

Tonya Perkins-Stoudemire has devoted her adult life to the service of others. For many years, she was a Rotarian embracing the Rotarian model of service before self. She expresses her desire to serve others by volunteering to serve on several non-profit boards including Triumph House, Habitat for Humanity, Union Miles Development Corp, and the Cleveland Realist. The thread that all of these organizations have in common is serving and uplifting the underserved. In 2012, her love of community service guided her to start Bessie's Place, a facility whose goal was to provide low income housing for young women aging out of foster care, providing them a safe haven and life skills that would include both leadership and career development. The vision of Bessie's Place further developed and became Bessie's Angels, a 501c3. Bessie's Angels' mission is to educate, nurture and empower young women aging out of foster care. Tonya believes that "in community" or as an energized group we can change the world and leave a legacy of service and efficiency, impacting change while improving lives.