



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Xavier University of Louisiana Announces Staff in President's Office



PATRICE BELL MERCADEL

Vice President of Administration and Chief of Staff

Ms. Patrice Bell Mercadel's responsibilities at Xavier University of Louisiana are expanding with her designation as Vice President of Administration and Chief of Staff for the University. Ms. Bell Mercadel joined Xavier as Chief Marketing and Communications Officer in September 2017 and was selected to serve as Chief of Staff in fall of 2018. Ms. Bell Mercadel has oversight of the operations of the president's office, university's marketing and communications efforts, public affairs, government relations, community relations, and strategy. Her area of responsibility has grown to include institutional planning and effectiveness, campus improvement and development projects, community development, internal

communications, customer service enhancement, internal and external university events, and university administrative operations.

Ms. Bell Mercadel has 30 years of experience in the public, non-profit, and for-profit sectors. Recently, she completed the Harvard University Graduate School Institute of Educational Management Leadership Program. She has been a leading woman in business in New Orleans, working to improve the City of New Orleans and the educational landscape of the Greater New Orleans area throughout her career. She is a board member of the Contemporary Arts Center, and has served on a number of boards and committees in the community. In recognition of her work in the Crescent City, Ms. Bell Mercadel was previously named a City Business Women to Watch Honoree by the New Orleans Publishing Group. She has won numerous awards on behalf of the institutions she has represented for campaigns and community service.



RAE BORDEN
Deputy Chief of Staff

Dr. Rae Borden recently joined Xavier University as the Deputy Chief of Staff for the Office of the President. She will work closely with the Vice President of Administration and Chief of Staff in the planning, development, implementation, and facilitation of the strategic initiatives of the President. Prior to joining the staff of the President's Office, Dr. Borden served as the Administrative Director to the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost for Georgia State University in Atlanta. In addition to her role at Georgia State, Dr. Borden was a long-time staff member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. She also worked as an undergraduate administrator in the Graduate Institute of Liberal Arts at Emory University. Dr. Borden is involved with a number of professional organizations, most notably serving as an ex-officio board member and former Vice Chair of the Provost and Academic Affairs Assistants in Higher Education National Association and as an ambassador for the National Association of Presidential Assistants in Higher Education.



ASHLEY IRVIN

Communications and External Affairs Manager

Ms. Ashley Irvin is serving as the Communications and External Affairs Manager for Xavier University. In her role, she will oversee all presidential communications and external affairs relations with key stakeholders. Previously, she served as Xavier's Marketing Communications Specialist, leading the marketing efforts for the BUILD program where she successfully developed and implemented strategic communications plans, managed social media, and prepared promotional materials. Under Mayor Mitch Landrieu, Ms. Irvin served as the Communications Assistant and Liaison for the City of New Orleans where she oversaw the execution of citywide communications programs, special events and public meetings, in addition to social media management, internal and external correspondences, media inquiries and strategic marketing campaigns. She also worked as a field organizer on the campaign of Senator Mary Landrieu and Deputy Clerk for the Orleans Parish Civil District Court, where she gained experience planning community-based events and political campaigns. Currently, Ms. Irvin serves on the Board for Inclusive Care Healthcare for All, and is a member of the Public Relations Society of America and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.



LATANYA GRAHAM
Special Initiatives Coordinator

Ms. LaTanya Graham serves as the Special Initiatives Coordinator, supporting the Office of the President and overseeing strategic implementation, partnerships and operational initiatives and efficiencies of the Office of the President.



MARISA HONEYCUTT-WILLIAMS
Scheduling Assistant

Ms. Marisa Honeycutt-Williams provides administrative support, with a specific focus on providing front-line customer service and overseeing calendar management to schedule and arrange appointments and meetings for the Office of the President.

About Xavier University of Louisiana

As America's only historically Black and Catholic University, Xavier University of Louisiana has set itself apart for nearly a century. Despite its small size (3,300 students), Xavier is a nationally recognized leader in the STEM and the health sciences fields, producing more African American students who graduate from medical schools each year than any other university in the United States. Its liberal arts-based programs in such areas as art, business, education, psychology, and political science – as well as such recent additions as bioinformatics, data science, neuroscience, crime and social justice, and jazz studies – offer students an unbeatable combination of traditional classroom study, hands-on research, service-learning opportunities, and life experiences. For more information about Xavier University of Louisiana visit us online at www.xula.edu or follow us on Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter @XULA1925. To book interviews, contact Diana Hernandez at (504) 520-5120 or dhernan1@xula.edu.