

## LENA L. KENNEDY

Lena L. Kennedy is a visionary leader and CEO of Community Women of Vital Voices specializes in community and consensus-building strategies for community organizing; building community coalitions; philanthropic consulting; corporate advisement; and leadership and life-coaching initiatives.

Over a lifetime in politics, Kennedy has developed a passion for helping others become involved in strategic ways. Through her organization Women in Leadership Vital Voices (WLVV), she wants to make members “the most informed women in the United States” about public policy, politics and how they both really work.

“Time is important,” she says. You need to figure out your whole purpose and how to empower yourself and maximize what you are already doing in terms of your community and philanthropy work. There is strength in numbers and what people need to do is meet and build relationships. I teach individuals how to strategically build on those relationships to impact communities and change outcomes.”

Her core values of trust and respect have served her well in building her own relationships and coalitions. Kennedy got her start in the political arena more than 38 years ago when she led fundraising and campaign activities for Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley’s gubernatorial bid. She has since worked with President Barack Obama; Vice President Al Gore, President Bill Clinton, Senator Hillary Clinton for President, the Reverend Jesse Jackson; Congress members Nancy Pelosi, Diane Watson [former Congressmember], Elijah Cummings, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Judy Chu, Adam Schiff and Maxine Waters; U.S. Senators: Cory Booker, Kamala Harris, Barbara Boxer, Harry Reid, John Kerry, Patrick Leahy, and Chuck Schumer. At the state level, she has worked with Speaker of the House Karen Bass and State Senator Carol Liu, to name a few. She also served as a key member of President Obama’s finance committee and traveled for him throughout the country. In 2008, she co-chaired the National Women’s Leadership Initiative and later she was appointed by Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz as Vice Chair of the National Democratic Committee (DNC). In 2016 President Obama appointed her to the advisory board for The Kennedy Center for the Arts.

Kennedy served as a member of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Majority Trust under the leadership of Senator Chuck Schumer. Kennedy has served on the boards of several notable organizations – including the Pasadena Arts Council, Pasadena NAACP, Community Health Alliance of Pasadena, First AME Church - Pasadena Trustee, Planned Parenthood Pasadena & San Gabriel, and the Pasadena Symphony Advisory Council. She was one of the founding members of the Pasadena Playhouse Diversity Committee.

Although she already was a political veteran, Kennedy was astounded by what she learned from the Obamas. The most important lesson from the former President was that one needs to lead always “with your head and your heart.”

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In 2000, she founded the So Cal Women's Health Conference & Expo, which has brought together more than 32,000 attendees over the years to empower them with informative and practical lectures on health, wellness and lifestyle by renowned physicians and other healthcare professionals.

Kennedy has received many awards for her work in the community – including recognition by the American Cancer Society, United Negro College Fund, John F. Kennedy Award from Los Angeles Democratic Party, National Congress of Black Women, Pasadena NAACP Ruby McKnight Award, Soroptimist International Altadena-Pasadena Best for Women Award, 2011 FAME Seeds of Faith Community Service Award, 2005 Aspires West Pasadena Community Award, Ladies of Distinction Award, Pasadena Playhouse Wells Fargo Community Diversity Award, and the 1998 Pasadena NAACP Community Volunteer Award. Pasadena Magazine named her one of the Fifty Businesswomen of Pasadena in 2010 and she has been featured in several publications.

The Pasadena native was educated and received professional training at Sawyer College, Pasadena City College, Indiana University School of Philanthropy, UCLA in public relations, the Center for Non-Profit Management, and the California Association of Nonprofits. She is one of 10 siblings and draws strength from her deep roots in her community and family, which includes her children Tyesa, Jonathan, Chris, and Kari; and two beautiful grandchildren: Christopher and Savannah.