
STRATEGY LEADER | ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTOR | BUSINESS ADVOCATE
Recognized Workforce Advocate, Results-Oriented Executive Director
Drives Successful Community-Industry Engagement Initiatives

Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. – Hellen Keller

LEADERSHIP

Strategy Advisor who collaborates with state economic development and tech industry local workforce to create talent.

Co-Founder, President & Chair of Women in Bio (WIB): Established a professional national organization, developed women entrepreneurs, led growth & exceeded members & corporate sponsor goals >\$1m.

Professional/Business Boards

RECOGNITIONS & AWARDS, AND MEDIA SPOTLIGHTS

Recognized in *12 Women that Have Shaped the History of the BioHealth Capitol Region* (BioBuzz 2020)

Honored in biosciences with *Robbie Melton Women in Bio Scholarship Fund* (since 2010)

Featured in the Leadership Exhibit Spotlight, MD Women's Heritage Center: *Maryland Women in STEM* (2011)

Tech Expert Media Spotlights Think Tech HI, Olelo Community Media & ABC Now News.Segment

Professional Speaker & Panel Presenter/Moderator (live/virtual learning), and Competition Judge

Ms. Melton is an effective Senior Leader experienced in transforming organizations with strategic vision, programs, and a focused team. She has a keen sense of seeing opportunities, working with board of directors and staff to meet objectives and goals. Experienced in entrepreneurial activities, secures capital, strategizes business and revenue growth, engages key business introductions, including local & regional state and federal government contracting networks to develop and create talent.

- Specializes in **strategic planning & analyzing organization** for funding needs; programs & organizational development.
- **Builds partnerships: develops strong relationships with federal, state, and local governments, private sector and nonprofit companies** to build strong economic growth.
- Skilled in **managing staff, volunteers and promoting opportunities for underserved populations; team building.**

SELECT ACHIEVEMENTS & COMMUNITY ECONOMIC IMPACT

Exponentially increased nearly 500% agency funding from < \$1m: won \$5m-\$6m state funding for 5 grant programs to technology companies.

Secured \$3MM USDA funds, \$3MM State funds & \$1MM private investments.

During pandemic, organized, developed & delivered virtual conferences, workshops & webinars- survive COVID for businesses & federal contracting.

Created the Business Innovation Division – focused to spur innovation economy; mentored and educated businesses, provided funding resources.

Created the Rural Business Innovation Initiative – to reach companies in underserved areas; provided tech assistance to 180+ tech- based companies.

Mentor & Trainer for the *South Africa Women Entrepreneur Project.*

Robbie mentored us when I founded a technology startup in Maryland. We developed and marketed unmanned aerial vehicles, satellites and space hardware. Robbie helped us secure Maryland State investment to finance various business ventures that eventually became quite profitable. She also offered ongoing guidance and support, as well as helping us network with other area businesses and government offices. Robbie is very responsive and energetic and I highly recommend her.

– Entrepreneur

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Hawaii Small Business Development Center (SBDC) - Kauai | Lihue, HI

July 2020 – Present

Center Director

Advocate and mentor entrepreneurs, startups, and small businesses: provide strategic planning guidance; business and financial planning; workforce, employment, and team building; market expansion; and product development. Manage the Kauai SBDC Center operations; generate weekly, and annual reports to the state office.

- Collaborate with state economic development agencies, local governments, business organizations and area businesses: strengthen the business community, support companies to survive during the pandemic; connect companies to essential business resources, and strategize for business planning and revenue growth.
- Guide companies to identify funding sources and navigate applications process – COVID-19, grants, and loans.

Major Accomplishments:

- Created and led Hawaii Federal HUBZone Contracting conference, resulted in companies expanding, increasing sales and becoming sustainable.
- Assisted companies in expansion to international markets

County of Kauai Office of Economic Development | Lihue, HI

January 2019 – April 2020

Director

Led the Office of Economic Development divisions in film, energy and sustainability, manufacturing, tourism, agriculture, and workforce development. Managed a team of 10 staff members.

- Revived the nonexistent Agri Division as a core element of econ development; rescued the Workforce Development Board.
- Initiated the inaugural Mayor's Economic Summit: Engaged the community is solving key island issues

Major Accomplishments:

- Created the Business Innovation Division to focus on spurring an innovation economy: led entrepreneur outreach, engaged stakeholders, mentored and educated businesses, and provided funding sources.
- Partnered with Facebook for major social media marketing event
- Engaged a team of community leaders to create an island-wide *Youth MakerDay* to spur youth entrepreneurship and expose youth to new skills

Hawaii Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) | Honolulu, HI

February 2014 – December 2018

Executive Director & CEO

Led tech agency transformation and refocus - growing Hawaii's technology and innovation economy from a stagnant industry into a relevant, robust industry in Hawaii's economy – developed programs, policies, incubator facilities; secured grants. Implemented 5 programs in various industries, and two federal contracts. Managed a team of 17 staff.

- Spearheaded and exponentially increased agency funding nearly 500% - within 2 years base budget was < \$1m, lobbied and received an additional \$5-\$6m in state appropriations funding for five grant programs to tech companies for development and operations.
- Inserted HTDC into Workforce Development conversation: ensured jobs growth in HI, with major focus to develop talent; interfaced with clients, includes startup accelerators, universities, and community colleges towards building a strong workforce.
- Invented the Annual Legislative Technology Crawl – educated state legislators on the various types of technologies developed in Hawaii, and how funding supports the tech ecosystem.
- Helped HI companies become globally competitive- awarded \$900k grants to 29 manufacturing companies.

- Partnered with Ag and tech stakeholders to create the first ever Agathon, a hackathon for agriculture needs.
- **Major Accomplishments:**
 - Created the first *Annual Metrics Program* in the agency's 25 years of existence and measured the economic success of the agency's companies in the Incubator and Grants Programs and demonstrated the power of state funded programs to build a strong economy.
 - Launched *Neighbor Island Initiative*: facilitated transforming HTDC into a true statewide agency – provided continuous mentor services to 55+ companies and propelled them to next growth level in rural neighbor islands.
 - Created, designed, and built the *Entrepreneurs Sandbox* – the first community collaboration and coworking center for Honolulu innovators. Secured \$3m funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, \$3m funding from state legislators, and \$1m private investment for construction costs. Collaborated with partners to secure an additional \$1m in funding from a Japanese Investor for buildouts.

Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO) | Columbia, MD August 2003 – January 2014

Served as a Strategic Leader in developing educational programs for entrepreneurs, focused on USDA technologies and scientific development and developed critical programs to meet the needs of rural entrepreneurs. Served on investment committees, recommending funding for startup technology companies and created educational programs for 300 plus portfolio companies: Managed a team of 5 staff members.

Director, Entrepreneurial Innovation | July 2009 – January 2014

- Provided Portfolio Management guidance for 39 tech startups including strategy, marketing, funding advice.
- Served on monthly TEDCO Funding Review Committee, angel and VC investors, for two seed investment funds. Reviewed 20+ applications monthly and recommended funding. Made site visits to applicants. **Major Accomplishments:**
 - Created the *Rural Business Innovation Initiative*: provided intensive technical assistance to 180+ technology-based companies in rural MD. Supervised 6 contractors – mentored and gave business advice to companies.
 - Created, implemented MD Agricultural Innovation Forum (funded by U.S. SBA): facilitated connecting USDA Agri Research Service tech transfer managers, scientists, farmers, agri-businesses, university extension staff.
 - Created the Annual I.C.E. (Innovation, Company, Entrepreneur) Awards recognizing the achievements of TEDCO portfolio companies
 - Developed a Pitch Training Workshop for portfolio companies to apply to TEDCO quarterly VC pitch forum.

Senior Program Manager, Entrepreneurial Development | January 2006 – June 2009

- Served on monthly TEDCO Funding Review Committee, angel and VC investors, for two seed investment funds. Monthly, reviewed applications- 100+ annually, and made funding recommendations. Served on a special faculty fund review committee that provided grants to further the development of university faculty inventions.
- Served as Coordinator-USDA funded multi-industry, University Partnership for Alternative Jet Biofuels Project; served on Planning Committee of the National Agricultural Technology Innovation Partnerships Foundation. **Major Accomplishments:**
 - Designed curriculum, implemented quarterly educational workshops for TEDCO's 300+ portfolio companies.
 - Mentor & Trainer for *South Africa Women Entrepreneur Project* (funded by US Dept. of State & UMBC), a 6-month training program to teach select group of South African women technology entrepreneurs: mentored 3 companies – 1) animation company (Pixar-level); 2) web-based company; 3) database company.

Program Manager, Entrepreneurial Development | January – December 2005

- Served on monthly TEDCO Funding Review Committee, angel and VC investors, for two seed investment funds. Applicants-tech startups with a relationship to university or federal lab (licensing, JV, faculty). Reviewed various tech applications, made recommendations for investment, served as portfolio manager for funded companies.

- Managed *Incubator Business Assistance Program* that provides funding to the 18 Maryland Business Incubators.
- Worked with the TEDCO team to create federal laboratory technology showcases.

Technology Development Coordinator (Joint Appointment)

TEDCO & Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) | August 2003 – January 2004

Served as Entrepreneur Liaison between TEDCO and Maryland DBED.

- Collaborated with all University of Maryland research Campuses, and private universities technology transfer officers, and identified state resources to facilitate the commercialization of technology.

Major Accomplishments:

- Presented a comprehensive plan of the needs of the Universities technology transfer offices for state support for programs and funding.

Maryland Department of Commerce (MD Dept. of Economic Dev.) | Baltimore, MD July 2001 – June 2003

Assistant Director, Investment Financing Group

Evaluated business plans of biotechnology startup companies: 1) determined the viability and worthiness to receive equity investment from the state; 2) assessed probability of potential investment by other angel and venture capital funds; and 3) recommended the companies to their business resources.

- Collaborated with the Johns Hopkins entrepreneur department and developed a lecture series for Johns Hopkins Univ. faculty and post docs on entrepreneurship.
- Designed, conducted a business plan writing workshop for minority companies seeking investment funding.

Major Accomplishments:

- Created the first statewide *Handbook of Services and Programs* resource for technology companies.
- Successfully recovered past due royalty repayment obligations; established a system for monitoring current and future repayment obligations.

Prince George’s County Economic Development Corporation | Lanham, MD

October 2000 – June 2001

Senior Business Development Specialist

Directed a program funded by the National Science Foundation to promote the commercialization of federal laboratory technology with businesses and entrepreneurs to stimulate economic development in targeted areas.

- Performed general economic business development for retaining technology companies.

Major Accomplishments:

- Working with 13 federal labs of the Technology Transfer offices in Maryland, generated a database of *Top 10 Technologies* available to license within each agency.

University of Maryland, Maryland Industrial Partnerships | College Park, MD

August 1996 – September 2000

Projects Manager, MIPS

Promoted and managed project oversight focusing on business-university partnership technical assistance projects in various scientific and engineering fields.

- Marketed the MIPS program to corporate executives from startup to Fortune 500 companies.
- Surveyed and analyzed program initiatives in other states to determine best practices in funding programs.
- Skilled in reviewing and discerning highly technical and scientific information in a broad range of industries.

Major Accomplishments:

- Created an evaluation system to capture quantitative economic benefits of the program to demonstrate to the university and state officials the importance of funding.
- Achieved 90% ROI on the annual company commercialization survey.

NON PROFIT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Creator and Facilitator *Faith and Business* (2012, 2103, 2015): Pioneered 8-week course for business owners to run companies based on biblical principles; first designed program for women, then expanded to become coed.

Women in Bio (WIB) | Washington, DC Metro Area

2001 – 2010

Co-Founder (2001), President (2002 – 2008), and Board Chair (2009 – 2010)

Established the nonprofit organization to advise and support women entrepreneurs: developed and provided bioscience educational programs, networking events and mentoring. As President, raised >\$500k, outreached and built partnerships with key organizations. Grew WIB organization into the current 13 chapters in North America.

- Demonstrated leadership response to demand; expanded WIB programming with professional development.
- Chaired the Board of Directors and Advisory Board to shape the vision and growth of WIB.
- Actively engaged WIB committees, including the fundraising programs, entrepreneur and membership. Recruited and motivated 50+ committee volunteers.

Major Accomplishments:

- Led growth of WIB from offering two annual events to 16+ programs in the Washington, DC/ Baltimore region: resulted in increased annual attendance of 1000+ women and raised over \$500k in sponsorships.
- Expanded WIB from Washington, DC/Baltimore region to become a national organization with membership chapters and developed partnerships with other key organizations.
- Established Young Women in Bio (YWIB) for middle and high school girls, and inspired students to choose education at biotech companies such as Proctor & Gamble, MedImmune (Amgen), and Emergent BioSolutions. YWIB has now expanded girls' education in high schools across the United States.

EDUCATION & UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI

Project Management Specialist, International Benchmark Sites Network for Agrotechnology Transfer

Served as Contracts Administrator for USDA and USAID projects. Managed five international subcontracts. Wrote subcontract agreements, worked with principal investigators on cost containment. Identified, recommended necessary cost reductions to the PM when project funding was reduced from \$1m to \$500k.

U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, Washington, DC

Policy Analyst Intern, Office of Policy & Planning

Performed economic analyses for policy studies focused on user fees and forecasting value in river management systems. Co-authored paper critiquing various methodologies used to value weather information.

Master of Arts in Science, Technology and Public Policy | The George Washington University, Washington, DC

Bachelor of Arts in Economics | Drake University, Des Moines, IA

RECOGNITION, AWARDS

RECOGNITIONS & AWARDS

- Recognized in *12 Women that Have Shaped the History of the BioHealth Capitol Region* by BioBuzz (2020)

- Honored in biosciences with the *Robbie Melton Women in Bio Scholarship Fund* (legacy fund since 2010)
- Featured in Leadership Exhibit Spotlight: *Maryland Women in STEM*, MD Women's Heritage Center (2011)
- Mentor Award, GWU Women Entrepreneur Leadership Center (2005)

TECHNOLOGY & MEDIA SPOTLIGHTS

- Featured on Olelo Community Media, "Island Focus – Robbie Melton" (July 26, 2019?)
- Featured in *Honolulu Civil Beat*: "Civil Bytes: Robbie Melton Nurtures a 'Hub Building Around Tech in Hawaii'" (March 6, 2015)
- Featured on Think Tech Hawaii Interviews with Jay Friedell: "80/80 By 2030 – HTDC Update with Robbie Melton" (June 29, 2016?)
 - "New Growth HTDC with Robbie Melton" (July 21, 2015?)
- Featured on Think Tech Hawaii Interviews with Donna Blanchard: "Innovation Starts at HTDC Interview with Donna Blanchard & with Robbie Melton" (March 26, 2015?)
- "2015 Unconferenz at Sullivan Center" (May 30, 2016?)
- "Taking a Tour of HTDC Tenants at Manoa Innovation Center" (April 23, 2014?)
- Featured on Think Tech Hawaii HTDC Interview with Angus McKelvey, "Developing Our Technology Economy with Robbie Melton" (July 16, 2014?)
- *ABC Now* Interview, "Caleum Research Corporation" (March 28, 1999)
- Morgan State University Interview, "In Good Standing"

BOARD LEADERSHIP, PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS & SPEAKER ENGAGEMENTS

Lihue Business Association Board
 Keiki 2 Career Advisory Committee
 Kauai Economic Development Board
 Garden Island Research & Development Committee
 Past President, Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce – Hawaii
 Co-Founder, Past President & Past Board Chair, Women in Bio (WIB)
 Past Vice Chair, Baltimore County Technology Council
 Past Vice Chair, MIT Enterprise Forum Board
 Board of Directors, Technology Transfer Society-DC
 BlueWater Mission Board
 The George Washington University Entrepreneur Roundtable Board
 National Agricultural Research Alliance-Beltsville
 Prince George's County Technology Assistance Center Incubator Advisory Board
 University of Maryland Baltimore County – bwtech@umbc Advisory Board
 University of Maryland Diversity Initiative
 Maryland Business Incubation Association
 ACTIVATE Advisory Board

SELECT SPEAKER / PANEL PRESENTATIONS

COMPETITION JUDGE

University of Hawaii Pacific Center for Entrepreneurship (PACE) Business Plan Competition, 2014 – Present
 Catch a Wave Business Plan, North Shore Rotary Club
 Hiplan Business Competition

Start Right! Women Business Plan Competition for Women Entrepreneurs (Rockville Economic Dev., Inc.)
ACTiVATE Bio Program

SPEAKER / PRESENTER

Speaker Panel Moderator, Hawaii HUBZone Webinar Conference (May 2021)

Speaker, Virtual Women's Symposium 2021: "Navigating: Challenges We Face" (March 21, 2021)

Speaker, Hawaii Business Leadership Conference: "Winner's Mindset: Lessons for Business and the Boardroom"
(July 27, 2017)

Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Conference: "Technology & Commercialization
for Women & Minorities"

HIplan Business Competition Pitch Workshop

Speaker, Maryland Economic Development Association (MEDA): "Business in Rural Maryland:
The Real Business Innovation Initiative in Maryland" (?October 15, 2011?)

Keynote Speaker, Drake University Entrepreneur Day (2010)

National Institutes of Health Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Conference

The George Washington University Angel Conference

State Science & Technology Initiative Annual Conference

University of Maryland University College (UMUC) Bioscience Career Day

University of Maryland Women's Leadership Conference

Invited Guest Speaker, "Management of International Collaborative Research"

1988 International Conference on Strategic R&D Management, Tokyo, Japan