

Brittini Drayton
Multimedia Storytelling
Professor Chris Evans

Revised:

In this revised version of my narrative, I made several minor adjustments, starting with the first and most important change was to take personal views out of the story. This was a challenge I didn't realize I had at first, but after several reviews I believe I fixed them. The inclusion of attributes was a significant aspect that was addressed during the editing process. There were several sentences with no attributions, which made the writing seem more opinionated than factual. After careful examination, it was discovered that a number of the quotes had attribution issues, which made it challenging to know who was speaking throughout the story. Finally, a noticeable tendency toward subjectivity in my writing was identified and addressed; this characteristic was particularly strong in this writing.

Anticipation of Retirement

Henry Street Settlement is registered with the New York Department of Homeless Services, NYC.gov. Established in 1893, this family shelter was the first in the country to house families in private apartments.

Henry Street Settlement offers round-the-clock social services to assist families in overcoming homelessness and moving into long-term housing. Since then, shelters nationwide have used it as a model.

Under the direction of the Urban Family Center, Henry Street Settlement opened as one of the first publicly funded shelters for abused women in New York City in 1977, making it the original shelter of its kind.

Verona Middleton-Jeter, a young social worker from South Carolina, worked her way up to a leadership role at Henry Street Settlement.

Middleton-Jeter, executive director of Henry Street Settlement since 2010, announced that she would be retiring on January 30, 2023, after 38 years at the Settlement, thirteen of them as executive director.

According to Middleton-Jeter, her early years in rural South Carolina are the source of her commitment to uplifting those who are impoverished and fulfilling her desire to help others.

"I grew up very poor, and in turn, I was inspired to work with poor people, my people," said Middleton-Jeter.

Across the decades, Middleton-Jeter worked at Henry Street Settlement; she said her career has evolved beyond her expectations.

"I found myself at this amazing job, and I had a boss who challenged me. He gave me tasks that I didn't think I could complete, and the more he told me I could, the more I believed him. Before I knew it, I was excelling fast at Henry Street, and all these amazing things started coming to fruition," said Middleton-Jeter.

In Middleton-Jeter's reflection on her professional journey, she details the transformative impact of a challenging job and supportive leadership, driving her rapid success at Henry Street.

Meanwhile, Frances Drayton, a former student of Middleton-Jeter's, a mentee, and the director of The Battered Women's Program, considers the impact and notoriety of her mentor.

"Verona became a high statue and made a huge impact. Her name entered rooms before she did, and that traveled fast," said Drayton.

Extending the narrative, Drayton highlighted Middleton-Jeter's renowned status.

"Her reputation preceded her, indicating the significant influence she had both within and outside of the community," said Drayton.

Reflecting on Middleton-Jeter's own experience learning from her mentors, Drayton elaborated on Verona's capacity for encouraging personal development within others.

"Verona was good at pushing us beyond our limits because she knew we were bigger than them. We made a difference and left a legacy that will endure within Henry Street Settlement even though we have left," said Drayton.

However, Middleton-Jeter is not without critics.

"While Verona displayed an unwavering confidence in her approach, her strong belief in 'helping people help themselves' sometimes made residents feel overwhelmed or pushed beyond their limit," said Debra Roman, a former resident of the Urban Family Center and a member of the Self-Help Program.

Roman, contemplating Middleton-Jeter's approach of pushing people beyond their limits, emphasized that this strategy wasn't always the healthiest for those who were being pushed.

Simultaneously, Roman acknowledged Middleton-Jeter's intent with this approach and expressed gratitude for her leadership nonetheless.

"We appreciated the intent but needed a more tailored approach," said Roman.

According to Drayton, the influence of Middleton-Jeter's leadership is not diminished by these critiques.

Drayton acknowledged the positive impact Middleton-Jeter had on her and those around her, expressing deep appreciation for the opportunity to work alongside Middleton-Jeter.

"Verona was among the best, recruited the best, and left an enduring legacy. She exemplified unwavering reliability and leadership. It was an honor to work with her and receive her mentorship," said Drayton.

In offering words of advice to those aspiring to make a lasting impact on the world, Middleton-Jeter would encourage others to embrace continuous learning.

overcome challenges by lifting and climbing, and leave their unique mark on the world.

"One thing I'd tell anyone who wants to leave their mark on the world is to lift and climb. Look at the people and situations around you and see where you can help and develop those around you," said Middleton-Jeter.

Reflecting on her professional trajectory, Middleton-Jeter attributed her rapid success to having people who believed in her, emphasizing the universal need for support and encouragement.

"I excelled so fast in my field. I had people believe in me. Everyone needs someone rooting for them," said Middleton-Jeter.