

Roderick Smith*

Roderick Smith demonstrated talents early as part of the University City High School's Jazz Ensemble, football team and Martial Arts Club.

The Jazz Ensemble sparked an enduring career in music as a keyboardist, vocalist, teacher and promoter. After graduating high school, he attended

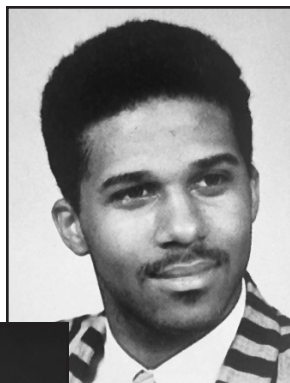
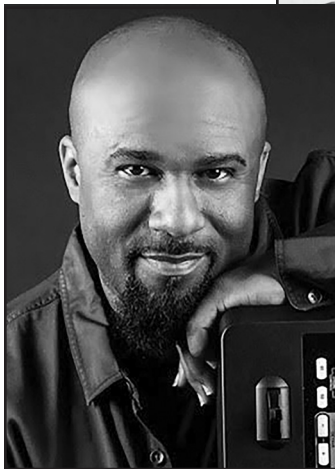
Columbia College in Chicago where he studied music composition. His knowledge in music theory and his skill in keyboarding opened doors to the music world.

He performed with international acts that included Michael Bolton, Fontella Bass, Keith Sweat and Lisa Left-Eye Lopez, the founder of the

sensational female hip-hop group, "TLC." From Lopez, he gained the nickname "LS Bless," which stayed with him for the rest of his life.

Early in his career, he had a passionate interest in the martial art of Kung Fu where he practiced styles that included Mui Tai, Wing-Chun, Tai Chi and Praying Mantis.

Also a professional wiring technician, Smith was devoted to mentoring and supporting the local St. Louis music scene. He was a force behind the creation of "The Dirty Muggs," a popular hip-hop, R&B and pop band in which he frequently performed. At one point in his career, he moved to Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, to be the lead keyboardist for "The Soul of Motown," a popular headliner at the famed Grand Majestic Theater. He was also the minister of music in his church, World Changing Word of Faith in Granite City, Illinois. In 2014, he and his wife, Michelle, founded the label Luminary Enterprise, an enterprise that showcased their contemporary gospel duo, "El and Elle," and also provided a variety of musical specialties to the film and entertainment industry.



**Roderick
Smith**
Class of 1987

*Posthumous