

# **Marlon A. Smith, Ph.D.**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Operations and Administration**

- Over twenty years of experience enhancing organizational success through leadership, program development, research, training, community outreach, capacity building, advocacy, and strategic planning.
- Managed the development of policies and initiatives in response to changing organizational needs and community assessments.
- Advised organizations, public agencies and community boards on organizational development, program planning, best practices, event management and policy interpretation and collateral consequences.
- Directed project assessment, long-term planning, and fiscal management to organization and outreach programs.
- Developed and coordinated fund raising programs and initiatives.
- Established comprehensive public relations and marketing strategy for volunteer recruitment and retention.
- Developed and designed publications, organizational events, and marketing and publicity items.

### **Community Development**

- Developed community coalitions and corporate/government partnerships to address issues of prisoner recidivism, poverty, education, fair housing, career placement and job training.
- Counseled clients about personal, academic, and career goals, plus facilitated community referrals for additional client services.
- Supervised statewide ex-offender reentry program that maintained a 12 percent recidivism rate among program graduates.
- Increased college acceptance and enrollment of program members by over 75 percent in 4 years.
- Developed client, community volunteer and mentor program
- Coordinated career training and employment certification programs.
- Served on local, state, and national committees to address social and restorative justice issues.
- Managed a statewide reentry budget to include reentry administration center, events, community programs, training initiatives and staff development.

### **Curriculum, Instruction and Program Design**

- Assessed new and current curricula and research on criminal justice and prisoner reentry initiatives.
- Developed and implemented curricular and programs integrating audio/visual, critical thinking, and teacher assessment tools for non-traditional students and adult learners.
- Developed curriculum for both undergraduate and graduate student in the area of Black intellectual tradition including its philosophies, histories, and theological perspectives
- Constructed organization wide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion curricula for staff and key stakeholders.

## EDUCATION

**April 2016    Doctor of Philosophy in Interdisciplinary Studies**

Humanities and Culture Concentration  
Specialization in Martin Luther King Studies  
Union Institute & University, Cincinnati, Ohio

**Dec. 1999    Master of Theological Studies**

Brite School of Divinity, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas

**Dec. 1994    Bachelor of Arts in Journalism**

Concentration in Public Relations, Minor in African American Studies  
School of Communications, University of Houston, Houston, Texas

## UNIVERSITY SERVICE

2023- Present Coordinator, Black Studies Distinction Program, Birmingham Southern College

2023-Present, Member, Quality Improvement Plan Committee, Birmingham Southern College

2023-Present, Member, Diversity Equity & Inclusion Task Force, Birmingham Southern College

## PUBLICATIONS:

### Books:

*Reshaping Beloved Community: The Experiences of Black Male Felons and Their Impact on Black Radical Traditions.* (Lanham: Lexington Books, December 2018).

*Black Lives Houston: Voices of our Generations* (2018, BakerRipley Publication)

### Blogs:

“My Hope for Black History Month,” BakerRipley, 9 February 2017,

<https://blog.bakerripley.org/my-hope-for-black-history-month/> . Blog.

“Why Black Panther and Representation Matters,” BakerRipley, 19 February 2018,

<https://blog.bakerripley.org/why-black-panther-and-representation-matters/> . Blog.

“The Truth about JUNETEENTH,” BakerRipley, 15 June 2018, <https://blog.bakerripley.org/the-truth-about-juneteenth/> . Blog.

### Articles:

“It’s time for Black women to stop capping a white feminist agenda” *The Grio*, 8 October 2018,

<https://thegrio.com/2018/10/08/time-for-black-women-to-stop-capping-a-white-feminist-agenda/> .

Op-Ed.

“Community and climate go hand-in-hand,” *The Houston Chronicle*, 20 January 2019, Opinion.

## DISSERTATION COMMITTEES AND REVIEWS:

### Dissertations Committees and Reviews:

Young, Ernest *The Struggle Toward Martin Luther King, Jr’s Beloved Community in Toni Morrison’s Beloved, Paradise, and Love*, 2023 Union Institute & University, 2023, Dissertation Committee Member

Bradbury, Douglas *Quantum Reconciliation: Consideration of Martin Luther King Jr. ’s Notion of Mutuality*, Union Institute & University, 2017, Dean’s Review

Williams, Alfred *Dimensions of Divine Presence in Ancient Egypt as Viewed Through African Thought*, Union Institute & University, 2018, Dean's Review

## **WORK HISTORY**

### **June 2024-Present Director Center for African American Studies/Assistant Professor**

University of South Carolina Upstate

- Develop the mission, vision, annual project goals for the Center of African American Studies.
- Oversee the coordination, implementation and evaluation of the African American Studies.
- Direct the day-to-day administrative and operations of the Center for African American Studies.
- Oversee and approve all program, operations and administrative cost for the Center.
- Design and Teach courses that are within the discipline of African American Studies.
- Manage the Center's curricular and extra-curricular programming focused on the African American experience.
- Represent USC Upstate in the community, conferences, and special programs.
- Build and develop relationships with key stakeholders that contribute to the intellectual examination of the African American experience in the region, state, and southeastern United States.

### **August 2023-August 2024 Visiting Assist. Professor/ Coordinator, Black Studies Program**

Birmingham Southern College, Political Science Department, Birmingham, Alabama

- Teach both Introduction to Black Studies Course and Black studies courses within the Black Studies Distinction Course catalog as well as Introduction to Poverty Studies.
- Structure and oversee the Black Studies Distinction Program to include its community development and engagement work across the region.
- Direct the Black Studies Capstone experience for students earning a distinction in Black Studies.
- Review and approve all courses for approval in the Black Studies Distinction Program.
- Develop and teach specialized courses in the field of Black Studies and contribute to the teaching needs of their disciplinary departments.
- Develop Black Studies Distinction programming and services, including exploration term courses, community engagement events, panels, forums, and internship opportunities.

### **January 2018-Present Lecturer**

University of Houston, African American Studies Department, Houston, Texas

- Teach online course in the introduction of African American Studies for diverse population of students.
- Develop and present material for research and theory in the area of African American Studies
- Research and teach factors that inform African American Studies, particularly as it relates to incarceration and education studies.
- Develop theoretical models for conferences.

- Provide assessment instruments (e.g., learning inventories) to help students identify their own strengths and weaknesses as strategic learners.
- Create education tools that will allow students to integrate and apply the learning skills discussed across their own academic programs and become effective and efficient learners.
- Develop and design new courses that will expand African American Studies Department course offerings.

### **July 2018-Present Founder and Principal**

Marlon A Smith Enterprise, LLC

Provide subject matter expertise and contract services to nonprofit, philanthropic, and intermediary organizations in need of strategy design expertise, community outreach and engagement services, and program planning and evaluation leadership. Sample clients include:

Houston Endowment, Houston, Texas *July 2020- December 2020, Independent Consultant*

- Support the design and execution of HEI's \$25MM community grantmaking process.
- Support vice-president of programs (VPP) and program team to develop criteria for identifying and assessing racial equity grantees included in HEI's \$25MM commitment to racial equity grantmaking.
- Advise on the process of engaging partners that are new to the Foundation.
- Support the team to co-create learning goals for the grant dollars.
- Provide general thought-partnership.
- Support the development of communication about the grants.
- Develop community engagement plan for grant recipients.
- Develop plan to engage broader community beyond early action grants, including process mapping, logic model, communications strategies, accountability metrics.
- Finalize detailed implementation plan for the effort.

American Leadership Forum—Gulf Coast Chapter, Houston, Texas *March 2020-July 2021 DEI facilitator and Independent Contractor*

- Guide ALF racial justice steering committee's strategic plan and special projects on racial equity and justice.
- Develop and lead racial justice dialogue series and workshops for ALF Senior Fellows responses.
- Assist in drafting policy proposals on racial equity and justice practices and procedures.
- Research and analyze current ALF programs and initiatives.

Justice Center at The Council for State Governments, New York City, New York *October 2019-January 2020 Independent Contractor*

- Restructured, facilitated, and advised CSG's staff in the transition of Department of Justice Grantees for its Community Reentry Division and the National Reentry Resource Center website.
- Developed state responses and communication strategies for national and state reentry programs.

- Drafted policy analysis briefings on issues impacting reentry at local and state level.
- Researched and analyzed data and trends on issues that influence incarceration, reentry, and recidivism.

Working Partners, Houston, Texas *November 2018-January 2021 Chief Consultant*

- Serve as the Chief Consultant on projects related to racial equity and inclusion for a Houston-based strategy and evaluation consulting firm created to address a critical need in the non-profit community in the region. Most recently I oversaw the research and evaluation of health disparities in HIV and AIDS awareness in boys and young men of color.

### **June 2022-June 2023 Chief Community Builder**

The Women's Home, Houston, Texas

As a member of the executive leadership team, I oversee the organization's community development and service programs for the Spring Branch Division, including our two low-income family residential apartments, our Whole Life community service center, our workforce development initiatives, along with our internal and external diversity, equity, and inclusion programming, trainings, and projects.

- Apply the social determinants of health and appreciative inquiry methodology to shape organizational program design in order to help identify strengths and assets within communities and measure impact of services.
- Help organization sustain its commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in order to build wholistic approaches across the organization and within the communities we serve.
- Nurture networks of service providers, partners, and potential partners while at the same time fostering connections to those who have benefitted from the organization's services.

### **December 2020-July 2022 Director, Programs Department**

Harris County Precinct One Commissioner Rodney Ellis, Houston, Texas

Oversee the development of a national program department model that measures responsive public service to over one million Harris County residents and employs inclusive and collaborative initiatives, community engagement activities, and public services to address the economic, educational, social wellbeing for program participants ranging from children to senior adults.

- Create programmatic goals based on quantitative and qualitative community assessments and best practices and track the effectiveness and impact of program outputs in our 13 community centers, 2 training and learning centers, and our various nonprofit partnerships.
- Direct the program departments over 80 member staff and guide the construction of partnerships with key community organizations that align with mission and vision of the department's five programmatic areas, in addition to our aquatics, biking, and juvenile justice programs.
- Create and supervise the management of the program department's \$12 million budget, oversee the operations of facilities and assets, and serve as a member of the precinct's

executive leadership team, including working in close collaboration with the Precinct's policy department and communications department.

### **April 2016-October 2019 Senior Manager, Policy and Engagement**

Baker Ripley (formerly Neighborhood Centers, Inc.), Houston, Texas

- Develop and manage intellectual exchanges with partners and stakeholders that allows for investment in community development and growth in communities across Houston and surrounding counties.
- Develop and monitor strategic plan that extends institutional investment and community programming across all divisions of agency to include agency Charter Schools and early education, community-based initiatives, public service solutions and workforce solutions, and seniors.
- Oversee program design and evaluation for department programs and initiatives.
- Write and edit agency publications to include books, blogs, articles, and reports that inform stakeholders on agency priorities, initiatives, and projects
- Research, prepare and distribute summaries of policy and engagement project milestones and deliverables.
- Identify and implement communication strategies for relevant projects and initiatives for community constituents.
- Partner with organizational teams to establish and report on strategic metrics and executive projects.
- Represent the office of the CEO in meetings, workshops, and conferences.

### **June 2014-January 2017 Adjunct Professor**

Lone Star College, Houston, Texas

- Teach learning framework for diverse population of first year learning experience students.
- Develop and present material for research and theory in the psychology of learning, cognition, motivation, and leadership development.
- Research and teach factors that impact learning and application of learning strategies.
- Develop theoretical models of strategic learning, cognition, and motivation which will serve as the conceptual basis for the introduction of college-level student academic strategies.
- Provide assessment instruments (e.g., learning inventories) to help students identify their own strengths and weaknesses as strategic learners.
- Create education tools that will allow students to integrate and apply the learning skills discussed across their own academic programs and become effective and efficient learners.
- Assists students in developing skills that will enable them to draw from the theoretical models they have learned in class.

### **June 2007 – June 2014 Texas Re-entry Manager**

Prison Fellowship Ministries, The InnerChange Freedom Initiative, Houston, Texas

- Developed and managed a donor-funded, 365-bed pre-release prisoner re-entry program.
- Managed the day-to-day operations of the Houston Reentry Center

- Supervised 5 paid staff, 10 office volunteers, and 40 reentry volunteers and 60 client mentors.
- Served as subject matter expert for Prison Fellowship Ministry on criminal justice and prisoner reentry.
- Liaised with leadership in higher education; local, state, and national public sector agencies; private sector partners; and funding organizations.
- Developed 5 state and 2 national initiatives on felon disenfranchisement, particularly around issues of education, race, housing, employment and public policies.
- Develop local, state, and national training projects to include, volunteer development, critical thinking, conflict management, and GED prep courses.

**January 2006 – May 2007 Associate Pastor of Missions and Evangelism**

New Faith Church, Houston, Texas

- Researched and developed grassroots, outreach and network programs to meet the needs of diverse community population.
- Created 5 coalitions and strategic outreach plans that united church leaders, city and government officials, and school administrators for the purpose of assessing and addressing future community needs.
- Developed and coordinated 2 neighborhood outreach events for the purpose of providing economic, social, and community resources.
- Developed, planned and trained over 50 members for foreign outreach mission projects that included India, Peru, Jamaica, and Africa.

**June 2002 – Dec 2005 Minister of Outreach/Director of CIC Institute of Biblical Studies**

New Bethel Church, Fort Worth, Texas

- Directed the Certificate of Theology Program in conjunction with the Interdenominational Theological Center of Atlanta, Georgia.
- Maintained and reviewed accreditation status for certificate program.
- Solicited and reviewed certification instructors and classes.
- Created all training and organizational material for ministry leaders and staff. Developed and coordinated Camp Joshua before and after school care program for children's grades K-5.
- Managed and reconciled all revenue and expenditures for workshops, seminars, school programs and special events activities.
- Recruited, trained and evaluated all faculty, staff, and volunteers for outreach and education programs.

**June 2002 – Dec 2005 Long-term Bilingual Substitute Teacher,**

Fort Worth Independent School District, Fort Worth, Texas

- Ensured success of district testing and assessment exams for students.
- Developed bilingual lesson plans for students.
- Coordinated student learning activities and evaluation metrics.

**Sept 2001 – May 2002 Program Director for United Nations Advocacy,**

General Board of Church and Society, New York City, New York

- Directed and coordinated GBCS UN efforts in relationship with United Nations offices, United Nations Non-government Organizations, and Permanent Missions of United Nations Member States for the communication of and advocacy for the General Boards positions on international issues and concerns.

**June 1999 – Aug 2001 Coordinator of Continuing Education**

Southern Methodist University, Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas

- Supervised all ten program design teams, volunteers and staff workers, and sub-committee groups for special events planning and implementation.
- Lead continuing education curriculum team and oversee education certification courses and curriculum.
- Oversee and coordinate multiple annual conferences.
- Coordinated course registration for over 300 certification students.
- Maintained student database with an annual attendance roster of 300 people.
- Developed communication between university and community organizations to ensure success of university programming.

**May 1998 – June 1999 Government and Public Relations Assistant**

Cash America International, Fort Worth, Texas

- Developed database to include community leaders and government officials.
- Created press packets, publication materials, and special events to meet organizational goals and objectives.
- Coordinate organizations three annual community outreach and sponsorship initiatives.

**August 1996 – January 1998 Community Relations Coordinator**

Barnes and Noble Bookstores, Arlington, Texas

- Developed stores monthly events calendar to include book signings, community literacy programs, and special events.
- Develop coalitions and community partnerships with local businesses, schools, city officials, and community leaders.
- Create press releases and address media inquiry for special events and community programs.
- Maintain 60k community relations budget.

**June 1995 – August 1996 Account Executive,**

XDS-Xerox Corporate Agency, Fort Worth, Texas

- Develop sales and finance proposals for area sales district.
- Maintain product and sales relationship with current Xerox customers.
- Train new and existing customers on current Xerox technology.
- Provide customer service to new and existing customers.
- Coordinate area sales and training meetings for accounts sales teams.

**SERVICE EXPERIENCE**

**2014-Present Founder**

Black Greeks Speak Social Justice and Human Rights Council, Houston, Texas



- Supports operations and administration of Board by advising and informing Board members, interfacing between Board and staff, and supporting Board's evaluation of chief executive.
- Oversees design, marketing, promotion, delivery and quality of programs, products and services.
- Recommends yearly budget for Board approval and prudently manage organization's resources within those budget guidelines according to current laws and regulations.
- Effectively manages the human resources of the organization according to authorized personnel policies and procedures that fully conform to current laws and regulations.
- Assures the organization and its mission, programs, products and services are consistently presented in strong, positive image to relevant stakeholders.
- Oversees fundraising planning and implementation, including identifying resource requirements, researching funding sources, establishing strategies to approach funders, submitting proposals and administrating fundraising records and documentation.
- Oversee the production of web content, blogs, and quarterly magazines.

### **SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

- 20 Mar 2024 Presenter, "From Trayvon Martin to Barak Obama: Reimagining Black Masculinity in the Age of Intersectionality," University of Illinois Springfield, Springfield, Illinois.
- 08 Feb 2024 Moderator, "The Contemporary Relevance of Black Greek Letter Organizations," Birmingham Southern College, Birmingham, Alabama.
- 17 Feb 2024 Moderator, "Black at the Intersection: Black and LatinX," Birmingham Southern College, Birmingham, Alabama.
- 26 Oct 2023 Panelist, "Eradication of Poverty: Dignity for All in Practice," Birmingham Southern College, Birmingham, Alabama.
- 12 Oct 2023 Presenter, "The National Panhellenic Council: The Culture Keepers of Black Life on College and University Campuses," Birmingham Southern College, Office of Student Affairs, Birmingham, Alabama
- 10 Oct 2023 Moderator, "Changing the World for Good One Question at a Time: An Appreciative Approach to a Lifetime of Service," Birmingham Southern College, Black Studies Distinction, Birmingham Alabama
- 03 Oct 2023 Presenter, "Defining, Structuring, and Evaluating Black Studies Education at BSC," Birmingham Southern College, Political Science Division, Birmingham, Alabama
- 12 Sept 2023 Moderator, "Our Struggle and Our Progress: Remembering the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Church Bombing," Birmingham Southern College, Black Studies Distinction, Birmingham Alabama

- 17 Jan 2019 Panelist, "Criminal Justice Reform Symposium," Texas Southern University Urban Research and Resource Center, School of Public Affairs, Houston, Texas
- 16 Sept 2018 Radio Guest, "Botham Jean and the Criminal Justice System," Darryl Dennard, Chicago, Illinois
- 4 Dec 2017 Panelist, "Millennial Dialogue: A Criminal Justice Forum," University of Houston, Science Engineering Building, Houston, Texas
- 27 Oct 2017 Keynote Speaker, "TEDish Talk Student Forum Organizing for Change," University of Houston-Downtown, School of Public Service Auditorium, Houston, Texas
- 30 Oct 2016 Panelist, "Politicking While Black: A Conversation on Race, Accountability, and the Presidential Election," The Shrine of the Black Madonna Cultural Center, Houston, Texas
- 10 Dec 2016 Moderator, "Examining High Performing Schools for African American Youth," Houston Community College, SE Campus, Houston, Texas
- 10 Nov. 2016 Keynote Speaker, "Engaging Police Violence and African American Communities," Texas Southern University, University Student Center, Houston, Texas
- 4 Nov 2016 Presenter, "Insurrectionist Ethics" Philosophy Born of Struggle Conference," Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas
- 25 Oct 2016 Panelist, "Bail, Jail and Injunction Panel Forum," Thurgood Marshall School of Law, Texas Southern University, Houston, Texas
- 28 Sept 2016 Keynote Speaker, "Redefining Scholarship: The Work of the Scholar-Activist in the Era of Mass Incarceration," Brown Bag Lecture Series, Department of the Administration of Justice, Texas Southern University, Houston, Texas
- 27 Sept 2016 Panelist, "Involved Citizens of Houston Community Forum," University of Houston Agnes Arnold Hall, Houston Texas
- 24 Sept 2016 Keynote Speaker, "Midterm Residency Social Justice Speaker, Union Institute & University, Cincinnati, OH.
- 19 July 2016 Panelist, "Avenues to Justice, Reconciliation, Peace and Love Community Town Hall Meeting," Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church, Houston, Texas

18 Feb 2016 Panelist, “From Slavery to Mass Incarceration: Discussing Black Prisoners/Ex-prisoners’ Place in the Black Freedom Narrative,” University of Houston-Downtown, Robertson Auditorium, Houston, Texas

6 Nov 2015 Panelist, “Prison Prophets,” Philosophy Born of Struggle Conference, University of Connecticut, African American Cultural Center, Storrs, Connecticut

### **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND SERVICE**

- Board Member, Urban Ministries Alabama, Birmingham, Alabama (2024-Presentt)
- Committee Member, Houston Mayor Re-entry Summit Planning Committee (2014-2023)
- Executive Committee Member, Houston My Brother’s Keeper Initiative (2016-2023)
- Creator and Host, Black Greeks Speak, MJWJ Global Talk Radio (2013-2016)
- Public Policy and Advocacy Internship, Justice Fellowship, (June 2013-December 2013)
- Founder and Board Member, The Fellowship of the Outer Court (2011-2013)
- Event Coordinator, Houston Reentry Coalition (2008-2014)

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS, AFFILIATIONS, and HONORARIES**

- Fellow, Encore-Oped Public Voices Fellowship (2018-present)
- Senior Fellow, American Leadership Forum Houston/Gulf Coast Chapter (2017-present)
- Member, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. (1991-present)
  - Charter Member, Pearland-Manvel-Fresno (TX) Alumni Chapter
- Member, American Correctional Association (2007-2014)
- Member, National Association of Black Journalists (1994-1998)
- Board Member, Houston Interfaith Workers Justice (2006-2008)
- Board Member, Achievement Through Leadership Foundation (2008-2013)