

Leadership & Outreach Committee Member Bios DDA William St/Midtown Planning Area Project

Britany Affolter-Caine

Ph.D – Director of Talent Enhancement, [SPARK](#)

In her role at SPARK, Britany is responsible for the organization's talent attraction and enhancement efforts for the region. Prior to joining Ann Arbor SPARK, Britany served as a consultant to the non-profit sector, where her work focused on strategic planning and policy research. She has also served as the director of Intern In Michigan, a state-wide talent retention and attraction program, and senior research associate for the Great Lakes Economic Initiative with the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution.

She earned a masters degree in secondary education, economics, from Wright State University and a doctor of philosophy degree in higher education policy and organizational behavior from the University of Michigan. A native of Northeast Ohio, Britany has lived in Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti since 2000 where she and her husband, David, are raising their two boys.

Ron Dankert

President, [Swisher Commercial](#)

Ron has been active in the Ann Arbor real estate business since 1972. He attended Central Michigan University and The University of Michigan, and has pursued additional professional training in accounting, economics, urban planning, real estate marketing, taxation, and German.

Ron joined Swisher Commercial in 1978. He is a specialist in office and industrial sales and leasing, with substantial experience in the management of multi-tenant Class A office buildings and retail strips. This experience gives him the added capability of more fully understanding commercial real estate from both landlord and tenant perspectives. His community involvement includes two mayoral appointments with the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority (1998-2006), where he served as 2000-2001 Chairman of the Board of Directors, and served six years as Chair of the Parking Operations and Finance Committee.

He is a former Chairman of the Board of Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County, and served as member of the DeVine Foundation Board of Directors. In 2010, Ron was elected Secretary of the Board of Directors of the newly-formed, taxpayer-funded Main Street Business Improvement Zone "MSBIZ". MSBIZ is a non-profit organization operating on behalf of the property owners in the district to provide consistently high quality services to complement basic City services to make the South Main Street area between Huron and William cleaner, safer and more vibrant.

Ron and his wife Barbara live in Ann Arbor and enjoy skiing, sailing, traveling, golf, and racquetball. They have one daughter, a former Peace Corps volunteer, who lives in Washington, DC.

Bob Galardi

Downtown Resident and Educational Consultant

Bob grew up in Ann Arbor and has a long family history here - his grandfather came here from Italy as a tradesman (tile setter) and helped build many of the buildings in town and on campus. After a tour in Viet Nam, he attended Eastern Michigan University and first studied Speech and Drama and later returned to receive a teaching credential and eventually a Masters in Education.

In August of 2007, he completed a 32-year career with the Ann Arbor Public Schools. During his career in the schools, he served in a variety of roles: teacher, union president (teachers-AAEA and principals-AAAA), Executive Director of Curriculum, Principal, and finally Deputy Superintendent for Administrative Services. As part of his professional endeavors he researched, trained, and participated in a variety of approaches to the resolution of conflict. He served as a community mediator and a trainer of mediators for over fifteen years. In 2006, he started a consulting company, the Educators Resource Group.

As a consultant, Bob now works with school districts in Michigan to develop and improve their programs for students. He is also involved in facilitating negotiations and the problem solving process with schools and other organizations.

He and his wife have been married for 33 years. She is an accountant and they have two children. Their daughter Angela is a U of M grad working for Citi Bank in NYC. She and her husband Eric live in Brooklyn with their first grandchild, Dalia, who was born last May. Their son Anthony also lives in Brooklyn and is a teacher in the South Bronx.

During his career with the school district, he served on a variety of civic boards and committees. Over the past 25 years, he has been a member of the Burns Park Players and has participated in most of their annual productions.

Joan Lowenstein

Attorney, [Jaffee Raitt Heuer & Weiss](#) & Co Chair of the [Ann Arbor DDA Partnerships Committee](#)

Joan Lowenstein is an attorney at Jaffe Raitt Heuer & Weiss, located in the First National Building in downtown Ann Arbor. She has worked in downtown Ann Arbor since 1986, practicing intellectual property law and teaching communication law at the University of Michigan. Joan served on City Council from 2000-2008, doubling as a planning commissioner for part of that time. She currently serves as a DDA Board Member and has since 2007. She lives in the Ann Arbor Hills neighborhood, a short distance from downtown, and bikes to work. Joan is married and has two sons.

John Mouat

Partner, [Mitchell & Mouat Architects](#) and co-chair [DDA Transportation and Operations Committee](#)

John Mouat is a partner in the firm Mitchell and Mouat Architects, Inc., a downtown Ann Arbor firm specializing in Community Architecture. Projects in downtown Ann Arbor have included the County Office building at 200 N. Main, renovations at the Pardon Block, Schwaben Building, and First United Methodist Church, and the Fourth and Washington parking structure. He has been active with a number of civic organizations and served on the boards of City of Ann Arbor Housing Policy, Ann Arbor YMCA, Washtenaw Area Transit Study, and Ann Arbor Civic Theater. John currently serves as a DDA Board Member and has since 2007. He and his wife Lisa Snapp, Director of Climate Change Policy at the EPA Vehicle Lab, live on the near Old West Side and have two teenage daughters.

Hillary Murt

Ann Arbor Resident, former business owner, and [Michigan Theater Board Member](#)

Like many Ann Arbor residents Hillary came to Ann Arbor to attend school at the University of Michigan and didn't leave. She began her Masters of Public Health program at U of M in 1975 and worked at several health related businesses until 1980 when she started working on her doctorate in Medical Care Organization. During this time, she held the position of Research Associate, where she worked on a number of grants for various health agencies.

Marriage and raising a family intervened and in early 1992 she pursued starting her own business, Pen in Hand, which she first began in her home and later opened a retail store on Fourth Avenue in 1994. The store was the first business in Ann Arbor to offer fine stationary, invitations and calligraphy to the community in a retail setting. She enjoyed considerable growth and success with the business over the six years of her ownership, and experienced a sense of pride in having a destination shop on Fourth Avenue which to that point offered relatively few retail options to the community. Ann Arbor is a community with many micro business environments, each with their own character and mix of businesses, and she found it challenging to figure out how to be a successful store on a street that didn't have a large share of walk-by traffic.

She decided to sell her business in 2000 which she felt fortunate to be able to do. She began another life chapter where she has been a community volunteer with a number of organizations. She served on the Board of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor for 11 years beginning in 1994 and as President from 2000-2002. She also served as Chair of the Jewish Community Foundation from 2003-2005. She served on the Board at the Ann Arbor Academy from 2000-2001 and in 2006, she began a term with the

SafeHouse Center Board, serving as President from 2008-2010. She is currently on the Board of the Michigan Theater.

Nancy Shore

Director, [getDowntown Program](#)

Nancy has been the Director of the getDowntown Program since 2007. A partnership between the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, the City of Ann Arbor and the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority, the getDowntown Program provides commuting programs and services for employers and employees in downtown Ann Arbor. Nancy has a Masters in Social Work in Community Organizing from the University of Michigan. Nancy also currently sits on the Board of the Main Street Area Association. Nancy, her husband Chuck and their daughter Camille have lived in Ann Arbor since 2002. Her first job when she moved to Ann Arbor was at Zingerman's Deli.

Sandi Smith

Owner/Broker, [Trillium Real Estate](#), [City Council Member](#) and [Co-Chair DDA Partnerships Committee](#)

Sandi Smith has been a Realtor since 1986. In 2001 she co-founded Trillium Real Estate and in 2008, moved the business to the Kerrytown neighborhood. She is a past Board Member for the Ann Arbor Area Board of Realtors and the Washtenaw Rainbow Action Project. She continues to serve in multiple community service capacities, including as a DDA Board Member since 2004, a City Council Member, Ward 1, since 2008, and a Jim Toy Community Center Board Member since 2010.

Bonnie Valentine

Director of Sales and Marketing, [The Whole Brain Group](#)

Bonnie has held a variety of management positions in both high-tech and higher education environments, ranging from technical support to business and finance. Her left- and right-brain approach to developing sustainable solutions stems from a balanced education in art, business, and project management. Bonnie has applied her creativity and eye for detail by fulfilling lead roles at The Whole Brain Group as Consultant, Project Manager and Business Development Lead. From eCommerce Websites to Software and iPhone app development, Bonnie has acquired a broad repertoire of consulting and management expertise. And in everything she does, Bonnie manages to keep things organized while also making sure everyone is having fun!

Kirk Westphal

Founding Principal, [Westphal Associates](#) and [City Planning Commissioner](#)

Kirk Westphal developed expertise in interviewing and video storytelling during his former career in advertising and marketing research in New York City, where he interviewed thousands of people for consumer products companies. He brought this experience to the field of urban planning with the creation of [Insights into a Lively Downtown](#), an award-winning 2006 documentary film capturing the essence of vibrant city blocks from a pedestrian's perspective. Since founding Westphal Associates, Kirk has helped organizations and municipalities research a variety of subjects.

He received a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Pennsylvania and a master's degree in urban planning from the University of Michigan. Kirk currently serves on the planning and environmental commissions in the City of Ann Arbor where he lives with his wife and two sons.