

Influential Women: Felicia Boone as a Job Developer and Transition Team Leader with the NYC Department of Education

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-- More Than 25 Years of Service Focused on Special Education, Workforce Readiness, Community Partnerships, and Helping Young People Build Independent Futures

Brooklyn, New York — Felicia Boone is a longtime educator and transition services specialist with the NYC Department of Education who has dedicated more than 25 years to supporting students with special needs and helping young people prepare for meaningful lives beyond high school. Through her work in special education, transition planning, workforce development, and community engagement, she has built a career centered on advocacy, compassion, and creating opportunities for students and families who often face significant barriers.

Felicia began her career in 2001 following a major career change, entering special education without a formal background in teaching. Although the transition presented a steep learning curve, she was encouraged by a principal who recognized her potential and gave her an opportunity to step into the classroom. Felicia embraced the challenge, learning to work with students whose needs and circumstances were initially unfamiliar to her.

Through persistence, mentorship, and a genuine commitment to student growth, she developed a strong foundation in special education. Her early classroom experience taught her the importance of patience, adaptability, organization, and understanding each student as an individual. After eight years in the classroom, Felicia transitioned in 2009 into a newly created role as a Job Developer and Transition Team Leader, allowing her to focus more directly on helping students prepare for life after graduation.

Today, Felicia works with students with disabilities between the ages of 14 and 22, supporting



their transition from school into adulthood. Her responsibilities extend across transition planning, workplace readiness, post-secondary exploration, job placement, and work-based learning. She coordinates employment opportunities, develops partnerships with community agencies and businesses, and helps students gain the skills and confidence necessary to navigate life after high school.

Her work also includes programs centered on pre-employment transition services, summer youth employment, and internships. Rather than simply preparing students academically, Felicia focuses on the broader skills needed for independence, including communication, self-advocacy, professionalism, confidence, and other essential soft skills.

A defining characteristic of Felicia's approach is her willingness to work alongside her students. She does not believe in simply watching young people complete tasks from the sidelines. Whether students are participating at worksites or preparing care packages, she is actively present and involved. Her hands-on approach reinforces her belief that students learn not only through instruction but also through real-world experiences and supportive relationships.

Felicia attributes her success first and foremost to a genuine passion for helping others. She describes herself as a natural nurturer, particularly when working with students and families. That passion has been complemented by strong organizational and detail-oriented skills, which are essential in a position involving extensive paperwork, coordination, scheduling, communication, and partnership development.

Networking has also become an important part of her professional success. Felicia understands that meaningful opportunities for students often require collaboration beyond the school building. By building relationships with business partners, community organizations, agencies, and other stakeholders, she helps create pathways through which students can gain real-world experience and explore potential careers.

Her work requires considerable stamina as well. Felicia is actively involved in the environments where students are learning and working, standing alongside them and participating in the process. She believes that professionals in her field must bring drive and ambition to their work while remaining committed to the young people they serve.

Just as important, Felicia recognizes that students' experiences do not end when they leave school each afternoon. Many of the young people she works with face difficult circumstances at home, and school may sometimes represent a safe and supportive environment for them. Understanding those family dynamics has strengthened her ability to approach students with empathy and patience.

Felicia acknowledges that working with students facing difficult circumstances can be emotionally challenging. Their experiences can pull at the heartstrings, making resilience and a strong emotional foundation essential. Yet rather than allowing those challenges to discourage

her, she uses them as motivation to continue advocating for students and helping them build better futures.

Her career has also been shaped by the support of people who encouraged her along the way. Felicia credits the great people in her life with helping her stay focused and continue pursuing her purpose. After 25 years in education, her passion for children and service remains one of the strongest forces behind her professional journey.

One of the most important lessons Felicia has learned is that success in education and transition services is not achieved in isolation. The best career advice she has received centers on building strong community relationships, working collaboratively, and remaining open to learning from others who share a commitment to supporting students and families.

For Felicia, collaboration creates opportunities that no individual or organization could develop alone. Schools, families, employers, community organizations, and agencies each bring different resources and perspectives to the table. When those groups work together, students are more likely to receive the comprehensive support they need to succeed.

Felicia encourages young women entering the field to begin with a genuine passion for helping others. She believes that service is at the heart of the profession. Working with children and young adults requires a willingness to nurture, encourage, advocate, and remain present even when circumstances become difficult.

She also emphasizes the importance of organization, attention to detail, networking, stamina, drive, and ambition. Professionals must be willing to learn how to develop partnerships and create opportunities while also being prepared to work directly alongside the students they serve.

Another important lesson she shares is not to allow anyone to dim their light. Felicia recognizes that professional environments can sometimes involve competition, obstacles, or individuals who may not immediately support someone's ambitions. Her message is to remain focused on purpose, continue developing professionally, and refuse to allow external circumstances to undermine confidence.

At the same time, she encourages professionals to understand the families and circumstances behind the students they serve. Compassion, she believes, must be paired with resilience. Professionals need to care deeply while also developing the emotional strength required to continue showing up consistently.

Felicia sees some of the greatest challenges in her field in helping students and families navigate complex life circumstances while preparing young people for adulthood, employment, and independent living. Students may face academic, social, economic, or personal barriers that make the transition process more complicated. Addressing those barriers requires patience,

advocacy, structured support, and consistent encouragement.

Yet within those challenges, Felicia sees significant opportunities. Expanding community partnerships, strengthening advocacy, and developing more accessible employment and transition programs can help young people discover possibilities they may not otherwise encounter. She believes collaboration among schools, families, agencies, and employers can create meaningful pathways toward confidence, employment, and independence.

Her commitment to service extends beyond her professional responsibilities. Felicia volunteers in her community by preparing hygiene care packages for people in need approximately three times a year and has worked at soup kitchens since 2009. Community service reflects her broader belief that helping others should extend beyond one's job title.

Faith is also an important part of Felicia's life. She values reading the Bible, meditating on its teachings, and worshiping at church. Journaling provides another avenue for reflection and personal growth, and she has published her journal called "Gifts of Hope: Healing Journal". The focus of the journal is to empower individuals while searching for purpose for those who have lost loved ones.

At the heart of Felicia's work are compassion, perseverance, advocacy, and service. She is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for young people, especially those facing disabilities or challenging home circumstances. Through her dedication, she empowers them to build essential skills, strengthen their confidence, overcome challenges, and move forward toward a brighter future.

After more than two decades in education, Felicia continues to demonstrate the transformative impact of consistent advocacy and genuine care. Her work is not limited to preparing students for their next step; it is about helping them recognize their potential, discover opportunities, and understand that their circumstances do not have to define their futures.

Through her hands-on leadership, community partnerships, and unwavering passion for helping others, Felicia Boone remains committed to empowering young people to move beyond the classroom with greater confidence, independence, and purpose.

Learn More about Felicia Boone:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/Felicia-Boone>

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