



AFRICAN AMERICAN ADVISORY BOARD

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Pastor V. Jesse Smith

Board Member

Vergion Jesse Smith has been a resident of the city of Palmdale for more than 21 years. He has been married for 29 years to Joann N. Smith from which emerged two beautiful daughters named Jasmine Q. Smith (Officer in the United States Air Force), and Jaliah C. Smith (Student at Cornell University).

He holds a Juris Doctorate degree in law, and serves as a Mediator, receiving his training from the University of West Los Angeles School of Law and Loyola Law School Dispute Resolution Program. He currently serves as a Hearing Officer for the city of Palmdale presiding over parking citations, and served four years as a Planning Commissioner on the Palmdale Planning Commission. As a Planning Commissioner, Mr. Smith decided on businesses receiving Conditional Use Permits (CUP), housing coming into the community and updating Land Use, Laws and Regulations in the city of Palmdale.

Mr. Smith serves as Pastor of The Way Center of Truth—a non-denomination church that seeks and fights for social justice in the name of Jesus the Christ—and was recently elevated to the position of a Bishop in his Ministry. Passionate about leadership, Mr. Smith founded Heights of Greatness Leadership Institute where he provides leadership and public speaking training for individuals wishing to take their life to the next level of greatness.

A community activist to heart, Mr. Smith currently serves as chair of The Antelope Valley African-American Leadership Council (AV-AALC)) which seeks to raise awareness about issues impacting the Black community. He also co-founded *The Community Action League (TCAL)*, an organization which advocates for the civil rights of all Americans, and has served as president of the *Antelope Valley Branch of the NAACP*. His activism in the city of Palmdale and the Antelope Valley, has led to many housing and law enforcement reforms.

Mr. Smith played a major role in bringing the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in the Antelope Valley which resulted in a \$2 million dollar settlement being awarded to victims of law enforcement for misconduct. Mr. Smith conducted “Know Your Rights Workshops,” in the community where he helped to educate citizens about their rights when interacting with the L.A. County Sheriff’s Department.

He worked with the District Attorney’s Office and the Public Defender’s Office at the Antelope Valley Courthouse to create programs to help people of color be treated fairly in the criminal justice system. Mr. Smith advocated, participated and joined in rallies and demonstrations fighting for healthcare workers to receive a fair contract and to be treated with respect and dignity by management.

Imbued with passion, commitment, dedication and love for justice, Mr. Smith has made it his purpose to seek justice for the voiceless, the disinherited, the outcast and the unwelcomed of our society. He continually reminds himself when he takes on a cause “for this purpose was I born.”