

## Biography

**Karen Leeper Bennett** is a native of Richmond Virginia. She earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Physical Therapy from Howard University in 1979, a Master of Science Degree in Exercise Physiology from Georgia State University, a Master of Divinity Degree from Candler School of Theology at Emory University and a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from Alabama State University.

Bennett moved to Georgia in 1985, and has resided in DeKalb County since that time. In 2012 she was elected to serve in the Georgia General Assembly as State Representative of District 94; representing citizens in both DeKalb and Gwinnett Counties. She is currently serving in her fourth term. In this capacity, she serves on some of the most influential committees to include Health and Human Services, Economic Development and Tourism, Regulated Industries and Code Revision. Bennett currently serves as the Chairperson for the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus. Representative Bennett has sponsored legislation to improve Health Disparities, provide for tax incentives for employees who hire disadvantaged and disabled veterans, improve funding for Kinship Care providers and increase provider rates for therapist to provide Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy to children with special needs, to name a few.

Professionally, Dr. Karen Bennett is a licensed Physical Therapist and is the President and CEO of Metro Therapy Providers, Inc. in DeKalb County; a pediatric therapy provider service offering physical, occupational and speech therapy to her clients since 1990. The Atlanta Business League, Black Enterprise Magazine and the Physical Therapy Association of Georgia have recognized Dr. Bennett for her entrepreneurial endeavors.

Dr. Bennett is a life member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., a life member of the DeKalb NAACP, a member of the DeKalb Chapter of National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) and the Order of Eastern Star. She has served as a member of the 100 Black Women of DeKalb County, the Physical Therapy of Georgia Board of Directors and other civic and professional boards. She is a graduate of Leadership DeKalb and the DeKalb Neighborhood Leadership Institute. Bennett has served Georgia as an advocate for children with special needs and their families for over 25 years. She has served the state of Georgia as a member on the Continuous Quality Improvement Committee for the Department of Community Health (DCH) and as a co-founder of the Tri-Alliance (PT, OT and SLP), which serves as an advisory group to DCH, DPH, BCW and CMOs, an advisor to the Physical Therapy Association of Georgia, Babies Can't Wait and Early Head Start. In addition, she has served on the Green Space Bond Fund and Land Use Committee both for DeKalb County. Dr. Bennett has mentored many in the area of leadership development and public policy. In her capacity as chairperson of the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus, she launched the first ever 'Young Leaders Policy Summit', raised over a half million dollars in fundraising and secured thousands of dollars in grants.

In addition to working as a professional and community advocate, Bennett is also an Ordained Itinerant Elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church since. Since 2009, Reverend Bennett has served as a Senior Pastor to churches in the Augusta Annual Conference and currently serves as a Pastor in the West District of the Atlanta North Annual Conference. Reverend Bennett is quoted as saying that "her blessings are by the Grace of God and that she tries to lead by following the example of Jesus Christ".

Leroy Bennett and Reverend Karen Bennett are the proud parents of two adult children; Jabari, an attorney in Florida and Asha, a clinical laboratory scientist and biologist in Atlanta. Reverend Bennett's love for God, family and others is exemplified in all aspects of her life through her ministry, public and community service. Reverend Bennett believes that "***Only What You Do For Christ Shall Last***".