

Contact

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Top Skills

Social Policy

Poverty Reduction

Capacity Building

Certifications

Attorney Certification

Freyja Harris

Attorney & Administrative Officer
Farmington, Michigan

Summary

Dedicated attorney, policy planner, and public administrator with strong leadership skills and commitment to empowering organizations, communities, and individuals to achieve transformational change. Proficient leading teams of diverse stakeholders, direct reports, and consultants through complex projects. Skilled in contract and grant management, budgeting, and capacity building. Effective mediator with excellent problem solving and diplomacy skills aimed at promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.

Experience

Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan
Project Director, Pontiac Funders Collaborative
May 2020 - Present (3 months)
Detroit, Michigan, United States

The Project Director, Pontiac Funders Collaborative provides leadership, management, and guidance in support of a place-based initiative. Serves as an external presence and spokesperson, representing the mission and purpose of the Community Foundation and Pontiac Funders Collaborative. The Project Director is supported by a collaborative of regional funders and helps the Pontiac Funders Collaborative to develop partnerships and projects that support the community of Pontiac in co-creating sustainable community strategies. The Project Director is also responsible for implementing the mission/vision of the funder collaborative, leading through continuous strategic thinking, managing implementation, projecting the distinct goals of the initiative, and measuring outcomes.

Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation
Chief Administrative Officer
October 2019 - April 2020 (7 months)
Detroit, MI

Oversee DESC's contracted attorneys and serve as main point of contact to address any legal matters including those related to federal rules and

regulations, Board Governance and Bylaws, procurement, contracts, grants, EEOC complaints, and FOIA requests.

Develop and maintain the master list of policies and ensure internal policies and procedures are regularly updated.

Identify and resolve issues which may create a risk to the corporation: operational, compliance, governance, and regulatory.

Revise and direct procurement process and procurement tools as necessary to promote fair and open competition, consistent and informed evaluation of bidders with innovation and flexibility.

Maintain boilerplate contract language for various types of partners to ensure consistency with respect to contract initiation, modification, renewal and termination.

Manage monitoring team and processes to ensure policies, goals and objectives for compliance are met, audit strategies are appropriate, reviews are timely, and deficiencies are proactively identified and resolved.

Administer and coordinate DESC's technology and information systems to support organization management, planning needs, and funding body requirements.

Enhance the grant development and management process for the successful execution of new grants or awards from federal, state, city, and philanthropic sources.

Anticipate issues and develop strategies to resolve operational concerns and execute proposed corrective actions.

Supervise DESC IT infrastructure, system administration, & other tech, facilities, and maintenance support staff.

University of Michigan - School of Music, Theatre & Dance

3 years 4 months

Assistant Dean for Student Affairs; Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

July 2019 - October 2019 (4 months)

Ann Arbor, Michigan

Provided leadership and vision in support of the School's mission to prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of performance and research in a global society.

Served on the School's senior leadership team and was responsible for serving a diverse population of students, faculty, & staff to enhance their personal, academic, and professional success and ameliorate barriers to that success.

Oversaw the planning and administration of accommodations for disabilities, international student affairs, student life initiatives, staff and faculty DEI training, DEI strategic objectives, and community engagement.

Served as liaison between faculty and students, providing leadership and strategic direction to ensure high-quality student support is consistently delivered to a diverse community.

Addressed concerns, interpreted policies and procedures, explored options for resolution, and made appropriate referrals to campus and community resources as necessary.

Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer

July 2016 - June 2019 (3 years)

Ann Arbor, Michigan

Developed, cultivated and provided visionary leadership for strategic initiatives and activities to advance the objectives of the SMTD's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan.

Collaborated with the Office of Institutional Equity, Office of General Counsel, and other relevant school and university offices in responding to and educating the community about bias, discrimination, and harassment.

Assisted in ensuring SMTD's compliance with relevant state and federal laws, regulations, and university policies.

Utilized best practices to provide guidance on the implementation of effective strategies and initiatives to promote diverse applicant pools for hiring and admission.

Assisted faculty and senior administrators in the development of recruitment, orientation, and retention focused programs and training to support the engagement and success of a diverse community.

Partnered with associate deans and campus-wide offices to identify best practices to develop and implement strategic goals and programs to support academic advising, curriculum development, student professional development, and wellness.

Served as the administrative designee for students needing accommodations for disabilities.

Fostered relationships with University-wide offices and funding sources to support students, faculty, and staff seeking to use their talents to engage with underserved communities, celebrate diversity, and foster greater opportunity for accessibility and equity.

In collaboration with the Center for Research on Learning & Teaching (CRLT) and the National Center for Institutional Diversity (NCID), develop training for

faculty development experiences focused on maintaining a supportive learning environment for our diverse student body.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Management Support Specialist - Midwest Multifamily Asset
Management Division

May 2015 - July 2016 (1 year 3 months)

Detroit, Michigan

Exercised professional judgment, initiative, and leadership in assessing, documenting, and improving the effectiveness of administrative and business management policies and processes.

Served as point of contact for the coordination of data collection, analysis, and reporting of key performance measures.

Anticipated challenges and developed strategies to resolve complex operational problems and proposed corrective action to ensure the agency's mission was achieved.

Delivered a wide range of liaison services to support program functions, including identifying performance improvement needs, training opportunities, and resources.

Max. M & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation
Senior Program Officer and Detroit Revitalization Fellow

July 2012 - May 2015 (2 years 11 months)

Southfield, Michigan

Monitored a portfolio of grants in Detroit focused on early childhood education and/or arts & culture.

Established strategies and processes to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of grant-making and data collection.

Supported grant partners with grant writing and program assessments.

Researched best practices and policy implications to bolster the impact of programs.

Supervised interns and managed the deliverables of consultants.

Assessed the feasibility of grant proposals for board consideration and reviewed stewardship reports.

State of Michigan
Michigan Benefit Access Director

August 2011 - July 2012 (1 year)

Lansing, MI

Managed \$5.7M project budget and reporting requirements of multiple funding sources.

Developed a multifaceted marketing plan in collaboration with the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services, including website and training resources.

Created and managed a centralized training curriculum and schedule to provide in-person/ web-based training to statewide nonprofits.

Presented Michigan Benefits Access (MBS) training curriculum throughout the state to staff and volunteers of nonprofits.

Designed implementation and data tracking tools specifically to address issues related to training, client engagement, and requirements of program funders.

Oversaw the responsibilities of the MBA Training Specialist and AmeriCorps Manager.

FLORIDA DEPT. OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES, Office on Homelessness

Senior Management Analyst II

July 2009 - July 2011 (2 years 1 month)

Tallahassee, FL

Administered the Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) and Emergency Solutions Grant; monitored compliance with twenty-six HPRP grant agreements and budgets totaling \$21.5M HPRP award.

Developed policies and data collection training tools to ensure regulatory compliance.

Responded to inquiries from the public and state agencies regarding eligibility or assistance.

Provided technical assistance on-line and in person for all grantees receiving HPRP funds from the State of Florida.

FLORIDA COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Executive Director

August 2006 - July 2009 (3 years)

Tallahassee, FL

Facilitated the development of FCH's plan for diversification, fundraising, & strategic objectives.

Managed annual budget, bylaws, membership recruitment, newsletter, and website.

Monitored legislation pertaining to issues of homelessness, housing, and supportive services.

Collaborated with government and non-profit organizations to advocate for fair housing practices.

Organized three statewide conferences on homelessness and supportive housing.

Supervised part-time, contract employees providing various services to FCH.

FLORIDA HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION

Senior Housing Policy Analyst

June 2003 - July 2006 (3 years 2 months)

Tallahassee, FL

Assisted in the administration of multiple affordable housing finance programs: LIHTC, HOME, CDBG, and multi-family mortgage revenue bonds.

Responded to inquiries and developed training related to the ADA and Universal Design.

Reviewed loan applications and local government plans for appropriate use of housing funds.

Performed project management for the development of a web-based, housing locator system.

Monitored financial performance, occupancy, and construction of developments.

Colorado Coalition for the Homeless

Housing Counselor/Program Liaison

August 2000 - May 2003 (2 years 10 months)

Denver, CO

Developed procedures and materials for housing voucher program eligibility and compliance.

Served as program liaison between CCH and state agencies to report outcomes for funding.

Conducted HUD housing quality inspections and monitored the maintenance of assisted units.

Negotiated residential leases, mediated landlord-tenant disputes, conducted annual certifications.

Testified before the Colorado General Assembly and the Dept. of Children and Families regarding the needs of households experiencing homelessness.

COLORADO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Legislative Assistant

November 1998 - October 1999 (1 year)

Denver, CO

Researched topics for Colorado General Assembly members, attorneys, and constituents.

Tracked changes to bills throughout the legislative process and performed legal research.

Coordinated with legislative assistants and attorneys to complete projects efficiently and within strict deadlines.

Drafted and edited resolutions, memorials, and amendments for the Colorado Statutes.

Education

Wayne State University Law School

Juris Doctor, Law · (2012 - 2017)

University of Colorado Denver

Master's degree, Urban Planning · (2000 - 2003)

University of Colorado Denver

Master of Public Administration - MPA · (2000 - 2003)

Denver Paralegal Institute

Paralegal Certificate, Paralegal Studies · (1998 - 1998)

University of Florida

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Political Science and Government · (1993 - 1996)