



Crime Victims Advisory Board

Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Rev. Dr. Damali Najuma Smith Board Member

As Assistant Director of Community and Public Engagement with the USC Center for Religion and Civic Culture, the Rev. Dr. Najuma Smith combines her experience as a pastor and expertise as a community leader to help faith leaders become full partners in the work of social change. She leads programming for the Cecil Murray Center for Community Engagement, which is housed at CRCC.

Smith also is a pastor, motivational speaker, author, life coach, radio personality and community activist.

She accepted her call to ministry in 1996, while serving under the phenomenal tutelage of the Rev. Dr. Cecil L. "Chip" Murray, her father in ministry. Smith was ordained as a Deacon in 1996 and as an Itinerant Elder in 2000. Since that time, she has served as Assistant Pastor and Pastor of Family Ministries at Christ Our Redeemer AME Church in Irvine, California; Pastor of A.K. Quinn AME Church in Moreno Valley, California; and Pastor of St. James AME Church in Los Angeles, California. In 2014, Smith launched Word of Encouragement Community Church in Los Angeles. She is a frequent speaker at churches and church conferences.

Pursuing her passion to serve others beyond the walls of the church, Smith founded the company Living on Assignment, LLC, a personal development coaching and consulting firm that helps people live rich and meaningful lives. She is also the executive director for the Southern California School of Ministry. She founded a sexual violence awareness and training campaign called "It's Not Okay." Combining her passion for social justice and entrepreneurship, Smith established Chocolate Tee's, an urban apparel company that uses a portion of its profits to support selected non-profit efforts and the "It's Not Okay" campaign. She also leads the "...And She Can Preach!" mastermind group, committed to supporting emerging women preachers.

Smith holds a B.S. in management from Pepperdine University, a Bachelor of Theology degree from the Southern California School of Ministry, an M.B.A. from Woodbury University and a Doctorate in Ministry from United Theological Seminary. She is an alumna of the "Passing The Mantle" Civic Engagement and Community Development Institute at USC, the precursor to the USC Cecil Murray Center's Faith Leaders Institute.

