



# MARY'S MEMOIRS

THE BIRTH OF MARY'S HELM



Marylee Smith

## COLORS AND SYMBOLS

**Blue:** Represents wisdom, truth, and eternity

---

**Gold:** Represents spiritual wealth, refinement, and enhancement of your surroundings

---

**The Helm:** Represents protection of the mind and always faces towards the right to represent guiding others in the right direction in life

---

## THE NAME

DID YOU KNOW IT HAS A THREE FOLD ORIGIN?

"Yours, Lord is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor for everything in heaven & earth is yours. Yours Lord is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all." - 1 Chronicles 29:11

This scripture of text was the guiding principle for every decision to begin the organization. If every decision was made in step with what God desired then ultimately it would prosper because his Spirit would guide the whole process. The name had to have something to do with a head to remind everyone who was truly in charge of the organization. Secondly, in the Christian faith the virgin Mary gave birth to a son who would not only be covering, but also the covering of the rest of the world. The word Mary acknowledges a revolutionary birth and the organization would revolutionize the educational realm. Lastly, the founder's grandmother's name was Marylee Smith and her sister, who stood in as a motherly figure after her untimely death was Wilma Helm. Mary's Helm is also the founder's tribute to her maternal heritage.



Wilma Helm

## THE FOUNDER & ORIGINAL ADVISORY BOARD



NiKayo D. Coble  
Founder



Glenn B. Allen, Sr.  
Board Member



Jalal "J.D." Dayani  
Board Member



Dr. Mark Dunaway  
Board Member



Dr. Camille Feanny  
Board Member



Bing Howell  
Board Member



Valencia Koker  
Board Member



Muriel Samuels  
Board Member



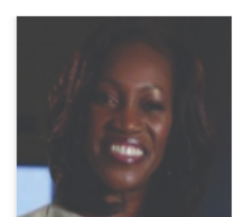
Stacy-Leigh Sellers  
Board Member



James R. Simmons  
Board Member



Dr. Marilyn S. Taylor  
Board Member



Sandy Washington  
Board Member

## HOW IT ALL STARTED

NiKayo Denise Coble is a self-proclaimed lifelong love of learning. She loves it so much that in 2010, after studying computer science for 4 years and spending another 6 years being professionally groomed for leadership in the banking industry, she took leap of faith and shifted her career. The decision did not come easy as she had grown comfortable with the lifestyle her profession afforded her.

No matter how many volunteer hours NiKayo committed to faith-based organizations, schools, and non-profit entities that aligned with her passions she could not shake the unsettling feeling that there was more to life than financial security and she was not doing enough to pursue her calling. She was living the "American Dream" in the eyes of some, but I was not living out her heart's desire.

With nothing more than an inner calling to do something more with her life that benefitted people other than herself NiKayo made the life altering decision to leave corporate America behind and joined the education realm.

She joined the Teach For America program in 2010 and served economically and socially disadvantaged populations. Ms. Coble extended her teaching commitment well beyond the program's requirements, earned a Masters in education, and several other advanced teaching endorsements. Her experiences in Title 1 schools combined with her corporate knowledge, advanced leadership training, and IT skills left her aspiring to one day use her skillset to blend the best of both worlds into a practical school that would make a positive difference in the lives of children who needed it most.

However, in 2014 she woke up from a dream and knew that her mission and vision had suddenly grown much larger. It had expanded beyond owning a single school that supported children, to transforming educational spaces for all ages around the globe. It made complete sense to her because after all, she was a self-proclaimed lifelong learner. Although the dream made sense, it also felt like extremely large undertaking and unattainable. Her faith however told her that all things are possible with God. So she prayed and did what research proves to be a valuable and quick way to learn:



## HOW IT ALL STARTED

Tapped and relied on subject matter experts who had more experiences and wisdom than herself. She asked them to coach and guide her on how to make her dream a reality. She shared my dream and fleshed out the details with her inner network. Then on July 18, 2015 she officially brought together those she had been talking to and asked them to serve in an official capacity as advisors.

From there an 11 person original advisory board was created. With the support of her advisors (and other advocates who believed in the vision) a synergic vision was created that would positively help people move seamlessly from one stage of life into the next using a holistic approach to learning. And thus, the framework for Mary's Helm was born.

Two of her original advisory board members had been living and working in the United Arab Emirates in varied education and professional capacities for several years. They recommended that she consider relocating to the region as it would be a prime and receptive spot to pilot some of her ideas and curriculum since the country was undergoing a major education reform .

Professionals from all around the globe were gathering and working there to support the country's vision for a new education and it would be a great opportunity for her expand her network globally. And with that trusted advice, she left the United States of America and moved to the United Arab Emirates.

NiKayo was on a mission not only to experience education outside of the US, but also to build a network with talented professionals from around the world all while continuing to develop her learner centered curriculum from a global perspective. She travelled to various countries and gained international perspectives about the needs of educators, families, and communities from various cultures and background. She worked as a teacher, assessment coordinator, and oversaw K-12 curriculum efforts. In addition to her work experiences she often volunteered her skills and services as pilot projects for the Mary's Helm S.H.A.P.E. model.

During the 2020 Global Covid-19 pandemic NiKayo noticed families, individuals, and organizations struggle and scramble to get the appropriate education support, coaching, and services that could help them adjust with a rapidly changing global economy. It was during that moment she knew it was time for the dream she had back in 2014 to manifest itself. Being armed with her global knowledge, experiences, and a solid professional network it was time for her to make my second professional leap from employee to entrepreneur. NiKayo resigned from a senior leadership position, at a stable job, in the middle of an instable economy, in order to focus all her efforts on bringing Mary's Helm to life. Mary's Helm, LLC was formally registered and established on September 23, 2020 in the United States of America in the state of Georgia.



NiKayo Coble, Founding Board Members + Vision Advocates  
1 Year Update & Celebration Meeting  
Georgia, United States of America



NiKayo Coble, Staff, & Students  
Site Learning Visit: Punchi Muthu Preschool  
Tangelle, Sri Lanka