



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF PEACE



Rose Martin

Peace Neighborhood Executive Director, 1976-2006

Rose Martin, Peace Neighborhood Center's longest serving Executive Director, left a lasting impression in our community and helped save hundreds of people's lives. Her life's work and philosophy continues to inspire us at Peace, and is central to our approach to helping people living in poverty who work to overcome extraordinary obstacles in their lives.

A tireless and fearless advocate for people in need, Rose Martin lived in over 38 different foster homes before she turned nineteen. That experience didn't define or break her. She learned and grew from it instead.

Rose first moved to Ann Arbor in 1971 in search of a new beginning for herself and her two children. Upon arrival, she talked the City of Ann Arbor into hiring her as a Tenant Aide at the Ann Arbor Housing Commission. While there, she created an innovative program that took low-income children on educational enrichment trips to places of interest around the country, including: Mammoth Caves in Kentucky, New York City, the Grand Canyon, Chicago, and Washington DC. She often credited these road trips as "transformational" and "life-changing".

While at the Housing Commission, Rose also got involved with the effort to establish Peace Neighborhood Center. She joined Peace as its second Executive Director in 1976, and served in that role for 30 years before retiring in 2006, when Bonnie Billups, Jr. succeeded her. **As Executive Director, Rose launched a number of innovative programs to respond to emerging community needs.** And under her direction, Peace experienced tremendous growth and became a respected and valued community resource.

Rose was always fond of sharing:

“ Somewhere along the way, it occurred to me that the only way to live was to treat people like I wish people had treated me . . . And when you've been abused, kicked around and under-valued as much as I have been, you sure have plenty of time to think about how people should treat each other.”

This became Rose's life philosophy and a guiding tenet that she brought to Peace Neighborhood Center. Though she passed away unexpectedly in 2013, Rose's legacy of helping those in our community most in need continues here at Peace—where her life's philosophy and commitment to treating people with kindness, compassion, and respect continues to guide us.



Peace
Neighborhood
Center 1971 - 2021