

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Reverend Dr. Gregory Smith

PERSON

Smith, Gregory Robeson

Alternative Names: Reverend Dr. Gregory Smith;

Life Dates: September 22, 1947-

Place of Birth: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Residence: White Plains, NY

Work: White Plains, NY

Occupations: Foundation Chief Executive

Biographical Note

Reverend Gregory Robeson Smith was born on September 22, 1947 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He is the Senior Pastor of the Mother African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Harlem, New York. His maternal grandfather, Benjamin Congleton Robeson, was very active in the local community activities of Harlem. As a child, Smith's family history was steeped in the history of the church. In 1936, his grandfather became the pastor of Mother African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and his uncle Paul Robeson often attended and spoke out against the discrimination that existed at the time.

In 1954, Smith earned his diploma from Dewitt Clinton High School in Bronx, New York. He received his B.A. degree in history in 1959 from Livingstone College in Salisbury, North Carolina. Continuing his education, he received his M.B.A. degree in marketing and finance and his M.A. degree in divinity from the University of Wisconsin. He completed his education with his Ph.D. in higher education administration and finance and his Ph.D. in ministries. Smith has integrated his careers as a business executive, public activist and religious leader. He has spent over twenty years working in marketing and finance with several Fortune 500 companies.

In 1990, Smith was appointed by President George Bush as President and CEO of the African Development Foundation, an independent federal agency in Washington, D.C., with offices in twenty-five African nations. Smith continued to serve under the Clinton Administration until May 1995 when he became the Senior Pastor of the Mother African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Harlem, New York. The church is known as the "Freedom Church" for the central role it played on the Underground Railroad. It

was attended by Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and Harriet Tubman.

Smith holds positions on several boards. He is Deputy Grand Master of the Prince Hall Masons of the State of New York. Smith is President of the Prince Hall Temple Associates, Inc. and has received the distinction of being one of the Outstanding Men of America.

Smith resides in New York with is wife and family.

Smith was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on January 24, 2007.

Related Entries

DeWitt Clinton High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

The Modern School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Livingstone College [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

University of Wisconsin-Madison [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Union Theological Seminary [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.Div

United Theological Seminary [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

D.Min

Ogilvy & Mather Corporation [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1972 to 1974]

Account Executive General Food Account Group

Lever Brothers Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1975 to 1977]

Product Manager, Aim Toothpaste

Revlon, Inc. [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1977 to 1980]

Marketing Manager

Joseph E. Seagram & Sons [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1980 to 1982]

National Products Manager

Knoxville College Board of Trustees [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board

Kappa Delta Phi National Education Honor Society [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Member

New York Republican State Committee Governor's Club [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Member

African American Men of Westchester, Inc [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Member

Westchester County Board of Legislators Compensation Advisory Board [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board

Westchester County, NY Human Rights Commission [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Charter Member

Prince Hall Masons State of New York [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Deputy Grandmaster

Board of Directors Paul Robeson Foundation [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Vice President

Prince Hall Temple Associates, Inc [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

President

Westchester Food Coalition [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board of Directors