

## Brenda Foye Cornelius

Brenda Cornelius is a 30-year DeKalb County homeowner, business owner and community volunteer. She has a lifetime of community engagement and commitment to others.

Brenda served as Commissioner of Human Relations for the State of Georgia, appointed by Governor Roy Barnes. She made history as the state's first commissioner of the agency that was charged with ensuring successful delivery and inclusion of government resources and services to 9 million Georgia citizens, with a focus on the ethnically/economically underserved and immigrant communities.

- She was instrumental in the creation of the Georgia Hispanic Affairs and Asian American Affairs Commissions.
- Organized and raised funds for scholarships for a 3-day multi-state African American Heritage Tour for 100 ethnic and religious diverse students.
- Established the Georgia Human Relations Consortium. Organized over 100 state agencies to deliver responsible, respectful and timely customer service to all Georgians.
- Developed the forum for emerging ethnic communities to interface with state agency heads to discuss issues of concern while working together for solutions.
- Created "*I AM GEORGIA*," a statewide initiative designed to mend the disconnect between state government and communities while celebrating the richness of all of Georgia's communities through education and cultural exchange.

Prior to appointment of Commissioner, Brenda was Director of the Governor's office of Community Relations. As a member of the governor's executive cabinet, the director's responsibilities included keeping him in touch with his constituencies and crafting highly effective programs and initiatives, while working directly with underserved and immigrant communities with a focus on Latino/Hispanic, Asian Pacific Islander, African Americans and Native American communities, as well as, women's groups, churches, faith-based and grass roots organizations.

### **Additional professional experience includes:**

Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Human Services, City of Atlanta. The office charged to improve the quality of services to Atlanta's citizens with a particular focus on the needs of homeless and low-income individuals and families. To develop and implement continuous quality improvement processes that will help strengthen families and communities.

Director of Place Based Initiatives, the United Way of Greater Atlanta. Working with the Community Engagement team to implement strategies and projects related to

community convening and improving relationships within place based initiatives in Westside/Atlanta, Clayton and DeKalb Counties and other identified areas where relationships are critical to improving Child Well Being.

In 2000, Brenda founded The Cornelius Group (TCG), a bilingual community relations and public affairs consulting firm that focuses on creating and cultivating strategic alliances through cultural specific, cultural appropriate outreach and innovative marketing. TCG is highly experienced in the core building blocks of community and government. Extensive work in relationship building in local, state, regional and national political campaigns.

**Education:**

Morris Brown College – Atlanta, Georgia

Bachelor of Science, Business Administration/Organizational Management

**Professional Development:**

Atlanta Regional Commission – Regional Leadership Institute

Conflict Mediation Certification

Leadership Atlanta

The Coca-Cola Diversity Leadership Academy

**Affiliations, Awards and Recognition (abbreviated list)**

- American Heart Association/American Stroke Association Ambassador
- American Red Cross Advisory Board Chair
- Atlanta Business League Board of Directors (Atlanta’s 100 Most Influential Women Award)
- City of Stone Crest, Georgia Alliance (Leadership Award)
- Christian Council of Metro Atlanta (Outstanding Human Relations Award)
- Church’s Chicken Minority Advisory Board
- Concerned Black Clergy of Metro Atlanta (Outstanding Public Service Award)
- Concerted Services Community Action Agency (Outstanding Service Award)
- Co-President for the League of Women Voters for Atlanta-Fulton Chapter
- Georgia Chamber of Commerce Board
- Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Board
- Georgia Latino Elected Officials Founding Member
- Georgia Law-Related Education Consortium Board
- Georgia Legislative Black Caucus Advisory Board (Trendsetter Award)
- Georgia’s Minority Elected and Appointed Officials Eggs & Issues Founding Member (Meritorious Service Award)
- Green Economy Diversity Initiative Board
- National Association of Chinese Americans
- National Black Public Relations Society
- National Council of Negro Women (State Community Leader of the Year Award)
- National Organization of Human Service Professionals
- United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (Outstanding Political Initiatives Award)
- Who’s Who of Black Atlanta Leaders

- Women Looking Ahead Magazine Board (Georgia's Most Powerful & Influential Women Award)

### **Gubernatorial, Government and Community Appointments**

- DeKalb County Community Relations Commission Chair
- Georgia Asian American Affairs Commission
- Georgia Diversity Council
- Georgia Hispanic Affairs Commission
- Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Legislative Committee Chair
- Georgia Hispanic Chamber Political Action Committee Board
- President Jimmy Carter Community Partnership Awards Selection Committee
- The King Center National Holiday Advisory Committee
- The Sapelo Island Heritage Authority
- Trumpet Awards Foundation Selection Committee