



GRETCHEN VANICOR

Program Manager

Gretchen Vanicor, Ed.D., is a Program Manager who oversees projects for the Louisiana RESTORE Act Center of Excellence (LA-COE), as well as other high-profile initiatives advancing Gulf Coast restoration and resilience at The Water Institute. In her role, Gretchen is responsible for managing competitive research grants, complex programs, and projects supporting Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan and other restoration priorities.

With over a decade of leadership experience managing teams, including internal and external stakeholders, Gretchen has developed strategic priorities to solve complex problems, and unite diverse groups through community engagement and outreach. She joined The Water Institute after spending over a decade at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in the Office of Sustainability and Community Engagement.

In her role as the Director of Sustainability, Gretchen was the co-chair of the University Strategic Plan Committee, helping develop the university's 2023-28 strategy. She spearheaded multiple campus initiatives, including the Sustainability Strategic Plan, Community Engagement Committee, UL-Lafayette Community Collaboratory, Tree Campus, Bee Campus and the President's Council on Sustainability. In 2024 Gretchen was named Chief Sustainability Officer.

As a researcher, Gretchen has extensive experience around the subject of sustainability and resiliency. Her work has been nationally recognized, with educational research incorporating geospatial, quantitative and qualitative methods. Gretchen's dissertation, "A Multiple Methods Study of the Contributing Factors Affecting the Operationalization of Sustainability and Resiliency in Public, 4-Year universities in the United States," identified and measured the impact of internal and external barriers and support for sustainability and resilience performance.

As the Project Manager for TEAM BeauSoleil for the 2009 U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon competition, Gretchen developed and managed the strategic design, marketing, finance, and construction plan, coordinating the efforts of more than 200 Louisiana-Lafayette students, faculty and administration needed to complete the entry. During this time and throughout her various roles at Louisiana-Lafayette, Gretchen has secured and overseen over \$1 million in federal, state and private grants funding to support programs at the university.

Gretchen graduated from McNeese State University with a Bachelor of Science in Management, and a double major in Marketing as well. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from Louisiana-Lafayette, going on to earn a Master of Architecture. She completed her Doctor of Education at Louisiana-Lafayette, specializing in Higher Education Administration and Leadership.

ORGANIZATION ROLE

Program Manager

PROJECT ROLE / FOCUS AREAS

Project Management

Program Management

Community and
Stakeholder
Engagement

Resiliency and
Sustainability Strategic
Planning

EDUCATION

Ed.D, Higher
Education
Administration and
Leadership, University
of Louisiana at
Lafayette

M.Arch, University of
Louisiana at Lafayette

BS, Architecture,
University of Louisiana
at Lafayette

BS, Management and
Marketing, McNeese
State University



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2026-Present: Program Manager, The Water Institute

2024-2025: Chief Sustainability Officer, Director of Office of Sustainability and Community Engagement, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

2014-2024: Director of Sustainability, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

SELECTED PROJECTS

- [Partnership for Our Working Coast](#)
- [Restore Act Center of Excellence for Louisiana](#)