

Ruth Simms Hamilton was born in 1937. She earned her bachelor's degree from Talladega College in Alabama and a Ph.D. in sociology from Northwestern University. She came to MSU in 1968 in the Department of Sociology. Later she was a core faculty member in the African Studies Center, the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, and the Center for Advanced Study of International Development. Hamilton was also the director of the African Diaspora Research project for 17 years, where she was an early pioneer of research concerning the dispersion and settlement of African people after leaving the African continent. She later became a valued member of the TIAA-CREF Board of Trustees from 1989 to 2003, serving on the Board's Corporate Governance and Social Responsibility Committees from 1990 to 2003, as well as the Board's Executive Committee. Hamilton died on November 10, 2003.