

Orange County
Arts and Cultural Affairs Advisory Council
MEMBER BIOS 2020-2021
Updated 10/01/2020



Karen E. Climer, Chair

**Chair, Funding & Standards Committee, and Review Panels for Cultural Tourism and Cultural Facilities Funding*

A native of Orlando, Karen Climer owns and teaches real estate at Demetree School of Real Estate. Previously, she was an independent grant writer and fundraising consultant with many arts clients including the Martin County Arts Council, Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra and Orlando Ballet. Ms. Climer served for two years as a grant review panelist for the Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs. She also served on the board for the Negro Spiritual Scholarship Foundation, Orange County Children and Family Services, and chaired the City of Orlando Citizen Review Board. Ms. Climer holds a Bachelor of Music in percussion

performance from the University of Alabama and an MBA from Rollins College.



Commissioner Emily Bonilla

Elected in 2016 to the Orange County Board of County Commissioners representing District 5, Commissioner Emily Bonilla earned her BA in English from the University of Central Florida in 2003 and a MS in Internet Marketing from Full Sail University in 2010. She founded Save East Orlando in 2013, and co-founded and served as acting chair for Save Orange County until 2015. Commissioner Bonilla is an advocate of conserving Orange County's natural and economic resources.



Cecelia Bonifay, Immediate Past Chair*

A managing partner for Akerman LLC, Cecelia Bonifay is president emeritus of the board of Crealdé School of Art, distinguished as the longest-serving board member for the Winter Park community school for the visual arts. Ms. Bonifay serves as a member of United Arts of Central Florida's Board of Directors; on the executive committee and board member for the Orlando EDC, and chaired the Economic Strategy Committee. She is the past co-chair of the Urban Land Institute's Climate Change, Land Use and Energy Committee, and she currently serves as the Chair of the ULI Central Florida District Council. She is a frequent speaker on the topics of land use and growth management, development incentives, green energy and climate change, and green building and LEED certification. Ms. Bonifay also is a board member of the Metro Orlando Economic Development

Commission. She has been recognized by *Chambers USA*, *The Legal 500*, *The Best Lawyers in America*, and *Florida Super Lawyers*, and she is a former recipient of the *Florida Real Estate Journal's* "Top Women in Commercial Real Estate" award.



Julie Coleman

The founder and president of the Orlando School of Cultural Dance for 28 years, Julie Coleman wrote grants and administered programs for area children, and showcased their talents in the annual Cultural Dance Showcase at what is now Bob Carr Theater. She collaborated with the Department of Juvenile Justice and the City of Orlando to bring arts education to children who would otherwise not have had the opportunity to experience the arts. In addition to running the school, Ms. Coleman taught dance and African history as an adjunct professor at Valencia College and lectures/demonstrates dance for students of Orange County Public Schools.

Gwen Covington

***Chair, Blockbuster Committee**



An Orlando native, Gwen Covington is a recording artist, realtor and retired public administrator for Miami-Dade County. As CEO of Entertainment Galore, LLC, Ms. Covington offers consulting services for music publishing and concert productions, having worked with The Ojays, Najee, Denyce Graves, Pastor Shirley Caesar and BeBe Winans. She also offers special event support for clients including NFL Superbowl XXIX, BET TV, The Miami Heat, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce National Convention, Miami/Goombay Festival, ZORA! Festival and FAMU Orange Blossom Classic. She partners with her husband, Will, a record producer and Grammy Award-winning drummer, for the *So You Want Your Name in Lights* Youth Summer Music Camp. Ms. Covington loves sharing music industry updates and positive community news as a

contributing writer for The Orlando Times and other publications, and she is a former co-host at radio station WOKB-1680 AM. She is a Jones High School alumni and an active member of its Historical Museum Society. She holds a BS in accounting from Florida Memorial University and an MBA from the University of Miami. Her many accolades include the Exemplary Distinguished Honoree in Sight and Sound Leadership Award from the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education in Washington, D.C.



Roberto Gonzalez

A native of Mexico City, Mexico, painter Roberto Gonzalez has been on a life-long, introspective journey in search of the appropriate outlet to share his rich heritage and passion for life with others. This unbridled passion serves as the central inspiration behind the artist's exceptional work. Each painting delivers an inner-peace that is passed from artist to viewer as Roberto takes them on their own personal voyage of discovery inside his imaginative world of impressionism. His extraordinary work "Cold Blue Mountain" was commissioned by Sports & The Arts and is displayed at Amway Center in Orlando as part of their permanent collection. Roberto's works have been exhibited at City Arts Factory Downtown Orlando and he was invited to participate in a two man show at Gallery at Avalon Island in Orlando in August of 2012. Additionally, he participated in the Osceola Center for the Arts celebrating Hispanic Artists and Culture Exhibition. Roberto was the featured artist for the Premier Art exhibit

showcase that opened the Waldorf Astoria Orlando in 2010. His work "Autumn Forest" is part of the private collection of Sir Paul McCartney. His work "The Continental Shelf"

is a permanent mural at One Eleven in Orlando. This Lincoln Property Company project was installed in November of 2015. In May of 2014 Roberto was appointed to the City of Orlando Public Arts Advisory Board. Roberto describes his unique artistic style as “fluid movement from which flows the essence of life” and enjoys using vibrant colors, unusual movement and acrylics and oil on canvas to bring his vision to life. Roberto currently resides with his wife, Linda, in Orlando, FL and is the proud father of two daughters, Elisha and Jennifer, and grandfather of two beautiful grandchildren, Paloma and Elsa.



Samí Haiman-Marrero

***Chair, Diversity & Inclusion Committee**

Samí Haiman-Marrero is the President & CEO of Urbander, a Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) solution-based agency that assists the corporate, nonprofit and government sectors overcome their diversity and inclusion challenges. She is one of the nation’s leading business development and marketing experts, specializing in the U.S. Hispanic market. Ms. Haiman-Marrero earned a master’s degree in Communications from the University of Puerto Rico. She has been interviewed by international, national and regional media regarding the Latino experience in the U.S., including *The Wall Street Journal*, *El Nuevo Día* (Puerto Rico) and *Huffington Post*. Named one of the 25 Most Influential Hispanics in Central Florida in 2016 by *Visión Magazine*, Ms. Haiman-Marrero has served on the boards for Visit Orlando, United Arts of Central Florida, the Hispanic Business Initiative Fund’s TAC committee (Orlando Chapter), the University of Central Florida’s

Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) Community Engagement Council, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando’s Supplier Diversity Council, and as the President of the Hispanic American Professional and Business Women’s Association (2015-2017). Since 2014, Ms. Haiman-Marrero has facilitated the *Talleres de Bienvenida* (Welcome Workshops), a free admission program she cofounded to help recent arrivals from Puerto Rico and other Spanish-speaking countries better navigate their new lives in Central Florida and integrate into the U.S. workforce without abandoning their cultural values.



Jeffrey Moore

Mr. Jeff Moore has served as dean of the UCF College of Arts and Humanities since 2016 and is responsible for the health and activity of three schools, five departments, and many programs and centers. Moore joined UCF in 1994 as the university’s first full-time percussion professor. He is an active author, composer, and music arranger, and is an international performer, lecturer, clinician, and soloist. He currently serves on the boards of directors for Central Florida Community Arts, The Orlando Repertory Theatre, Orlando Shakes, and the Atlantic Center for the Arts. He serves as secretary for the Orlando Philharmonic Board of Directors and the president of the Florida Higher Education Arts Network. He is on the board of advisors for the Percussive Arts Society and is a recipient of the Yamaha Legacy Education Award. Moore holds a BME from the University of North Texas and a MA in percussion performance from the University of Wisconsin.



Shelby Norwich, Vice-Chair

**Chair, Public Art Review Board*

With a passion for people and a profound interest in the art of negotiation, Shelby Norwich has been in real estate for more than 16 years and has been one of the top producers at Olde Town Brokers for the past six years. Playing a major role in generating substantial growth to downtown Orlando, she was involved in the development of three high-rises from the ground up. Ms. Norwich contributed to the growth of ZOM Residential, where she was the head leasing agent for The Waverly on Lake Eola before she moved on to work for Historic Creations and was the Director of Sales for the luxury condo buildings The Sanctuary and Star Tower. Born and raised in Cocoa Beach, Ms. Norwich earned her BA in Organizational Communications from the University of Central Florida, and her Masters in Liberal Studies from Rollins College. Ms. Norwich is a huge supporter of local artists and the local art scene – serving on the Downtown Arts District Board (DAD) for six years. She is also a Circle Member for the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts and has been on the Runway to Hope committee, where she assists local children and their families who have been impacted by pediatric cancer. She enjoys surfing, bowling, traveling, and most of all, spending quality time with her two adorable pugs, Joshe and Sake.



Frank Santos

Frank Santos is the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for Rosen Hotels & Resorts, where he has worked for more than 30 years. The Orlando Business Journal distinguished Mr. Santos with its first-ever CFO Award in 2009 in recognition of his outstanding performance as a corporate financial steward. He helped create the award-winning in-house Rosen Healthcare system and serves as Treasurer of the Harris Rosen Foundation as well as on the company's charitable giving committee. Santos received the Paragon Award in 2000 given by Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals (HFTP) in recognition of individuals who have made a significant and lasting contribution to the

hospitality industry. He is the past president of HFTP, and served as the chairman of its annual conference. He is a Board Member Emeritus of the Orlando Shakes (2004-2018) and Orlando Repertory Theatre (1998-2018). He is currently serving on the board for the Dr. Phillips Center and the Runway to Hope Foundation. Mr. Santos also has served in a variety of capacities for Canine Companions for Independence, the American Cancer Society, the Coalition for the Homeless, St. Luke's United Methodist Church and the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra.



Keith Smith

***Chair, Advocacy Committee**

Originally from Rochester, New York, Keith has resided in Winter Garden for the past 20 years. Currently in his 28th year with The Walt Disney Company, Keith is the most recent Senior Vice President and Chief Talent Officer for Partners Federal Credit Union, which serves all employees of The Walt Disney Company. Keith holds a BA in Theatre, a Masters in Human Resources from Rollins College and is a certified Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR). He has extensive expertise in live theatre and events and has directed, produced, or performed in over 50 theatrical productions over the past 30 years. Deeply passionate about the arts and volunteering, Keith is honored to receive the Presidents Volunteer Service Award over 10 times, is a volunteer guest lecturer at the Rosen School of Hospitality and is actively involved in non-profit board leadership.

Currently on the board and a past president for the Garden Theatre, he was also former Executive Director of Miss Florida's Outstanding Teen Pageant, former member of the Board of Directors for the Miss Florida Pageant and former Executive Director and co-founder of the Miss City Beautiful Scholarship Pageant in Orlando.

Lorene Walker



Theo Webster

***Chair of Sustainability Committee**

Throughout her career, Theo Webster has supported the arts in her work in Washington, D.C., at the Kennedy Center and the National Endowment for the Arts, and in Central Florida at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, the University of Central Florida and Bob Carr Performing Arts Centre. During the early days of the Arts and Cultural Affairs Advisory Council, she served on the Education Committee and started Arts for a Complete Education in Orange County as well as worked with the Florida Alliance for Arts Education. She served on the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs grants panel, reviewing Arts Education grant applications from across the state. She participates with the Florida Cultural Alliance in advocating for the arts in Florida. She says her work with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) taught her about the needs of working people, and her work with First Congregational Church taught her ways to listen and build consensus around tough issues.

**Current and/or Past Chairs*