

Iris Roley

Iris Showes-Roley was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio. Iris is a wife of 23 years to Jesse Roley, a mother of three, and grandmother of five. She is the proud partner of RoSho Awards & Graphics, the only Black-owned engraving company in the region. Her company provides promotional items, awards, trophies, plaques, custom apparel and signage for the past 15 years.

As a child, Iris was developed to be an entrepreneur and social activist. Her grandfather, Big David Kinebrew, owned a Bail Bonding business. Her grandmother, Vivian Kinebrew, was a nurse and social activist, who not only opposed and fought mistreatment of black people in the city but also fought across the country. In addition to her grandparents, Iris got her schooling early on from the Famous Black House (located in Avondale), formerly known as the Rockdale Temple.

Iris is an original member of the Cincinnati Black United Front. As the Project Manager for the CBUF, in November 2000, Iris implemented a plan of action to address the wrongful deaths of two unarmed black men by the Cincinnati Police Department. Iris and the CBUF led the effort to mobilize the Cincinnati African American community to report, collect, and document over 400 instances of police brutality and misconduct.

The documentation was the catalyst used to file a class action lawsuit against the city of Cincinnati, its police department, and Fraternal Order of Police in federal court. The lawsuit and eventual settlement in March 2001 is known as the historic Collaborative Agreement and the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Cincinnati and the Department of Justice. It is the only settlement in the country that includes community members to be a part of how public safety is designed and implemented with a focus on problem solving for communities and police.

Iris has been invited to speak and consult in many cities including New York, where she consulted with attorneys, community organizers, plaintiffs and city officials on the elimination the horrible stop-and-fisk” policies; other cities like Ferguson, Baltimore, Cleveland, Milwaukee and, yes, even Puerto Rico.

Iris has graciously given 15 years of her life dedicated to the reform of police departments and the implementation of public policy. Iris Roley currently lends her talents and time to various boards, including AMOS Project, City Managers Advisory Board (MAG), the Police Chief Advisory Board (CAB), the Community Police Partnering Center (CPPC), Unofficial Juvenile Court in Madisonville, and the Summer Enrichment Program (A summer math and science program) just to name a few.