



HAMILTON URBAN CORE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

In Celebration of a Phenomenal Woman

Denise Janet Brooks is remembered as a human rights, anti-racism and social justice leader, humanitarian, visionary, role-model, person of conviction and great integrity.

Today is a most special day for the clients, staff and board members both past and present of Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre as we remember Denise for her amazing leadership in the pursuit of justice, the amelioration of basic human rights and equity in health care for Hamilton's most vulnerable people. Denise Brooks' tireless work in raising awareness in addressing and ending poverty, creating access to culturally responsive primary health care for underserved populations, in advancing equity in healthcare, led to the creation of transformative systemic change throughout the Community Health Centre sector in the province.

Denise is also remembered for her determination, as an eloquent speaker, her heart of gold and that infectious and joy filled laughter. Compassion came easily to this leader who was never too busy to listen and speak with clients to give words of encouragement, instill hope and inspire and empower them to speak up when they experience barriers and challenges.

Denise tirelessly dedicated her efforts towards building capacity and empowering Hamilton Urban Core staff and was always readily available to mentor, support and coach staff especially in understanding how to provide services that are grounded on the social determinants health.

A phenomenal woman - that was Denise! Proud to walk in her own skin, comfortable to speak that raw truth and expected to hear the raw truth in return.

This focused stick-to-it-ness fueled her determination to work with the clients, staff, board, sector supporters and many community members to achieve what seemed like a monumental task to acquire the necessary approval and funding for the new Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre building that will be located at 430 Cannon Street in Hamilton. This is a bitter sweet victory and celebration for us as Denise is not here to see her vision and hard work come to fruition, as we begin to build this new community health centre located in the Core. This is an awesome legacy for a woman of African heritage who has contributed so much to shaping this community in the health sector and beyond. A community health centre that is surrounded by greenspace, that is welcoming and open, creating a feeling of warmth, care and respect for the clients, staff and volunteers to feel empowered, that they too are important and that they matter.

**From Hamilton Urban Core Board of Directors and Staff
Thursday July 28, 2021**