



2007 Alumni Honor Roll | Reasons to Believe



Role models who give us *Reasons to Believe* in the power of education

Michelle Hayes Robinson

Rosedale Junior/Senior High School, 1973

Being fair, open and honest has contributed to Michelle Robinson's prosperous career. She says her word is her bond, and anyone who has worked with her knows it's true.

For the past 21 years, Robinson has served as a supplier diversity manager for major corporations in the Kansas City area. Most recently, she spent seven years at Sprint, structuring their supplier diversity program, which focuses on developing strategies to ensure that companies managed and owned by minorities, women and the service disabled veterans have an opportunity to bid on contracts with the corporation. She said she gains a great deal of satisfaction knowing that she has helped up-and-coming businesses to succeed by providing them with opportunities to compete.



Growing up in a diverse school like Rosedale Junior/Senior High helped her to appreciate diversity around her, and that has contributed to her current success. Having great African-American administrators and teachers gave her reasons to believe in herself, and her future.

A 2005 story in *Minority Business News USA* identified Robinson as a leader in diversity initiatives. In 1998, she received the Golden Eagle Award from the National Eagle Leadership Institute. Through her job, she is a member of the Mid-America Minority Business Development Council and a former member of the Black Chamber of Commerce, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Asian Chamber of Commerce. She has visited with students in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools many times over the years, focusing on career opportunities and what it takes to be successful.

She wants today's students to follow their own dreams and not live someone else's. She also wants them to stay focused on learning.

"Learning is a lifelong process, but it's not just limited to the classroom," Robinson said. "Life is one great big classroom if you are open to it."