

Dr. Sharma Henderson, Ed.D. - Biography

Dr. Sharma Henderson is a native Californian who was born and raised in the South Central area of Los Angeles. She attended various schools within the Los Angeles Unified School District throughout her elementary and secondary years and is a very proud Los Angeles High School and LAUSD alum. As an undergrad, she attended the University of Southern California (USC) and received both a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts degree in African American Studies. She continued at USC to obtain a Master of Science degree in Education Administration. In December of 2009, Sharma achieved her childhood dream and obtained her Doctor of Education degree with an emphasis in Organizational Leadership from Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education and Psychology.

Sharma credits her academic success, in part, to her participation in the federally-funded Upward Bound Program. Upward Bound provides high needs and at risk youth with intensive college-preparatory services throughout their high school career. As she pursued her academic endeavors, Sharma carefully shaped her career around her passion for educational opportunity and academic achievement programs. She has worked as a Tutor, Advisor, Director, and Program Administrator for multiple outreach programs. College preparation is her "first love" and she has been providing these and related services since 1994. Throughout her career, Sharma has guided thousands of students through the high school completion and the college preparation, application, and completion process. She is also highly trained and skilled in the financial aid and scholarship support area, having assisted her students in funding all phases of their postsecondary education with local, state, federal, international, and private scholarships and grants.

In the Summer of 2001, Sharma co-founded the Community Outreach and Opportunity Programs (CO-OP). CO-OP is a non-profit human and social services organization dedicated to the improvement of lives of people in need in the Southern California area. CO-OP has recently relocated and is proud to now call the City of Carson home. For 15 years, CO-OP operated 2 federally-funded Upward Bound programs in addition to a host of complimentary services and activities. Sharma currently serves as the President and CEO of CO-OP and is the interim Executive Director of the Carson Coordinating Council, a board level volunteer appointment, which has provided basic needs, mental health, and other vital services to the most vulnerable Carson residents for more than 68 years. Sharma is also a federal grant reviewer, program evaluator, grant writer, and trainer.

In addition to her role at CO-OP, Sharma has operated a private Consulting Firm since 1998. Her firm provides local agencies, businesses, and individuals with optimal technical assistance and customized support. Dubbed as "Dr. Sharma," she specializes in connecting people to resources they need to help them "Learn, Work, and Live Better!". Over the course of the past 22 years, she has helped secure over \$40 million in grant funds and other contributions for various nonprofit agencies and programs and has helped hundreds of clients improve their businesses, enhance their lives, and reach their professional goals. Sharma is also a Direct Sales specialist, committed to supporting women in their pursuit of financial independence by successfully operating independent retail businesses.

Sharma serves on several Boards, including the City of Carson's Stroke Center Volunteer Association and Carson Accountability and Transparency, serving both as President, and the Carson Sheriff's Station Support Foundation. She also served as Chair of the City of Carson's Community Civic Engagement Board and is a former Commissioner with the Senior Citizen's Advisory Commission. Sharma is a proud Rotarian and very active with her church of over 20 years. She is an extremely committed volunteer, particularly in areas relating to educational outreach, stroke and endometriosis (prevention, treatment, and awareness), and social stewardship. She is also the founder of various initiatives, including Elevate Carson, the Carson Volunteer Network, Carson Community Civic Action Network, and the Carson College Access Network. In 2018 she was honored as one of the "Leaves of Carson," an award given to a select number of Carson volunteers every 5 years. Sharma is sought after public speaker, an internationally recognized and published scholar, a noted community advocate, and was a loving and dedicated caregiver to an amazing Stroke Survivor for over 10 years.

Sharma currently resides in Carson, California where she is an active member of her local community. Her personal interests include spending time with her nieces and nephews, trying new and diverse foods, writing, and social media.