



Texas Municipal League Midyear Conference

March 14-15, 2024 • San Marcos



Tito Rodriguez

TML President and Mayor Pro Tem, City of North Richland Hills

Tito Rodriguez currently serves as president of the Texas Municipal League and mayor pro tem of the City of North Richland Hills. He was first elected to the North Richland Hills City Council in May 2011.

Mayor Pro Tem Rodriguez was raised in San Antonio and graduated from Central Catholic High School. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Columbia College in Columbia, Missouri. He retired from the State of Texas, Office of the Attorney General as a special investigator in the Child Support Enforcement Division in 2015 after a 32-year state career. After his retirement, he took a position with the Birdville Education Foundation as its executive director. He left this position in mid-2017 to dedicate his time with various nonprofits, community, and municipal organizations, including the Texas Municipal League, the National League of Cities, the North Central Texas Council of Governments, the Trinity Metro, and the United Way of Tarrant County.



Doug Griffiths

President and CEO, 13 Ways Inc.

Doug Griffiths is a wildly popular community strategist and author of two best-selling editions of "13 Ways to Kill Your Community". He has supported, guided, and inspired hundreds of communities to create effective change. Whether through speaking and presentations, or through advising and consulting, he is dedicated to helping communities across North America find their own pathway to success.

He grew up on a ranch outside a small town where he learned the value of hard work, critical thinking skills, and the value of community. That background led him into politics, but he insists he has since been through rehab and is fully recovered. His experience in politics gave him a deep understanding about how to move people and to get things done. He deliberately retired from politics in January 2015, after serving for 13 years, to return to his passion for community building.

Griffiths has an Executive MBA, and Honors B.A Philosophy Degree, as well as his Bachelor of Education, all from the University of Alberta where he has taught community and municipal leadership courses for elected officials and administration.



Larry McManus

Director, Business & Community Development, Texas Economic Development & Tourism, Office of the Governor

Prior to returning to EDT in 2020, McManus served as senior director for Rural Economic Development at the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) where he was responsible for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, the State Office of Rural Health, and TDA's economic development activities.

His previous tenure with the Office of the Governor had him managing Community Relations and Domestic Expansion and Recruitment (DER) activities. These teams assisted in the announcement of more than 140,000 jobs and a capital investment in excess of approximately \$63 billion between January 2005 and August 2015. McManus has 30 years of economic development experience with the State of Texas.

Prior to joining the State of Texas, he spent nearly five years with NationsBank (now Bank of America). McManus holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance from the University of Texas at El Paso and is a graduate of the Economic Development Institute at the University of Oklahoma.



L'Oreal Stepney P.E.

Board Member, Texas Water Development Board

Governor Greg Abbott appointed L'Oreal Stepney, P.E., as a Board member of the Texas Water Development Board with a term set to expire February 1, 2029.

Stepney was previously the Deputy Executive Director of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), serving as the Chief Operating Officer. During her 30-year career with TCEQ, Stepney worked to develop the Title V Air Operating Permitting Program from inception, was selected as the first Deputy Director to create the Office of Water focused on water availability, supply, planning, and permitting programs in Texas, as well as lead efforts to obtain permitting delegation from the United States Environmental Protection Agency for certain oil and gas discharges.

Stepney also managed the agency's response to record breaking drought conditions to alleviate water shortages with communities and previously served as one of the Texas negotiators with Mexico and the International Boundary and Water Commission to ensure water delivery compliance under the Rio Grande 1944 Treaty. With these responsibilities, she had many

opportunities to work closely with the Texas Water Development Board on several water programs which has been an asset in her role as Board Member.

Stepney is a board member for the Mickey Leland Environmental Internship Program, and a graduate of both the University of Texas Governor's Center Executive Management Program and the University of Texas Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution Fellows Program.

Stepney has received several distinguished recognitions including 2022 Rainmaker of the Year by the Texas Water Foundation, 2022 President's Award by Texas Water Conservation Association, and 2019 Outstanding Public Official Award by the Water Environment Association of Texas.

Stepney received a Bachelor of Science in aerospace engineering and a Master of Science in civil engineering from the University of Texas at Austin. She is a Registered Professional Engineer.



W. Nim Kidd, MPA, CEM,
Chief, Texas Division of Emergency Management

W. Nim Kidd serves as the Chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). In this capacity, he is responsible for the state's emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities. Prior to serving with TDEM, Chief Kidd was appointed to the San Antonio Fire Department (SAFD), where he was promoted through the ranks from firefighter to District Fire Chief, including Lieutenant in charge of the SAFD Technical Rescue Team and Captain of the SAFD Hazardous Materials Response Team.

From 2004 to 2010, Chief Kidd served as City Emergency Manager for the City of San Antonio, where he managed the city's response to over a dozen state and presidential disaster declarations. In 1997, Chief Kidd was one of the original members appointed to the Texas Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue Team. In 2001, he was the Plans Section Chief that responded to the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center.

Chief Kidd formerly served as chair for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Advisory Council (NAC). Chief Kidd holds a Master of Public Administration from Texas State University, a bachelor's degree from Texas A&M University-Commerce, and two associates' degrees. He is the Vice Chancellor for Disaster and Emergency Services for The Texas A&M University System. He is a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM®), a Texas Master Firefighter, and holds Hazardous Materials and Emergency Medical Technician certifications. Chief Kidd and his wife, Dr. Emily Kidd, M.D., share three children and a beautiful granddaughter together.



Gregory D. Winfree Esq.
Agency Director, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

The Honorable Gregory D. Winfree was appointed Agency Director of the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) on December 15, 2016. TTI is a state agency and the largest and most comprehensive higher education-affiliated transportation research institute in the United States. He is also an Adjunct Professor at the Texas A&M University School of Law. In 2019, he was appointed to the Texas Connected and Automated Vehicle Task Force established by Texas Governor Greg Abbott. The Institute was formed by The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents in 1950 to conduct research for the Texas Highway Department—now the Texas Department of Transportation. Today, TTI research projects total \$66.9 million annually for about 200 sponsors at all levels of government and the private sector. The technologies and strategies developed at the Institute have saved the state and nation thousands of lives and billions of dollars. Winfree joined the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology in March 2010 as Chief Counsel and was later sworn in as the Assistant Secretary in January 2014. During his tenure, Winfree also served as Deputy Administrator and Administrator of a predecessor agency, the Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA).

As Assistant Secretary, he was the senior executive responsible for a \$450 million budget and oversaw more than 1,000 scientific, data analysis and administrative staff members who support USDOT's multi-modal transportation initiatives. The program offices under his purview included: the John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center; the Research, Development and Technology Coordination Office; the Bureau of Transportation Statistics; the Positioning, Navigation, Timing and Spectrum Management Office; the Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office; and the Transportation Safety Institute.

Prior to his USDOT appointments, Mr. Winfree served as Corporate Counsel for several Fortune 500 corporations for 17 years that operated in a number of technical industries, including:

Natural resources and metals (Freeport-McMoran Copper & Gold, Phoenix, AZ);
Pharmaceuticals (Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, Collegeville, PA); and
Chemicals and polymers (Union Carbide Corporation, Danbury CT).

Prior to his corporate legal work, Mr. Winfree was a Trial Attorney in the Housing and Civil Enforcement Section of the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division. He started his legal career as an Associate at a prominent Washington, D.C.-based law firm, Venable, LLP. Mr. Winfree is also an innovator with design and utility patents to his credit and thus has a special affinity for TTI's diverse transportation research portfolio and commitment to innovation. Much of his career aligns with organizations with a strong focus in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) disciplines, and Mr. Winfree has spoken extensively on the importance of STEM education to the future transportation workforce.



Kathleen Jackson P.E.

Commissioner, Public Utility Commission of Texas

Governor Greg Abbott appointed Kathleen Jackson to serve as a commissioner on the Public Utility Commission of Texas on August 5, 2022, for a term set to expire on September 1, 2027. She served as Interim Chair from June 7, 2023 – January 23, 2024.

Since joining the PUCT, Jackson has spearheaded efforts to improve the energy efficiency of the state’s electric grid. She previously served as a Board Member of the Texas Water Development Board, first appointed by Governor Rick Perry in 2014 and reappointed by Governor Abbott in 2017.

Throughout her career, Jackson has represented agricultural, environmental, industrial and wholesale supply interests, including developing and implementing water management strategies for Southeast Texas. A registered professional engineer, Jackson served as a public affairs manager for one of the world’s largest petroleum and petrochemical producers.

Jackson was also involved in production agriculture with her late husband, who ran a cattle operation and farmed rice. She was a member of the Lower Neches Valley Authority Board of Directors, the Texas Water Conservation Association, and participated on the Sabine and Neches Rivers Bay and Estuary Environmental Flows Assessment Program Stakeholders Committee. In August 2021, Governor Abbott appointed her to the Environmental Flows Advisory Group.

She is also a board member and past president of the Lamar Institute of Technology Foundation, a sustaining member of the Junior League of Beaumont, a member of the Texas Farm Bureau, past president of the American Cancer Society of North Jefferson County, and a past board member of Junior Achievement of the Golden Triangle.

Jackson received a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering from North Carolina State University.



Kel Seliger

Former Texas State Senator and TML Legislative Hall of Honor Inductee

Former State Senator Kel Seliger was first elected to the Texas Senate in 2004 representing Senate District 31 which stretches from the Panhandle south to the Permian Basin.

In the Legislature, Seliger was known as an advocate for issues of public education, higher education, and local control. He served as chairman of the Senate Higher Education Committee and Senate Select Committee on Redistricting and was a longtime member of the Finance and Education Committees. He chose not to run for re-<https://tmlmidyearconference.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Kel-Seliger-e1709747243670.pngelection> last November.

Prior to his Senate election, he served four terms as the mayor of Amarillo and as a member of the Amarillo City Commission and the Amarillo Civil Service Commission.

Seliger received the TML Legislator of the Year award for his work in the 84th Texas Legislature and has been a staunch defender of local decision making throughout his career bolstered by his experience as a mayor.

His long career in elected office exemplifies the Texas spirit of community and public service.



John Daly Ph.D.

Liddell Centennial Professor of Communication, University of Texas (Austin)

John Daly Ph.D. is the Liddell Centennial Professor of Communication, the TCB Professor of Management, and University Distinguished Teaching Professor at The University of Texas at Austin. He teaches undergraduate and graduate classes on Interpersonal Communication and Advocacy. Among his instructional responsibilities is teaching a UT System-wide course as part of the Archer Program. He has won every major undergraduate teaching award at UT Austin and has also been recognized by the UT System for his teaching. He has served as the President of the National Communication Association, the largest association of scholars and teachers of communication in the world. Dr. Daly has published numerous scholarly articles and produced more than a dozen books including *Advocacy: Influencing Others and Championing Ideas* (Yale, 2012). For his scholarly work he has been recognized as a Fellow of both the National Communication Association and the International Communication Association.



Bennett Sandlin

Executive Director, Texas Municipal League

Since October 1 of 2010, Bennett Sandlin is Executive Director of the Texas Municipal League. Prior to that, he was General Counsel of the League, where he helped cities primarily in the fields of tax, economic development, budget, and finance issues, including the municipal hotel occupancy tax and the economic development sales tax. Bennett authored the Revenue Manual for Texas Cities, and was an instructor in Public Funds Investment Training. Bennett is a 1993 graduate of the University of Texas School of Law and has previously worked at the Municipal Affairs Division of the Texas Attorney General’s Office.

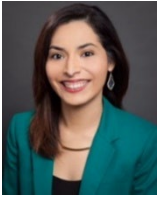


Monty Wynn

Director, Grassroots and Legislative Services, Texas Municipal League

Monty Wynn is the Director of Grassroots and Legislative Services for the Texas Municipal League where he coordinates and implements the legislative policy program for the 1,178 member cities. He has been with TML for 16 years. Prior to his work at TML, Wynn worked for two state comptrollers, was the committee director for the House Public Education Committee and served as the chief of staff to two senators.

Wynn is a graduate of The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in economics and political science. He and his wife, Rosemary, have two sons, Aiden, 16, and Owen, 15.



JJ Rocha

Grassroots and Legislative Services Manager, Texas Municipal League

JJ Rocha is the Grassroots and Legislative Services Manager at the Texas Municipal League where she coordinates the legislative policy program for the 1,178 member cities. Before joining TML in 2010, she interned at the Texas House of Representatives. Rocha is a graduate from St. Edward's University with a degree in political science. In 2014, she received her master's from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas in Austin.



Michael Martin

Legislative Counsel, Texas Municipal League

Michael Martin is Legislative Counsel for TML, where he provides guidance on legal and legislative issues for the 1,178 member cities. Before joining TML, Michael served as the chief of staff for a New Orleans City Council member, in-house counsel for the City of New Orleans, and assistant city attorney for several Texas cities. Michael graduated from Marymount University with a degree in political science. In 2012, Michael received his law degree from Tulane University School of Law.