

Vivian Nixon
Executive Director College and Community Fellowship

Vivian Nixon is an ordained minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Her current work includes fighting for the removal of barriers to reentry for formerly incarcerated people in the United States, and advocating for the inclusion of higher education in prison and in reentry. In 2004, she received the “Lifting as We Climb Advocacy Award” from the Correctional Association of New York. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Services Administration from the State University of New York, Empire College and will complete a Master of Liberal Studies in 2008 at the same institution.

Rev. Nixon is the director, and an alumna of the College and Community Fellowship (CCF). CCF is unique in that it uses higher education and leadership development as primary strategies to help formerly incarcerated women develop economic security for themselves and their families. As a recipient of a Soros Justice Advocacy Fellowship awarded by the Open Society Institute in 2005, she founded ReEnterGrace – a project that employs the talent of formerly incarcerated women and men to reach out to African American faith-based communities and educate them about the disparate impact of United States criminal justice policies on people of color, to encourage them to help individuals resettle in the community, and to help them advocate for the elimination of systemic barriers to reentry. Rev. Nixon serves on the advisory boards of the Prisoner Reentry Institute at John Jay College, the Interfaith Coalition of Advocates for Reentry and Employment (ICARE), and Reentry Net. Rev. Nixon recently published an essay titled “A Christian Response to Mass Incarceration: Unbind them!” in the Beacon Press anthology “Getting on Message: Challenging the Christian Right from the Heart of the Gospel”.