



Southern Methodist University



STAFF

Celebration & Convocation



OCTOBER 24, 2023

10:30AM

GEORGE W. BUSH INSTITUTE AUDITORIUM

Honoring staff excellence, new inductees of the 25+ Years of Service Club and staff award recipients

smu.edu/smusa

smusa@smu.edu



PRELUDE & PROCESSIONAL



Welcome



Amanda Bobo
Staff Association, President-Elect

Invocation



Lisa Garvin
Chaplain and Minister to the University

Introduction of Speakers



Christopher M. Ham
Staff Association, President

State of SMU Address



R. Gerald Turner
President of the University

Recognition of Staff



R. Gerald Turner
President of the University
Amanda Bobo, Christopher M. Ham,
Staff Association Executive Board Members

Twenty-Five Year Club Inductees

John Blank
Jared T. Calkins
Karie A. Conklin
Peter Franklin Davis
Steven B. Denson
Manuel Richard Diaz
Pamela Kay Fincher

Cindy L. Havens
Erich Emil Heise
Steven Scott Lake
Bobbie Lay
Cruz Lopez
Michael Morton
Janey C. Rodriguez

Deborah L. Rozier
Rebecca Kay Sampson
Ruthann Swanson
Sunsharae Smith Thierry
Jorge Villa
Robert Walker

Presentation of
President's Awards



R. Gerald Turner
President of the University
Amanda Bobo, Christopher M. Ham
Staff Association Executive Board Members

Presentation of Loretta
O'Reilly Hawkins Award



Mallory Williams
Staff Association, VP of Staff Development

Closing Remarks



Christopher M. Ham
Staff Association, President

University Hymn - "Varsity"



All sing together

UNIVERSITY HYMN

"Oh we see the Varsity, Varsity, Varsity
as she towers o'er the hill over there.
And our hearts are filled with joy, SMU, SMU,
Alma Mater, we'll be true forever!"

STAFF WITH TWENTY-SIX OR MORE YEARS OF SERVICE

FORTY-FIVE YEARS

Richard Abrahamson - Meadows School of the Arts
Rojelio Torres - Facilities, Planning and Management

FORTY-THREE YEARS

Andy Frye - Enrollment Services
Joe Papari - Enrollment Services
Winston Tubb - Dedman School of Law

FORTY-ONE YEARS

Tito Munoz - Facilities, Planning and Management

FORTY YEARS

Jane Lenz Elder - Perkins School of Theology
Lisa Montes - Dedman School of Law
Dee Powell - Cox School of Business

THIRTY-NINE YEARS

David M. Davis, II - SWGSB
Tara M. Emerson - Meadows School of the Arts

THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS

Chuck Donaldson - Meadows School of the Arts
Ellen Frost - Perkins School of Theology
Jennifer (JJ) Jones - Student Life
Sheri Starkey - Department of Human Resources
Diana Vineyard - Dedman College
Dale A. Winkler - Dedman College

THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS

Michael Washington - Campus Services

STAFF WITH TWENTY-SIX OR MORE YEARS OF SERVICE

THIRTY-SIX YEARS

Sherry Aikman - Dedman College
Laura Amberson - Dedman School of Law
Bobbie Heine - Dedman School of Law
Rebecca (Becky) Hood - Simmons School of Education
Carolyn Jeter - Office of the Provost

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS

Jaynell Harrell Dalby - Office of Budgets and Finance
Debbie Seiter - Office of Information Technology
Alison Tweedy - Campus Services

THIRTY-FOUR YEARS

Elizabeth Aguirre - Cox School of Business
David Anderson - Dedman College
Judith Benes - Dedman College
Jim Dees - Lyle School of Engineering
Gregory Ivy - Dedman School of Law
Sharon Tabbert - Dedman School of Law
Mary Varela - Dedman College

THIRTY-THREE YEARS

Robert Bucker - DEA-Strategic Affairs
Jorge Cruz - Office of Information Technology
Christopher Eatmon - SMU Libraries
Kent Gadell - Facilities, Planning and Management
Sandra Heads-Thorpe - Dedman School of Law
Stephen Leary - Meadows School of the Arts
Jacqueline Wilborn - Enrollment Services

THIRTY-TWO YEARS

Andrea Maupin - Office of Information Technology
Elizabeth Jeanne Milazzo - Cox School of Business

STAFF WITH TWENTY-SIX OR MORE YEARS OF SERVICE

THIRTY-ONE YEARS

Pamela Bell - Office of Budgets and Finance
Yvette Castilla - Office of Budgets and Finance
Nazario Del Rio - Facilities, Planning and Management
Susan Strobel Hogan - Resident Life and Student Housing
Lorinda Lamb - Office of Budgets and Finance
Alan Pushin - Office of Information Technology
Jerrell Stracener - AT&T Center for Visualization

THIRTY YEARS

Kathy E. Brooks - Office of Budgets and Finance
Christopher Hayward - Dedman College
Hillsman Jackson - DEA-Public Affairs
Dianne B. Jopling - Office of the Treasurer
Melissa Keene - Meadows School of the Arts
Scot Montague - Dedman College
Chris Smith - Office of Information Technology
Sandra Tefft - Facilities, Planning and Management

TWENTY-NINE YEARS

Janet Allmon - SMU Libraries
Jose M. Moreno - Facilities, Planning and Management
Ronald L. Wallace - Facilities, Planning and Management

TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS

Monica G. Cordero - Enrollment Services
Abby Kinney - Office of Budgets and Finance
Julia Maynard - Office of the Provost
Maria Richards - Dedman College
Kathleen Scott - DEA-Marketing and Communications
Mannie Tanner - Police Department

STAFF WITH TWENTY-SIX OR MORE YEARS OF SERVICE

TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS

Ian Aberle - Office of Information Technology
Rene Bowen - DEA-Annual Giving and Alumni Relations
Eric English, Sr. - Facilities, Planning and Management
Larry Helpert - Facilities, Planning and Management
Terry M. Johnston - Office of Information Technology
Terri Lewers - Southwest Review
Sean Miller - Facilities, Planning and Management
James Pan - Office of Information Technology
Shawn Remek - Office of Information Technology
Katherine Schacht - SMU Libraries
Thomas (Tommy) Tucker - Student Life
Merlin Wilkerson - Office of Information Technology

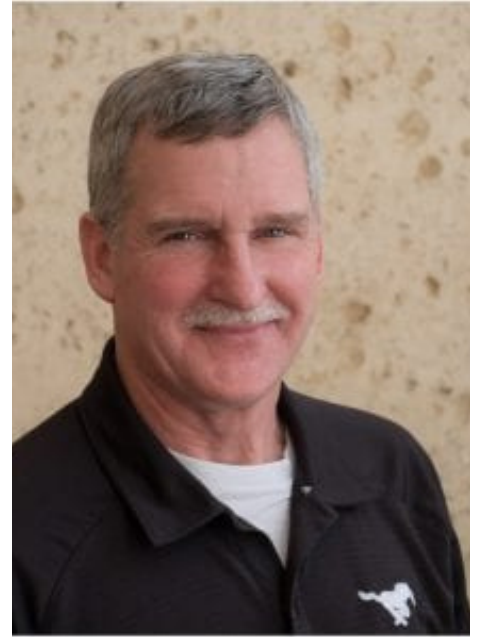
TWENTY-SIX YEARS

Rebekah Bell - Dedman School of Law
Ricardo Del Rio - Mail and Copy Services
Robin L. DeVore - Office of University Division Support
Alejandro Estrada - DEA-Records and Gift Administration
Pamela G. Henderson - Meadows School of the Arts
Lawrence J. Hengst, Jr. - Meadows School of the Arts
Cheryl Hitt - Facilities, Planning and Management
Mary L. Jones - Enrollment Services
Laurene Klassen - Office of Information Technology
Kevin Knox - Cox School of Business
Diane E. Kucera - DEA-Records and Gift Administration
Toni Nolen - SMU Libraries
Janet Thomas Stephens - Meadows School of the Arts
Todd Wright - Lyle School of Engineering

TWENTY-FIVE YEAR STAFF INDUCTEES

John Arthur Blank

John is a Desktop Support Technician for the Office of Information Technology. John began his SMU career as a temp in the Bradfield Computer Center to help roll-out Windows 95 and was later hired permanently to be a support technician. Over the years, he has worked the Help Desk and even taught a couple of computing courses for the university. Before joining SMU, John was a math teacher and tennis coach at Garland HS for 19 years. Growing up in Dallas, he quips, "SMU is in the bubble in the bubble in the bubble and...where the grass stays green all year long." He attended Eastfield Junior College, the University of Texas at Dallas, and received his BS in Mathematics and Psychology from East Texas State University. He has been married to Debra for almost 45 years, and has three grown children, John Jr., Lacy, and Julie. He is also the proud grandparent of nine grandchildren. He enjoys playing tennis every Saturday; sharing the gospel; and updating and renovating his home when not riding his bike or taking evening walks.



Jared Calkins

Jared is the Assistant Director of Financial Controls. He began at SMU as an Advancement Associate and has held the following positions over the past twenty-five years: Interim Manager of Gift Processing; Assistant Manager of Gift Administration; Assistant Director of Gift Administration before moving into his current role where he has been for the past 10 years. He says his fondest memory here at SMU was operating a golf cart for the Bush Library opening. Before coming to SMU, Jared ran his own process service and publishing company. He attended the University of North Texas where he received his BA in English Composition. He has been married to his wife for 30 years and has one teenage son. When not working, he enjoys playing bass guitar.



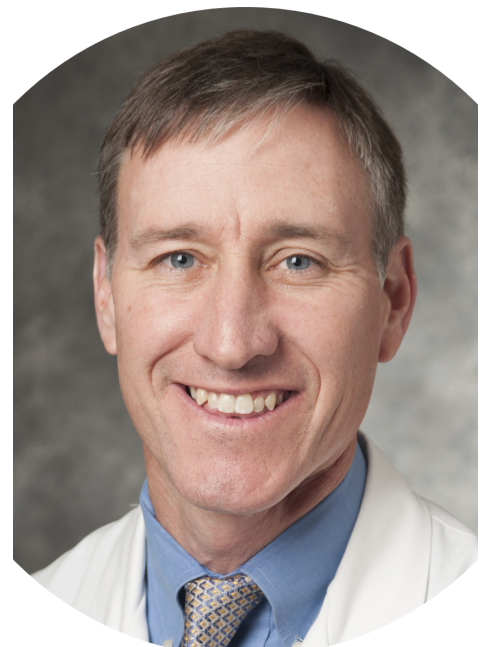
Karie A. Conklin

Karie is the Executive Assistant to the Chief Information Officer. She began her tenure at SMU in Information Technology Services in the Bradfield Computing Center. Her path included stops as the Administrative Assistant to the AVP of IT and then Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director for Administrative Computing and the AVP for Budget and Information Technology. Before SMU, she was the principal's secretary at Forney Primary School. She received her Commercial Art Certification and began working as a Commercial Artist. Karie says she fondly remembers being involved with SMUSA and all of the friends and colleagues she has met over the years. She has been married to Thomas for 37 years and they have two children – Gina (SMU staff member) and Vincent. She also has four grandchildren. She has taught Sunday School for over 20 years and enjoys reading and listening to podcasts on true crime, the paranormal, and the history of the national parks.



Peter Franklin Davis

Peter is the Medical Director for the Dr. Bob Smith Health Center. He began at SMU as a Sports Medicine Fellow in the Memorial Health Center. Over the years, he served as a staff physician, co-medical director, medical director – medical services, and as the team physician for SMU Athletics. Before SMU, he was completing his medical school residency and served on the faculty at UTSW through their fellowship program. His fondest memories here at SMU include the people – Jane Phillips, RN, Dr. Nancy Merrill, the athletic training staff, the Health Center staff, and the 2009 Hawaii Bowl. Peter has attended school at SMU, the University of Kansas, the University of Alabama – Birmingham, and UT Southwestern. He has been married to Elena for 18 year and has three ‘busy’ children – Luke, Lily, and Liam. He enjoys golf and soccer, as well as outdoor activities, anything the kids are doing and tinkering on cars..



Steve Denson

Steve is an Assistant Dean in the Cox School of Business. He began his career at SMU in Cox serving as Assistant Director and then Director before moving into his current position in 2020. Before SMU, Steve worked with the Chickasaw Foundation. He grew up in Wapanucka, Oklahoma and attended Carnegie Mellon. When asked about his fondest memory of SMU, Steve claims there are, “too many to count.” When not working he enjoys just puttering.



Manuel ‘Rick’ Diaz

Rick is the Regional Director of Admission – Southern California Regional Office. He is one of the first admission officers in the nation who actually lives in the area he recruits. He has been in the enrollment management field for over 40 years and before SMU, he worked at Claremont and USC. Amazingly, he worked for SMU prior to these last 25 years. He is a husband, father, and grandfather. Elena Hicks, Rick’s supervisor writes, “Rick has a unique ability to extend the commitment and care he shows to his family to the multitude of students and their families he has assisted over the years.” He has served in national and state leadership positions in the enrollment management arena for the majority of his career. He enjoys quilting and excels at it.



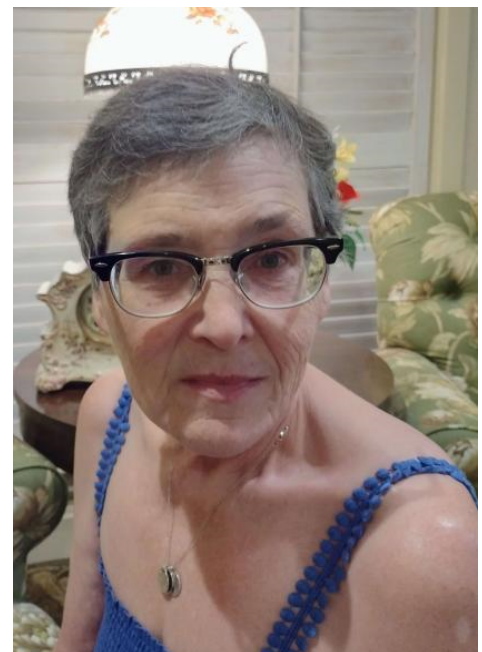
Pamela Kay Fincher

Pamela works as Systems Administrator/PeopleSoft Security in the Office of Information Technology/Enterprise Data Services. But she started her career at SMU in the Department of Mathematics as the Administrative Assistant to the Chair. From there, she transitioned to Assistant to the Dean in General Education before changing hats to become a Senior Business Analyst in the Division of Enrollment Services. Before coming to SMU, she worked as an Escrow Assistant, in sales for fine jewelry, and in marketing/development for a telecommunications company. She received her BA in Business Administration from the University of Texas at Arlington. She says it is difficult to pick a fondest memory because she is still making them. She has two grown children – Tiffany (SMU graduate) and Stan. Pamela enjoys reading, watching old movies, road trips, playing the piano and the Christmas season (which begins in August for her)!



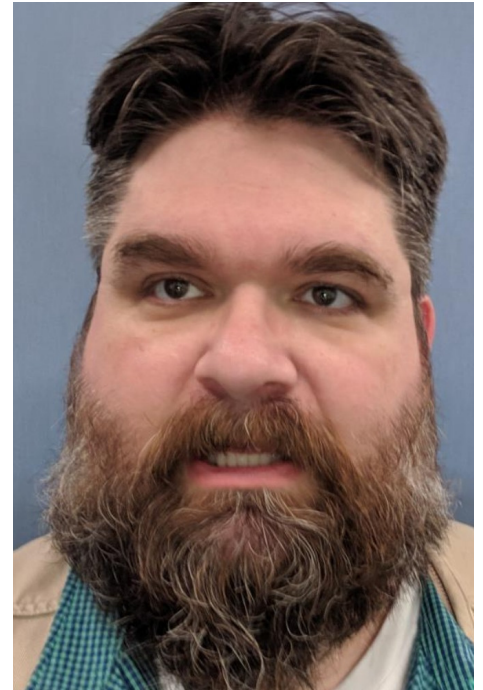
Cindy L. Havens

Cindy is the Executive Assistant to the Dean, Dedman College. She started at SMU in Meadows as the Executive Assistant to the Dean. Following that, she was Assistant to the Dean for Research and Institutional Effectiveness in Meadows where she stayed until moving to her current position. Before SMU, Cindy was a proofreader, legal secretary, and a paralegal. But she moonlighted in the evenings for the Music Hall Box Office as a box office manager for shows. She received her degree from North Texas State University. She remembers when Meadows Museum opened and they welcomed King Carlos and Queen Sophia of Spain at the end of a whirlwind two weeks' worth of events. She has been married to Paul for 35 years and has two children – Aurora (SMU graduate) and Sterling (SMU degree awarded posthumously when he was lost in an auto accident). Cindy and her husband enjoy renovating houses and have completed several renovations and are about to complete one in their current home. She enjoys traveling, going to wineries and distilleries, antiques, and reading.



Erich Heise

Erich is Director of Physical Security in the Office of Information Technology. When he first joined SMU, however, he started in Enrollment Services as an IT/PC Support Tech. From there, he transitioned to the Office of Information Technology as part of the Systems Team and then to the Security Team where he was first a Physical Security Engineer before moving into his current position. He tells everyone that his fondest memory of SMU is meeting his wife, Lisa, in the Enrollment Services Department, and getting married at Perkins Chapel with the reception at Meadows Museum. Growing up a Navy brat, Erich moved up and down the Eastern seaboard and worked as a lifeguard, in dive shop sales, and as



Director of Aquatics for JCC. He received his degree from SMU, of course. He is married to Lisa and they have two kids – Rhys and Milo. When he was asked about his hobbies and what he does for fun, he responded, “What is there other than working here!”.

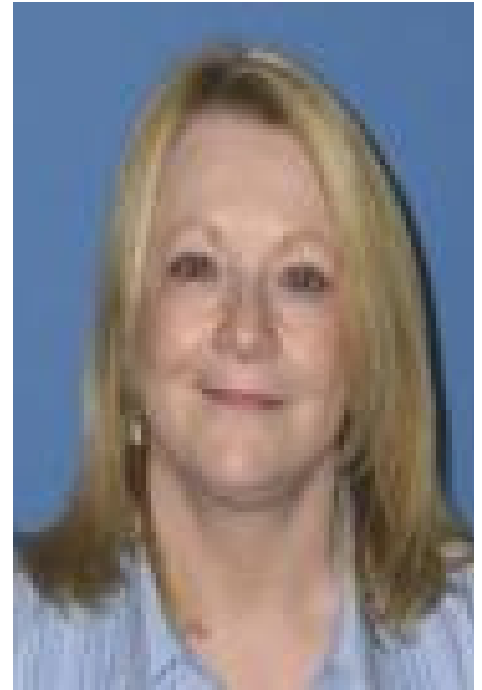
Steve Lake

Steve is a Senior Network Engineer in the Office of Information Technology. He has held this position from the beginning, being hired into the expanding Office of Information Technology all those years ago. Before joining SMU, he was with the US Air Force and was a Field Engineer at Intecom. He grew up in Dallas and has one son. He enjoys spending time with his family.



Bobbie Lay

Bobbie is a Financial and Scheduling Coordinator in the Division of Theatre, Meadows School of the Arts. She says she has the perfect job since this is where she started at SMU. Before coming to SMU, she was the Executive Assistant to the Dean of Fine Arts at another college, and was in corporate management for a Baker Industries company. She also worked in Human Resources for a utility company. Fondest memory...hearing the roar of the crowd as Toby Askew walked by in the SMU Homecoming Parade. She has one daughter – Angela, and a grandson – Braxton as well as ‘bonus grandsons’ – Logan and Mason. She enjoys spending a lot of time with family and friends and will read by the pool whenever she has time.



Cruz Lopez

Cruz is Director of Operations (DES/Admission). She originally started at SMU in 1993 in Undergraduate Admissions, but left briefly to work for a private company. She has held several positions from Information Systems Specialist to Business Analyst to Senior Business Analyst before settling into her current role. Prior to joining SMU, she was a Research Analyst for the University of Texas at Arlington in their Development Office. She received her BS in Business Information Systems from UT Arlington. She listed three memories that hold a special place for her: being a part of the Peoplesoft implementation project and celebrating the Go-Live date; the excitement on campus around the opening of the Bush Library and having all living presidents in attendance; and meeting her husband, who she has been married to for 26 years, at a SMU happy hour. They have three sons. She enjoys hosting parties and events for her kid's schools and groups, running in 5K fundraisers, long walks at White Rock, and yoga.



Michael Everette Morton

Michael is Associate AD Student Health and Well-being (Athletics/Sports Medicine). He started as an Assistant Athletic Trainer for men's soccer and men's and women's track and field. From there, he moved to Head Football Athletic Trainer before becoming Director of Sports Medicine/Head Football Athletic Trainer. This then transitioned into Assistant AD Student Health and Well-being/Head Football Athletic Trainer prior to his current position. Before SMU, he was a graduate assistant athletic trainer for baseball at Auburn where he earned his Masters of Education in Higher Education Administration/Sports Administration. He has a BA in Athletic Training from Purdue University. He remembers the fall of 2009 when SMU Football went to its first bowl game (Sheraton Hawaii Bowl) in 25 years and even though they were a huge underdog, went on to win. He is married to Michelle and they have 3 children – step-daughter, Carys Ginechese (SMU freshman), Michael and Violet. He enjoys spending time with the kids, going to the lake and fishing, and grilling and cooking on the smoker.



Janey Rodriguez

Janey is an Advancement Researcher for Special Projects. She began in Development and External Relations as the Administrative Assistant in the Office of the Vice President. After that, she moved to Prospect Development and that is where she has stayed. Before SMU, Janey was the Assistant to Associate Dean of the College of Sciences & Engineering at the University of Texas at San Antonio. She grew up in West Texas and attended South Plains College. She is married to Ruben and they have two Scottish terriers – Atticus and Finn.



Deborah Lanell Rozier

Deborah currently works as a Buying Assistant in the Purchasing Department. When she joined SMU back in 1998, it was in the Purchasing Department. But before SMU, she spent 10 years as a Merchandise Assistant for JCPenney in their corporate offices. Deb has spent half her life here in Texas and the other half in California. She attended El Centro and Bishop College. Getting to know all the people over the years is her fondest memory of her time here at SMU. She has three children – all grown, and three grandchildren. Her extended family includes four sisters who live all around the country. She enjoys cooking and claims she is somehow always cooking for something.



Rebecca K. Sampson

Rebecca is a Senior Employee Relations Specialist for the Department of Human Resources. But she started at SMU as the Catering Event Sales Manager, becoming the first woman Catering Operations Manager before transitioning to HR in Training and Development. Here she developed the role of Employee Relations Specialist. Before SMU, she says she had a checkered past – as a Professional Speaker on Free Market Economics; with a French Oil & Gas Pipeline Producing Company; and in Marketing for the American Heart Association. She received her Bachelors from the University of Houston and her Masters from SMU. She remembers all of the wonderful and amazing people she has met and the fun times they have had together here at SMU. She has a wonderful mother and aunt that she cares for as well as a niece and nephew. She enjoys reading mystery novels, decorating, cooking, and traveling.



Ruthann Swanson

Ruthann is a Library Specialist in Fondren Library Technical Services, but she began at SMU as a Library Specialist in the Science and Engineering Library. Before joining SMU, she enjoyed volunteering in her church's library and singing in various choirs. She grew up in Chicago but received her Master of Liberal Studies from SMU. True to her librarian side, she has enjoyed all of the wonderful opportunities to attend various lectures at SMU and have books signed by the many authors that have presented here over the years. She is married to Les and has one son – Mark who is married to Megan (both of whom are SMU alums). She is also the grandmother to 3-year old Madelyn. She enjoys reading participating in book clubs, line dancing, and road trips.



Sunsharae Thierry

Sunsharae is a Senior Business Systems Analyst/Data and Application Services in the Office of Information Technology. She began her tenure at SMU in the Registrar's Office as a student worker before being hired as a full-time employee in 1998. Her first full-time position was as a Curriculum Manager where she remained until moving into her current position. She worked the summer before entering SMU in the HR department for the Superconducting Super Collider and thought it was a fun summer! She received her BA in English from SMU. It is a much longer story, and Sunsharae gets goosebumps telling it, but her fondest memory is when Sidney Poitier came to campus as part of the Tate Lecture Series. She was able to attend a special afternoon talk and though she froze before being able to shake his hand, he did look at her and smile. She has been married almost 20 years to Darrell and they have two kids – Logan and Olivia. She enjoys cooking/baking/trying new recipes and restaurants, gardening when not too hot, and travelling with her family.



Jorge Villa

Jorge is a Coordinator in the Cox School of Business. He started out as an assistant to the Building Manager before being promoted to his current position. Before coming to SMU, he worked for a furniture moving company and as a sous chef for a restaurant. He grew up in Michoacan, Mexico where he attended high school. He has enjoyed making new friends over the years and expanding his work family. He has been married to his wife, Audelia, for 38 years and they have raised three daughters. One daughter, Georgina, graduated from SMU with both a Bachelor and Master's degree. They have one grandson - Santino. He enjoys spending time with his family, especially that new grandson who is only 8-months old!



Robert Walker

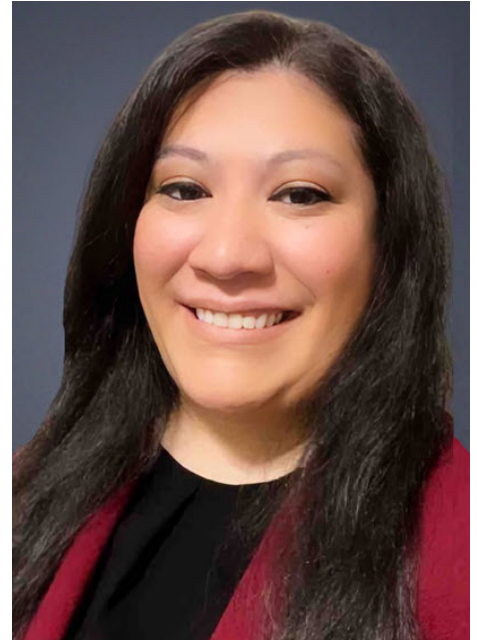
Robert is Director, Norwick Center for Digital Solutions (nCDS), SMU Libraries. He was hired as the manager for the Center for Media and Instructional Technology where he served as Classroom Support Manager, Live events Manager, and Campus Videographer. He then moved to his current position where he is responsible for SMU's digital collections, digitization, and the Oral History Studio. Before SMU, he was a professional actor based out of New York City and a technical manager at one of the top law firms. He received his Bachelors in English/Theater from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He says that his fondest memory is being the personal videographer for President Bush, post-presidency and being invited as a special guest to the grand opening of the Bush Presidential Library & Institute. He is married to Carolyn and they have two daughters - Madysen and Lili. He enjoys renovating his house, Fender guitars, working in the Dallas Mavericks broadcast department during home games, and getting beverages with his daughters and their dog, Penny Lane.



PRESIDENT'S AWARD WINNER 2023 GRETCHEN C. VOIGHT NEW EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE

Amanda Navarro

Amanda is a STABLE Senior Business Analyst in the Office of Facilities, Planning and Management. Before joining SMU, she worked for 10 years in the Interior Design industry, and an additional five years in space management at UT Southwestern Medical Center. Allison Day, Amanda's supervisor wrote in her nomination of Amanda, "She remains exactly as she began, thoughtful, generous, service-first, incredibly bright at helping find solutions and problem-solve whatever lands in our lap that particular day. And she does it with a huge smile and a determined spirit." Amanda graduated Summa Cum Laude from the Art Institute of Dallas with a BFA in Interior design. She enjoys spending time with her family, painting, crafting, and hosting fun themed parties throughout the year. She and her husband, Chris, will be celebrating their 7th anniversary in November and they have one son, Vincent, who is three years old. Her fondest memory of SMU (to date) is of being a part of the OFPM team and touring the renovated or newly constructed spaces. She enjoys seeing the wonderful and innovative designs SMU offers students, staff, and faculty.



PRESIDENT'S AWARD WINNER 2023 CONTINUING EXCELLENCE

Carolyn Jeter

Carolyn joined SMU in 1987 as the Executive Assistant to the Provost and has remained in this position for all of those 36 years, and through seven permanent Provosts and four Interim Provosts. Prior to SMU, she garnered ten years of experience in various positions which included: county government, departmental support in higher education, and staff support in hospital administration. Provost Loba commented in her nomination letter that Carolyn, "...is the walking, talking embodiment of the excellence we seek to provide - and to model - within our SMU community." She goes on to say, "On a daily basis Carolyn's work is a reflection of SMU's academic profile to our entire campus, the local community, and - in fact - the world." Carolyn received her BBA in Office Management from Texas A&M Commerce. She enjoys running, classical guitar, photography, reading, and gardening. She is married to Jon who also worked for SMU for 22 years, but is now retired. Her fondest memory of SMU - football season on the Boulevard!



PRESIDENT'S AWARD WINNER 2023 INNOVATION

Jennifer Mayes

Jennifer began her career at SMU in 2021 as an Instructional Systems Administrator on the Academic Technology Services team within OIT and that is where you can find her today. Before SMU, she worked in various roles at the University of Oklahoma and Texas A&M related to the Canvas LMS, course design and quality assurance, and adjunct faculty onboarding and training. Jason Warner commented, “Jennifer is not just a driving force behind SMU’s technological successes but also is the beating heart that ensures SMU’s instructional technology pulse is always vibrant, inclusive, professional, and forward-looking.” He also noted that “Jennifer Mayes embodies the spirit of innovation in every sense.” She graduated from the University of Oklahoma with her BBA and her MHR. She enjoys volunteering with Delta Sigma Pi, a professional business fraternity, drinking wine with friends and family, reading and travelling.



PRESIDENT'S AWARD WINNER 2023 OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP

Neil Robinson

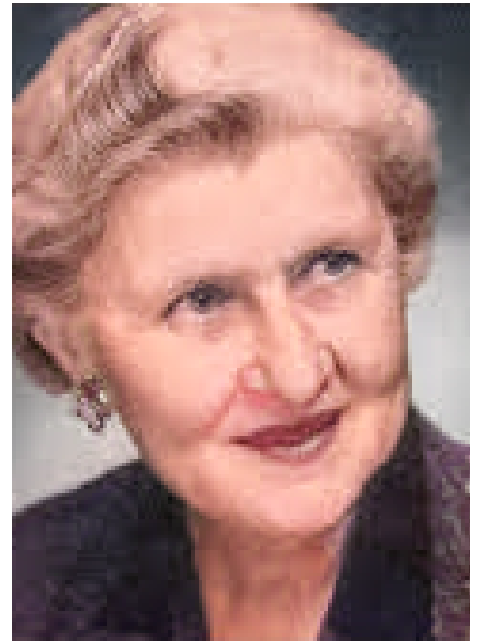
Neil was hired in 2014 as the Executive Director for Integrated Marketing within DEA. In 2018 he was asked to create and lead a planning team of project managers which in 2019 led him to being named the Executive Director for Planning and Campaign Marketing where he helped develop the SMU Ignited campaign. Before SMU, he worked for the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas as VP of Marketing Communications and with a small ad agency in Dallas prior to that. Emily Hughes Armour had this to say on her nomination of Neil, “He masterfully delegates, and balances all manner of expectations and opinions from a sea of stakeholders, synthesizing these contributions to a truly excellent and manageable vision that also manages to exceed the expectations of all those involved.” Neil received his bachelor’s degree magna cum laude in English from Rice University and a master’s degree in English from the University of Chicago. He enjoys running – and has completed his first marathon – reading contemporary novels and volunteering for the kids’ schools. He is married to Lorie and has two children – Graham and Paige.



LORETTA O'REILLY HAWKINS AWARD

The Loretta O'Reilly Hawkins Award was established to recognize and reward employees who represent the qualities and spirit of Loretta O'Reilly Hawkins, her love of SMU, her commitment to the community, and her high standards for work and life. Loretta O'Reilly Hawkins was a member of the university staff for 37 years, from 1924 to 1961, during which time she held various roles, including assistant to President C.C. Selecman and President Umphrey Lee. Her retirement in 1961 was announced in a lead editorial in the Dallas Morning News entitled "Loretta's Leaving."

Mrs. Hawkins was a single parent who was devoted to both SMU and her family, working tirelessly through the depression (and a 66% pay cut for staff employees) to better the university, while also taking on part-time and evening work to support her family. She had an excellent reputation in the community and high standards of accomplishment in work, family, and the art of living. This award was endowed by Mr. Dallas E. Hawkins II, to honor his mother and her life as well as to benefit the university to which she was so dedicated.



LORETTA O'REILLY HAWKINS AWARD WINNER 2023

Wendelin Donahue

Director of Community Engagement in Development and External Affairs

Wendelin began at SMU in 2016 as an Assistant Director of Employer Relations in the Hegi Family Career Development Center. She actually began her career in NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena as an intern. She did try corporate America, but decided being in the education field was more what she wanted to do. She worked in a high school as both a teacher and administrator which led her to working in the higher education arena. Here she was able to combine her 'love for all things students, community and career and technical education.' In her nomination letter, Jennifer



Jones writes, "Her love and dedication to SMU goes beyond measure. She constantly gives to the SMU community by connecting the SMU community with the Dallas Community." She received her BA in Psychology from Spelman College (magna cum laude), her MBA from the University of Redlands, and her Ed.D. from the University of Southern California. Wendelin enjoys hands-on activities and all things water-related. She has three sons - Tyson, Joshua, and Caleb, and is close to her parents and sister and her family.

2023 - 2024
SMU STAFF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD

Christopher M. Ham	President
Amanda Bobo	President-Elect
Samantha Tellone	Past-President
	Staff Advocacy Council Chair
Jennifer Gomez	Vice President of Programming
Mallory Williams	Vice President of Staff Development
Claudia Favela	Vice President of Service and Activities
Tiffany Powell	Vice President of Marketing and Communications
Veronica Decena	Director of Administration
Mitzie Goff	Treasurer

SMU STAFF ASSOCIATION MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Laura Figura	Perkins School of Theology
Jomita S. Fleming	Office of Risk Management
Brittany Mosley	Facilities, Maintenance and Grounds
Matt Nadler	Cary M. Maguire Center for Ethics & Public Responsibility
Kurt Pottkotter	Athletics
Michelle Volk	Office of the University Bursar

SMU STAFF ADVOCACY COUNCIL

Sue Bierman	Academic Affairs (SAES, UDS, IPE)
Darius Maize	Athletics
Gail Darden	Business & Finance
Anna Martinez	Cox School of Business
Michelle Baehl	Development & External Affairs
Scot Montague	Dedman College
Winston Tubb	Dedman School of Law
Jerrod Harrell	DES, Taos, Int'l Programs
Diane Rives	Legal Affairs
Alisha Bailey	Lyle School of Engineering
Ryan Cole	Meadows School of the Arts
Rachel Holmes	Perkins School of Theology
Karie Conklin	President's Office
Jalesia Horton	Libraries
Dawn Levy	Simmons School of Education
Kaleb Loomis	Student Affairs

2023 - 2024 EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Please join us for these upcoming events, presented just for you!

Details will be communicated closer to each event, so watch for SMUSA announcements or check out the Calendar of Events on our website for updates. www.smu.edu/smus

October 27, 12:00 - 1:00pm

Book Club

[Anxious People](#)

By: Fredrik Backman

October 28, 7:30 - 10:00am

SMU Homecoming Parade

November 1 - December 8

Holiday of Hope/Toys for Tickets

November 28, 11:00am - 1:00pm

Holiday Pop-Up Shop

Hughes-Trigg Ballrooms

We will have more events throughout the year.
Some will be online and some will be in person.

Invitations to events are sent through your SMU email account.
To manage your list subscription, please visit <https://mylists.smu.edu>

Join us on social media for information and updates!
We can be found on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
Tag us in your photos, #smustafflove!



UNIVERSITY HYMN

“Oh we see the Varsity, Varsity, Varsity
as she towers o’er the hill over there.
And our hearts are filled with joy, SMU, SMU,
Alma Mater, we’ll be true forever!”

SPECIAL THANKS

Zach Peterson

Announcer

Chris Regis

Vice President for Business and Finance
SMU Staff Association Advisor

GET INVOLVED

We would love to hear your ideas!
To volunteer to help with the planning or hosting
of one of our events, just send an email to smusa@smu.edu
or reach out to your Staff Advocacy Council Member in your area.

SMU® **Staff Association**