

Dawn Smith, Recreation Program Supervisor – Clark County Parks & Recreation

Dawn Smith is a leader for Clark County Parks & Recreation (CCPR). Since 2000, she has managed and currently supervises multiple CCPR programs and employees, oversees several construction projects, and develops strong relationships with the leaders and people of her communities. She is a qualified professional who strengthens and enhances the CCPR department and division through proven and well-rounded recreational programming.

As a native of Las Vegas, and the seventh of nine siblings of a blended family, Dawn has embraced and conquered many challenges in her life. At the early age of seven, she lost her first brother to Police violence; her grandmother the year she graduated high school; her closest brother to murder at age 27, two years after that, another brother from a severe car accident, her father in 2008 (one month after introducing him to her daughter), her best friend to breast in 2009, and her roommate passed away at their home in 2019. Though these incidents could have destroyed her, she persevered.

After her second brother's death in 1993, she chose to commit her life to giving back to others and joined a professional cultural arts African dance troupe named Olabisi (*Oh-la-bee-see*, which means *Joy is Multiplied – partly because his name was Joey*). She and the dance troupe performed throughout Greater Las Vegas, spreading joy, African cultural, and African American experiences.

During one dance performance for a Black History program for Clark County Parks and Recreation, Dawn was recruited to become a part-time Recreation Program Assistant for New Direction for Youth (Clark County's current Gang Intervention Team). Within 6 months, she was hired full-time with Clark County Parks and Recreation, and her career thrived.

In 2005, Dawn became the Recreation Program Supervisor for the Walnut Recreation Center and is still there to date. She oversees and manage multiple recreation programs and personnel, develop, oversee and administer funding for three operating budgets, and secured capital funding for multi-million-dollar construction projects. In her tenure, she has supervised and trained hundreds of full-time staff and have hired and trained thousands of part-time staff and volunteers. Her main focus and passion is outreach and community support. She supervises, coordinates and facilities a variety of diverse recreational, educational, and cultural programs and activities - these include many self-improvement programs, special community events and neighborhood services which serve the no-to-low income community she works in. In her words, she says, "My goal is to empower individuals by finding and offering necessary available low-to no cost classes and resources; partner with local public officials and leaders to build community; and to provide a safe recreation location for patrons and families." In addition to her above duties, she is currently on 5 active construction teams (involving upgrades to one multi-generation recreation center, design and construction of two modular facilities, and renovations of three outdoor, neighborhood parks). She is also the facilitator of the following programs: The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), the After-School Snack

Program, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program for Clark County Parks and Recreation. In 2015, she reinstated the Clark County RecMobile outreach recreation program, which services 4 sites outside of her regular programming area. She is a mentor and employer for the youth of the Clark County Summer Business Institute (SBI) and served on three local coalitions throughout Las Vegas. To enhance her participants' cultural experiences, she commissioned and added a large community art sculpture on Walnut's grounds. Her ultimate goal is to create a familial, well-rounded community campus, to better-serve and improve the Walnut community, before she pursues career advancement.

