

MEDIA KIT



RAGS *to*
REAL ESTATE

DENISE E. SMITH

with HARRY LOUIS WILLIAMS, II

ONE WOMAN'S JOURNEY OF EMPOWERMENT

"It's been a long time coming, I'm excited to be able to share my journey. My hope is to inspire, motivate and empower someone to dream big dreams. Build on what you love to do and plan to work at it!"

BOOK AT A GLANCE

TITLE:

Rags to Real Estate

SUBTITLE:

One Woman's Journey to Empowerment

SUBJECT:

Personal memoir

AUTHOR:

Denise E. Smith, with Harry Williams, III, Real Estate professional, community leader.

CATEGORY:

Women's memoir, economic empowerment, overcoming obstacles, Multicultural issues

They were two San Francisco teenagers hopelessly lost in love. There was just one problem. He was an African American from the black ghetto of Fillmore's Western Addition. She was a Latina from the city's Mission district. They lived in the most liberal city in America at the dawn of the hippie movement. Yet, their romance was still considered taboo.

Hateful glares and police harassment were no detriment to the flame of love that kindled between the couple. Scorned by her parents when her pregnancy was discovered, she moved in with the young man and his family. They married. There were four children in all. They named the youngest child, Denise.

Love could not pay the bills. Poverty and struggle became a way of life for the family.

ONE WOMAN'S JOURNEY OF EMPOWERMENT

The Smiths moved from the traditionally African American Fillmore district of San Francisco to Bayview-Hunters Point where heroin addicts nodded and gunfire crackled in the dead of night.

The young mother was forced to work 12-hour shifts to keep food on the table, while her husband faced long lapses in unemployment. Someone would have to care for the youngest child.

Denise's mother reached out to "Grandma Bertha," a southern matriarch from her husband's side of the family. This deeply devout woman of God and faithful servant would take young Denise into her home and raise her as though she were her very own. Grandma Bertha was a stern disciplinarian, who spouted the folk wisdom, scripture verses and southern witticisms that would become the blueprint for Denise Smith's life.

Grandma Bertha could not protect Denise from everything. There were whispers that would suddenly conclude when she would walk into a room.

The young girl found herself filled with unanswered questions about her family blood line; her parentage; about what it meant to be biracial; questions that would haunt her and one day turn her life upside down.

While still in high school, Denise landed an internship at a finance company and a deep interest in the real estate business was born. Through grit and sheer will, Denise Smith carved out a path that led to the top of the mountain and by the time she was 30 years old, she owned a million dollars' worth of real estate.

In this, her first book, Denise Smith shares how her vision became reality. She shares lived insights on romance, relationships, and spirituality. At the book's conclusion, the reader will understand that everything is possible if one only believes in themselves and has motivation.

"My life is about encouraging young people to believe in themselves. What traits you want in someone else, develop in yourself. Don't strive to marry a millionaire, strive to become your own millionaire."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

At 14 years old she landed a summer job that piqued her interest in finance and real estate. Before she reached 30 years old, she owned a million dollars in property.

DENISE ELNORA SMITH was born and raised in an inner-city neighborhood in San Francisco, California. At 14 years old, she landed a summer job that piqued her interest in finance and real estate. Today, she resides in Oakland, California where she is an investor representing buyers and sellers of property as the sole owner of Royal Realtors and Loan Services.

For ten years, she hosted the first-time buyer home ownership television show in the country, "Dare to Dream," on cable station, Channel 27. Each week, her face was beamed into homes all over the San Francisco Bay area turning Ms. Smith into a highly-recognized figure in the community.

In 2008, Deacon Smith was elected to serve as the President of the Oakland Association of Realtors. She was elected to serve on year on the Associated Real Property Brokers Board of Directors in 2005. And in 2003, she was appointed to the Affordable Housing Task Force by then Oakland Mayor, Jerry Brown.

Denise Smith was among the first group of women ever selected to be ordained, as a deacon in the near 100-year history of Allen Temple Baptist Church. She also serves as the president of the Allen Temple Baptist Church Business and Professional Women's Society.

Board Member

Oakland Association of Realtors
1999 - 2010

President

Oakland Association of Realtors
2008

President

Women Council of Realtors of
East Bay
2001 & 2011

Governor

California Women Council of
Realtors
2007 & 2008

State District Vice President

California Women Council of
Realtors
2004, 2005 & 2006

Equal Opportunity Vice-Chair

California Association of Realtors



TARGET AUDIENCES

A wide range of people will find meaning, direction and entertainment in the pages of ***Rags To Real Estate: One Woman's Journey To Empowerment***. The message of hard work rewarded by success is a timeless one.

AT RISK YOUTH: *Rags to Real Estate* was written with the hope of passing along critical lessons to a generation of youth and young adults looking for real world examples of transcendent success. Denise Smith's hope is that this book will find it's way into the hands of **incarcerated young people as well as foster children** being raised by the state. She believes that the message of hope and self-empowerment will resonate with them.

MULTICULTURAL/BIRACIAL: There are very few books which tackle the subject of **growing up as a biracial child**. *Rags To Real Estate* is an honest look at this very complex issue. Young people who are the children of biracial unions will be enthralled by this work. Those who want to become more familiar with multi-racial family dynamics will also have a starting place in Ms. Smith's story.

FAITH COMMUNITY: People of all faith traditions will find *Rags To Real Estate: One Woman's Journey To Empowerment* fascinating. The thread of Ms. Smith's Christian faith weaves itself throughout her book like a silk thread through a fine tapestry. Her strength is derived from belonging to a community of believers. As a result, one will note the significant role prayer and meditation played in her life and success.

WOMEN: Women of all walks of life will be inspired by the story of a woman overcoming the odds in a male dominated field as well as the unique challenges traversed by a female entrepreneur. This book will be perfect for book clubs, as well as, professional women's organizations that support the educational, social and career development of other women and youth.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did you get involved in Real Estate?
2. Did you have a family member, friend etc., working in the Real Estate industry, who encouraged you to pursue this field?
3. How old were you when you first got involved in Real Estate? What piqued your interest in Real Estate and why?
4. Was your family supportive of your ambitions?
5. Can you tell us about some of the challenges that you have faced in the Real Estate profession?
6. Can you share an experience where your gender or race prevented you from getting business or gaining access to opportunities? If you haven't experienced sexism or racism in your industry, what do you attribute it to?
7. What are some of the sacrifices (personally and professionally) that you had to make to get to the top in your business?
8. What or who inspires you, as a woman in general and as a business woman, in such a tough industry?
9. How did you cope with becoming successful? Did you ever find yourself isolated because of your success?
10. What advice would you give a young person, especially a young woman of color who is interested in getting into Real Estate?
11. When you aren't working, what do you like to do to relax (i.e. hobbies, activities)?
12. Do you have any regrets personally or professionally? If so, what are they?
13. If you could do "7" things differently over the course of your life, what are those "7" things?
14. Do you see yourself as a role model?
15. Why did you decide to write a book at this point in your life?
16. Once you made the decision to write your memoir, what were the steps you took to become an author?
17. What do you hope to achieve by sharing your story?
18. What do you view as your source of strength?

“Denise Smith is the type of professional who makes me proud to spell my name W-O-M-A-N! She is beautiful inside and outside, talented, capable and a woman of integrity. She practices what she preaches and values relationships over profits, character over process, and exceeds expectations constantly. She should be an ANDERSON COOPER CNN HERO.”

-- **Dr. Laura Lyons**, CEO of Career Dynamics, author of *Lyons Guide to the Career Jungle*

“If you’ve ever felt trapped in a cycle of poverty and despair, if you’ve ever felt marginalized because of your ethnicity or your gender, this book might just change your life. Denise Smith has truly traveled from rags to real estate. It has been a joy to witness her journey.” -- **Barbara Lee**, Member of Congress (CA-09)

At an early age, Denise taught me a very powerful lesson, pray hard and work hard. Thank you dear friend for inspiring me; I know your story will continue to inspire many. — **Nikki Shaw**, Celebrity Chef

As the president of the Allen Temple Business and Professional Women’s Society, Denise Smith has been instrumental in raising thousands and thousands of dollars in college scholarship money for students with hopes and aspirations for a better life. She is an excellent example of someone for whom success has not been measured merely in financial holdings but in service to others.

— **Rev. Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Jr.**, Senior Pastor, Allen Temple Baptist Church

This book is the amazing story of how God used a grandmother to plant the seeds of the Gospel in the heart of a young lady with great business talents. The seeds matured in the soil of her life to nourish her through the wilderness of temptation to the high ground of humble Christian service. If God can do this with Deacon Denise Smith, surely he’s still in the blessing business ready to mold the lives of girls and young women who will be obedient to God’s call. — **Rev. Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Sr.**, Pastor Emeritus, Allen Temple Baptist Church

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