

CAREY J. MAYS

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Senior student affairs leader with 17+ years of progressive higher education experience spanning student involvement and engagement, student government advising, fraternity and sorority life, homecoming and traditions programming, new student orientation, leadership development, diversity and belonging initiatives, and large-scale event production. Career trajectory reflects five promotions across two major institutions from Program Coordinator at the University of Florida to dual-Director at St. Edward's University with increasing responsibility for strategic planning, multi-million dollar budget administration, facilities oversight, staff supervision, cross-divisional collaboration, and assessment-driven continuous improvement. Committed to building vibrant, inclusive campus communities where every student can discover purpose, develop as a leader, and build lasting connections.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Director of Student Involvement & Director of Student Belonging and Inclusive Excellence

St. Edward's University, Austin, TX | 2025 - Present

Expanded portfolio to oversee two offices providing executive leadership for the full spectrum of co-curricular engagement, diversity programming, and campus community building. Serve on the Student Affairs Leadership Team with strategic oversight contributing to the \$7+ million divisional budget.

- Provide executive leadership for student organizations, SGA, University Programming Board, Presidents Advisory Council for Belonging and Community, Homecoming and Family Weekend, orientation, family engagement, leadership development, cultural heritage programming, and belonging initiatives.
- Direct operations with combined annual budget exceeding \$1 million across multiple cost centers and revenue streams.
- Supervise professional staff and 60+ student employees across both offices, overseeing hiring, onboarding, performance evaluation, and professional development.
- Serve on Campus Vibrancy Team, University Awards Committee, Staff Council, Common Theme Committee; led University Inauguration Planning Committee.

Director of Student Involvement (merged Student Activities + Student Transitions)

St. Edward's University, Austin, TX | 2020 - 2024

Two previously separate director-level portfolios formally combined under a single title, reflecting the departmental merger led. Continued oversight of all student involvement functions plus orientation, family engagement, and new student transition programming.

Homecoming, Traditions & Large-Scale Events

- Led planning and execution of the university's annual Homecoming and Family Weekend. HillFest signature event drew 810+ attendees including 113 alumni, 152 family members, and 498 guests.
- Managed 70+ direct programming events and oversight for 300+ student organization events annually across 30,000 sq ft of facility space.
- Increased signature event attendance by 20% through data-informed campaign strategies for programming with 3,000+ attendees.

Orientation & New Student Transitions

- Directed Hillstart pre-orientation, summer orientation sessions, and Anchors extended welcome programming.
- During COVID-19, transitioned two-day in-person orientation to a summer-long virtual engagement model, retaining all completing students despite two staff reductions.

Assessment & Data-Driven Decision Making

- Implemented CampusLabs Event Pass mobile CRM tracking system, achieving national recognition as a best-practice model and case study. Captured data for 1,428 unique students reaching 49.8% of the active student population.
- Increased student engagement from 32% to 49.8%, representing a 55% improvement in campus involvement.

Budget & Vendor Management

- Published 10% fiscal savings by merging two departmental units, generating \$112K in annual resource reductions while decreasing cost-per-attendeo by 11% and increasing attendance by 24%.
- Negotiated vendor contracts including software, event services, A/V, and facility services totaling \$200,000+ annually.

Staff Supervision & Development

- Recruited and hired 13 professional positions while supervising 64 total employees (4 professional staff + 60 student employees).

Director of Student Activities & Director of Student Transitions (concurrent)

St. Edward's University, Austin, TX | 2018 - 2020

- Promoted to inherit a second department while continuing to direct Student Activities, providing leadership for orientation, family engagement, and new student transition programs.
- Developed and launched Family Engagement plan including parent/family contact acquisition, web presence, and targeted communications strategy.
- Launched and co-supervised the Peer Mentor initiative connected to the First Year Experience program.

Director of Student Activities

St. Edward's University, Austin, TX | 2016 - 2018

- Promoted to lead Student Activities with expanded oversight of student organizations, University Programming Board, campus events, and cultural heritage programming for ~900 attendees.
- Managed \$256,000 annual budget while initiating new revenue streams through alumni engagement and donor stewardship.

Associate Director of Student Life

St. Edward's University, Austin, TX | 2013 - 2016

- Initial hire at St. Edward's. Built student activities programming infrastructure from the ground up. Managed 80+ student organizations.
- Designed student involvement tracking initiative that tripled special event attendance through enhanced marketing and systematic assessment.

Assistant Director, Center for Student Activities & Involvement / Reitz Union

University of Florida, Gainesville, FL | 2011 - 2013

- Advised Student Government Productions (\$700K budget) and ACCENT Speakers Bureau (\$500K budget) for major concerts and speakers at one of the nation's largest public research universities.
- Managed event permitting for 7,000+ events per year. Developed risk management protocols for student organization events.
- Advised Florida Invitational Step Show, Homecoming Parade, and Gator Growl traditions.

Program Coordinator, Sorority & Fraternity Affairs

University of Florida, Gainesville, FL | 2008 - 2011

- Developed and co-taught Panhellenic Council Recruitment Leadership course (EDA 4930) preparing 60+ students per semester.
- Supported Greek community growth to 600+ new members over four years with oversight of 90 organizations. Increased formal recruitment by 10% and informal recruitment by 50%.
- Created comprehensive programming for NPHC and multicultural Greek organizations focused on recruitment, risk management, and alumni engagement.

Program Cohort Coordinator (Volunteer)

Austin Urban Technology Movement, Austin, TX | 2020 - 2021

- Coached and motivated learning cohort members through self-guided technology training curriculum supporting workforce development in underrepresented communities.

EDUCATION

Master of Education, Educational Leadership and Research

The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS | 2008

Master of Science, Computer Information Sciences

St. Edward's University, Munday School of Business, Austin, TX | 2016

Bachelor of Science, Information Technology Communication

The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS | 2006

CERTIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Project Management Professional (PMP)
- Google Project Management Certificate
- Tableau Author Certification
- CliftonStrengths Facilitator (Top 5: Adaptability, Relator, Connectedness, Responsibility, Ideation)

TECHNOLOGY & PLATFORMS

CampusLabs (Engage, Event Pass, Pathways) | Smartsheet | Tableau | Banner | Canvas LMS | Microsoft 365 | Google Suite | Adobe Creative Cloud | Jira | Asana | Qualtrics | EMMA Email Marketing | CollegiateLink

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- University of Florida Superior Accomplishment Award Nominee
- Outstanding Collaborator, Reitz Union, University of Florida
- Outstanding Committee Member, Southeastern Greek Leadership Summit (SEGLS)
- National Pan-Hellenic Council Outstanding Advisor of the Year, 2007
- Alpha Phi Alpha President's Award, 2006
- CampusLabs Event Pass Implementation - Featured national case study and best-practice model

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)
- Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (AFA)
- American College Personnel Association (ACPA)
- Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Mu Gamma Lambda Chapter (Chaplain/Asst. Undergrad Advisor)
- Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Mu Xi Chapter (President/Historian/Webmaster)