

Dear Dr. Mattingly,

On behalf of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, I am pleased to recommend Dr. Gloria Kirkland Holmes for Emeritus status upon her retirement June 1, 2020.

Dr. Kirkland Holmes came to the University of Northern Iowa in August 1978 as a preschool-kindergarten teacher at Malcolm Price Laboratory School. She had a joint assignment in Curriculum and Instruction and taught early childhood classes in the evenings for the UNI Early Childhood Education program during her time there. She served as a Fellow in the Regent's Center for Early Developmental Education at UNI. She is currently an associate professor in early childhood, elementary education and provides leadership in diversity and inclusion at the University of Northern Iowa, especially in the College of Education. Her scholarship is focused on preparing teachers to work with all children and to close the achievement gap that has formed in the African-American, Latinx, and new comer populations.

She is best known at UNI for the African-American Read-In targeting elementary aged students. Now in its 14th year at UNI, the event takes place on February 27 with approximately 1000 children expected to attend from Waterloo and Hudson Schools. Dr. Holmes is also know for the African American Children and Families Conference that advocates for the transformation of communities so that needs of children and families are met through attitudinal changes and actions, as well as caring and sharing in better the lives of children and families. These two activities have touched the lives of so many young children who begin to think that maybe they would like to go to university. The African American Children and Families Conference has provided significant support to UNI teacher candidates and inservice teachers in understanding the needs of children who may not look like or have the experiences they have.

In 2018, Dr. Kirkland Holmes was awarded the Graven Award presented to a person whose life is nurtured and guided by a strong Christian calling and who is making a significant contribution to community, church, and society.

Over the years, Dr. Kirkland Holmes has led the encouragement and support for the UNI community to be a part of the "village" that ensures justice, peace, and understanding and good will toward each other. Her commitment has touched thousands of students over the years. Dr. Kirkland Holmes has long been engaged in community activities that nurture young male and female leaders of color known as the Shining Stars – Young Male Leaders Program. The program is designed to help youth (KG – Grade 8) grow, develop and excel cognitively, emotionally, socially, psychologically, physically and spiritually while assisting them in goal-oriented college-ready preparatory thinking. The goals of the programs include decreasing juvenile detention, suspensions, expulsions, and drop-out rates, as well as building self-esteem and confidence.

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction recognizes and values the immense contribution made by Dr. Gloria Kirkland Holmes in the field of education for all children. We support her Emeritus recognition.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robin Dada". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "D".

Robin Dada
Department Head, Curriculum and Instruction
College of Education
University of Northern Iowa