



Marilyn Sanders Mobley, PhD

Emerita Professor of English and African American Studies

Case Western Reserve University

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Marilyn Sanders Mobley is an emerita professor of English and African American Studies at Case Western Reserve University. Her more than four decades in higher education include roles as a faculty member, vice president for inclusion, diversity and equal opportunity and chief diversity officer at CWRU, provost at Bennett College, and founding director of African American Studies and associate provost at George Mason University, where she was a faculty member for 19 years, and the recipient of the Sojourner Truth Award for her leadership roles.

She earned her bachelor of arts in English and Education from Barnard College of Columbia University, her master of arts in English from New York University, and her PhD in English from Case Western Reserve University. She is a graduate of the Harvard University Management Leadership Institute, a Senior Ford Foundation Fellow and a recipient of funding from the NEH for her scholarship in African American literature. She has presented her scholarship throughout the United States and in Canada, Kenya, Russia, France, Italy, England, Austria, Ghana and Egypt, and has done seminary studies at the Howard University School of Divinity, the Anderson University School of Theology and through Leadership Focus under Church of God Ministries.

A graduate of Leadership Cleveland 2010, Mobley's talk, "The Paradox of Diversity," was selected for TEDxCLE 2013. She is the recipient of a 2019 YWCA Woman of Achievement award, immediate past president of Blacks in Management, and a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. She is a former board member of the Cleveland Leadership Center, the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Cuyahoga County Public Library, and she is a founding and lifetime member of the Toni Morrison Society, where she formerly served as president and a member of the board. She served two terms on the board of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education. She is a former board member of the Ohio Humanities Council, and a member of the advisory team that planned the 2026-2027 yearlong tribute to Toni Morrison for the state of Ohio. She is the founder and CEO of SandersMobley Consulting, which supports organizations in connecting their vision to action through strategic storytelling, teamwork, and community engagement.

Mobley has several publications on Toni Morrison including *Folk Roots and Mythic Wings in Sarah Orne Jewett and Toni Morrison: The Cultural Function of Narrative*, one of the first cross-cultural studies on Morrison. In 2016, she published a spiritual memoir, *The Strawberry Room and Other Places Where a Woman Finds Herself*. Her latest book, *Geopoetics of Place, Race and Be/longing* was published in July of 2024 and received the Toni Morrison Society Book Award in 2026. She is an ordained associate minister at Arlington Church of God in Akron, Ohio, where she leads the Wellness and Grief Recovery ministries. A proud mother, grandmother and great grandmother, Mobley is working on a book on the late minister, civil rights activist, and Operation PUSH cofounder, Rev. Willie Taplin Barrow.