

# Andrea Little Mason, Ed.D.

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## OVERVIEW

Andrea is an educator, scholar, researcher, advocate, legacy builder and international speaker whose focus is to use her expertise to help others become equipped with skills and experiences that promote self-sufficiency and resourcefulness.

Andrea is knowledgeable about various instructional contexts that include both traditional and nontraditional educational settings, with both children and adults, while also having personal educational experiences that allow insights into diverse post-secondary learning environments (i.e. historically black university, predominantly white university, and online university).

Andrea is an author, speaker, and presenter at conferences. She possesses exceptional verbal and writing skills that allow effective communication and productive outcomes in both face-to-face interactions as well as distance correspondences.

Andrea is Co-Founder and Executive Director of Harmonic Connections PLUS, a 501c3 not-for-profit organization with the focus of *“building legacy through practices that promote sustainability in communities and the environment.”* To that end she uses her expertise as a Birth Ambassador and Birth Mentor to create platforms for collaboration between birth workers around the world in an effort to improve birth outcomes.

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## EXPERIENCES

### ***Founder and Managing Director***, February 2019

Daughters of the African Diaspora Alliance, Chicago Heights, Illinois

Daughters of the African Diaspora Alliance (D.O.A.D. Alliance) involves women of African descent who are committed to preserving, protecting, and promoting indigenous knowledge systems from Africa through traditional birth practices, by utilizing resources within nature, and by practicing skills that allow people of African descent to sustain themselves. It recognizes the daughters of the African Diaspora, spread all over the Western Hemisphere, who have dedicated their lives to learning the traditions of their ancestors, understanding the needs of birthing women's bodies, and using ancient knowledge to heal and protect women.

### ***International Birth Ambassador, Harmonic Connections PLUS***, January 2018 - present

Centre for Indigenous Knowledge Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville,  
KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

A stakeholder with Indigenous Knowledge Systems Based Sexual Reproductive Health Initiatives with the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge Studies in South Africa. Assisting with the creation of a database of African traditional midwifery professionals and institutions from within the continent and African Diaspora; and building a repository of African-American SRH that can be shared through publications.

**Associate Director, Doula Program, July 2016 - December 2016**

Birth Institute, Boulder, CO

Oversaw selection, production and promotion of Birth Wisdom content including: webinars/podcasts, blogs and mini-courses. Fostered development of new continuing education programs and courses by collecting and interpreting data from enrollment data, student and instructor feedback, internal/external input, competitive market analysis and other informational sources to optimize for current trends in continuing education for doulas, midwives and other maternal healthcare professionals. Prepared and delivered lectures, led and moderated classroom discussions, and administered and graded examinations for the Holistic Doula Program, including the 8-week introductory workshop and the 1-year practicum.

**Mathematics and Science Instructor (Grade 8), 2015 - 2016**

Betty Shabazz International Charter School, Chicago, IL

Developed and implemented Mathematics and Science curricula based on Grade 8 Common Core Standards; participated in team working to establish data driven instructional practices among the middle school grades to improve student outcomes; Skype Session organizer between students of Betty Shabazz Academy and students of Cheery Children Education Centre in Nairobi, Kenya.

- 88% of students showed growth in Math from Spring 2015 - Spring 2016; 60% showed growth of 5 points or higher; almost 30% showed double digit growth; the number of students at or above Norm Grade Level Mean score more than doubled; increased their mean score by almost 8 points; 22% more students were ranked *average*, *high average*, or *high*.

**Cultural and Birth Worker Exchange, 2015**

Gauteng Province (Johannesburg South, Johannesburg, Soweto, & Pretoria) and KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Attended South Africa's Department of Women's Delegates Summit in preparation for the 59th Session of the *United Nations Commission on the Status of Women*; met with education professor at the University of Witwatersrand to consider future collaboration; participant in *Helping Babies Breathe* training with renowned midwife, Marianne Littlejohn, and other South African midwives; participated in pregnancy workshops and meetings/trainings for pregnant women and their partners at public and private hospitals and birthing facilities; was guest in the home of a family in Clermont Township, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

**Co-Chairperson and Session Facilitator, 2014 - 2018**

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Tau Psi Zeta Chapter, Alsip, IL

The Stork's Nest - a collaboration between Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. and the March of Dimes that promotes prenatal health for pregnant women

Coordinated prenatal education sessions; established and maintained relationship with participants; used the prenatal education curriculum to prepare pregnant mothers for birth; served as and provided resources for expecting mothers

**Editor-in-Chief, 2013 - 2016**

The International Center for Traditional Childbearing - Black Midwives and Healers Review Newsletter (ICTC BMHR)

Copy and content editor also responsible for assembling articles, interviewing featured birth workers, and managing BMHR editions.

**Dr. Doula**, 2013 - present

Sankofa Birth, South Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana, Birth Mentor

Provides a holistic approach to childbirth that values the contributions of medical professionals and also reinforces the innate and intuitive strength and wisdom of women's bodies in childbirth; promotes harmonious connections within the birthing environment for optimal outcomes for mother and baby through skills-based birth preparation, labor/birth support, and postpartum support as well as family/relationship dynamics through [DrDoulaSays...](#) Blog.

***Volunteer Doula***, 2013 - 2014

Chicago Volunteer Doulas, Chicago, IL

Non-for-profit organization providing pregnancy, labor and delivery support to low-income women.

Provided educational, physical, and emotional support for women in childbirth; provided prenatal consultations and postpartum visits for new mothers

***Lunch and Recess Supervisor***, 2012 – 2013

Serena Hills Elementary School, Chicago Heights, IL

Co-developed supervisor job summary and responsibilities document that was shared district wide; ensured students' safety during lunch periods and recess; monitored activities and recreation; arranged the orderly assembly of children in and through corridors

***Leadership Team Member/Facilitator/Mentor***, 2009 – 2013

Family Christian Center, Munster, IN

EQUIP Education: Family Life Development and Application

Provided leadership to adults through instruction and mentorship; facilitated large and small group sessions; coached individuals in disciplines pertaining to family relational paradigms

***Co-Founder and Executive Director***, 2008 – present

Chicago Heights, IL

[Harmonic Connections Plus](#) is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization focused on building legacy through practices that promote sustainability in communities through relationship education and in the environment through green initiatives; established to develop curricula to equip individuals with skills to manage their personal and professional interactions more effectively.

***Curriculum Developer*** of relationship education curricula and ***Principal Facilitator*** for couple and family workshops and classes; orchestrates collaboration with sustainability initiatives; reviews applicants for supplemental educational scholarship awards; collaborates in research about marriage and family. Designs relationship education courses attended by individuals and families in intimate and professional settings.

***Project Coordinator and Skilled Birth Ambassador*** for *HC+ Birth Community* designed to help women and families prepare for childbirth. Developed [Doula Perspectives Theory](#) which was

translated into Japanese and published by a nurse-midwife who is an assistant professor at the University of Tokyo.

### **EVENTS**

**Presenter** for Kwanzaa Event: Birth, Breastfeeding and Beyond Panel (2014); **Organizer** for Improving Birth Rally - Chicago South Suburbs (2014); **Presenter** at MudWorks (2014); **Musical Presenter** at MudWorks (2014); **Coordinator** for Birth Professional D.E.S.S.E.R.T. B.A.R. (2014); **Presenter** at INSPIRE Indiana (2013); **Presenter** at INSPIRE Chicago (2012); **Musical Presenter** at Midwest Christian Film Festival (2011); **Musical Presenter** at OFMBI Commencement (2011); **Presenter** at Expressions of Love Conference (2011); **Host and Organizer** of Vision Empowerment (2011); **Presenter** at Pam Ross LIVE (2010); **Musical Presenter** at One Flesh Ministries P.R.O.M. (2008, 2012); **Presenter** at "Marriage Connections" (2008 - 2013).

### ***Lesson and Instruction Developer, 2001 – 2006***

Urban Ministries, Inc. Publishing Company, Calumet City, IL

Developed quarterly lessons for two publications (ages 9-11 and 12-14) comprised of reviews, short stories & articles; prepared teachers' lessons and study guides; researched historical and background references for teachers' texts; produced interactive group activities and projects to accompany lessons

### ***Private and Home Educator, 1997 – 2010***

Chicago and South Suburbs, IL

Developed individual curricula and provided instruction for four students at Pre-K - 8 grade levels; managed daily scheduling of routines and educational disciplines; coordinated educational and extracurricular activities including music, sports and sign language; taught other homeschool students with coursework through co-operative sessions; tutored junior high, high school, and adult students in mathematics courses

### ***Administrative Manager, 1996 - 2001***

Mason Home Remodeling, Chicago, IL

Residential kitchen and bathroom remodeling: single family, new construction and rehabs in Chicago and surrounding North, West and South Suburbs

Responsible for tracking business expenses; planning and organizing systems; and providing additional support for employees

### ***Youth Instructor and Team Leader, 1996 -2005***

True Rock Ministries, Chicago, IL

Directed and developed programs and musical presentations for youth; organized and managed musical teams for conference programs

### ***High School Mathematics Teacher (Teachers for Chicago), 1994 – 1997***

Chicago Public Schools, Crane High School, Chicago, IL

Developed syllabus for math courses (including honors) for grades 9-12 (applied mathematics, algebra, trigonometry); prepared students for statewide and national standardized testing; monitored and assessed students' progress based on learning objectives

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## EDUCATION

### **Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership**

w/ **Specialization in Curriculum and Instruction:** GPA 3.9/4.0 (2013)

University of Phoenix, Phoenix, Arizona

### **Masters of Arts in General Education:** GPA 3.67/4.0 (1996)

St. Xavier University, Chicago, Illinois

### **Bachelor of Science in Mathematics:** GPA 3.22/4.0 (1994)

Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, Alabama

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## Computer Experience

MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, & Publisher), Adobe (Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Flash, & Photoshop), Quark, Google (Docs, Slides, Sheets, & Forms), Lucid (Charts & Press) Online education experience

## Writing and Editing Experience

*Doctoral dissertation academic writing and editing* (APA 6th ed. formatting, 2011 – 2013)

*Copy editor* (11:11, Robert and Natalie Watts, 2011)

*Copy editor* (Serving, Leading, and Loving, Pam Ross, 2011)

*Consulting Editor* (Seven Magazine Online, 2007 – 2008)

## Publications

*Their Journey to the PhD: Special Edition: Stories of Personal Perseverance and Academic Achievement*, Chapter 8: A Path the Would Please Her Mother (2014)

*Non-Conventional Gender Roles in Relationship Education Curricula for African Americans: A Content Analysis [Dissertation Research]* (2013)

*Maximizing the Connection [Relationship Education Curricula]* (2009-2013)

*Soul Soil: The Good, the Bad and the Dirt that Makes Up Relationships* (2009)

## Honors and Awards Highlights

### *Keynote Speaker* (2017)

“Speak Your Truth 2017” ProDoula Conference, Kansas City, Missouri

Maternal and infant mortality among African American women.

Topic: *The Black History of Birth in America*

### *Advocate for Transformation* (2016)

University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa

Intellectual Exchange surrounding transformation in higher education with the Assistant Dean

Internationalization and Academic Head Research together with the Academic Head Transformation.

Discussed ways in which *harmonic connections* can be made between the modern and the traditional to revitalize sustainable communities among people of African descent throughout the diaspora to create sustainable legacies for generations to come.

**Presenter (2014)**

2nd Annual Black Doctoral Network Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

“Make the Connection”

Topic: *Non-Conventional Gender Roles in Relationship Education Curricula for African Americans: A Content Analysis*

**Research Presentation Award Recipient (2012)**

University Of Phoenix School of Advanced Studies

**Emerging Scholar (2012)**

Annual Conference of the Association of Leadership Educators, Key West, Florida

“Changes in Attitude, Changes in Latitude: Discovering the Keys to Innovation in Leadership Education”

Research Topic: *The Marriage Index as a Measurement of Marital Stability among HBCU Alumni: A Descriptive Study*

**Presenter (2011)**

Annual Undergraduate and Graduate Student Social Justice Conference, Chicago, Illinois

“Past is Present: History, Social Movements, and Justice”

Presentation: *Schools as a Catalyst for Identifying and Nurturing Purpose Learners*

**Presenter (2010)**

Annual Undergraduate and Graduate Student Social Justice Conference, Chicago, Illinois

“Social Justice in a Changing World”

Presentation: *The Consequences of Education Inequalities*

**Board Member**, Kingdom Leadership Development, Inc. (since 2011)

**Honorary Doctorate of Sacred Music**, OFMBI -New Covenant International (2008)

**Biblical Counseling Certificate**, American Association of Christian Counselors (2008)

**Intern for Teachers for Chicago**, Chicago Public Schools (1994 – 1996)

**Pi Mu Epsilon, Inc.**, National Mathematics Honor Society (1994)

**Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.**, Service Organization (since 1991)

## **Birth Education Workshops and Trainings**

**Helping Babies Breathe - South Africa Birth Worker Exchange** (2015)

**Childbirth: A Global Perspective - Coursera, Emory University** (2014)

**Birthing Better with the Pink Kit Method - Virtual Mentorship from New Zealand** (2014 -2015)

**Reproductive Justice Conference** (2014)

**Physiological Birth Conference** (2014)

**Zulu Birth Project Workshop** (2014)

**Birthing From Within Introductory Workshop** (2014)

**ProDoula Workshops** - Labor Doula, Postpartum Doula and Advanced Business Trainings (2013 - 2014)

**Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Certification** (2013)

**International Center for Traditional Childbearing Full Circle Doula Training** (2013, 2015)

## Interests and Activities

**Music Projects:** Vocalist and songwriter as a part of the duo *Eugene and Andrea*

**CD Projects** - Moments of Solitude (2002), Covenant of Love (2004), Just Us (2007), Lovers' Rendezvous (2009), A Glimpse into Greater Expectations (2011)

**Hobbies:** Making crafts (jewelry, dolls, cross stitch, and sewing), painting (clothes and wall designs)