

# JESSICA HUROV

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## PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Seasoned leader with expertise in strategic planning, program development, marketing, and economic growth. Demonstrated success in driving tourism and community engagement in Alachua County through the creation and execution of award-winning marketing campaigns. Manages a portfolio of grants and sponsorships, supporting 60+ local organizations while fostering key partnerships with regional and state tourism stakeholders. Proficient in market research and data analysis, leveraging insights to promote tourism as a vital economic driver. Leads a high-performing team, ensuring alignment with budgets, policies, and industry standards. Expert at managing multiple projects simultaneously, balancing deadlines, resources, and stakeholder expectations to achieve optimal outcomes.

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **Alachua County Tourism Development Director**

**September 2018-present** (*Reclassified from Tourism Development Manager in October 2023*)

*Strategic Tourism Development and Execution: Expertise in developing and implementing comprehensive and innovative marketing strategies to increase tourism, drive economic development, and generate tourism revenue. Over the past six years, paid lodging in Alachua County has increased from \$114 million in FY18 to \$174 million in FY24—a 52% growth—directly impacting the local economy. This increase has led to a \$3 million rise in the Tourist Development Tax, from \$5.7 million to \$8.7 million, providing increased revenues for Alachua County to reinvest.*

#### **Marketing Campaign Leadership**

- Developed the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County marketing and advertising expenditure plan, creating tourism strategy to effectively target audiences with impactful content and messaging, boosting visitation and economic impact. Annually update the plan to reflect goals and objectives of tourism marketing and investments.
- Expert in deploying multichannel marketing campaigns across digital, broadcast, print, social media, billboards, and radio, generating significant advertising impressions and attracting both leisure and business travelers.
- Experienced in art direction and graphic design, supervising the production of marketing collateral, print materials, and digital assets. Led successful branding initiatives, increasing visibility and engagement through creative and targeted marketing strategies. Utilizes design expertise to create impactful stakeholder reports and presentations.
- Oversaw the development of the new VisitGainesville.com tourism website, ensuring vendor contractual compliance, supervision of improved navigational structure, and engaging, accurate, and user-friendly content.

#### **Grant & Sponsorship Management**

- Oversees \$2 million in annual grants and sponsorships for 60+ arts, culture, nature, and sports-related non-profit organizations, supporting tourism-driving events, venues, and activities that attract regional and national participants. Promotes funding opportunities to encourage participation from new organizations and non-profits, expanding community involvement and diversification of funded projects.
- Implements Board of County Commission directives to establish objective criteria, ensuring a fair and transparent evaluation process for grants and sponsorships.
- Collaborates with funded organizations to ensure compliance with funding agreements, providing guidance on marketing partnerships and best practices for event and festival promotion.
- Developed new grant and sponsorship programs, including the Small Towns and Municipalities Fund, Cooperative Billboard Advertising Program, and Non-Profit Cultural Facilities Grant Program. Improved existing applications to better define and clarify funding eligibility and out-of-county marketing requirements.

#### **Public Presentations, Stakeholder Engagement & Partnerships**

- Proven ability to serve as a liaison between local tourism boards, government agencies, and the community, advocating for tourism development, presenting updates, sharing tourism impacts, and supporting board-directed initiatives and goals.
- Develops and delivers impactful presentations for the Tourist Development Council, conducting six meetings annually with appointed members.
- Presents to the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners, as well as joint meetings with municipalities, advising County leadership and County Commissioners on Tourist Development Tax performance, grant partnerships, new tourism opportunities, and more.

- Delivers presentations to key advisory boards, including the Alachua County Economic Development Advisory Committee and Rural Concerns Advisory Committee.
- Engages with industry stakeholders and conference organizations, including the Florida Agritourism Association, Rotary Club of Gainesville, Hospitality Council, Leadership Gainesville, Arts Council Artists Conference, ARTS352, Alachua County Citizens Academy, and more, sharing strategic insights and fostering collaboration.
- Cultivates partnerships with local hospitality providers, attractions, municipalities, non-profits, and businesses, enhancing regional marketing efforts and driving tourism growth.
- Actively participates in local, statewide, and national organizations, including serving on the Destinations Florida board, strengthening industry connections and synergies.
- Guest lectures at the University of Florida College of Tourism, Hospitality, and Event Management, sharing industry expertise with students.

#### **Data Analysis & Market Research**

- Assesses tourism trends and collaborates with market research providers to gather and analyze data (e.g., lodging, revenue, visitation) to identify growth opportunities, address emerging challenges, pinpoint areas for growth and track key performance indicators.
- Prepares data-driven economic impact reports and develops annual tourism economic development reports, ensuring clear and actionable insights for decision-making and advocacy, leveraging data to optimize marketing investments and resource allocation.
- Managed the *Americans for the Arts: Arts and Economic Prosperity Study*, coordinating survey data collection from 52 organizations to demonstrate the economic and social contributions of arts and culture in Alachua County.

#### **Team Leadership & Performance Management**

- Directs a team of 7 tourism professionals, setting clear performance goals, conducting annual evaluations, providing direction on short- and long-term projects, and fostering a collaborative, results-driven work environment aligned with County goals.

#### **Budget Oversight & Resource Allocation**

- Responsibly manages the annual tourism budget, ensuring optimal resource allocation to maximize return on investment and support tourism development projects and goals.
- Collaborates with County departments in budget planning, legal, contracts, procurement, and fiscal oversight to ensure adherence to County policies and procedures.
- Creates actionable, clear agenda items for the Board of County Commissioners.

#### **Accreditation & Policy Development**

- Led Visit Gainesville, Alachua County to achieve excellence in tourism development, meeting high industry standards. Managed and executed the effort to earn Accreditation with Distinction from Destinations International, upholding tourism excellence and best practices.
- Developed departmental policies and standard operating procedures to ensure operational consistency, efficiency, and alignment with organizational goals.
- Initiated efforts toward earning the Governor's Sterling Award, focusing on continuous improvement and operational excellence.

#### **Managing Director, Hippodrome Theatre** (February 2014 - August 2018)

*Led the business administration and operational strategy for the Hippodrome Theatre, a renowned professional arts organization in downtown Gainesville.*

- **Financial Oversight:** Managed an annual budget of \$2.5 million, sourced from diverse revenue streams, ensuring financial stability and growth.
- **Revenue Generation:** Directed marketing and promotional efforts across multiple programming areas (mainstage theatre, cinema, education, rentals, concessions, and special events), resulting in over \$1.2 million in annual earned income.
- **Fundraising Leadership:** Secured over \$500,000 in in-kind and cash contributions from more than 80 local business partners annually, and spearheaded the theatre's most successful fundraising campaign, "Keep Gainesville Hipp."
- **Team Management and Development:** Hired, trained, and supervised a team of 6 direct reports and 15 administrative staff, fostering a collaborative and high-performance work environment.

- **Creative Direction:** Executed graphic design for all print and digital marketing materials, including brochures, posters, social media graphics, and advertising collateral, ensuring consistent brand messaging across all platforms.
- **Government Relations and Advocacy:** Cultivated relationships with local and state elected officials to secure governmental support and funding for the theatre. Represented the organization at statewide lobbying events in Tallahassee.
- **Public Relations and Media Engagement:** Authored articles for the *Gainesville Sun* and other media outlets, and appeared on radio and television to promote the Hippodrome's mission. Served as a guest speaker at community events including Rotary, Kiwanis, Chamber of Commerce meetings, and the University of Florida.
- **Board Relations:** Collaborated closely with the Board of Directors, preparing materials for meetings and providing regular updates on operational performance, strategic initiatives, and organizational growth.

### **Director of Marketing and Communications, Hippodrome Theatre** (October 2005 - Feb 2014)

*Led the marketing and communications strategy for the Hippodrome, overseeing all aspects of external communications, media relations, and promotional efforts.*

- **Strategic Marketing Leadership:** Developed and executed a multi-faceted, strategic communications plan to promote all divisions of the theatre, including mainstage performances, cinema, education programs, and special events.
- **Creative Content Development:** Designed and produced all printed marketing materials (brochures, posters, flyers), managing multiple projects and tight deadlines. Wrote compelling copy and selected visuals to create cohesive, high-impact communications.
- **Media and Public Relations:** Authored and distributed press releases, pitching stories to local and regional media outlets, and maintaining strong, active relationships with journalists and media contacts.
- **Donor and Stakeholder Engagement:** Actively engaged with donors, patrons, board members, business leaders, and elected officials at special events, strengthening relationships and supporting the theatre's fundraising efforts.
- **Direct Mail Campaigns:** Led direct mail campaigns, developing creative content and maximizing outreach effectiveness, even with limited resources.
- **Social Media Strategy and Content Creation:** Created and managed all social media accounts, crafting engaging content that resonated with audiences. Organized and attended social media outreach events to increase community engagement and brand visibility.
- **Video and Visual Media Production:** Produced promotional videos for social media platforms, collaborating with contracted videographers and editors. Coordinated photoshoots with local photographers and media outlets to create dynamic visual content.

### **Graphic Designer, Maritz McGettigan** (January 2000 - June 2000)

Created custom promotional materials for incentive travel programs and business meetings, working closely with clients to integrate their branding and destination imagery. Designed print and promotional assets tailored to specific client needs, ensuring alignment with marketing goals and corporate visual identity.

### **Administrative Manager, Boston University Tsai Performance Center** (June 1997 - October 1999)

Managed daily operations of a 525-seat, multi-use performance venue, overseeing scheduling, staffing, facility maintenance, financial operations, and box office activities. Coordinated event logistics and worked directly with clients to ensure seamless execution of events. Contracted with external renters, processed payments, and supervised administrative staff.

### **Conference Coordinator, Boston University** (February 1995 - June 1997)

Organized and coordinated logistics for conferences and special events hosted by university departments and external clients. Managed event planning details such as facility setup, housing, catering, and schedules. Selected to oversee high-profile events for university dignitaries, trustees, donors, and international conferences.

### **Project Manager, Dorr Research Corporation** (June 1992 - February 1995)

Managed marketing, advertising, and opinion research projects for high-profile clients. Led client communications, project timelines, and deliverables, ensuring market research studies met objectives and were completed on schedule.

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## EDUCATION

### **Boston University**

Bachelor of Arts in English

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology

*Graduated with academic honors.*

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## PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- Appointed to the Destinations Florida Board; representing Alachua County with statewide tourism professionals.
  - Certified Public Manager (CPM); Florida Center for Public Management; completed August 2023.
  - Professional in Destination Management (PDM); Destinations International; completed August 2021.
  - Serves as Alachua County's Emergency Support Function (ESF) 18 representing Business and Industry during declared emergencies.
  - Completed Alachua County Leadership Academy; 2019.
  - Memberships/partnerships with Visit Florida, Destinations Florida, Destinations International, US Travel Association, Florida Society of Association Executives (FSAE), Alachua County Hospitality Council, Florida Agritourism Association.
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## PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

- **Michael Curry**, Associate Vice President, Office for Advancement/Deputy Executive Director; Santa Fe College Foundation, Inc. President, Hippodrome Theatre Board of Directors. Cell: (352) 538-7866; Email: [michael.curry1@me.com](mailto:michael.curry1@me.com)
  - **Greg Johnson**, Coldwell Banker Commerical M.M. Parrish Realtors; President, Gainesville Orchestra Board of Directors. Cell: (352) 281-1240; Email: [gjohnson@mmparrish.com](mailto:gjohnson@mmparrish.com)
  - **Mark Sexton**, Alachua County Communications Director. Email: [msexton@alachuacounty.us](mailto:msexton@alachuacounty.us)
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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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