



Dr. Tahira Reid Smith

Smithsonian-Featured Inventor | Penn State Professor | ASME Fellow

Dr. Tahira Reid Smith is a Smithsonian-featured inventor, Full Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Penn State University, and founder of Jump Dreams, Inc. — the company bringing the world's first automated Double Dutch jump rope system to market. Her 40-year journey from a third-grade sketch in the Bronx to a Smithsonian exhibit has been featured by the New York Times, Essence, NBC's Today Show, NPR, BBC, and PBS NOVA. A Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, a distinction held by only a small fraction of ASME members, Dr. Reid Smith speaks at the intersection of innovation, faith, and cultural legacy. Her talks combine the credibility of an engineering professor with the lived authenticity of a Black woman inventor who has been walking by faith for 26 years to bring her childhood dream to life.

AS SEEN IN



Smithsonian

The New York Times



EBONY

SIGNATURE TOPICS

From Curiosity to Impact: Turning Ideas into Real-World Innovation: Every breakthrough starts as a question — but most questions never become products. Drawing on four decades of moving a third-grade sketch through prototype, patent, Smithsonian exhibit, and a company founded to bring it to market, Dr. Tahira Reid Smith distills the decision points and design methodology required to transform curiosity into impact. Audiences leave with a repeatable framework they can apply to their own ideas, products, and ventures.

Building Beyond Barriers: Turning Adversity into Innovation and Impact: What if the challenges you face are actually the starting point for your greatest ideas? In this engaging talk, Dr. Tahira Reid Smith shares how lived experiences can fuel creativity, confidence, and innovation at any stage. Audiences will leave inspired and equipped to turn obstacles into opportunities and ideas into action.

The Power of "Wow": How One Word from a Mentor Can Change a Life: Organizations lose billions each year in untapped potential — talent that goes unrecognized, underdeveloped, or out the door. Dr. Tahira Reid Smith shares the single moment of recognition from a mentor that altered her trajectory and launched a career that has now shaped over 1,500 students and mentees. She offers leaders a practical framework for becoming the pivotal voice in someone's development — the kind of leader who unlocks talent rather than losing it.

 1500+
students educated

 50+
keynotes

 1700
citations

 50+
media interviews

 20+
awards

A Lifetime of Innovation

From Childhood Sketch to Prototype, Patent, and the Smithsonian



Dr. Tahira Reid Smith's groundbreaking invention — the world's first automated Double Dutch jump rope system — began as a third-grade sketch at PS 97 in the Bronx in 1986. Years later, as a mechanical engineering student at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, she transformed that childhood idea into a working prototype. Today, the photo from the day her prototype first worked is on display at the Smithsonian's "Change Your Game" exhibit, and she is bringing the invention to market through Jump Dreams, Inc., the Black-woman-owned company she founded in 2024. She recently showcased Jump Dreams at the Congressional Inventions Project's Women's History Month Innovation Showcase on Capitol Hill, and her upcoming children's book, *Tahira and the Double Dutch Dream: The Story of Jump Dreams*, will share the journey with the next generation of dreamers. Dr. Reid Smith is ready to inspire your audience with stories of creativity, persistence, and walking by faith.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Smithsonian-Featured Inventor
- ✓ Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Penn State University
- ✓ Founder & CEO of Jump Dreams, Inc.
- ✓ Featured on Capitol Hill (March 2026)
- ✓ Mentor to hundreds of students and aspiring inventors



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