



Trainer Biographies – February 16-17, 2019



Emily Arata

Emily Arata is the Assistant Vice President of Government Relations and Community Initiatives at the Ochsner Health System. In her role, Emily develops community investment and outreach strategies that advance Ochsner's mission. She represents the health system in complex legislative efforts and works with government officials at the local, state and federal level. Prior to joining Ochsner, Emily served as a Deputy Mayor for the City of New Orleans. Arata oversaw communications, local and federal government affairs, and policy for the mayor's office. She was campaign manager for Mitch Landrieu's runs for lieutenant governor and mayor before joining his executive staff in 2010. She was also a staff member for former Sen. Mary Landrieu in Washington, D.C.

Arata was also the mayor's designee on his Committee on Sexual Violence Response and was chairwoman of a working group to implement new domestic violence policies. For her work, the New Orleans Family Justice Center presented her with a 2015 Champion Award.



Candice Battiste

Candice Battiste is a bold, progressive advocate for her community and state. She is a proud graduate of Louisiana State University and the Southern University Law Center where she served as the President of Law Students for Reproductive Justice and was a recipient of the prestigious Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Fellowship.

She is the past Shreveport-Bossier Field Director with Citizen SHE United and the Unanimous Jury Coalition, Vice President of the Women's Democratic Club of Northwest Louisiana, currently serves on the executive board of the New Leaders Council- Louisiana Chapter, and was recently selected as a United Nations Association Delegate. When Candice is not discussing progressive politics, she can be found at one of many Louisiana food and music festivals or curling up with a good book. She is also an active member of the Junior League of Shreveport-Bossier.



Sumer Cooner

Sumer Cooner is a proud graduate of Emerge Louisiana's Inaugural 2018 class. Upon completion of the Emerge program, Sumer announced her candidacy for Caddo Parish School Board. With a determined ground game and proven community leadership, Sumer challenged a sitting School Board Member in a "red" district. Sumer earned 43% of the vote in a district that voted 88% Republican just four years prior- a 45 point swing.

Sumer attended public school K-12 and graduated from The University of Texas at Austin in 2007 where she studied Advertising at one of the top advertising programs in the country. While in Austin, Sumer took night classes to become a Realtor to earn money during college. She married her wonderful husband, Nick, in 2006. Sumer was the Marketing Director at Shreveport Opera before welcoming her two beautiful children, Henry and Lucille, into the world. She enjoyed being able to spend those first precious years with them at home. She started an in-home sewing Etsy business, HopScotch Stitches, while she was home with her children and continues to help with her parent's oil and gas companies, T-M Well Service and McDonald Resources. Sumer is currently the Development Coordinator at The Strand Theatre.

She proudly volunteers as the pianist at Church for the Highlands and loves volunteering to help families in need at Highland Center Ministries. You can also find Sumer at AC Steere, her children's school, where she helps lead the running club or assisting a teacher in their classroom. Her hobbies include water skiing, gardening, sewing, playing the piano, and spending time with her husband, two children, and their dog, Banjo. Sumer loves her neighborhood and the people in it.



LeVette Fuller

LeVette Fuller serves on the Shreveport City Council. In 2018, LeVette answered the call to run for office. She advanced to the runoff and won her election with 74% of the vote. Councilwoman Fuller now serves the people of District B which includes downtown Shreveport. Fuller's win created the first African-American majority council in more than four decades under the mayor-council form of government.

LeVette is an associate with the Shreve Memorial Library system and a dedicated community activist. Fuller is a graduate of Caddo Parish Magnet High School and Centenary College. In addition to her work with local schools and community partners through the public library system, she serves on the Leadership Council for Step Forward, an organization focused on cradle-to-career success for North Louisiana. Fuller has served as a board member for the Shreveport Caddo Metropolitan Planning Commission and is a founding member of Re-Form Shreveport, an organization dedicated to bringing citizens together to share ideas and find implementable solutions to improve Shreveport's built environment. She is also an active member of the Junior League of Shreveport-Bossier.