

Caitlan Smelley - President



“Great leaders find ways to connect with their people and help them fulfill their potential.”
-Steven J. Stowell

My name is Caitlan Smelley and I am seeking to be your 2017 Urban Management Assistants of North Texas President. I am currently the Assistant to the City Manager for the Town of Addison, TX and previously worked for the cities of Grapevine, TX and Burleson, TX. I have been a member of UMANT since 2012 and served as the Chair of the Networking Committee for 2.5 years and as Vice President in 2016.

When I first became a member of UMANT, I wasn't sure what I had signed up for. A mentor of mine encouraged me to get involved with this group in order to build my network. As a MPA student, I didn't know anyone and was a novice in local government. When I arrived at my first NTCMA/UMANT event, I was lucky enough to have my mentor by my side to introduce me to what felt like 100 managers, directors, and assistants. At the conclusion of the evening, I felt welcomed and included in the local government professional here in North Texas.

I believe the purpose of UMANT is to provide emerging leaders with opportunities to connect with mentors and with each other. As your President, my top priority is to create a community of local government professionals that cultivate relationships with those in the same career stages and learn from those that have been in this profession for a number of years. As a training ground for emerging leaders, I will encourage UMANT to capitalize on the success of events like Exec.Connect, which serve as the starting point for growing organic mentorships. I will continue to utilize our professional development events as opportunities to bring in managers and subject matter experts to speak on specific topics that directly relate to our members and encourage non-members to join. I will also focus our networking events on membership engagement and socialization to ensure that all local government professionals feel welcomed and part of our organization.

UMANT has not only expanded my professional network, but also allowed me to build friendships with people who just get “it”. Whether “it” is a celebratory success with a project, frustration with a co-worker or elected official, or panic due to a complete mess up, they understand “it” and are able to listen and/or brainstorm solutions. We all need a person, group or community that we can confide in and lean on. As your President, I will strive for UMANT to be known for having such a culture: one of trust, support, and encouragement.

One of my all-time favorite quotes is: “Great leaders find ways to connect with their people and help them fulfill their potential.” We are the next generation of leaders in local government. If elected President, 2017 will be focused on helping you develop into the leader you're meant to be.

