

McKinney Economic Development Organization

Over the past three years, the team has undergone meaningful transitions that reflect the organization's evolving priorities and growth.

In August 2021, Office Supervisor Deana Smithee was promoted to Operations Manager, strengthening operational leadership. Shortly after, in September 2021, Project Manager Madison Clark's role was redefined as Business Retention and Expansion Manager, emphasizing a proactive approach to business retention, expansion, and recruitment efforts.

The following year saw several key staffing changes. Executive Assistant Joanne Isom resigned in January 2022 and was succeeded by Melanie Molina, who joined the team in February, and is now a Certified Administrative Professional. In April, Luke Gajary was hired as the Marketing and Social Media Manager, enhancing the organization's branding and outreach. Executive Vice President Abby Liu departed in June 2022, marking a shift in leadership. In October, Madison Clark's responsibilities expanded to include workforce development, leading to her promotion to Director of Business Retention and Workforce Development. Around the same time, Technology and Infrastructure Specialist Michael DePaola resigned, with the City of McKinney assuming responsibility for related projects.

The trend of restructuring continued in 2023. In February, Project Manager Miguel Esparza resigned, and Caroline Causey was hired to focus on traditional projects. In June, Mike Wilkes joined the team as a Project Manager, tasked with expanding the Innovation Fund Program. August 2023 saw another leadership transition with the resignation of President & CEO Petar Tokar. This leadership gap was filled in October 2023 when Michael Kowski took on the role of President & CEO, bringing a fresh strategic direction to the organization.

The momentum carried into 2024 and 2025 with the addition of three new roles to support the organization's objectives. In November 2024, Shannon Roberts joined as the Marketing and Special Events Coordinator, responsible for event planning and social media management. The same month, Project Manager Caroline Causey resigned, and this position will soon be posted. In December, Miranda Esparza was hired as an Economic Development Specialist, providing research support and assisting with various business attraction, retention, and workforce development initiatives.

Most recently, in January 2025, Erick Rodriguez joined as the Business Intelligence Analyst, focusing on data analysis and strategic insights to drive decision-making on a regional, national, and international scale.

These staffing changes reflect the organization's commitment to strengthening its leadership, expanding its capabilities, and positioning itself for long-term success in economic development and business growth.