

# GWENDOLYN DELORES SAFFO

3432 NW 37th Avenue Gainesville, Florida 32605 • [saffogd@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:saffogd@cityofgainesville.org) • (352) 339-3977

---

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission:

This correspondence serves to express my interest in becoming the next **Equal Opportunity Director** for the City of Gainesville. I am a consummate professional with many years of experience and I possess a broad base of knowledge that spans over thirty-one (31) years. I am committed to Equal Opportunity, Diversity Management, Affirmative Action, Human Resources/Employee Relations, and the Small & Minority Business Enterprise. I am a highly responsible and forward-thinking leader with a proven record of a proactive commitment to equal opportunity and diversity.

Having served in the capacity of Interim Equal Opportunity Director twice; first in 2009 and again in 2015, I am a proven and trusted asset. I have provided managerial and administrative leadership and policy guidance to the City Commission in all areas of Equal Opportunity. I am dedicated and loyal to the City of Gainesville; both the organization and the community. As such, I am more than capable and well-equipped to assume the position of the Equal Opportunity Director. I am uniquely qualified in that I will bring stability to the office as well as a new and positive direction. My goal entails building the strength and integrity of the Office while providing a transformative vision for the future.

My experience shows that I am skilled as a mediator, investigator, diversity trainer, community organizer, campaign manager, human resources professional and collective bargaining negotiator. Through these experiences, my problem-solving and conflict resolution skills have been enhanced. I have also developed many positive relationships in the organization and the community that will allow me to continue to foster collaborative and diplomatic partnerships.

I have demonstrated that I am a proven asset and I have the respect of my peers, city staff and the community. Having served in the field for so many years, I have demonstrated an understanding of the needs of a diverse and progressive community such as ours. I clearly understand the importance of and the necessity for a holistic and balanced strategy, which is inclusive of the office, the organization, and the community. I believe in continuous improvement. I can effectively and efficiently manage and lead people and processes in a positive way that is motivational and promotes excellence. I am fair, ethical, just, consistent and impartial in my deliberations. I also possess the ability to be bold, aggressive and unintimidated when necessary to achieve positive and meaningful results. I have a record of exhibiting sound judgement, composure and patience when dealing with stressful situations.

I have always been highly visible and active in the community. My community outreach activities include speaking to various community-based organizations and businesses regarding the goals and objectives of the Office of Equal Opportunity and serving as a leader and participant in community organizations. I am committed to listening to the varied opinions of the citizens and ensuring that their input is heard and respected. A person in this position must be sensitive, responsive and accessible to the needs of internal and external stakeholders; however, that individual must also be able to maintain the credibility and integrity of the office through independence and neutrality.

My educational background includes a Master's Degree in Political Science with a certification in Public Administration and a Bachelor's of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice/Public Administration. I have a background in the legal field and I have been certified as a County Court Mediator by the Supreme Court of Florida. I am certified as a Senior Affirmative Action Professional by the American Association for Access, Equity & Diversity. I am a certified Diversity Trainer and I am also certified in the areas of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action from Cornell University. In addition, I have taken numerous courses relating to the equal opportunity investigative process.

In summary, my experience is vast in the Office of Equal Opportunity and in the Gainesville community. This position will afford me the opportunity to make a positive impact while continuing to build upon the foundation of strength and integrity of this Office. I look forward to continuing the positive working relationships that have been established with the Mayor and Commissioners. Thank you for considering my application. I welcome the opportunity to discuss my credentials with you.

Sincerely,

*Gwendolyn D. Saffo*

Gwendolyn D. Saffo

# GWENDOLYN DELORES SAFFO

3432 NW 37th Avenue Gainesville, Florida 32605 • saffogd@cityofgainesville.org • (352) 339-3977

---

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY DIRECTOR

**~Committed to Equal Opportunity, Diversity, Affirmative Action, and Small & Minority Business Enterprise~**

*A highly committed, loyal, forward-thinking, innovative and results oriented leader.*

*A leader focused on achieving exceptional results with experience and knowledge that spans over thirty-one (31) years.*

*A proven, well-respected individual that understands the importance of and the necessity for a holistic and balanced strategy, inclusive of the office, the organization and the community.*

*An accessible and sensitive leader who is responsive to the needs of internal and external stakeholders, while maintaining the credibility and integrity of the office through neutrality of actions.*

---

## EDUCATION

<u>University of Florida</u> , Gainesville, FL <i>Master of Arts in Political Science</i>	1983-1984
<u>University of Florida</u> , Gainesville, FL <i>College of Law</i>	1981-1982
<u>Shaw University</u> , Raleigh, NC <i>Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice/Public Administration (summa cum laude)</i>	1977-1981

## TRAININGS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Senior Certified Affirmative Action Professional, American Association for Access, Equity & Diversity

Certified Diversity Trainer, C. Cathy Harris, Inc.

Certified County Court Mediator - The Supreme Court of Florida

Equal Opportunity Certification - Cornell University, School of Industrial & Labor Relations

Affirmative Action Certification - Cornell University, School of Industrial & Labor Relations

Advanced Instructional Techniques (Train-the-Trainer) - Langevin Learning Services

---

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **Affirmative Action Manager & Chief Investigator** **2015-Present**

- Responsible for the implementation and administration of the Dismantling Racism Community Initiative and other special community and internal outreach activities.
- Develops, implements and administers the City's Affirmative Action Plans for both General Government & Gainesville Regional Utilities.
- Provides leadership and policy guidance in all areas relating to equal opportunity, affirmative action and diversity in the absence of the Equal Opportunity Director.
- Works closely with the Equal Opportunity Director on budgeting, staffing and strategic planning goals of the Office of Equal Opportunity.
- Serves as the Affirmative Action & Equal Opportunity compliance agent.
- Responsible for reviewing all discrimination final investigative reports prior to submission to the Equal Opportunity Director and the Human Rights Board.
- Conducts independent research, based on developments in equal opportunity law.
- Conducts studies and collects information to evaluate employment practices and determine whether there may be systemic discrimination.

# GWENDOLYN DELORES SAFFO – PAGE 2

---

## **INTERIM EQUAL OPPORTUNITY DIRECTOR**, City of Gainesville     **January 2015-October 2015**

- Provided leadership and policy guidance to the City Commission for the implementation of a comprehensive equal opportunity and diversity program in areas relating to equal opportunity, affirmative action, minority & small business enterprise, disability programs and diversity initiatives.
- Responsible for the budgeting, staffing and strategic planning goals of the Office of Equal Opportunity.
- Developed training and conducted workshops and strategic initiatives related to diversity and equal opportunity, in employment, housing, public accommodation, fair credit and purchasing.
- Reviewed and approved all changes to personnel requisition action forms and current or proposed city employment policies, procedures and guidelines, job descriptions, and purchasing policies and procedures for compliance with equal opportunity laws.
- Responsible for the preparation and implementation of the city's affirmative action and diversity initiatives.
- Conducted independent research and made recommendations based on developments in equal opportunity law and policy and collected information to evaluate employment practices and determine whether there may be systemic discrimination.
- Supervised and evaluated staff.

## **SENIOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITY SPECIALIST**, City of Gainesville     **2003-2015**

- Developed, implemented and administered the City's Affirmative Action plan for both General Government & Gainesville Regional Utilities.
- Responsible for the implementation and administration of the Dismantling Racism Community Initiative and other special community outreach activities.
- Provided leadership and policy guidance in all areas relating to equal opportunity affirmative action and diversity in the absence of the Equal Opportunity Director.
- Worked closely with the Equal Opportunity Director on budgeting, staffing and strategic planning goals of the Office of Equal Opportunity.
- Investigated complaints of discrimination and made recommendations.
- Conducted independent research, based on developments in equal opportunity law.
- Conducted studies and collected information to evaluate employment practices and determine whether there may be systemic discrimination.
- Supervised and evaluated staff.

## **CONSULTANT**, University of Florida Office of the Vice Provost-Affirmative Action     **2003**

- Conducted independent research and made recommendations to managerial staff based on developments in equal opportunity law and policy.
- Responsible for planning the Regional Affirmative Action conference & other special projects as assigned.

## **PERSONNEL/EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COORDINATOR**, School Board of Alachua County     **2001-2003**

- Conducted investigations of all employment complaints.
- Member of the collective bargaining negotiation team for career service personnel.
- Advised supervisory staff in progressive discipline matters.
- Personnel representative on administrative interview teams, and advisory groups.
- Supervised and evaluated staff.

# GWENDOLYN DELORES SAFFO – PAGE 3

---

## **CAREER SERVICES SUPERVISOR**, School Board of Alachua County

**1994-2001**

- Assisted in the planning, implementation and evaluation of all personnel functions.
- Screened, interviewed and evaluated applicants' education and experience for job referral, assigned salaries and approved other employee status changes.
- Provided career counseling to Career Service applicants and assisted in the administration of the disciplinary policy.
- Member of the collective bargaining negotiation team for career service personnel.
- Supervised and evaluated staff.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST**, City of Gainesville

**1987-1994**

- Advised managerial staff on personnel policies and procedures and EEO/AA guidelines.
- Conducted field/desk audits and other specialized technical research of classification, pay benefit and employment data and developed related reports and recommendations.
- Screened, interviewed, and evaluated applicants' education and experience.

## **FAIR HOUSING SPECIALIST**, City of Gainesville

**1985-1987**

- Drafted the City's First Fair Housing ordinance for approval by U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD).
- Conducted investigations of all complaints of housing discrimination.
- Maintained working agreements with federal, state, and county agencies.
- Provided semi-annual reports to the City Commission concerning the status of housing, discrimination within the city.

---

## VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES & ORGANIZATIONS

### **VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

Take Stock in Children (Gainesville Enrichment Mentoring Initiative), The Education Foundation

Guardian Ad Litem, Gainesville, Alachua County, FL

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Greater Gainesville

Volunteer Coordinator for Phyllis Kotey for Alachua County Judge candidacy

Political Awareness & Involvement Chair (Social Action), Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. GAC

Campaign Manager for Meshon Rawls, Candidate for Alachua County Court Judge

### **ORGANIZATIONS**

The Education Foundation, Board of Directors

National Diversity Council, Florida Affiliate

Society for Human Resources Management

American Association for Access, Equity & Diversity

# GWENDOLYN DELORES SAFFO – PAGE 4

---

National Alumni Association of Shaw University, Southeastern Regional Vice-President

Florida Sunshine Alumni Chapter-Shaw University, President

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Gainesville Alumnae Chapter, President (2001-2005; 2007-2011)

Focus On Leadership

Leadership Gainesville XX

National Forum for Black Public Administrators, President – NCFC (2007-2012)

The Visionaires, Inc.

Mount Carmel Missionary Baptist Church, Usher

.....

# GWENDOLYN DELORES SAFFO

3432 NW 37th Avenue Gainesville, Florida 32605 • [saffogd@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:saffogd@cityofgainesville.org) • (352) 339-3977

## PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

### **Honorable Judge Denise Ferrero**

County Court Judge  
Alachua County Criminal Justice Center  
220 South Main Street, Room A203  
Gainesville, FL 32601  
Phone: (352) 548-3700

### **Honorable State Judge Phyllis Kotey**

Clinical Associate Professor of Law  
Florida International University  
1601 NW 100<sup>th</sup> Terrace  
Plantation, FL 33322  
Phone: (954) 205-0400  
Email: [koteyp@fiu.edu](mailto:koteyp@fiu.edu)

### **Naima Brown, Ph.D.**

Vice President of Student Affairs  
Office of the President  
Santa Fe College  
3000 NW 83<sup>rd</sup> Street, R-211  
Gainesville, FL 32601  
Phone: (352) 222-7049  
[naima.brown@sfcollge.edu](mailto:naima.brown@sfcollge.edu)

### **Jeff Lane**

Fire Chief  
Gainesville Fire Rescue  
City of Gainesville  
1025 NE 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
Gainesville, FL 32601  
Phone: (352) 334-5078  
Email: [lanejj@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:lanejj@cityofgainesville.org)

### **S. Yvette Carter**

Community & Government Relations  
Officer  
Gainesville Regional Utilities  
301 SE 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Gainesville, FL 32601  
Phone: (352) 393-1207  
Email: [cartersy@gru.com](mailto:cartersy@gru.com)

### **Cecil Howard, JD**

Associate Vice President  
Chief Diversity Officer & Title IX  
Coordinator (Diversity, Inclusion & Equal  
Opportunity)  
University of South Florida  
4202 E. Fowler Avenue  
Tampa, FL 33620  
Phone: (813) 974-8615  
Email: [howardc@usf.edu](mailto:howardc@usf.edu)

### **Milton Reid**

Retired General Services Director  
City of Gainesville  
5751 W. Newberry Road  
Gainesville, FL 32605  
Phone: (352) 318-3318  
Email: [miltonrreid@bellsouth.net](mailto:miltonrreid@bellsouth.net)

### **Heddie Sumpter**

HR Administrator  
College of Visual and Performing Arts  
University of South Florida  
4202 E. Fowler Avenue  
Tampa, FL 33620  
Phone: (813) 974-1715  
Email: [hsumpter@arts.usf.edu](mailto:hsumpter@arts.usf.edu)

### **Honorable Alexander Killens**

Special Assistant, State of North Carolina  
Governor's Office  
Former Commissioner, State of North Carolina  
Department of Motor Vehicles  
Former Special Assistant, State of North Carolina  
Secretary of the State Office  
2205 Lyndhurst Drive  
Raleigh, NC 27610  
Phone: (919) 208-7242

### **Richard Williams**

Retired Fire Chief  
Gainesville Fire Rescue  
City of Gainesville  
P. O. Box 140443  
Gainesville, Florida 32614  
Phone: (352) 284-8088  
Email: [fire1@gru.com](mailto:fire1@gru.com)