



2020 NOC Commencement Speaker

Diane Anderson, a native Oklahoman who grew up in Okmulgee County, graduated from Morris High School and earned her Associate of Science degree in Business Administration from Northern Oklahoma College in 1992. She also received a Master's degree from the University of Oklahoma in Human Relations-Administrative Leadership.

She began her professional career with Conoco, Inc. in Ponca City and later Phillips 66, working in the geology and geophysics departments before becoming Coordinator of Community Relations. She recently retired after 45 years.

Her service as a community activist includes membership in and chair of numerous boards and committees of civic, political and professional organizations at the state as well as at the local level including the Ponca City United Way, Attucks Community Alliance, Ponca City Chamber of Commerce and Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame. Her contributions also include serving on the advisory boards of the Black Liberated Arts Center, Oklahoma Community Institute, Ponca City High School African American Club, Ponca City Main Street, University Center at Ponca City, Supported Community Lifestyles and the YMCA.

Anderson served three terms as City Commissioner for the City of Ponca City beginning in 2004 and two terms as Vice-Mayor, the third woman and the first African American elected to that position.

She was a founder of the Child Advocacy Center of Kay County and a Court Appointed Specialty Advocate. Ms. Anderson is active in the New Life Baptist Church and serves as the pastor's secretary. Her life goal has been to leave the world better than she found it for her family and her community.

Anderson acquired her sense of community and charity from the most influential person in her life, her mother, Gustavia "Gussie" Anderson.

"She taught us that no matter how little you have, you have enough to share," Anderson said. "She taught me how to be a woman of faith, character and integrity. The most valuable attributes I have are due to a little five-foot dynamo, who was more than a mother; my mother. She was a spiritual leader, teacher, mentor, community activist, nurse, friend and confidant."

She is mom to three M's; Mark, Marissa, and Marshaun and Nana to six. Diane was honored as a Northern Oklahoma College Distinguished Alumna in 2012.