

Results driven educator with over a decade of experience in work-based learning, team supervision, marketing strategy, and business management. Adaptable business leader adept in driving process improvements across organizations, identifying new opportunities for high impact change, and leading projects to provide optimized services to multiple stakeholders. Proven record of developing nationally recognized educational programs focused on student growth and career preparation, from conception and design through implementation, measurement, and continuous improvement.

Areas of Expertise include:

Career Education

- ◆ Work-based Learning
- ◆ Practicum/Capstone
- ◆ Digital Portfolio Training
- ◆ Entrepreneurship

Marketing

- ◆ Branding
- ◆ Marketing Research
- ◆ Market & Competitor Analysis
- ◆ New Product Launches

Relationship Management

- ◆ Team Development & Leadership
- ◆ Stakeholder Management
- ◆ Reporting & Proposal Presentation
- ◆ Contract Negotiations & Management

Professional Experience

Student-Led Innovations, LLC dba Career Bridge • Pharr, TX • November 2019 to Present

Founder/CEO

Creator of the Career Bridge work-based learning system and career and technical education consultant. Specializing in work-based learning, capstone, career and technical education practicum, and student-led methodologies through business services. Assisted U.S. Department of Education with work-based learning concepts for both CyberNet and Rural Tech Project Initiatives.

Weslaco ISD / South Texas College • Weslaco, TX • January 2021 to May 2022

Dual Credit Marketing Instructor / Shot Put & Discus Coach

Marketing instructor at Weslaco East High School with a vision to develop a national model in work-based learning through the creation of a student-led marketing agency. Focusing on Marketing & Sales and Entrepreneurship programs of study. Additional duties include being a DECA sponsor and Shot Put & Discus Assistant Track Coach.

PSJA ISD / South Texas College • Pharr, TX • August 2012 to August 2020

Entrepreneurship Coordinator / Dual Credit Marketing Instructor / Shot Put & Discus Coach

Developed national model for work-based learning with first student-led marketing agency in United States. Led students to complete marketing research within multiple business sectors. Mentor high school and college level students to pursue careers in marketing by supporting projects to design marketing strategies and deliverables. Facilitate courses in Marketing, Customer Service, Social Media, Advertising, and Public Relations. Cultivate robust partnerships with regional and multinational companies to align work-based learning opportunities with stakeholder objectives.

Coached nationally ranked Bronze, Silver, and Gold UIL Shot Put and Discus State Champions. Developed several district, area, and regional champions in both shot put and discus. Produced four NCAA Division One athletes.

JANA, Inc. • San Antonio, TX • January 2009 to June 2012

Head of Marketing / Account Executive

Formulated, directed, and coordinated marketing activities and policies to promote products and services; collaborated with advertising and promotion managers to build market awareness. Negotiated contracts with vendors and distributors to manage product distribution; established distribution networks and strategies. Authored and interpreted RFQ's, bid packages, and underlying bid and costing documents.

*Additional experience as **Head Graphic Designer** with Hippo Films in Brownsville, TX, **Trauma Sales Associate** with Stryker Orthopedics, and **Relationship Manager** with Heartland Payment Systems in McAllen, TX.*

Education & Credentials

Entrepreneurship Acceleration Certificate, 2019

The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania • Philadelphia, PA

Master of Professional Studies in Integrated Marketing Communications, 2019

Georgetown University • Washington, DC

Bachelor of Science in Marketing & Advertising, 2007

Morningside University • Sioux City, IA

Certifications

Level One & Two Throwing Coach, United States Track and Field (2017)

Marketing Education 8-12, Texas State Board of Education (2012)

Awards

- RGV LEAD Teacher of The Year (2021-2022)
- South Texas College Distinguished Teaching & Learning Award (2017)
- Sales Performance Acknowledgement, Heartland Payment Systems National Top Performer (2008)

Professional & Community Involvement

- Member, RGV LEAD Board of Directors (2022-Present)
- Founder, South Texas Throwers Shot Put & Discus Club (2021-Present)
- Business, Marketing, and Finance Advisory Committee Member, Texas Education Agency (2018 – Present)
- Work-based Learning Champions Group Member, Texas Education Agency (2018 – Present)
- Committee Member, South Texas College Marketing Advisory Committee (2015 – Present)
- Commissioner, Sioux City Human Rights Commission (2006 – 2007)
- Founding Board Member / PR Spokesman, Siouxland Community Media (2006 – 2007)
- Board Member/PR Committee Chairman, Siouxland Unidad Latina (2005 – 2007)

Publications & Presentations

1. **Garza, JE.** (2017). *Preparing our Future Entrepreneurs*. National Career Pathways Network Connections Publication, Vol 28, No 3, The Future is Here.
2. **Heyward, G.** (2019). *Rethinking Career and Technical Education*. Center on Reinventing Public Education. Retrieved from: <http://research.crpe.org/reports/rethinking-cte/index.html>
3. Presented at ACTE CareerTech VISION National Conference invited by U.S. Department of Education, Ford Next Generation Learning National Conference, National Career Pathways Network Conference, Texas Career Education Summer and Winter Conference, PSJA College for All Conference, Region-one STEM Summit, and RGV Lead Regional Conference (Session and Keynote).