

FEATURED SPEAKERS FRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2019

APRIL ATKINS, ACIP is a Community Affairs Specialist for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) covering the North and Central Florida markets for the Atlanta FDIC Region. She is responsible for educating insured financial institution representatives, municipal entities and community-based organizations on community reinvestment opportunities. She facilitates partnerships between financial institutions and community-based organizations to promote community and economic development in communities of low wealth. She has also worked on temporary assignments with Minority Depository Institutions, and fair lending.



April has been a part-time lecturer at Georgia Institute of Technology in the building construction program, where she developed and taught courses in residential development policy and finance. She has also served in various urban planning, community and government affairs roles with the Office of the CEO of DeKalb County, Georgia; DeKalb County Board of Commissioners; the Urban Land Institute's Terwilliger Center for Workforce Housing; the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association; and the City of Marietta, Georgia.

A native of the Florida panhandle, April received her bachelor's from the University of Florida and her master's from the Georgia Institute of Technology. She holds a professional certificate in community economic development from NeighborWorks America and in community development finance from Opportunity Finance Network and the University of New Hampshire's Carsey School of Public Policy. She is a graduate of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators Mentor Program, Leadership DeKalb Class of 2012, and LEAD Atlanta Class of 2011. She served as a co-chair and member of the FDIC's Chairman's Diversity Advisory Council and co-chair for the LEAD Atlanta Class of 2015. In 2017, she was honored to receive the Shirley Taylor-Prakelt Award from the Florida Community Development Association, in recognition of her professional excellence and support of community and economic development.

In 2019, April was selected to participate in an executive leadership program with the Graduate School USA, a leading provider of professional development and training courses for the federal government and the private sector. April is also an appointed planning commissioner in DeKalb County, Georgia, and she volunteers with LEAD Atlanta, and Out of Darkness, an anti-trafficking ministry in Atlanta, Georgia. She is a member of Ray of Hope Christian Church.

THE HONORABLE PETER ALTMAN



Mr. Altman is a Councilmember in the City of New Port Richey. He is a CPA and has managed over 20 Community Development Districts (CDDs) in Florida. Born in St. Petersburg, Peter is a USF graduate with an Accounting Degree. As the former Mayor, he also served as the Finance Director for the city. Reelected in 2018, he serves as an elected official member of the Florida Redevelopment Association. He is a local government representative member of Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council.

MILES BALLOGG



Mr. Ballogg serves as the Brownfields Practice Leader and Economic Development Director for Cardno, Inc. He assists public and private sector clients with land redevelopment programming, assessment, and remediation, specifically in environmentally-blighted areas. Miles has been involved in the implementation of both federal and state Brownfields programs for over 25 years including during their inception. He is a strong advocate for environmental justice and has been recognized as the National Leader of the “Healthfields Movement” by utilizing Brownfields and other leverage resources to improve access to health care for underserved communities. Miles provides comprehensive programmatic support, technical assistance, and project coordination for numerous Brownfield Redevelopment Projects utilizing EPA Assessment, Cleanup Multi-Purpose, and Cleanup Revolving Loan funding. Miles assists clients (including government agencies, non-profits, and private sector developers) with Brownfields consulting, grant writing, and programmatic support to facilitate the transformation of environmentally-impaired properties into benefits to their communities.

LENORA BILLINGS-HARRIS, CSP



Lenora Billings-Harris, CSP (Certified Speaking Professional) is a CPAE (Council of Peers Award of Excellence) Hall of Fame speaker and an internationally recognized authority in the areas of inclusion, diversity and bias. She has been included as one of the 100 Global Thought Leaders on Diversity and Inclusion by The Society of Human Resource Management and was named by Diversity Woman Magazine as one of the twenty top influential diversity leaders in the US. Her award-winning diversity leadership research is recognized in academic journals internationally. Additionally, she serves on the Advisory Council of the Nido Qubein School of Communication, High Point University, as well as being on the adjunct business faculty of two other universities.

Diversity, inclusion and disrupting bias is a full-time focus for Lenora. She partners with clients to help them leverage their diversity of thought which impacts employee engagement and retention, customer acquisition and sales, community and corporate relations. Her powerful yet engaging style inspires audience members to take personal and organizational actions that disrupt bias and accelerate bottom-line business results.

She has presented to audiences in over 41 countries and six continents, including such places as Dubai, Israel and South Africa and Malaysia. Billings-Harris co-authored [TRAILBLAZERS: How Top Business Leaders are Accelerating Results through Inclusion and Diversity](#), and is the author of [The Diversity Advantage: A Guide to Making Diversity Work](#), 3rd Ed. Most recently, she was the [cover story](#) for Inclusion Magazine, 2019 winter edition.

In addition to management positions held with two Fortune 100 companies plus the Business School at The University of Michigan, Billings-Harris has held leadership positions with several non-profit organizations. She is a past president of Win-Win Resolutions with a mission to reduce bullying, violence and prejudice in schools and communities, and was a founding charter member of the Maricopa County Black Chamber of Commerce. She is a past president of the National Speakers Association, and past president of the Global Speakers Federation. In 2016 she was the Cavett Award recipient, the highest honor bestowed upon professional speakers in the USA. In 2018 she was inducted into the Speaker Hall of Fame.

JOSEPH BONORA



finance projects.

Mr. Bonora is the founder and President of Catalyst Asset Management, Inc. and Catalyst Community Capital, Inc. Joe has over 20 years of experience in real estate finance and development and is responsible for the strategic direction of the companies, including the planning, development, and implementation of the firm's various verticals. He is particularly well versed in government funding programs and public-private partnerships and is well known within the industry for his ability to engineer complex capital structures and create innovative new ways to

Prior to forming Catalyst, Joe was the co-founder and Managing Director of Aileron Investment Management, a national specialty finance firm focused on government guaranteed loan programs, and developer of multifamily, senior housing and mixed-use properties. From the time he formed the company in 2010 until 2018, Joe led Aileron in providing over \$550 million in funding to small business owners nationwide. The company also developed over \$200 million in multifamily and commercial real estate.

Joe lives in St Petersburg, FL with his wife and two children. He is mediocre at golf but has been boxing and training in Muay Thai for over 15 years, so he is granted unlimited mulligans. Joe is on the board of the Boys and Girls Club of Lee County, and a member of several community-focused organizations including the Attainable Housing Coalition and the Tampa Downtown Partnership.

JEFF BURTON, M.P.A. FRA-RA, DFCP



Mr. Burton is the Director of the Palmetto Community Redevelopment Agency and President Elect of the Florida Redevelopment Association. He is a Florida native who has enjoyed life in a small community, fishing on the Manatee River, and graduating from local schools, colleges and universities. He holds an Associate Degree in Business, a Bachelor's in Economics, a Master's in Public Administration and is currently working on a PhD in Environmental Science and Policy at the University of South Florida.

Jeff has been awarded a Florida Redevelopment Association designation as a certified Redevelopment Administrator (FRA-RA), and is a Florida licensed Building Code Administrator. His career includes roles as a building contractor, City of Bradenton Planning and Compliance Manager, Building Codes Manager for the Institute for Business & Home Safety, and Director of Codes and Standards for the Association of Millwork Distributors. He has also served as a City Councilman and Vice Mayor.

THE HONORABLE JANE CASTOR, MAYOR, CITY OF TAMPA



Jane Castor is the 59th Mayor of the City of Tampa, elected for the first time in 2019. She served 31 years with the Tampa Police Department, working her way from a beat cop to the first female Chief of Police. Castor helped reduce major crime by 70% citywide. She ensured public safety during the 2012 Republican National Convention and the first Bollywood Awards in America. She also oversaw the security plan for Super Bowl XLIII and led the Department of Homeland Security's Tampa Bay Urban Area Security Initiative.

Community outreach has always been a cornerstone of Castor's career. As a cop, Jane knew the families, business owners, and community leaders in her neighborhood and, as Chief, she expected every officer to do the same. Under her watch, everyone was to be treated with dignity and respect. She also implemented several programs to help at-risk youths. Under Jane's leadership,

the police department built a RICH House in the city to provide a safe-haven for hundreds of economically disadvantaged kids. She also raised \$4 million to build a recreation center. The Police Athletic League now offers after school/summer programs for 500+ at-risk youths. On a national and local level, Castor is recognized for her leadership in law enforcement and community involvement. She has received multiple awards including the 2015 USF President's Distinguished Citizen Award, 2014 Tampa Chamber of Commerce's Woman of Influence Award, and more. Jane is a proud born and raised Tampanian. She resides in Seminole Heights where she raised her two sons, Sergei and Seely.

CHRISTOPHER COCHRAN



Mr. Cochran is the Director of Service Development for the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART), where he oversees both the Planning and Scheduling divisions. In this capacity, Mr. Cochran oversees several critical projects related to capital planning and operations. Prior to joining HART, Mr. Cochran worked as a Senior Planner at the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority in St. Petersburg, where, most notably, he managed the design and implementation of the Nation's first P3 Transit partnership with Uber, to provide subsidized rides using public transit dollars to improve connectivity to transit stations. Prior to HART and PSTA, Chris worked at the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida during his tenure as a Graduate Student, where he graduated with an MS in Environmental Science and Policy with a concentration in Geomatics.

GLADYS COOK



Ms. Cook is the Disaster Housing Recovery Director for the Florida Housing Coalition. She brings over 25 years of experience in housing and community development in Florida. For many of those years, she has been a technical advisor for the Florida Housing Coalition and has developed training and program design for nonprofit organizations and local governments. As a planner, she provides research and analysis skills in the formation of housing incentives, conducting needs assessments, and housing specialties such as land banking and community

land trusts. She offers capacity building and strategic planning for organizations including predevelopment, underwriting and compliance for homeownership, rental and supportive housing. Gladys is a problem solver and consensus builder seeking to maximize human and capital resources to expand the supply of accessible, sustainable, and affordable homes for workforce and special needs households.



FELIX DELOATCH, ASSOC. AIA

Mr. Deloatch has led Torti Gallas' Tampa, Florida office since it opened in 2015. As Director and Project Manager, Mr. Deloatch has gained extensive experience working with both small and large-scale projects starting in the schematic stage through construction. This work has ranged from small-budget university facility renovations to multi-million dollar new construction. His role at Torti Gallas involves direct interaction with the Client and consultants as the project team leader working to meet fiscal and construction milestones. His recent work has focused on large and complex mixed-use buildings usually including a combination of residential, retail, office and parking.

Felix also has experience in resilient design, not only as it relates to climate change or natural disasters in coastal areas, but also in terms of economic and social equity resilience. The development of new affordable housing in a once blighted neighborhood and the revitalization of an empty downtown into a thriving destination. Both of these are examples of resilient design that correspond with Mr. Deloatch's philosophy that all communities should have a design identity that is sustainable and ever evolving.

Mr. Deloatch holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Elizabeth City State University and a Master's of Architecture from The Ohio State University. He is a member of the Urban Land Institute, the American Institute of Architects and the Florida Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. Mr. Deloatch has recently worked on the neighborhood revitalization vision for the Greater Ridgecrest Area in Pinellas County, Florida.

BRENNA DURDEN



Ms. Durden has substantial experience in land use, environmental and administrative law. She represents public and private clients in matters related to land development, community redevelopment, sustainability, transportation, zoning, comprehensive planning, port plans, water supply, campus master plans, developments of regional impact, real estate transactions, vested rights and concurrency, historic preservation, hazardous materials, brownfields, contamination and remedial actions, solid waste and air quality regulation. Ms. Durden also has significant experience in transactional due diligence, administrative and land use litigation and local and state government rulemaking and legislation. She is AV-Rated by Martindale-Hubbell and has been listed in the *Best Lawyers in America* in the areas of Land Use and Zoning Law, Real Estate Law, and Real Estate Litigation.

Her background includes holding various positions as a City Planner in Florida and California, as well as Assistant General Counsel for the City of Jacksonville. She is a former President of the Florida Planning & Zoning Association (Northeast Chapter) and former Chair of the Jacksonville Bar Environmental and Land Use Law Section. Ms. Durden currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Florida Redevelopment Association and on the Management Committee for the Urban Land Institute North Florida District Council. Economic Development Trust Fund Advisory Committee, appointed by former Mayor John Peyton. Ms. Durden is a graduate of the University of Florida College of Law.

JEREMY EARLE, PH.D., AICP, FRA-RA



Mr. Earle is the Assistant City Manager and the Executive Director of the Hallandale Beach Community Redevelopment Agency for the City of Hallandale Beach. In addition to managing several departments in the city, he has managed overall several redevelopment projects, redevelopment programs and revitalization activities in the city. He is an award winning urban planner. Under his leadership, the CRAs that he managed won numerous awards for programs relating to sustainability, economic development and marketing. Mr. Earle is considered by many to be an expert in the fields of redevelopment and revitalization, and he has considerable experience working in both the public and private sectors.

MICHAEL ENGLISH, AICP



Mr. English is a corporate leader in community planning and redevelopment. He has an extensive background in urban redevelopment, transit planning, and sustainable growth planning. His career includes real estate development, community and comprehensive planning, and eminent domain litigation support. Michael is a committed community leader who in addition to other boards, serves on the Executive Committee for Tampa Downtown Partnership. He served on the Florida Redevelopment Association Board of Directors for six years.

Michael has also served as the Associate Director of the Florida Center for Urban Design & Research, as an associate professor on the faculty of the School of Architecture at the University of South Florida in Tampa, and as the Executive Director of the redevelopment association in the Channel District. He authored one of the first strategic plans for the Channel District and wrote several CRA and master plans for redevelopment districts in Tampa and surrounding areas.

Michael also led an effort to acquire Tampa's Historic Union Station from CSX Railroad. As a board member, he secured \$3.5 million in local, state, federal and Amtrak funds and managed its restoration and renovation. He served as an 11-year board member of the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission, including five times as Chairman, the President of the Board and Chairman of Tampa Historic Streetcar, Inc., and board member for 16 years, and eight-time President of the Tampa/Ybor Railway Society.

JULIE FIFE



Ms. Fife is a Long-Range Planner with the Polk County Board of County Commissioners. In this role she handles Comprehensive Plan Amendments, long range strategic projects and implementation, coordinates on County-wide Economic Development, and facilitates joint city/county growth management. Her previous role with the County was serving as the Community Redevelopment Coordinator over three CRA's. Julie has a combined 15 years of professional experience as a Disaster Community Redevelopment Manager, after Hurricane Katrina, served as a Business and Economic Consultant for the Department of Economic Opportunity and a Family Mental Health therapist.

She is a graduate of the Southeastern University in Lakeland, with a B.S in Psychology. She also holds a Master's in Leadership. She is finishing up at the University of Florida completing a Master's in Urban and Regional Planning. Julie is a current member of the American Planning Association and is graduating with her FRA-P Certification at the 2019 FRA Annual Conference. Julie resides in Lakeland with her husband and four amazing kids, is a coffee enthusiast, loves yoga and hiking and her happy place is in a hammock on the beach with a good book.

MELANIE URFF GABOARDI



Ms. Gaboardi is the Director of Community Development Services for the City of Ocala, Florida. Her responsibilities currently include management of Ocala's Economic Development Division, Community Programs Division and the City's Office of Homeless Prevention. She has experience in finance, human resources, risk management, procurement and over 25 years in contract and grant administration for the private sector as well as local, state and federal funding including CDBG, SHIP and the 2018 EPA Brownfields Assessment grant. She held positions in the manufacturing, retail, healthcare, non-profit, state education, and local government sectors and is familiar with the nuances of the diverse needs of each. Ms. Gaboardi holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Central Florida and a Master's degree in Business Administration from Webster University.

CECILIA GAYLE, CRP, MBA, PLA



Ms. Gayle is the Senior Landscape Architect for Waldrop Engineering, a Tampa based company that provides planning, civil engineering and landscape architecture services. Raised in south Louisiana, 11th of 12 children, she learned to be a steward of nature, and her love for horticulture from her farmer father. This influenced her decision to pursue her passion in design & construction through landscape architecture. She graduated from Louisiana State University with a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture and later followed with a Master of Business Administration from Florida Institute of Technology. She began her professional practice in West Palm

Beach, settled in Destin and 6 years ago, set roots in Tampa. Cecilia has accumulated 30+ years of private and public-sector experience in Landscape Architecture, Planning and Urban Design, now proudly practicing as a Senior Landscape Architect with the Waldrop Engineering, Tampa team. In 2013, Cecilia discovered the Florida Redevelopment Association – realizing that CRA’s bring together her education & experience, love for revitalization, transformation of spaces and rebuilding communities. Cecilia is currently an active member of the Florida Redevelopment Association and chairs the FRA Academy Committee. In addition to advocating in her profession realm, Cecilia is passionate about her family, plants and pets. You will either find her creating a “food forest” in her backyard, playing with her pups, or traveling to visit with her brothers or sisters living throughout the United States.

WENDY GREY, AICP



WENDY GREY, AICP, was managing member of Wendy Grey Land Use Planning LLC, from 2002 to 2018. She worked with local governments on comprehensive plan and code assessments. She also worked with developers seeking entitlements, particularly in the areas of compatibility and Comprehensive Plan consistency.

Ms. Grey was planning director of the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department for ten years. She has a bachelor’s degree in environmental studies from the State University of New York at Binghamton and a master’s degree in regional planning from Cornell University and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners. She currently volunteers with several local organizations, including neighborhood advocacy groups.

FRANK L. HEARNE



Mr. Hearne is a shareholder in the firm of Mechanik Nuccio Hearne & Wester, P.A., in Tampa, Florida where he practices exclusively environmental law. In addition to his legal credentials, Mr. Hearne holds an B.S. degree in engineering focused on water resources and a master's degree in zoology focused on aquatic and estuarine ecology. Mr. Hearne's engineering and scientific training enables him to better comprehend the many technical aspects of his work such as geohydrology, complex organic chemistry and other topics. A substantial portion of his legal practice for over 35 years has been to advise public and private clients in transactions involving contaminated sites, including any aspect involving clean up, negotiations, agreements, insurance and mitigation.

GAIL HAMILTON



Ms. Hamilton is the CRA Director in Zephyrhills, Florida, and the current President of the Florida Redevelopment Association. Her experience with CRAs in large and small programs, Main Street programs, and other types of revitalization efforts have made her a recognized expert in Florida. In her year as President, the FRA is taking on several big projects to improve value to members, and her leadership in the legislative arena in 2019 was key to the successful passage of a bill supportive of CRAs. This is the second term that Ms. Hamilton has been elected to as the President of the FRA, and she has served in a leadership role in the Florida Main Street Program for many years.

TERI HASBROUCK, B.S., M.S. CERTIFIED PUBLIC MANAGER



Ms. Hasbrouck is the Pinellas County Environmental Program Coordinator. Teri develops and manages programs and operations of county-wide initiatives affecting both the public and private sectors of Pinellas County. She serves as program manager to coordinate and develop environmental regulatory programs, monitoring their effectiveness within the area of environmental impacts and compliance. Teri directs program administration, develops and maintains interagency and community partnerships, advisory boards, and interacts with the public on sensitive issues. She manages County-owned contaminated properties and the

County Brownfield Program. She works collaboratively with other County departments to provide expertise on property purchases and sales and insures that County-owned properties comply with state and federal regulations. Additionally, she works on special projects that require the development of strategies and plans to meet federal and state environmental regulatory requirements that apply to County assets and operations.

TYLER HUDSON



Mr. Hudson is a transactions attorney with experience representing clients in the acquisition, disposition, development, financing and leasing of commercial real estate, as well as mergers and acquisitions, private securities offerings and general business transactions. Tyler also practices in the areas of land use/zoning, alcoholic beverage licensing, and government relations.

Prior to joining the firm, Tyler was an associate at Holland & Knight LLP, where he practiced in both the corporate and real estate transactional groups. He was also a consultant with a public affairs firm in Washington, D.C. where he managed integrated government relations campaigns for multinational corporations and trade associations in the aviation, pharmaceutical and reinsurance industries. He is a University of Florida law graduate, J.D. magna cum laude, and graduated from the George Washington University with a bachelor's degree in philosophy.

In 2018, Tyler served as the Chairman of All for Transportation, the historic citizen-led campaign to fund county transportation improvements. The successful campaign collected over 77,000 citizen petitions, raised over \$3 million, and passed with 57% of the vote. He serves on the boards of the Tampa Downtown Partnership and the Tampa Heights Civic Association and is a member of the Urban Land Institute.

CHRIS JADICK



Mr. Jadick joined TBARTA as Director of Communications this past April. Prior to that he had a long career in television news, including News Director at WFTS ABC Action News, Executive Producer at WTVT Fox-13, and Director of Sports for Bright House Sports Network. Among his journalism honors are three regional Emmy awards as a news producer and news writer. Chris was also VP of Communications and Marketing for Tampa-based Salem Enterprise Solutions. A native

of Ohio, he earned bachelor's degrees in Journalism and Telecommunications from Kent State University and a master's degree in Strategic Communications from the University of S. Florida. He and his wife, Angie Moreschi, live in Lutz, with daughters Gia attending Duke University and Mica attending Boston University.

CHERRY P. JOCHUM



Ms. Jochum is the Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator Philanthropy Advisor for FEMA National Disaster Recovery Support. She is currently serving the North Florida area under the DR-4399-Florida Integrated Recovery Coordination (IRC) program.

Skilled at identifying opportunities, creating partnerships, and maximizing resources, she spent the last 14 years immersed in recovery and rebuilding efforts with DHS/FEMA, the American Red Cross and other organizations active in disasters. Ms. Jochum held FEMA contracting officer's technical representative (COTR) certification and has years of FEMA in-field and classroom trainings. She monitored Federal and State grantees to ensure accountability and transparency of millions of recovery dollars. She has broad program and staff management experience. She is active on the local and national community and serves on the board for several organizations. She is an FQS Qualified Public Assistance Project Specialist, Individual Assistance Specialist, Surge Capacity Force Specialist and Human Resources Specialist.

Ms. Jochum has significant fundraising (development) experience in proposal writing, annual reports, and grant appeals. Currently serving in Florida for the Hurricane Michael long term recovery as the Philanthropy Advisor to the Federal Disaster Coordinator, her job is to increase efficiency and coordination during the ongoing recovery duration between the federal government and philanthropic organizations in order to improve recovery efforts.

Prior roles in both university and nonprofit settings required her active engagement on committees and community boards. She has taken the lead for public relations and communication efforts and provided presentations to employers and associations on the topics of employee retention and recruitment and fund development. In NW Florida, she was the founding development director for Early Childhood Services, Inc., a multi-million-dollar public/private partnership providing childcare resource and referral services and quality child care in nationally accredited child development environments to sixteen NW Florida counties. She spearheaded philanthropy efforts that spanned the agency volunteer board of directors and the Tallahassee Legislature. She wrote and co-wrote numerous Federal, State and consortium grants for numerous nonprofit organizations. Ms. Jochum was instrumentally responsible for a federal-state-local partnership which brought quality childcare to Graceville, Florida, a Federal EZ Zone.

Ms. Jochum was deeply involved in both state and federal efforts post the twin disasters of Katrina and Rita. She was able to foster essential relationships among a diverse group of colleagues representing federal, state and local agencies. Ms. Jochum served as the Deputy Regional Director for the presidentially mandated Office of the Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding (OFC). She was boots on the ground for the Gulf Coast states (LA, TX and MS). At OFC, Ms. Jochum coordinated rebuilding efforts for local governments and ensured participation from key community and business stakeholders. Her role was instrumental in tracking hurricane recovery funds to expedite and investigate delays in funding for critical infrastructure projects. She served the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice through the Department of Justice to stand up the Hurricane Criminal Justice Infrastructure Recovery Grant Program Office. Ms. Jochum was responsible for designing the grant program which serves as one of the largest Federal hurricane recovery grants in the nation to restart and rebuild the criminal justice system. Her work was instrumental in facilitating the on-going rebuilding efforts for the State of Louisiana's law enforcement infrastructure.

Ms. Jochum is experienced in business start-up and ownership, recruiting, contracting, proposal and program and project design/management. Other skills include sales and marketing, public relations, and human services. Ms. Jochum was the founder and principal partner with an Cahill Rose, an executive search firm conducting national search assignments for public and private company clients.

JOHN M. JONES, AICP, CRP, FRA-RP



Mr. Jones is a Project Manager for S&ME, Inc. His specialization is in planning and consulting in community redevelopment and economic development. With over 20 years of experience in the field, Mr. Jones has facilitated the establishment, expansion, extension and day to day operations of several Community Redevelopment agencies in Central Florida including the Seminole County US17-92 CRA; the City of Sanford CRA and the City of Oviedo CRA. He has authored numerous Finding of Necessity Studies, CRA Redevelopment Plan updates and amendments for CRA's throughout the State of Florida.

Mr. Jones' career began as a public-sector planner focusing on land use and economic development planning and programming. The past 16 years of his private sector career have enabled him to continue his work with public sector CRA's. Mr. Jones has participated in private sector redevelopment planning, developing business assistance programming, developer matchmaking, the preparation of developer/development RFQs/RFPs and solicitations, the creation of Memorandums of Understanding, negotiation of Developer's Agreement for community redevelopment projects and preparation of retail market studies and economic and fiscal impact report.

EVAN JOHNSON, AICP, LEED AP, FRA-RP



Mr. Johnson is the Business Development Manager for Pinellas County. Mr. Johnson has worked with Florida communities on a wide variety of projects across the state for the past ten years, public and private sector. He is a committed historic preservationist, an urban design and mobility-oriented urban planner, and he has special experience in the critical interplay of land use and transportation. He received his bachelor's degree and master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the Florida State University. He was awarded Young Planner of the Year in 2008 by the American Planning Association, and Planner of the Year by the American Planning Association Florida Sun Coast Section in 2008. He serves on the Board of Directors, Friends of Tampa Union Station, Inc., and was elected President in 2014, as well as the Board of the Florida Redevelopment Association.

KAREN KRESS, AICP, LCI



Ms. Kress is the Director of Transportation and Planning at the Tampa Downtown Partnership. Karen serves as the Director of Transportation and Planning at the Tampa Downtown Partnership. In her role, Karen manages all aspects of transportation, parking and access throughout Downtown Tampa. A true advocate for transit and transportation, Karen leads Tampa Downtown Partnership's Transportation and Urban Design Committees, and its Parking Task Force. Karen has been successful in advocating for and bringing transportation options such as Coast bike share, ZipCar carshare, and Downtowner – an app-based electric ride service.

An avid biker, Karen helped found Tampa BayCycle (now called Bike Walk Tampa Bay), a regional cycling education, advocacy and encouragement campaign in 2007 and for over twenty years she has actively volunteered for the Sierra Club's Inspiring Connections Outdoors program. Acknowledging her efforts, Karen was honored by the Suncoast Chapter of the American Planning Association Planner of the Year in 2014 and in 2017 she was appointed as a Planning Commissioner by the City of Tampa. She is also a certified League Cycling

Instructor (LCI) and can teach bike safety classes. Karen moved to Tampa in the mid-1990's and is raising her three children with her husband in their own little slice of paradise on the Hillsborough River.

CHARLES L. MAROHN, JR., PE, AICP



Charles is the Founder and President of Strong Towns. Marohn is the lead author of *Thoughts on Building Strong Towns — Volume 1, Volume 2 and Volume 3* — as well as the author of *A World Class Transportation System*. He hosts the Strong Towns Podcast and is a primary writer for Strong Towns' web content. He has presented Strong Towns concepts in hundreds of cities and towns across North America and in 2017 was named one of the 10 Most Influential Urbanists of all time by Planetizen. Marohn is a long-time commentator on KAXE Northern Community Radio. He currently co-hosts KAXE's Dig Deep program, a monthly examination of public policy issues affecting Minnesotans. Chuck grew up on a small farm in Central Minnesota. The oldest of three sons of two elementary school teachers, he joined the Minnesota National Guard on his 17th birthday during his junior year of high school and served for nine years. In addition to being passionate about building a stronger America, he loves playing music, is an obsessive reader and religiously follows his favorite team, the Minnesota Twins. Chuck and his wife live with their two daughters in their hometown of Brainerd, Minnesota.

LISA ANNE MIFFLIN, NBE | CRCM



District Community Affairs Officer
Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC)

Lisa provides CRA training, technical assistance and community development resources to banks, OCC examiners and other stakeholders in Florida, Oklahoma and NE Texas. Lisa also leads and participates in CRA examinations for banks throughout the country. She began her career with the OCC as a safety and soundness examiner; later specializing in anti-money laundering, consumer protection and CRA. She has also served in other capacities in the OCC including college recruiting, new examiner training and assignments in Large Bank Supervision, Compliance/CRA Policy and Problem Bank Supervision in Washington, D.C. Ms. Mifflin is a speaker for industry conferences and an instructor for OCC CRA workshops for examiners and bank directors. She also represents the OCC on the advisory board for the Hillsborough County Schools Academy of Finance, a program that provides financial education, job shadowing and financial internships to high school students. Lisa is a graduate of the University of South

Florida (USF) with a Master of Public Administration, Bachelor of Science in Finance, and Certificate in Urban Studies. In 2017, Lisa completed the USF Community Real Estate Development program.

GIOVANNI MOSS



Mr. Moss has worked as a housing & community development, redevelopment, and disaster recovery professional for the past 15 plus years. He has a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Nova Southeastern University and Bachelor's Degree in Public Management from Florida Atlantic University. In his professional capacity he has held multiple position including Community Redevelopment Director, Housing & Community Development Director, and Community Development Director. He has also served on the Board of Directors of the National & Florida Community Development Associations and is the former Chair of the South Florida Community Land Trust.

Giovanni has extensive experience working with Federal, State, and TIF funded programs. This experience includes the comprehensive management of redevelopment initiatives, economic development programs, a myriad of disaster recovery programs, and large-scale capital improvement projects. He is a proud graduate of the Florida Redevelopment Association Academy and a certified CDBG practitioner with extensive experience in administering and ensuring compliance of federal disaster recovery funds.

During his career, Mr. Moss has directly managed over 120 million in CDBG-DR recovery funds, over 40 million in federal (CDBG, NSP, HOME) funds and \$30+ million in annual CRA operating and capital budgets. As a CRA Director, he negotiated and secured over \$100 million in private development investment in three (3) years and managed extensive capital infrastructure projects.

He currently holds the position of Project Manager with Innovative Emergency Management and works as a subject expert to the State Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO).

TONY OTTE, CEcD, FRA-RA



Mr. Otte is the CRA and Economic Development Manager for the City of New Smyrna Beach. He is a current FRA Board Member and has over 30 years of redevelopment & economic development experience - as a City Manager; CRA and Economic Development Director. His commercial realtor experience has spanned many years, and he maintains his Florida Real Estate Sales Associate license (voluntarily inactive). He managed a family construction business, is a IEDC Certified Economic Developer and a FRA Florida Redevelopment Administrator. He has a master's degree in Public Affairs from the University of Cincinnati and a bachelor's Degree, Thomas More College, Crestview Hills, Kentucky.

AMY PALMER



Ms. Palmer is the Community Development Director for the City of Auburndale, a position she has held since 2012. The Community Development Department issues building permits, works with developers and property owners on land development issues, and oversees the City's economic development activities. Prior to working for the City of Auburndale, she practiced economic development with the Central Florida Development Council, Polk County's economic development agency. Amy obtained her undergraduate degree with a double major in Political Science and Sociology from Catawba College in Salisbury, NC. She has a Master of Science Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Florida State University. She has been a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners since 2005. She is also past-chair for the Heart of Florida Section of the Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association. Amy and her husband Andy live in Winter Haven where she enjoys entertaining family and friends, swimming, cooking, and trying to keep up with her active daughter.

MATTHEW PETTY



Matthew is a city planner and real estate developer who has also been elected three times to the Fayetteville City Council. Matthew has a deep understanding of American zoning and development codes and infrastructure planning processes. He has facilitated numerous public hearings and stakeholder engagement efforts, and his first mixed-use project as an owner-developer is under construction.

Matthew was a grant writer and development associate for four years at the University of Arkansas Community Design Center, a professional urban design and architecture program which has earned more than 100 national and international awards for its urban designs, storm water solutions, and scenario plans. Matthew's time at UACDC has provided him a keen sense of how to overcome obstacles to project funding and site development. Serving his ninth year on the Fayetteville City Council, Matthew is Chair of the Transportation Committee as well as the city's tourism agency, where he orients infrastructure and marketing budgets towards Fayetteville's broader strategies.

Matthew's experience has taught him how to identify and overcome barriers to missing middle development and placemaking. He believes cities can build local wealth and restore neighborhoods by leveling the playing field for appropriate infill projects.

Matthew holds undergraduate degrees in Mathematics and Political Science from the University of Arkansas.

WALLACE REYES, PHD



Dr. Reyes is a social anthropologist, historian, researcher and author, with over 39 years of research work, and seven history books published. His goal is "to help preserve our heritage and keep our history legacy alive via education". He is a member of the Certification Board for the University of Florida in Gainesville, V.P. of the Gonzalez Habano Cigar Company in Tampa, Tour Director of the Cigar Industry History Tours and a member of the Ybor City Ambassador Program. He also works as a volunteer with the Ybor City Museum, as historian advisor, and Docent at the Plant Museum, in Tampa. He has been a member of the Florida Anthropological Society (since 1990).

Dr. Reyes is a Grand Master Cigar Maker, with two Guinness Worlds Records in 2006 & 2009, as well as the World's Longest Cigar Record, (196' ft. 3 3/8" inches) long, and for the first time in the U.S.A. (2009) He is the author of the following bilingual books (English and Spanish) in paper and digital format: "Once Upon a Time in Tampa"; "Cigar City Architecture and Legacy"; "Florida, Frontier Territory" & "The Golden Era of the Cigar Industry".

He was graduated from the University of Puerto Rico, with an Associate Degree in Business Administration, a degree of a bachelor and master's in Philosophy, and a dual Doctorate Degree in Philosophy & History, from the University of Alcala de Henares, Spain. As a social anthropologist he obtained a post graduate degree in American History from the University of Florida.

C.J. REYNOLDS



Ms. Reynolds is the Director of Resilience and Engagement for the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council. She is also the staff lead for the Tampa Bay Regional Resilience Coalition, which was formed in 2018 and currently includes 28 local governments. CJ has more than 25 years of experience working with scientists, local governments, professional associations, agencies and the private sector to identify and address emerging risks through innovative research and training partnerships. As the Resilience Coalition lead, she works with elected officials and staff to support integration of resilience strategies into all departments and plans. From 2011 to 2018, CJ was a researcher at the University of South Florida College of Marine Science, where she developed and coordinated federal grant research projects involving local governments to assess attitudes related to risk, adaptation strategies and municipal finance. Prior to moving to Florida, CJ was the Director of Industry Education at Merieux NutriSciences, a global food testing and consulting company, where she led the development of technical services and training for new food safety regulations and standards. She has also served as the director of public relations for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. CJ has a Bachelor of Science degree from Northern Illinois University.

BELINDA RICHARD



Ms. Richard is Terracon's National Brownfields Program Manager and has over 20 years of environmental experience with the past 14 years dedicated to the brownfields program. She has assisted more than 50 brownfield programs in implementing over \$30 million dollars of federal brownfields grant funding. Her experience includes grant development, project management, grant compliance and reporting, community outreach, Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs), budget management, brownfield inventories, environmental site assessments, remedial planning, grant closeouts, cleanup oversight, brownfield incentives and Brownfield Site Rehabilitation Agreements (BSRAs).

Ms. Richard has assisted clients in securing EPA Grant funding and every aspect of the brownfields grant lifecycle ensuring compliance with EPA Terms and Conditions of the grant. She works closely with communities in obtaining funding, developing their programs, leveraging local incentives and implementing successful redevelopment. In addition, Ms. Richard works closely with the EPA Brownfields administration, and is an experienced negotiator with the regulatory community. Ms. Richard started her career as an environmental regulator for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection; and has a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Engineering from the University of Florida.

PATRICIA ROBERTS



Ms. Roberts is a CPA with a degree in Art History and interests in architecture and the historic use of public spaces. After a stint in public accounting, she found her way to the City of Jacksonville Beach, where she worked as the Budget Officer for 15 years before becoming the Deputy City Manager. She was fortunate to work for a City Manager who believed in continuous learning and with co-workers who liked to work in teams. Her relevant experience includes conducting financial and internal audits; developing audit work papers, preparing the City's Comprehensive Annual Report and budgets; and developing its communications plan.

KATHYRN B. ROSSMELL



Ms. Rossmell's practice focuses on land use, environmental, local government and natural resources law. She represents private clients on land use matters; public and private clients on natural resources permitting issues and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance issues; practices civil litigation for public and private clients; and represents and advises public clients as general and special counsel, including legal analysis of special assessment methodology.

Kathryn received her J. D., cum laude, and a B.A., magna cum laude, from the University of Florida. She is graduated from Leadership Palm Beach County and is their General Counsel. The Past President of the Florida Association of Environmental Professionals, Treasure Coast Chapter, and a board member of the FAU Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, Kathryn also is a committee member of Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies' Moments Committee. She was admitted to practice in the United States District Courts for the Middle and Southern Districts of Florida, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia and is a member of the Florida Bar Environmental and Land Use Law Section, City County and Local Government Law Section, Administrative Law Section, and the Young Lawyers Division. She is also a member of the Palm Beach County bar, the Palm Beach County Planning Congress, and Florida Brownfields Association and the FRA.

ZACHARY SCHWARTZ



Originally from Tampa, Mr. Schwartz is a senior GIS and information systems analyst with the City of Palmetto's Community Redevelopment Agency. He is an ardent student of history and how it shapes communities and their growth. He graduated from University of Florida with a Bachelor's in Anthropology focusing on Archaeology. He earned his graduate certificate in GIS from the University of South Florida, and a Master's in Professional Studies in Information Sciences – Cybersecurity, and Information Assurance from Penn State. He was awarded the GISCI GISP certification in November of 2014. He also has post baccalaureate certificates including Information Systems Security & Geographic Information Systems.

TONI SHAMPLAIN, FRA-RA



Toni Shamplain is the Downtown North CRA Manager with the City of Panama City CRA. She is also the President Elect of the Florida Redevelopment Association and holds the designation of Florida Redevelopment Administrator through the FRA Academy.

Prior to her current position Ms. Shamplain was the Main Street Manager with the Downtown Improvement Board where she not only served as Main Street Manager but also was responsible for 3 of the 4 CRAs administered by the DIB. Additionally, she was the first Director for the Panama City CRA as a stand-alone agency that later merged with the City of Panama City. Ms. Shamplain holds a bachelor's degree from

Bethune Cookman University and has earned various Certifications in Management, Outcome Evaluations, Human Resources, as well as a Certificate of Appreciation from the Executive Office of the United States President, Washington D.C.

Toni's areas of expertise include not only community revitalization and redevelopment, but design and implementation of substance abuse treatment programs, designing group homes for children as well as the elderly; primary health care; criminal justice and corrections; information officer for a computer software design corporation, and working in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Ms. Shamplain also has expertise in System Analysis, Budgets, Public Policy, Faith Based Organizations and Not for Profits, etc.

Ms. Shamplain has worked effectively within various levels of government to include city, state and federal government. She is also a former Instructor with the Georgia Schools of Substance Abuse Studies, a Visiting Professor for Historical Black Colleges, adjunct professor Daytona Beach State College, Guest Lecturer at Georgetown University, and a National Motivational Speaker. Ms. Shamplain has been featured on National TV (CBS) for her advocacy and program success in Miami Florida while also being a contributing author with the Child Welfare League of America. Shamplain recently graduated from Rowlett Real Estate School and is preparing to take the state examination.

CLIFFORD B. SHEPARD



Mr. Shepard is the general counsel of the Florida Redevelopment Association. Mr. Shepard serves in a city attorney capacity to several cities in Florida. He also serves as the General Counsel for the Florida Redevelopment Association and is a certified Circuit Court mediator.

He obtained his undergraduate degree in journalism (News Writing and Editing) and graduated law school from the University of Florida, where he was a member of the Trial Competition Team, Managing Editor of *The Verdict* student newspaper, and a member of the law school's student government.

Cliff's practice developed in the areas of local government law, complex commercial litigation, real estate development, insurance defense and construction law, as well as homeowner and condominium association representation, an area he developed after serving as association president to a 2400 home development in Seminole County. In 1995, Cliff attained the AV rating from Martindale-Hubbell, and is listed in the *Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers*®. Cliff practices and mediates extensively in the areas of government law, employment, defense, real estate, construction law, complex commercial litigation and community association law. He is Board Certified by The Florida Bar in City, County and Local Government Law.

Cliff has been honored by Florida Trend Magazine as one of Florida's *Legal Elite*™ (2005-2009) in the areas of Governmental and Administrative Law and Commercial Litigation. Each year the magazine names a new group of top lawyers who have earned the confidence of those who know their work the best. Attorneys and judges throughout Florida were asked to name lawyers whom they hold in the highest regard - lawyers they have worked with or would recommend to others. The *Legal Elite*™ represent the top 1.7% of the 56,513 Florida Bar members who practice in the state. Cliff was also named a "*Florida Super Lawyers*" (2005-2010) by Law & Politics Magazine. "*Florida Super Lawyers*" is a consumer's guide to the best attorneys in the state.

Community service has also been a staple of Cliff's personal and professional life. He has served as a member of the Land Planning Agency for the City of Oviedo and as a member of the Board of Directors of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Central Florida. He has also served as the Chairman of the Board for *Kids Beating Cancer, Inc.*, a multiple award-winning local charity that assists families touched by childhood cancer through the recruitment, DNA testing and matching of potential bone marrow donors to patients whose best hope for a cure is a bone marrow transplant. Cliff also serves as a court appointed *guardian-ad-litem* to children who have been abused, abandoned or neglected by their parents.

JAMES H. "JIM" SHIMBERG, JR.



Mr. Shimberg is the Executive Vice President for Legal and External Affairs for Strategic Property Partners, LLC, the developers of the Water Street Tampa project. He joined Strategic Property Partners in December 2013 as Executive Vice President and General Counsel. In addition to his role with SPP, Mr. Shimberg also serves as

General Counsel for Tampa Bay Sports & Entertainment, the parent company for the Tampa Bay Lightning, and Amalie Arena.

Mr. Shimberg previously spent two years as the City Attorney for the City of Tampa where he ran the city's legal department, advised City Council, and served as Senior Advisor to Mayor Bob Buckhorn. Prior to working for the City of Tampa, Mr. Shimberg practiced privately at the firm Holland & Knight for 26 years where he spent three years as the executive partner of the Tampa office. His private practice focused on land use, zoning, local government, and real estate development.

He is a graduate of the University of Florida and the University of Florida's College of Law. Mr. Shimberg also currently serves on the Board of the Tampa Hillsborough Homeless Initiative and the James & Amy Shimberg Foundation.

GERALD SNELL



Mr. Snell is a current member of the Avon Park CRA, and Chairman of the Southside CRA in Avon Park, Florida. He has been active with the Florida Redevelopment Association as the chairperson of the diversity session at the annual conference for several years. His involvement with numerous community projects over the years have earned him local accolades, most notably the post Hurricane Irma effort. He received an award from the Board of County Commissioners as well as the local newspaper.

He is currently the CEO and Founder of Optimum Outreach, as well as Sheppard-Snell Funeral Consultants. He was formerly employed as Assistant Administrator for the COMSIS Corp/Transportation for the Disadvantaged. He is a graduate of Avon Park Sr. High School, and South Florida State College.

RICHARD STAUTS



Mr. Stauts is the Executive Director of the Florida City Community Redevelopment Agency. A native Texan, he graduated from Stephen F. Austin University with a BBA. Rick moved to Morgan City, Louisiana, working for the Credit Bureau for nine years, then the First National Bank. In 1987, Rick moved to Florida with First American Bank in Tallahassee. In 1989, Rick became an Economic Development Specialist and later, Planning Manager with the State of Florida Community Development Block Grant Program.

Since 2003, Rick has been the CRA Executive Director in two cities, Homestead until 2007, and Florida City from 2007 to present. Rick served two five-year terms on the Florida Redevelopment Association Board of Directors, serves on the FRA

Nominating Committee, and is the Past Chairman of the FRA Academy Committee. Rick has presented at conferences and workshops for such groups as the Florida League of Cities, Florida Redevelopment Association, Florida Economic Development Council, Florida Community Development Association, Florida Housing Coalition, Florida Main Street, FEMA, and US HUD.

KEN THOMAS



Mr. Thomas is the Director of Housing & Redevelopment for the City of Leesburg. He has served local governments for over 30 years; most of his work experience has involved redevelopment of neighborhoods. He is currently the Director of Housing & Redevelopment for the City of Leesburg; Ken has been employed with the City of Leesburg for 17 years. Prior to Leesburg, Ken worked at the City of Delray Beach and Orange County Government; he holds a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Central Florida and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Historic Bethune Cookman University.

Ken has dedicated his professional life to redeveloping neighborhoods; providing affordable housing, small business development and job creation. Ken created the first Business Incubator in Lake County (known as the Leesburg Business Incubator). He has been responsible for local governments receiving millions of dollars in grant funds for housing and redevelopment efforts. Ken was responsible for renovating an apartment complex utilizing grant funding, which resulted in the first housing incubation program focused on providing temporary housing to individuals who desired to become first time homebuyers. Most recently, Mr. Thomas has been responsible for the first Resource Center in Lake County. Ken is a Board Member of the Florida Redevelopment Association, Central Florida Health Foundation Board Chairman, and the Leesburg High School Power Academy Advisory Board and Lake County Housing Advisory Board. Ken has been married to his wife (Maria) for 29 years and they have four children.

BRENDA THROWER



Ms. Thrower is the Economic Development Specialist for the Ybor City Development Corporation, Economic and Urban Development Department, City of Tampa. She serves on the Florida Redevelopment Association Board of Directors. She manages, plans, and promotes economic development initiatives for Ybor City's two

Community Redevelopment Areas. As your tour guide of the Ybor Walking Tour, Brenda is reprising her much sought-after role of bringing history, economic development and Ybor to life.

DAVID N. TOLCES, B.C.S.



Mr. Tolces is a Board-Certified City, County, Local Government Lawyer and a Shareholder with the firm of Goren, Cherof, Doody & Ezrol, P.A., in Fort Lauderdale, and Delray Beach, Florida. His practice includes governmental law, commercial transactions, real estate, and environmental matters. Currently David serves as legal counsel for the Delray Beach, Lake Worth Beach, and the Margate Community Redevelopment Agencies. Mr. Tolces also represents municipalities and other governmental agencies in Broward and Palm Beach Counties, including the Broward County Housing Authority, the Deerfield Beach Housing Authority, the Dania Beach Housing Authority, the Hillsboro Inlet District, and the City of Doral Charter Review Commission. Mr. Tolces has served as Special Counsel for the Port Canaveral District Charter Review Committee, and as General Counsel to the Brevard County Charter Review Commission. His private practice includes representing clients in real estate, land use, administrative, and civil litigation matters that are an outgrowth of acquiring, selling, or owning real estate in Florida. He received his B.S. in Geological Sciences from the University of Texas at Austin in 1986, and his J.D. from the University of Florida College of Law in 1989. Mr. Tolces is certified by the Florida Bar in City, County, and Local Government Law.

JUSTIN WILLITS



Mr. Willits joined the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) in May of 2019 as a Senior Planner in the Service Development Department. He previously worked as a consultant for Tampa-based Tindale Oliver for 6 years. Prior to coming to Tampa, he supported the Transit Task Force planning a Bus Rapid Transit Network for Montgomery County, MD while completing his master's in urban and Regional Planning from The University of Florida. His professional career has been focused transit operations planning, multi-modal Complete Streets and developing Transit Master Plans for various agencies throughout the southeast. His primary role at HART is overseeing day-to-day service planning, project development, the management of short-and-long-range

planning, and inter-agency coordination to enhance multi-modal transportation systems throughout the region. He and his wife both prefer commuting by bike or transit, and he currently sits on the Livable Roadways Committee of the Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization.

MICHAEL ZAHARIOS



As a third-generation entrepreneur, Mr. Zaharios' passion for innovation started at a young age while spending afternoons learning about business from his dad and grandfather at their automotive repair shop in Daytona Beach. While earning a bachelor's degree and MBA, he helped lay the groundwork for the inception of the Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center. He oversees this organization, which has grown into an online network and educational resource for entrepreneurs across Florida's 67 counties. He is passionate about giving back to the community through volunteering, and facilitating events such as 1 Million Cups, Kickstart Weekend and Startup Grind.

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