

Planting Seeds of Life



Written & Recommended by

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Years ago, a seed was planted in the life of Ms. Audrey Gardner. It was a seed that would take root and blossom in the lives of others, locally, nationally and now globally. Born the eleventh of twelve children, Audrey knew that she had a special calling upon her life. At the age of five, she would hear a voice telling her the way in which to go. As a child, she knew that was the voice of God but she longed to see His face. From the age of five, she would routinely search for God, making it a daily hide and go seek. This was her private secret, because at that time children were to be seen and not heard.

As a parent of two, and with a heart for children, in 1989, Ms. Gardner became a Parent Coordinator for an Inner City sports program to broaden children's mind. "Soccer In the Streets", under the leadership of Carolyn McKenzie would solidify her purpose in life. Months later, she was appointed as the Program Director of "Soccer In the Streets". Little did Audrey know that this successful program would become a model for other cities throughout the United States. It was during this time she realized that the seed planted in her life from birth, and first recognized at the age of five, was to help children realize that they can do whatever they set their minds and hearts toward and make a positive difference in this world.

She would later join a speaker circuit encouraging elementary students at Ola Middle School in Henry County, Georgia, and high school students at Dr. Martin Luther King and Coretta Scott King to set goals, dream big and to deposit seeds of life in others. She would share with them her passion and project she founded abroad in Senegal West Africa: "Youth Action Without Borders". Ms. Gardner started this non-profit organization with her personal funds and would travel to Senegal several times a year, providing clothes, training, workshops, mentoring, equipment and later seeds to plant for agriculture. The Seed project was named in memory of Dr. George Washington Carver, while honoring President Barack and First Lady Michelle Obama.

One of the many distinguished honors Ms. Gardner received was the Humanitarian Award. In 2010, The Red Cross (Croix-Rouge) Senegalese honored her for working with the youth of Dakar, Senegal and giving of her time, service, resources and her love. The children from Youth Action Without Borders, sang "Heal The World" in English and French. Humbled and moved to tears by this experience, Audrey was compelled to do more, go higher to "see what the end would hold". She and a few of her colleagues from Delta Airlines, would partner up in this effort to take "Youth Action Without Borders" to the next level.

Audrey realizes that this mission could not be a success without Delta Airlines. From Carole Kerr, Delta Performance Leader, Jose Dennis, Delta PSA, and Group Leaders who allowed her time off and provided assistance with shipping bags with donations of books, clothes and other materials for the children of the camp in Dakar, Senegal. This same level of dedication and commitment transcends into her career. She was chosen to spear head Delta's Sky Club renovations. After successfully completing the renovation and re-opening of five Sky Club, Ms. Gardner was awarded the Most Valuable Player award by Delta Airlines.

On March 14, 2012, Ms. Gardner was given the distinguished honor of being the first Ambassador of the Red Cross (Croix Rouge) of Senegal to the United States. Her dream on connecting the United States to Africa and becoming a liaison for humanity is being realized. In addition, she seeks to develop an exchange student program to continue fostering the Sister City relationship with Dakar, Senegal. In the midst of all of her endeavors, she gave herself a gift of completing her Bachelors degree at Herzing University on May 12, 2012.

I write you and your network to let you know the impact that you, Ms. Winfrey, and your Angel Network has had on many lives, including mine, which transcends into something larger and greater than us. May you continue to see the seeds of life flourish and encourage Audrey along the way, as she runs on and sees what the end will be.