

## Tami DeVine



"It's been an amazing journey."

Tami DeVine's first name means "Seeker of Truth." So it's no wonder her path led her to journalism. She's a storyteller who has worked for most of the Broadcast Network affiliates across the country including ABC, NBC, CBS, and FOX affiliates. She's also worked for a print outlet in Los Angeles.

"What I love more than anything is telling other people's stories," Tami said. "I love going new places and meeting new people and hearing how they arrived where they are. In a way it makes me a student for life because I'm always learning."

Tami learned she wanted to get into the business of storytelling during her time at Concordia University Chicago. After watching the news one evening in her dorm room, Tami made her choice.

"I watched an ABC 7 news reporter tell a story and I was hooked. I knew right then that I wanted to be a news reporter." After serving as an intern at the CBS and FOX affiliates in Chicago, Tami would eventually go on to work behind the scenes at the same ABC 7 news station that helped her decide to go into broadcast journalism. A year later Tami moved to Hazard, Kentucky where she achieved her dream of being a TV news reporter at the CBS affiliate WYMT.

"Going live on TV was exhilarating and nerve-wracking at the same time. I screwed up a lot at first, but thankfully my first news director was a kind, patient man who showed me the ropes and helped me build my confidence."

That confidence would grow within her first year as a reporter, to the point that she was hired by WLEX TV, the NBC affiliate in Lexington, KY. She worked there for 5 and a half years, reporting, filling in as an anchor, and hosting a talk show. She also did some work in radio.

Throughout all this time Tami was also a classically trained musician who sang and played the piano. A friend introduced her to a music producer who liked Tami's unique, soulful style of Gospel music and asked her to prepare to move to Los Angeles for a record contract. When the 2003 Iraq war caused the funding for her contract to dry up, the producer told her not to go to L.A., but Tami felt called to move there regardless. WLEX agreed to release her from the few months remaining on her contract, so she packed up her little car and moved to the entertainment capital of the world. She stayed with a friend for a few days, then found housing in Whittier. She worked as a temp and did plays and musicals on the side. After a few months Tami connected with the music producer who told her the contract funding was back and that they should meet. Tami invited him to her play and lunch on the weekend. Two days before their meeting he died suddenly of a heart attack. She questioned her purpose for being in Los Angeles after his funeral.

While working as a temp Tami was introduced to Chavel DeVine, a young man who worked for the public access station in Pasadena. Tami teamed up with him to create Crown City News. The two married and turned Crown City News into a training ground launching people into their dream TV careers nationally and internationally.

During this time friends referred Tami to the Pasadena SBDC for help to move Crown City News to the next level. "I fell in love with the SBDC. It was incredible to me that small business owners like me could get free advice from such accomplished advisors and experts in their respective fields," Tami said. "Meetings aren't always my favorite thing, but I found myself looking forward to going to meet with my advisor Larry Johnson, because each week he had something new to tell me that I had not considered for my business."

After finding out about Tami's journalism background and storytelling abilities, SBDC Director Salvatrice Cummo asked Tami to begin writing the stories of successful clients for marketing purposes. "Finding out the struggles and challenges some of those business owners faced, how the SBDC was able to help them, and the ways they overcame the obstacles was truly inspiring to me," Tami said.

Salvatrice then asked Tami to write the stories of the advisors and the team at the SBDC. "The accomplishments of these advisors are just mind-blowing," Tami said. "From Larry Johnson who provides specialty foods to one of the biggest casinos in the world, not to mention his investment banking background, to Andrew Cohen who has worked with some of the biggest filmmakers that have ever lived, to Lori Williams who walked away from major banks and corporations to live life on her own terms, and so many others, I'm honored and humbled that I had the opportunity to tell their stories."

The client success stories and advisor articles Tami wrote can be found on the Pasadena SBDC website: [www.pccsbdc.org](http://www.pccsbdc.org).