

NYSPA Leadership Institute 2016-2017 Fellow: Vernon Smith, PhD



Vernon Smith, PhD, is a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and a proud product of its public school system. A bright and motivated student, Dr. Smith participated in academically gifted programs, is a graduate of one of the city's top-performing high schools, and was recruited into the Psychology Honors program at a highly-regarded public undergraduate university.

Dr. Smith was drawn into the field of clinical psychology after having been a member of several research laboratories lead by notable psychologists. These include junior internships at the Center for Cognitive Therapy at the University of Pennsylvania and the Adult Anxiety Clinic at Temple University.

Dr. Smith's subsequent exploration of psychoanalytic theory and technique complemented his early exposure to cognitive-behavioral research and practice. In addition to clinical psychology, during his undergraduate years Dr. Smith took courses in African and African American studies, attempting to interweave his interest in the theory, research, and practice of psychology with the value of serving the needs of the African American community.

During his doctoral training in clinical psychology, Dr. Smith worked with a notable figure in African American mental health, Dr. Anderson J. Franklin, in whom he observed an impressive ability to combine professional leadership, clinical practice, scholarship, and teaching centered on the mental health issues affecting African Americans. Dr. Smith's experiences at City College continue to inform his research on the development of close relationships and the teaching of race and ethnicity in undergraduate psychology curricula.

Dr. Smith's personal and professional lives are based in Manhattan. He resides in East Midtown with his wife of five years and their two-year-old daughter, maintains a private psychotherapy practice in Washington Square, and teaches undergraduate Psychology at the Borough of Manhattan Community College in TriBeCa. He currently serves as the president of the Division of Culture, Race, and Ethnicity of the New York State Psychological Association.