

THE REV. BRENDA GIRTON-MITCHELL

President Barack Obama named the Rev. Brenda Girton-Mitchell director of the Department's Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships on December 13, 2010. The mission of the center for Faith-Based and neighborhood partnerships at the Department of Education is to promote student achievement by connecting schools and community-based organizations, both secular and faith-based, as we build a culture of educational excellence. The center also works as a part of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

Girton-Mitchell brings more than 30 years experience to the Department from her work as a teacher, legal counsel and minister. A native of Indianapolis and the first in her family to go to college, Girton-Mitchell earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education in 1970 from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, then taught elementary school for nine years in Indianapolis. She then earned her master's in elementary education.

She earned her J.D. degree with honors from the Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1980, and worked for one year as a legislative assistant to former Senator Birch Bayh (D-Ind.). In 1994, Girton-Mitchell was named associate executive officer for the National Council of Negro Women in Washington.

In 1997, Mitsubishi Motors of America named her as its first director of diversity relations, a post she held for three years and during which time, she began her divinity studies at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

In 2000, Girton-Mitchell was named associate general secretary for justice and advocacy and director of the Washington office for the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

In the midst of working full-time for the council, she earned her master's of divinity degree and was ordained on June 12, 2004, as a minister for the Metropolitan Baptist Church of Washington, D.C., where she continues to serve as a minister for stewardship and missions.

Girton-Mitchell is a life member of the National Council of Negro Women, the NAACP, and the Urban League. She is admitted to the bars of Illinois, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Supreme Court. Among her memberships are the National Bar Association, the Washington Bar Association, and leadership Greater Washington. Currently, she is vice chair of the Board of Governors for Wesley Theological Seminary. She is a recipient of numerous awards.