

Influential Women Highlights Pamela Smith-Payton's Leadership as a Visionary Nonprofit Advocate

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Empowering
Communities, Transforming Lives, and
Championing Social Change

Pamela Smith-Payton, who will be featured by Influential Women in 2025, is a passionate community service advocate, seasoned nonprofit leader, and program director whose career is defined by her unwavering commitment to empowering individuals and strengthening communities. With decades of experience in social services, crisis intervention, and nonprofit management, Pamela has become a transformative force in addressing domestic violence, re-entry transitions, and community outreach.



Founder and Program Director of Open Arms Against Abuse Services

As the Founder and Program Director of Open Arms Against Abuse Services (O.A.A.A.S.), Pamela built a nonprofit dedicated to providing shelter, advocacy, and resources for survivors of domestic violence. Under her leadership, the organization has grown to operate two facilities with a committed staff and over 30 volunteers, securing nearly \$70,000 in annual contributions. Pamela has fostered strategic partnerships with local government, corporate sponsors, and major sports organizations, including the Philadelphia 76ers and Philadelphia Phillies.

"Our vision is to provide a holistic, trauma-informed support system that enables women and children to heal, thrive, and create a brighter future for themselves and their families," says Pamela. Through consistent advocacy, empowerment, and comprehensive care, O.A.A.A.S. has

become a beacon of hope and healing for countless families. Pamela also serves as CEO of Gospelodium Music and COO of MAAT Transportation and contributes to initiatives such as Diva Style and Queens Magazine, inspiring young girls toward independence and self-confidence. Pamela is also running for City Council District 5 At Large in Jacksonville, FL. In 2027, her focus is to make a difference in the communities. She aims to reform Jacksonville by bringing change to help the environment, homelessness, and school bullying, just to name a few..

Experience and Impact Across Social Services

Pamela's professional experience spans social services and nonprofit management. She served as Community Support Manager at Community Options, Inc., where she supervised staff, managed financial operations, ensured regulatory compliance, and developed individualized support plans for people with disabilities. Additionally, she has worked as a Transition Specialist, assisting incarcerated individuals in reintegrating into society through counseling, career development, and access to essential resources. She also worked with men and women who were in transit from prison back to the community by getting them jobs, housing, and counseling.

Community Engagement and Leadership

Pamela actively engages with civic and community organizations, serving on boards and participating in local task forces focused on safety, violence prevention, and public service. Her affiliations include the Stop the Violence Community Task Force, PA Domestic Violence Task Force, 12th District Police Department (Philadelphia), Town Watch Philadelphia, Southwest CDC NAC, and NAACP, among others. She also contributes to school and neighborhood initiatives, including serving as Home & School Representative and member of the Mitchell Home & School and Marion Oaks Civic Association. She works with the Democratic Party of Duval Co., also Red Alliance for Justice, and the Democratic Environmental Caucus of Florida Chapter. She is also a member of Girlstrek, Duval Black Caucus, and ADOS Advocacy Foundation.

Awards, Recognition, and Philosophy

Pamela's lifelong commitment to community service has earned her numerous awards, proclamations from the City of Philadelphia, commendations from Pennsylvania governors, and acknowledgments from the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus. She has been recognized nationally and locally for over 25 years of public service, particularly in domestic violence prevention and community development. Pamela attributes her success to determination and perseverance, noting that she was once the only Black organization focused on domestic services in her area—a challenge that shaped her unwavering commitment.

The best career advice Pamela received is simple: never give up on your dreams. She encourages young women entering her field to follow their passion, trust their instincts, and pursue ambitious goals despite obstacles. While funding remains the most pressing challenge in her work, Pamela embraces it as an opportunity to innovate and strengthen her programs. The values that drive her, both professionally and personally, are rooted in helping those who cannot help themselves and making a tangible difference in the lives of others.

A Legacy of Family and Leadership

Beyond her professional achievements, Pamela is a devoted wife of 25 years, mother of 12, grandmother of 26, and great-grandmother of six. She is currently running for city council and pursuing studies at Harvard, reflecting her lifelong dedication to leadership, advocacy, and meaningful social change. Through her work, Pamela Smith-Payton continues to inspire communities, champion survivors, and create lasting impact for generations to come.

Learn More about Pamela Smith-Payton:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/pamela-smith-payton> or through Open Arms Against Abuse Services, <https://www.openarmsagainstabuse.com/>

Influential Women

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