

# BJ Fontaine

## Biographical Statement

BJ Fontaine has over 35 years of experience working with industry, government, and universities. He has held a variety of executive and technical positions in leadership, organization improvement, and economic development. His expertise lies in bringing together diverse, divisive groups to successfully work together to accomplish common goals.

At General Dynamics from 1991 to 2004, his roles included Director of Operations, Engineering Manager, and Project Manager. He led project teams that developed world-class designs and installation processes for naval and commercial vessels. He was also a member of the General Dynamics Lean Manufacturing Council responsible for developing and initiating programs across all divisions.

During his tenure at the University of Texas, Arlington from 2004 to 2015, he was responsible for business growth, product development, and competitiveness, working with Incubators, universities, economic development centers, cities, non-profits, and businesses. He worked extensively with industrial and defense industry businesses, where his responsibilities ranged from new product introductions to operational excellence. He is a leader in the MEP systems adoption of innovation and growth services.

In 2015, BJ moved back home to Louisiana to be with family and live in the culture that he loves. He was soon called out of retirement by the City Manager of El Paso, Texas, to lead a project to improve commercial border crossings between the US and Mexico. BJ worked with city leadership to establish a bi-national steering committee of leaders from federal, state, and local governments, multiple industries, small businesses, and citizen groups from the US and Mexico to develop consensus solutions. This effort, ending in early 2017, resulted in the Texas legislature and the governor of Texas fully budgeting and funding the proposed \$34 million dollar infrastructure improvements.

BJ joined the St. Tammany Democratic Party Executive Committee (DPEC) later in 2017 as Executive Director to assist with strategic planning and organizational effectiveness. His initial efforts resulted in DPEC's establishing three formal committees: precinct organizing, fund raising, and candidate training and in adopting procedures to ensure the order and efficacy of meetings, speakers, and debates. BJ also established and chaired a Justice Reform Committee that connected the DPEC to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), Louisiana for Prison Alternatives (LPA), Voice of the Experienced (VOTE), League of Women Voters (LWV), and Spread the Vote / Project ID to support and coordinate efforts on justice reform. BJ retired during COVID to protect and care for those close to him.

BJ holds a bachelor's degree in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering from the University of New Orleans. His relevant training and certifications include NBIA Incubator Management, Building Partnerships, Project Management, Supply Chain Management, Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, Business Advisor Lean Design, Executive Team Facilitator, and ISO 9001, 14000, 13485.

BJ Fontaine is a native of New Orleans and lives in Mandeville, LA, with his wife Laurey and their dog Buddy.