

EDUCATION

Florida International University, Miami, FL (1995 to 2002)

December 2002: Graduated, Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration (GPA: 3.88).

Fields of study: Policy analysis, sustainability of urban systems, economic development, Geographic Information Systems, evaluation research, and performance measures.

Dissertation Title: [Fiscal and Organizational Determinants of Transportation Outcomes: A Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis of Sustainability Factors.](#)

Major Professor: Dr. Howard Frank

Accelerated Ph.D. program: Awarded Masters of Public Administration, April 2000.

Awarded a \$15,000 HUD Doctoral Dissertation Grant (2000-2002),

Awarded a \$500 Scholarship from the Berlin Foundation (1998).

University of Wisconsin at Madison (Fall 1986 to Spring 1991)

Bachelor of Arts May 1991. Graduated with honors, with a double major in Sociology and Spanish. Awarded the William F. Vilas Scholarship, 1986. Additionally attended several courses at the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay (Fall 1986—concurrent high school credit, and Summer 1987).

Universidad de Sevilla, Spain (Fall 1989 to Spring 1990)

Immersion in Spanish through a year abroad with the Council for International Educational Exchange.

Selected Training in Economic Development and Grant Work

- Texas Department of Transportation: Local Government Projects Coordination (certified since 2012)
- Texas Municipal League: Grant Writing (2014)
- Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX): Basic Economic Development Course (2015)
- Census: Census Data for Grant Writers (2017)
- University of Texas at Austin: IC2 Institute - Regional XLR8 Program (2020)
- Bastrop Chamber of Commerce: B.E.S.T. Leadership Training (2021-22)
- Additional educational experiences through conferences/convenings, such as: International Economic Development Council (IEDC), Texas Economic Development Council (TEDC), Texas Downtown Association (TDA), Stand Up Rural America, Texas Municipal League (TML), and Opportunity Austin.
- Proficient in Economic Development software tools including [Placer.ai](#) and Global Site Locator Industries (GSLI), as well as Microsoft Office, Canva, Asana, BaseCamp, SeeMyLegacy, etc.

PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

City of Smithville

Population about 4,000, located in the heart of rural Texas

Director, Economic Development/Grants Administration January 2021-present

Provide training opportunities for community development and capacity building for people in this rural area. Develop various plans and documents related to economic development and public participation. Continue to find resources for the City and for the community. Implement programming related to community development and infrastructure improvement. For example: Support workforce development through Career Tracks (formerly Smithville Workforce Training Center) and the Business Support Center (Innovation Center); nurture Cultural District activities including projects funded through the Texas Commission on the Arts; build sidewalks for connectivity in this small town as well as other infrastructure projects (drainage, wastewater).

As of August, 2025: Over 400 grants have been submitted since 2009, with an overall success rate of 58% yielding over \$23M in resources to this community.

Grants Administrator February 2009 to 2021

Responsible for developing strong partnerships and collaborating with various local, county, state, and national agencies and organizations to improve the quality of life for residents in Smithville and Bastrop County by seeking the means of bringing more recognition and resources, monetary and otherwise.

City of Smithville Milestones at a Glance

Timeline	Activity
Feb 2009	Hired at the City of Smithville as the Grants Administrator (part time until 2011, then full time, salaried)
2013-2014	Led an Economic Development Committee to discuss Smithville's needs for economic development, culminating with the 2014 Economic Development Survey .
2015	Completed Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) "Basic Economic Development Course"
2017	Started attending Opportunity Austin and Austin Chamber of Commerce Regional Partners lunches, Quarterly Investors meetings, and other programs.
2020	With April Daniels (Chamber), managed grant activities related to the Economic Development Community Resiliency Strategic Plan as a partnership between the City and the Chamber through a planning grant from the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA).
Feb 2021	Promoted to Director of Economic Development & Grants Administration – includes supervision for the Community Engagement Coordinator.
July 2021	St. David's Foundation funded the first \$100K to establish the Smithville Workforce Training Center (SWTC), currently called "Career Tracks" and serves Bastrop, Fayette, and Lee Counties. Subsequent grant awards include an Economic Development Administration (EDA) Good Jobs Challenge grant award of over \$5M, a Texas Talent Connects grant of \$250K, and a St. David's Foundation grant for (\$2M total) towards Employment Pathways for the Health Care Workforce.
July 2021	St. David's Foundation funded the first two years of the Community Engagement Coordinator position including salary/fringe and programming dollars. Subsequently, the City Council added it permanently.
2023	Awarded a \$1M+ grant from the Texas Department of Agriculture for Implementation of a project connected to the 2020 Economic Development Plan – used to construct the Smithville Innovation Center.
2023	With April Daniels (then with the SWTC), contracted with Lorie Vincent (Acceleration by Design) to provide nearly monthly sessions about various aspects of economic development that were open to the public and recorded for future reference, especially for subsequent Comprehensive Plan activities.
2024-2026	Support with Langford Community Management Services (LCMS) on the current Comprehensive Plan, convening the Stakeholder Committee, scheduling Community Forums, gathering data from surveys, and providing editorial recommendations through the live Portal (https://langfordplanning.com/smithville-rpc).
2025	Awarded \$2.7M for the latest sidewalk project from Texas Department of Transportation, providing in total over \$7M for sidewalk infrastructure for people needing safe pedestrian passage. This and a TXDOT sidewalk at SH 95 will complete a circular route that will connect all parts of the City.

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

University of Texas, Austin

Public Policy Institute: Program Coordinator January 2006 to January 2011

Provided research and analysis for a variety of projects related to public policy in Texas, developed research instruments, and ran statistical models. Supervised five to six Research Associates each semester. Managed all aspects of Conference coordination, including booking the venue, arranging for catering, budgeting all expenses, and organizing transportation and lodging for attendees. Copy edited and formatted conference papers for academic publications and college text books.

Department of Government: Lecturer: January 2005 to 2007

Responsible for course design, textbook selection, syllabus development, exam preparation and other duties as required to teach undergraduate level courses: "Statistical Analysis in Political Science" (GOV 391L), and "State Politics and Public Policy" (GOV 335N).

Florida International University, Miami

Metropolitan Center: South Florida Regional Data Center (SFRDC):

Assistant Director: January 2004 to December 2004

Wrote grants and contracts for projects that funded staff and students for the Metropolitan Center. Sought funding, data sources, and partnerships to establish the SFRDC. Procured funding, coordinated tasks, supervised students, and wrote final reports for various projects, including several public participation outreach assignments for the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization, an affordable housing study for the City of Key West, a homelessness study for the City of Miami, and a community impact study of Punta Gorda after Hurricane Charlie.

Institute of Government: Metropolitan Center:

Senior Research Associate: Aug 2002 to Dec 2003 / **Research Associate:** Jan 1999 to Aug 2002

Both as a “Research Associate” and as “Senior Research Associate”: Worked with a team to write various grant applications for research projects. Generalist researcher assigned to multiple projects at both centers. Responsible for collection, manipulation, and analysis of data from multiple sources and in various formats. Sources ranged from electronic to hard copy and included demographic, socio-economic, health, financial, and law enforcement data. Used a variety of analysis techniques including statistical, geo-spatial, and qualitative techniques. In addition, as a “Senior Research Associate,” supervised up to 14 graduate and undergraduate students on various projects.

School of Policy and Management:

Visiting Professor: Aug 2002 to Dec 2004 / **Adjunct Faculty:** Apr 1998 to Aug 2000

As Visiting Professor: Prepared and taught master’s level courses “Quantitative Methods for Urban Research” (URS 6155), “Special Topics in Public Administration: The Sustainable City” (URS 4931), and undergraduate course “Introduction to Urban and Regional Issues” (URS 3001). As Adjunct Faculty: Prepared and taught master’s level course, “Applied Statistics for Urban Study” (URS 6155).

College of Urban and Public Affairs: Academic Advisor: August 1995 to December 1996

Responsible for advising undergraduate students enrolled in the departments of Criminal Justice, Health Services Administration, and Public Administration as to their programs of study, career opportunities, and other issues of their concern. Duties included various administrative responsibilities ranging from updating academic records to processing of graduation documentation. Streamlined paperwork processes, created brochures and informative materials, processed course schedules, and created Excel spreadsheet forms.

SELECTED VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Smithville Community Gardens

www.facebook.com/TheSmithvilleCommunityGardens/

Volunteer and Board Member: 2010-present (Secretary, 2019-present)

The Smithville Community Gardens was established in 2009 as an innovative way to turn vacant properties into productive land, creating park-like spaces where community members can go to meditate as they pull weeds and plant vegetables, where anyone can harvest the bounty of the produce, and where truant teens and adults needing community service hours can go to get mentorship and do some good, honest work with their hands to help them get on a better path. Work to ensure the success of this program through grants and fundraising efforts; as secretary, manage minutes and post them to Google Docs.

Smithville Empty Bowl Project

www.smithvilleemptybowl.org

Coordination and Logistics: 2011-present

The Empty Bowl idea for a fundraiser for food pantries started in Michigan in 1990. In 2011, three Smithville nonprofits came together to follow their example. The Lost Pines Artisans’ Alliance, the Smithville Food Pantry and the Smithville Community Gardens have been working this annual event ever since. In the past few years, the Angels Unaware school backpack program (providing backpacks full of food on Fridays for students who might otherwise go hungry on the weekend), and the Smithville Community Clinic have joined to make this program a full health and wellness project. Local restaurants donate soup. Students in the local school district create bowls for all guests to keep as a reminder of all the empty bowls in the world.

Lost Pines Artisans’ Alliance / Cultural District

www.lostpinesartisansalliance.org / www.facebook.com/SmithvilleCulturalDistrict

Cultural District Liaison for the City of Smithville: 2013-present

The Texas Commission on the Arts requires that a governmental agency partner with a local nonprofit arts organization to be designated a “cultural district” through their program. In September, 2013, Smithville's Richard D. Latham Cultural District became the 25th Cultural District in the state. As the City Liaison: keep records, apply for and manage grants, supervise projects like the Youth Banner program, the Historic Coloring Book, public engagement programming, Center renovation, and otherwise work to ensure the success of the District.

Smithville Education Foundation

www.smithvilleeducation.org/home

Board Member: 2017-2025 (Treasurer, 2021-2025)

The Smithville Education Foundation was established in 2010 after the Texas Legislature cut the local Independent School District’s budget by about 15% to provide assistance in the arts for younger ages and to provide funds for teachers through a grant program. Coordinated the Enrichment Days program, assisted with the Innovative Teaching Grant program, and as Treasurer, accountable for all payments and receivables.

Smithville Robotics Booster Club

www.facebook.com/FRC5503

Board Member: Secretary, 2021-2023

The Smithville Robotics Booster Club supports the Smithville High School Robotics Team in their efforts to teach students about teamwork, business basics, electronics, engineering, coding, and “coopertition” – the ability to be more competitive through cooperation. During this time, the team went to compete at State each year. As secretary, kept track of activities and efforts and posted minutes to Google Drive.

Smithville Area Chamber of Commerce

www.facebook.com/FRC5503

Board Member: 2017-2023 (Executive Board: 2019-2023)

Served on the Executive Board as Incoming Chair, Chair, and Outgoing Chair (2019-2021) and as Secretary (2022-2023). Also served as the co-chair for the Keep Smithville Beautiful and the Smithville Economic Development Committees. Worked to enhance member benefits through partnerships for an educational series with the Smithville Public Library; to provide funding through grants for a variety of projects, including COVID relief to businesses, wayfinding signage, and community education; and built partnerships with other organizations and local businesses. Assisted in a wide variety of events, including Festival of Lights, Airing of the Quilts, Annual Banquet, Music in the Park, and much more.

Grants Administration Summary – Awards: February 2, 2009-August 6, 2025

Fiscal Year	# Applications	# Awarded	Pending	% # Success Not Incl. Pending	Average #/Month
2008-2009 (part-time, Feb-Sep)	19.0	11.0	0	58%	2.4
2009-2010 (part time)	15.0	7.0	0	47%	1.3
2010-2011 (Veterans Park)	14.0	7.0	0	50%	1.2
2011-2012	28.0	14.0	0	50%	2.3
2012-2013	20.0	13.0	0	65%	1.7
2013-2014	37.0	21.0	0	57%	3.1
2014-2015	30.0	12.0	0	40%	2.5
2015-2016	32.0	21.0	0	66%	2.7
2016-2017	19.0	11.0	2	65%	1.6
2017-2018	32.0	23.0	0	72%	2.7
2018-2019 (Note 4)	34.0	16.5	0	49%	2.8
2019-2020	32.0	17.0	0	53%	2.7
2020-2021	27.5	11.8	0	43%	2.3
2021-2022 (Eco Devo added)	22.0	19.5	0	89%	1.8
2022-2023	15.0	6.5	0	43%	1.3
2023-2024	16.0	13.5	0	84%	1.3
2024-2025 (YTD)	17.0	8.0	7.5	84%	1.7
Total	409.5	232.75	9.5	58%	2.1

Grants Administration Summary – Funding: February 2, 2009-August 6, 2025

Fiscal Year	\$\$ Requested	\$\$ Awarded	% \$ Success	Average \$\$/Month	# Months
2008-2009 (part-time, Feb-Sep)	\$666,713	\$70,182	11%	\$8,773	8
2009-2010 (part time)	\$962,743	\$433,110	45%	\$36,093	12
2010-2011 (Veterans Park)	\$2,970,560	\$269,063	9%	\$22,422	12
2011-2012	\$4,856,327	\$453,414	9%	\$37,785	12
2012-2013	\$1,726,124	\$1,100,940	64%	\$91,745	12
2013-2014	\$4,617,534	\$3,884,813	84%	\$323,734	12
2014-2015	\$1,835,805	\$152,963	8%	\$12,747	12
2015-2016	\$722,384	\$763,924	106%	\$63,660	12
2016-2017	\$6,166,973	\$171,148	3%	\$14,262	12
2017-2018	\$3,095,394	\$242,016	8%	\$20,168	12
2018-2019	\$105,035,060	\$187,300	0.2%	\$15,608	12
2019-2020	\$1,488,931	\$3,489,689	234.4%	\$290,807	12
2020-2021	\$2,222,719	\$1,478,616	66.5%	\$123,218	12
2021-2022 (Eco Devo added)	\$9,037,889	\$6,273,480	69.4%	\$522,790	12
2022-2023	\$1,004,748	\$1,182,945	117.7%	\$98,579	12
2023-2024	\$1,152,677	\$392,600	34.1%	\$32,717	12
2024-2025 (YTD)	\$9,867,875	\$7,103,938	72.0%	\$710,394	10
Grand Total	\$157,430,457	\$27,650,141	18%	\$139,647	198
Total minus Withdrawn (Note 2)	\$157,430,457	\$23,030,579	15%	\$116,316	198

Notes to Grant Summary Tables

NOTE 1: Typically, it takes three to six months to find out whether the application was approved or denied. Some applications will be pending through to the following fiscal year. For example, in FY 2015-16, the amount of funding awarded exceeds the

amount of funding requested; several grants requested in FY 2014-15 were awarded in FY 2015-16, and three TXDOT projects requested in FY 2018-19 were awarded in FY 2019-20.

NOTE 2: *The CAMPO Award of \$3.4M for the SH95 project in FY2013-14 was returned due to issues related to costs and utilities. In 2018, our district TXDOT office was awarded funds for the project. The 2019 USDA Grant/Loan program of \$1.9M was withdrawn in 2020 because SB-1512 provides the legal means for the State to fund all utility costs, which was not possible previously. Currently, TXDOT is managing the project completely, and expects to break ground in January, 2026. This will ultimately mean over \$14M in infrastructure improvements to the area, which has happened because the City initiated the project through that grant program, making sure the need got on TXDOT's radar.*

NOTE 3: *In 2024-25, St. David's Foundation awarded two large grants to Bastrop County: 1) \$750,000 for the Housing + Health initiative, and 2) \$2,000,000 for the Pathways to Economic Stability for Healthcare Workers.. Although the City received \$15,000 and \$12,000 respectively for direct services related to grant management, benefits to the Smithville community are tremendous. The Housing + Health program will focus on providing needed housing options for the entire county, including current Smithville residents, potential new residents, developers, and property owners. The Pathways grant provides a majority of funding to Career Tracks, the workforce training center located in Smithville, and will benefit over 250 individuals and their families throughout Bastrop County.*

NOTE 4: *Several Two-Stage applications have been submitted since 2019. The first phase was considered "0.5" and the second phase was considered the other "0.5" so that the two phases together would equal one application. If the grant was denied in the second stage, it remains "half" approved. If both phases are approved, the grant is considered fully awarded and counts fully as one application.*

According to Google: *"What is a good grant writing success rate? ... (People are) often surprised to learn that on average, one in every 10 grant proposals is accepted. That's an average grant writing success rate. That means many grant writers have a lower grant writing success rate and many have a higher one."*

www.professionalgrantwriter.org/learn-rejected-grant-proposal