

Cheryl D. Watkins, PhD

Bio



Dr. Cheryl D. Watkins is an educator by profession who tells you that she fell in love with teaching as a child. On rainy days, you could find her playing school on the back porch of her apartment building with her sisters and friends. In the field of education, she is known as a servant leader and believes that it is better to give than to receive. Throughout her career, she placed the educational needs of others as a priority and states it has fueled her efforts.

She rose through the ranks within the Chicago Public Schools during her 33-year career. Prior to retirement, she served as a teacher, professional development leader, assistant principal, principal, instructional support leader, deputy chief of schools and chief of schools. She has provided educational leadership and instructional support to more than 70 school principals and their assistant principals on the south, far south and southeast sides of the city.

Dr. Watkins has been the recipient of numerous awards and recognitions throughout her career at the local, regional and national levels. As a teacher, she received the Golden Apple Award (for excellence in teaching), the Kizzy Award, the Kathy Osterman Award for Superior Public Service, the Michael Jordan Education Club Teacher Achiever Award. And, as a principal, she received the Dare to Be Great Award from the Illinois Women in Educational Leadership and was one of two recipients in the state of Illinois to receive national recognition as a winner of the prestigious Milken Award for excellence in education. Most recently, Cheryl was honored to receive the Margaret T. Burroughs Legacy Award from the DuSable Museum of African History.

Dr. Watkins founded Monarch Education Consultants, LLC to support districts, schools and school leaders as they work to increase the academic achievement of students and to support the instructional capacity of teachers. She is passionate about how issues of race, equity and justice; emotional intelligence; and leadership permeate the culture and climate of schools and leads workshops on these topics across the state of Illinois.

Dr. Watkins earned her Bachelor's Degree from Chicago State University and has two earned advance degrees from the University of Illinois at Chicago, including a Master's degree and a Ph.D. in special education. She is currently studying to become a chaplain at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. She is the author of *Releasing Her: Wrestling Peace from the Jaws of Alzheimer's*, an Amazon best seller. She is an adjunct professor at two universities in the Chicago area, serves in her church, and is an active member of her sorority.