

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT • COMMUNITY RELATIONS

"[Darnita's] ability to translate legislation into layman's terms and quickly determine the impact of decisions on a local, regional, and state-level is a huge asset for us." — Columbus Chamber of Commerce

HISTORY OF PERFORMANCE IN GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND POLICY INFLUENCE

Foster collaboration and consensus across diverse entities, bridging gaps and creating synergies throughout cross-functional partners, and working diligently to drive forward economic development and policy interests at the local, regional, and state levels.

CULTIVATE SUSTAINABLE RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY, GOVERNMENT, AND BUSINESS STAKEHOLDERS

Analyze and present opportunities for improvement and business and economic development, tailoring communications to the needs and styles of each audience, building key account relationships, and fostering productive community relations.

CHAIRPERSON OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE COLUMBUS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Navigate issues directly impacting businesses in Central Ohio, identify public policies that foster a sustainable and productive business environment, educate members on top policy issues, and evaluate ballot issues and levies for Chamber endorsement.

EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Columbia Gas of Ohio, Columbus, OH

MANAGER, GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, 2002-present

LIAISON, GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, 2000-2002; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REP., INTERIM, 2000

Collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to monitor and assess local policy developments; present and advocate for Columbia Gas of Ohio's position; and drive forward strategic initiatives, business development priorities, and industry alliances.

Serve as a brand champion, providing direction and counsel on natural gas issues at the local, regional, and state levels, and developing and sustaining key relationships—with both internal and external stakeholders—to not only drive economic development, but also to maintain leading-edge awareness of the regulatory climate. Participate in lobbying efforts at the local level, managing legislative issues, and participating in state policymaking efforts. Partner with clients, site consultants, and local economic development organizations to provide counsel and advice on development and expansion opportunities.

Statewide Economic Development

- ▶ **Promote economic development opportunities in the State of Ohio**, meeting with government officials to identify legislative risks, managing PACs to drive funding for key initiatives, and increasing exposure throughout community leaders and lawmakers.

Community, Government, & Stakeholder Relations

- ▶ **Managed legislative and community affairs for a \$40M, 31-mile Central Ohio pipeline investment project** with impact across a multijurisdictional region including residences, commercial operations, businesses, parks, reservoirs, and environmentally sensitive areas.

Economic Development Funding

- ▶ **Created and administered the company's first Economic Development Grant Program**, awarding \$1.5M in grant funds to support the creation and retention of 4,000+ Ohio-based jobs and \$378M in capital investment, with total economic impact reaching \$1.8B.

Local Government Affairs

- ▶ **Restructured local government affairs by developing the first municipal policy management strategy**, streamlining local government operations, designing new processes, and creating a common platform to manage 1,000+ service area communities.

Public Policy Influence

- ▶ **Played a key role in the passage of legislation (HB319)** to establish the natural gas industry's 1st public policy to fuel job creation and infrastructure investments; proving up to \$5M in annual funding for competitive economic development projects.

Strategic Communications

- ▶ **Cultivated community, government, and stakeholder relations** following the company's largest and first regulatory rate case proceeding in 14 years, proactively communicating and managing relationships critical to securing support and overcoming objections.

Business Development

- ▶ **Participate in lead generation** through trade shows and targeted marketing campaigns, leveraging foundational sales and marketing experience to position offerings in a competitive market, and to facilitate a consultative, needs-based sales process.

Community Relations

- ▶ **Serve as a visible member of the organization for community-facing initiatives**, presenting philanthropic recommendations to leadership to reinforce commitment.

NATIONAL ACCOUNT REPRESENTATIVE, 1998-2000

Designed and deployed a national account development plan to fuel new business across 40 accounts in 4 leading industries.

Established relationships and connections with local, regional, and state economic development organizations, promoting Columbia Gas of Ohio's offerings to increase awareness and adoption. Deepened account penetration through active management and ongoing assessment of opportunities across national account footprint and an additional 375+ accounts and relationships.

Customer Communications

- ▶ **Developed first-time website and newsletter targeted toward national accounts**, delivering customer-centered communications to improve engagement and retention.

Sales Administration

- ▶ **Enhanced CRM data quality in order to support targeted sales initiatives**, updating and improving data collection techniques to ensure on-demand access to current information.

SALES REPRESENTATIVE, 1996-1998

Developed and executed business development plans to drive commercial sales, promote gas equipment, and grow market share.

Identified and capitalized on market opportunities to secure new construction and conversion customers, delivering in-depth presentations to educate customers on ROI models. Determined project feasibility—leveraging computerized applications for analysis—to ensure engagements were aligned with overarching business targets and company's financial goals.

Sales Pipeline Development

- ▶ **Achieved 100% of aggressive sales expectations** through acquisition of key commercial and new construction accounts, cultivating relationships critical to driving conversion.

REGULATORY ANALYST, 1994-1996

Developed cost recovery proposals and other analyses while ensuring accuracy and adherence to natural gas policies and guidelines.

Prepared, analyzed, and reported on study results of the impact on current gas recovery rates for customers transferring from gas transportation service to gas sales. Researched and compiled statistical data for rate case and purchased gas cost filings.

Analysis & Reporting

- ▶ **Prepared rate filings resulting in the recovery of more than \$700M** in annual gas purchase contracts; monitored special rate contract reports detailing \$8M in lost annual revenues.

EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

Franklin University, Columbus, OH

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA), BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (BS), ACCOUNTING

Professional Development —

Financial Accounting Institute's Utility Finance & Accounting

Oklahoma University Economic Development Institute

JoAnn Davidson Leadership Institute

United Way Project Diversity

Leadership Columbus

INDUSTRY & COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Current Leadership Roles—

International Utility Economic Development Association Board

Columbus2020 Economic Development Advisory Committee

Gahanna Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council

United Way's Impact Council

Community Shelter Board

Leadership Columbus

Select Former Leadership Positions—

American Gas Association, National Accounts Advisory Board

Gahanna Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council

Northwest Ohio Regional Economic Development

Columbus Recreation & Parks Commission

Ohio Economic Development Association

United Way Campaign Chairperson