



Wesley Gene Robinson-McNeese, M.D., son of Reverend Dr. Timmie and Reverend Priscilla McNeese, is a native of East St. Louis, IL where he graduated from Lincoln Senior High School as Class president/speechmaker. McNeese attended Southern Illinois University Edwardsville following high school but left for the United States Air Force after one semester. He trained as a Morse intercept operator at Keesler AFB, MS, before being stationed at Hakata AFB, Japan. His final duty station was Da Nang AFB, the Republic of Vietnam, where he was discharged as a Technical Sergeant, receiving the Air Commendation Medal for his service.

On returning home, Sgt. McNeese continued as an Air National Guardsman and Air Force reservist, first as a radio operator, then a medical technician, and finally an aero-medical technician flying out of Scott AFB, IL. During this same period McNeese worked for the Metro-East Journal newspaper and the American Optometric Association. He became an odd jobs man for East St. Louis' Crusader weekly newspaper, leaving his hometown as Editor of that paper, and writer of a weekly column, *Beneath The Surface*, to start his undergraduate education at Anderson College, IN. Following Anderson, he attended Illinois State University, Normal, IL and then Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, pursuing his newfound goal of becoming a physician. McNeese completed the school's MEDPREP program in Carbondale and then entered Southern Illinois University School of Medicine (SIUSOM), earning his medical degree in 1986, again being class president/speechmaker. A residency in Emergency Medicine followed at McGaw Medical Center, Northwestern University, Chicago, IL, completed in 1990.

Dr. McNeese worked fulltime as an emergency physician primarily at Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee, IL, and in 2001 accepted the position of Executive Assistant to the Dean for Diversity, Multicultural and Minority Affairs, heading up the first ever office of Diversity for SIUSOM. At the SOM he was an Associate Professor in the Departments of Internal Medicine and Humanities and co-founded the Physician Pipeline Preparatory Program (P⁴). McNeese left his diversity leadership role at the SOM, having attained the title of Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion, and continues to work part

time for the SIU System as Executive Director of Diversity Initiatives. Dr. McNeese's many honors include Board certification in Emergency Medicine, as well as membership in Alpha Omega Alpha Honorary Medical Society.

In addition to his career in medicine, McNeese was one-time pastor of the Capital City Church of God, Springfield, IL and then became founding pastor of the New Mission Church of God, Springfield. Reverend McNeese also established True Love Ministries in Springfield. He is a past president of the Ministerial Alliance of Springfield and Vicinity and has served his adopted community as a member of the Race Relations Task Force, Chamber of Commerce, the Sangamon County Health Department Board, the Greater Springfield Interfaith Association, and the Springfield Coalition on Dismantling Racism. An NAACP Webster Service Award winner, two of McNeese's favorite jobs were as a stadium physician, Wrigley Field, Chicago Cubs Baseball, and ship's physician, Holland America Cruise Lines.

Dr. McNeese is a frequently published essayist and poet. His first book, *Can We Do That?* is a primer on Christian sexual thought and behavior. His second book, *A South End Sunday Dawning*, is a redemption story set in 1959 East St. Louis. McNeese is married to LaVern Ollie of Pine Bluff, AR, his wife of 42 years, and is the father of eight children: Miguel, Timothy, Deanna, Maya, Safiya, Omega, Libra and Aziza.