



Who Is Vera Cornish

Speaker, Facilitator and Strategist are three key words that describe Vera Cornish. This dynamic inspirational speaker has garnered a reputation of meeting her audience where they are and leaving them energized and excited. As a speaker and facilitator Vera Cornish is thought provoking and refreshing. It is her belief that everyone has the power to choose and the innate ability to ReDefine, ReFrame, and ReCommit to both their professional and personal lives. Her book Dare To Dream is dedicated to the dreamers! Where would we be without those that take a concept and make it a reality!

“While some may see them as the crazy ones, we see them as genius.
They push the human race forward.
The people who are crazy enough to believe they can change the world do.”
Steve Jobs

Biography

In 1999 Vera Cornish launched Cornish & Associates Inc. This was after the realization that since the day she went to Kindergarten she had never been off the school year. The catalyst for that decision was a challenge to write a personal vision statement. Eighteen months later she was clear that life had been an amazing journey; a journey that not only included degrees from both Penn State University and Misericordia University but employment with Penn State all forming the foundation to be selected as the first Director of Institutional Diversity at Harrisburg Area Community College. The journey that started with teaching Autistic and Schizophrenic children had culminated in service to three college presidents. It was time to share her message with others; a message of encouragement, access, opportunity, leadership development, perseverance and visioning.

Since that time Vera Cornish has delivered keynotes, facilitated presentations, provided strategic consultation and coaching to meet the needs of corporations, government entities, nonprofit organizations and individuals. Companies and organizations that have utilized her expertise have included Giant Foods LLC., Highmark, The Hershey Company, Milton Hershey School, Capital BlueCross, the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus, Business Women’s Forum, Pennsylvania Women’s Conference, Talk Magazine, Michael Cloeren Productions, Hamilton Health Center and Hershey Entertainment & Resorts.

Embracing the spirit of social entrepreneurship, Vera Cornish is the publisher of the Urban Connection; a LifeStyle publication, founder of the Women of Heritage Breakfast, founder and producer of the Access & Opportunity Breakfast Series and founder and producer of the Access & Opportunity Career Fair.

Considered an outstanding facilitator Vera has developed programs which include:

- Finding Your Voice & Embracing Your Power To Influence
- Synchronizing Your Personal & Professional Brand
- The Tenacity Of Leadership
- The Power of Perseverance

Known for community engagement, Vera embraces an attitude of servant leadership. In her own community she has served on the boards of the YWCA of Greater Harrisburg, the Harrisburg Regional Chamber, and the planning committee for the 25th anniversary of Leadership Harrisburg. Her memberships have included the Pennsylvania Black Conference on Higher Education, National Black MBA of Greater Harrisburg, the Harrisburg Regional Chamber and CREDC, the Carlisle Regional Chamber, Executive Women’s International, Harrisburg Chapter and the Pennsylvania Governor’s Commission For Women.

Vera has served for over seventeen years in ministry. The opportunities to serve have ranged from speaking at national conferences to being a messenger of hope to the simplicity of being a greeter welcoming you to worship!

Vera has created dynamic platforms and signature events that are devoted to the success of each person and organization that has utilized her services. She has come to the realization that one of the most important factors to embrace is the power of your personal and professional brand. This one factor is core to forming the basis of cultivating, developing, and sustaining strategic relationships and at numerous points in time allows you to walk with confidence into the next opportunity.

In all aspects of her work Vera Cornish encourages individuals to learn from the past, stand in the moment and cast a vision for the future.

Highlights & Personal Achievements

- **First in her family to graduate high school: Elmer L. Meyers High School
Elmer L. Meyers High School**
- **First in her family to attain a college degree: Penn State University
B.S. Education, 1977**
- **First in her family to attain a Master's Degree: Misericordia University
M.S. Education, 1993**
- **Graduate Leadership Wilkes-Barre**
- **Member, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Committee for Social Justice, Wilkes-Barre Pa.**
- **Chair, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Committee for Social Justice, Wilkes-Barre Pa.**
- **1993: Penn's Woods Girl Scouts Woman Of Distinction**
- **First Director of Institutional Diversity: Harrisburg Area Community College**
- **Board of Directors: Harrisburg Regional Chamber and CREDC**
- **1998: Steering Committee, Envision Capital Region, Harrisburg Regional Chamber & CREDC**
- **First in her family to start a business, President, Cornish & Associates Inc.**
- **Founder & Producer: The Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast For Business & Industry,
Harrisburg, Pa.**
- **Publisher, The Urban Connection of the Capital, Region Print and Digital
Past and present media partners include Pennsylvania Blues Festival, Dauphin County Jazz Festival,
Dauphin County Music Festival, Dauphin County Cultural Fest, Berks Jazz Festival, and Reading Blues
Festival**
- **Founder & Producer, Access & Opportunity Career Fair
Recruiting & Retaining A Diverse Workforce & Talent Pool**

- **Founder & Producer, Access & Opportunity Breakfast Series
Recruiting & Retaining A Diverse Workforce & Talent Pool
Harrisburg, Lancaster, York and Hershey
Stakeholders and event partners have included Hershey Entertainment & Resorts, Hershey Medical Center (now Penn State Health), The Hershey Company, Pinnacle Health (now UPMC Pinnacle), Milton Hershey School, Harrisburg Regional Chamber, York Economic Alliance, The Patriot News, and the Dauphin County Board of Commissioners**
- **Founder & Producer Cultural Immersion
Make the Connection To The Capital Region: Talent Acquisition & Relocation**
- **Founder & Producer, The Women Of Heritage Annual Leadership Breakfast**
- **Founder & Producer, The Women Of Heritage Power Breakfast, Three Part Series**
- **Author & Publisher, Dare To Dream With Vera Cornish**
- **1996: Graduate Leadership Harrisburg**
- **1998-2004: Harrisburg Regional Chamber Board of Directors
Member Envision Capital Region Steering Committee**
- **1999: Dr. Martin Luther King Community Leader Award, Penn Credit**
- **Faculty: Corporate Learning, Penn State University, co-designed the training series; Improving Healthcare Through Supervisory Development, Recharging a Multigenerational & Diverse Workforce: A Guide for Leaders, and Recharging a Multigenerational & Diverse Workforce: A Guide for Frontline Caregivers.**
- **2001: Consultant: Public Relations and Communications Harrisburg School District**
- **2003: Consultant, Fun, Fit, & Fabulous, Women's Health Initiative, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield**
- **2010: Appointed by Governor Edward G. Rendell to the Pennsylvania Governor's Commission for Women**
- **2011: Co-chair Leadership Harrisburg's 25th Anniversary Committee**
- **2013-2017: Consultant, For Our Community Diabetes Initiative Capital BlueCross
Collaboration of ten community based organizations**
- **2013: Member, Hamilton Health Phase 2 Capital Campaign Team,
Strategic Relationships: Raised 7.5 million**
- **2014: Keynote Speaker, Central Pennsylvania Association Female Executives
10th Anniversary**
- **2015: Keynote Speaker, Creating and Supporting a Diverse and Inclusive Workplace
Capital Area Public Human Resources Association**
- **2016 Appointed to Leadership Harrisburg Board of Directors**
- **2018 Awarded Citizen of the Year by Kappa Omega Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity**
- **2018 Capital Region Go Red for Women Executive Leadership Team**

- **2018 Talk Magazine: Selected as one of the 100 African American Women of Influence in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania**
- **2018 Inclusion Academy: Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center and Penn State College of Medicine, What Our Community Has to Offer Diverse Employees, Panelist**
- **2019: Talk Magazine: Selected as one of the 100 African American Women of Influence in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania**
- **2019 Keynote, Elmer L. Meyer High School, 10th, 11th, 12th grades
Dare To Dream Series: Education The Pathway To Freedom**
- **2109: Presenter: Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, Women's History Month Program
Business Resource Group: The Power Of Finding Your Voice**
- **2019 Appointed by the Dauphin County Commissioners to the Dauphin County
Detweiler Park Master Site Planning Committee**
- **Mother Mary Catherine McGann Achievement Award: Misericordia University Alumni award in recognition of distinguished and sustained career accomplishments**
- **2019 Convocation Misericordia University**
- **2109 Convocation Penn State Wilkes-Barre**
- **2019 YWCA Hanover Women's Power Breakfast: Keynote**

Additional companies that utilized Vera for diversity and inclusion initiatives have included:

- **Fleet Bank**
- **Mellon Bank**
- **Citizen's Bank**
- **Commerce Bank**
- **Pennsylvania Black Conference On Higher Education**
- **Leadership Lincoln Nebraska**

Additional insights are available at:

www.veracornish.com

www.urbanconnection.us

www.destinationdauphincounty.com

www.accessandopportunity.com

For more information call 717-343-1509

