



Dr. Melanie Wilson-Lawson, affectionately known as “Doc Mel,” began her professional journey as a public-school teacher in the Houston Independent School District in the early 1990s. She later shifted to research & managing social and behavioral medicine projects at the University of Houston, before transitioning to university-level teaching at Texas Southern University in 1998. Over the years, Doc Mel has contributed to numerous special projects, including serving as a public health advisor for the City of Houston under Mayor Lee P. Brown, who also served on her doctoral dissertation committee. Her research endeavors extended to the Greater Houston Women’s Foundation, and she held academic appointments such as HIV/AIDS Orientation & Professional Education Program Faculty Liaison at TSU and Campus Project Coordinator for the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education’s “Elimination of Health Disparities Project.”

Doc Mel’s work has earned her several accolades, including a Certificate of Congressional Recognition as a Golden Volunteer from Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee and a Certificate of Appreciation from State Senator Rodney Ellis for her contributions to a youth summer camp in Acres Homes. She has been featured in *Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers* (Seventh Edition), the 26th Edition of *Who’s Who of American Women*, and the *Empire Who’s Who of Women in Education* (2006/2007 Honors Edition). A Montgomery, Alabama native, Doc Mel has skillfully balanced her academic career with family life and volunteer commitments. Her involvement in public service includes being elected as a 2008 National Delegate to the Democratic National Convention representing Texas Senate District 11, serving on President Obama’s Public Policy Committee, and participation on the campaign’s Regional Finance Committee. She is an active member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., The Links, Inc. (Missouri City Chapter) and Jack & Jill of America, Inc. (Houston Chapter), where she chaired the 2008 Debutante Ball. Doc Mel has also been an Ambassador for the American Heart Association’s “Power to End Stroke Campaign,” a board member for the “Recipe for Success” non-profit organization, and a participant in Houston First Lady Andrea White’s “We’re All Neighbors” outreach program.

In academia, she has held significant leadership roles, including Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs & Student Services and Executive Director for the Office of Continuing Education at TSU. She has contributed to scholarly works, authoring a chapter titled “Private Prisons & Healthcare: The Social Implications” in *Prison Privatization: The Many Facets of a Controversial Industry* (2012, Volume II). Doc Mel’s media presence has surpassed over 100,000 listeners/viewers hosting the popular podcast *Actuality Talk!* on platforms such as Apple, Pandora, and Spotify, as well as on her talk show, *Doc Mel Talks*, on Roku’s Mystic Circle TV Channel. She’s been featured as a life-coach on *College Hill: Celebrity Edition* & *The Portia Show* in Atlanta. She is also the author of the mini-pocketbook ‘Keep It Simple Sistah.’ Beyond academia and media, she has worked in professional player development for the National Basketball Association (NBA).

Notably, Doc Mel was the first African American to earn a Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work in 2002. She also holds a Master of Public Health from the University of Texas Health Science Center and a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from Texas Southern University, where she was honored with the 2011 Distinguished Alumni Award.