

Rodney David Washington Moore

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Bio

Rod, a veteran activist, civil rights historian and social ecologist, has spent a lifetime helping us become a better people. As a boy, he saw first-hand the power of cooperative action while working to help elect Birmingham's first African American mayor, 15 years after MLK's *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* (read about that experience as described in [Sister Rose \(Or, the Power of "We"\)](#)). He's been committed to the work of creating a society that works for all of us ever since.

That sacred work has included everything from economic justice to spiritual justice, from fighting for LGBTQ+ equality to increasing diversity in public office, from educating us about the unprecedented sociological shifts our nation is undergoing to fostering the Beloved Community. Throughout, it's his respect for what we each bring, individually, and his belief in who we can be, collectively, that has remained his true north.

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As an ethnically diverse Southerner who identifies both as African American and LGBTQ, as a person who grew up both in poverty and in a household deeply involved in the Civil Rights movement, and as an "activist minister" in the tradition of both his granddad Olden and MLK himself, Rod brings a unique perspective to the work before us as we determine the kind of people we want to be and the kind of society we want to live in.

He was 10 when he petitioned the City of Birmingham to launch a summer boxed lunch program in places where kids would receive free lunch during the school year, and 13 when he was speaking in historically white churches in support of Richard Arrington's bid to become Birmingham's first African American mayor.

His message to those churches was simple: he believed they could be a "Birmingham for all Birminghamians", and he challenged them to select the next mayor, not by the color of their skin but by their commitment to this vision.

30 years later, he'd take his "For All" strategy national, engaging with thousands of fellow ministers, both conservatives and progressives, on behalf of a presidential candidate he believed could help make us an America for all Americans -- Barack Obama.

The most pivotal period of his life was when he and three other young seminarians, in 1988, began providing spiritual care and case support for San Francisco's rapidly growing AIDS patients. At the time, they had no idea the crisis that would unfold over the coming years. The first protease inhibitor was released in 1995, at a time when AIDS was the leading cause of death for all Americans, between the ages of 25 – 44, both male and female, and by 1997, AIDS-related deaths had declined by 47%.

But not for African Americans. Not only would AIDS remain the number one cause of death for both men and women in the 25 – 44 age group, but by 1998, African Americans would constitute 49% of all AIDS-related deaths in the United States; a great example of intersectionality.

His work at this intersection of ancestry, religion and sexuality spans from speaking at San Francisco churches to garner support for [Prop K](#), which called for the reinstatement of the 1990 domestic partnership registry on behalf

of AIDS patients to spearheading outreach to historically white, conservative congregations during the [2008 Obama presidential campaign](#), to co-chairing 2015's [Evangelicals for Equality](#).

Rod has served on the founding team of a range of nonprofits and social ventures including [Music Bridge](#), a first-generation digital music platform that allowed artist-activists, unsigned artists and artists with AIDS to get their music out into the world. (Upon acquisition, proceeds were distributed to all participating artists.)

He's co-founder and on the board of [iPeerion Technologies](#), a social impact tech incubator focused on making advanced technologies like AI, blockchain, and digital currencies socially equitable, universally beneficial and environmentally sustainable.

His commitment to helping end entrenched poverty led to [HomeWorks Homes](#), a social justice real estate company launched by Crystal Crawford, MMI board member and his youngest and only remaining sister. HomeWorks enables the working poor to clear the many hurdles that both prevent them from becoming homeowners and lock them into a lifetime of renting.

He is a film producer and minority owner of [Lake Productions](#), an independent film company committed to advancing LGBTQ+, racial and social equality. His film credits include [The Falls](#) trilogy, [LUZ](#), and [Room to Grow](#), a documentary about six diverse LGBTQIA+ youth and their efforts to find themselves, as well as [The Patient](#), a documentary about people committed to living vital lives even as they contend with cancer. He is Narrative Advisor for [Tipping Point: What the Portland Protests Tell Us About the State of America](#) and is quoted in the film.

He is author of [Me & Mary: An African American Grandma, the Grandson She Raised, and the Lessons She Taught Him](#), and [This Land Is Your Land: How the Greatest Sociological Shift in United States History is Changing Everything. And What that Change Requires of Us](#), as well as his personal publication, [Letters From A Birmingham Boy](#).