

Dr. Kim Carter-Tillman: Transforming Lives Through the Time for Change Foundation

Far from a one-time recognition, the award highlighted decades of community activism. Carter-Tillman left a successful accounting career in 2002 to found the Time for Change Foundation (TFCF), a San Bernardino-based nonprofit designed to help women and families break cycles of homelessness and recidivism. Motivated by her own experience of imprisonment and homelessness, she believed that providing training and life skills in a nurturing environment could restore dignity and independence. Her motto—"a lit candle loses nothing when it lights another"—encapsulates her philosophy of empowerment and community.

The Time for Change Foundation began as a six-bed emergency shelter in San Bernardino. In its early years, Carter-Tillman recognized that housing alone could not end homelessness; healing trauma, rebuilding family bonds and creating pathways to economic prosperity were all essential. Over the next two decades, the organization expanded into a model of excellence for comprehensive support. Today, TFCF operates multiple housing facilities across Southern and Northern California, runs the BBOP (Black and Brown Opportunities for Profit) Center, and offers a full continuum of services—including housing, advocacy, re-entry programs and entrepreneurship training—that have helped over 5,300 individuals and families achieve lasting self-sufficiency. Carter-Tillman's vision transformed a small shelter into 250 units of housing annually, providing both emergency support and long-term stability.

Her leadership style blends business acumen with compassion. Certified in accounting and influenced by the strategic thinking of Harriet Tubman, she has served not just as an executive director but also as a motivational speaker, author and affordable-housing developer. The foundation's focus on evidence-based programs and belief in the potential of the human spirit drives its success. Carter-Tillman often notes that 70 percent of nominations for Nexstar's *Remarkable Women* come from other women, underscoring the role of community in recognizing and nurturing greatness.

The *Remarkable Woman* award came with a \$25,000 donation to a charity of Carter-Tillman's choice. During the televised ceremony, she told the audience she was proud to provide housing and business opportunities for women and children, reflecting on her journey from "statistic" to "creator and owner". Her ability to channel personal hardship into public service resonated with viewers across the country.

Recognition continued into January 2026, when Inland Empire Community News reported that Carter-Tillman received two honorary doctorate degrees, one in Divinity and another in Humanities. These degrees celebrate both the spiritual compassion woven into her mission and her tireless advocacy for social reform. The article noted that she once faced the same hardships as the women TFCF serves but leveraged those experiences to build a beacon of hope. Under her leadership, the foundation now serves not only women but also men and children, providing tools for self-sufficiency and fostering economic prosperity. Such achievements underscore the transformative power of resilience and purpose.

Dr. Kim Carter-Tillman's journey is a testament to the impact one person can have when they refuse to be defined by their past. By combining personal insight with professional expertise, she created an organization that addresses the root causes of homelessness and empowers individuals to rebuild their lives. Her work reminds us that transformative leadership comes not only from titles or degrees but from a commitment to uplift others. As communities grapple with housing crises and social inequities, the Time for Change Foundation offers a replicable model: comprehensive support, community engagement and economic empowerment.

Carter-Tillman's recent recognition—both the 2025 *Remarkable Woman of the Year* title and her 2026 honorary degrees—signals a broader appreciation for grassroots leaders who turn adversity into action. In honoring her, the

media highlights the women whose quiet perseverance fuels societal change. By celebrating her achievements, we also celebrate the thousands of women and families who have found stability and hope through TFCF's programs. Her story inspires us to believe that lighting the way for others does not diminish our own light—it multiplies it.