

Contact

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Top Skills

Disaster Recovery
Resilience
Urban Planning

Robin Keegan

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Development at U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
New Orleans, Louisiana, United States

Summary

Robin is a sought-after policy thought leader and practitioner committed to transforming communities through proven strategies in resilience and economic equity. As the former Executive Director of the Louisiana Recovery Authority and Office of Community Development, and founder of Spring Industries, LLC, Robin is skilled in solving intractable problems through tactical knowledge of federal, state, and local policies and funding to create innovative and transformative strategies to rebuild and strengthen communities. Robin's work is rooted in the fact that equitable and inclusive communities provide the strongest outcomes.

Robin has a history of designing successful strategies for multiple multi-billion-dollar responses to natural and human-caused disasters for communities for the states of Louisiana, New York, California and the United States Virgin Islands and other communities across the country. This includes programming more than \$500 million in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funding in economic development programs that helped fishers, farmers and main street businesses rebuild and grow as well as plans to strengthen major industry sectors. Robin has overseen strategic economic planning efforts and was lead planner and author of ProsperityNOLA, the first comprehensive economic development strategy for the City of New Orleans and has designed innovative strategies to support small businesses throughout urban and rural communities. Currently, Robin supports multiple counties across the country to increase economic security through the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund.

Robin is actively training the next generation of community real estate developers and disaster resilience experts through a dual position as Adjunct Lecturer in Tulane University's Master of Sustainable Real Estate Program housed in the School of

Architecture and Senior Fellow in the School of Social Work's Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy.

Skilled in Disaster Recovery: Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR); Policy and Program Development; Economic Development, Recovery, and Resilience; Government Administration; Nonprofit Administration; Analytical Skills; Urban Planning; Community Resilience; Emergency Management; Fundraising.

Experience

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Development
January 2021 - Present (2 years 9 months)

Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy, Tulane University School of Social Work
Senior Fellow/Adjunct Lecturer
January 2020 - Present (3 years 9 months)

Deliver course on Economics of Disaster Recovery focused on equity and building resilience.

Tulane University, School of Architecture, Master of Sustainable Real Estate Development Program
Adjunct Lecturer
August 2015 - Present (8 years 2 months)
Greater New Orleans Area

Teach seminar course on Sustainable Urban Planning and Design in the Sustainable Real Estate Development program, an interdisciplinary one-year graduate program that prepares students from diverse backgrounds to become effective and influential participants in the fields of real estate finance, design and development. The course focuses on "real-world" scenarios and opportunities to prepare students for the contemporary development climate. The MSRED degree is practice-oriented, and the program emphasizes opportunities for students to gain experience and build a professional network in innovative for-profit, non-profit and public settings.

Spring Industries, LLC

Principal

May 2019 - January 2021 (1 year 9 months)

New Orleans / Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Spring Industries was founded as a platform for innovative community-building solutions based in best practice. The firm's community planning and resilience consulting practice is rooted in principles of sustainability. Our team is mission driven. We bring transformative problem-solving skills combined with strategies for catalytic investment to support communities in their mission to be prepared to respond to natural or man-made disaster events.

Client: Witt O'Brien's

Project: CARES Act Funding Advisory Services; Project Role: SME

2017 - present

Provide advisory services to counties across U.S designing programs under the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund to stabilize communities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Project: U.S. Virgin Island Disaster Recovery Services; Project Role: Project Manager, CDBG-DR SME

Led long-term disaster recovery efforts for the U.S. Virgin Islands including development of Action Plan for the Territory's \$1.86 billion CDBG-DR allocation.

Client: Civix

2019 - present

Project: State of California Disaster Recovery/Mitigation Programs; Project Role: SME

Advise on development of housing, planning, public services and mitigation programs.

Client: Local Initiatives Support Coalition Rural Initiative

2020 - present

Project: Small Cities / Rural Economic Development Thought Leadership; Project Role: SME

Develop thought paper assessing economic development best practices in rural communities economically connected to their small city neighbors in response to COVID-19.

Client: SpinGlobal

2020 – present

Project: FEMA Community Training; Project Role: Economic Recovery SME
Develop and deliver training on economic recovery rooted in inclusive community practice.

Resilient Baton Rouge

Director

December 2016 - October 2018 (1 year 11 months)

Baton Rouge, Louisiana Area

Resilient Baton Rouge, a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-supported project to increase behavioral health services and build resilience capacity for residents of the Baton Rouge region impacted by the Great Flood of 2016. Resilient Baton Rouge brings together people, resources, and expertise from community and academic organizations to improve mental health recovery, to address the ongoing stress people are feeling, and to enhance our collective resilience and abilities to bounce back from the floods. We do this by:

- Increasing the capacity of community health providers and community based organizations to serve the flood-impacted community; and
- Supporting collaborative efforts around training local community residents and leaders in mental health screenings and support, data-sharing for better patient support, and coalition building for long-term resilience.

GCR Inc.

4 years 2 months

Senior Consultant

November 2012 - September 2016 (3 years 11 months)

Greater New Orleans Area

Robin supports GCR's Community Resilience and Planning Team as a subject matter expert working with communities around the country to develop and implement resiliency plans following major disasters. Robin also consults on economic development projects for the technology and professional services firm.

Director of Community Planning & Resiliency

August 2012 - September 2016 (4 years 2 months)

Greater New Orleans Area

Robin led a team that work with communities around the country to develop and implement resiliency plans following major disasters. Following Superstorm Sandy, Robin supported the states of New York, New Jersey and the City of New York in recovery efforts. From 2013 to 2015, she was a

consultant to the State of New York's Governor's Office of Storm Recovery leading a team of twelve to provide leadership in key roles in the state's housing and small business recovery programs.

Louisiana Recovery Authority

4 years 7 months

Executive Director

January 2010 - November 2010 (11 months)

Baton Rouge, Louisiana Area

Served as Executive Director of the Louisiana Recovery Authority, the state-created hurricane recovery entity established in 2005, and the Office of Community Development. The principle mission of the organization was to secure needed funding, lead long-term community and regional planning efforts, and ensure transparency and accountability in the investment of recovery funds. In 2008, the organization was also given responsibility for implementation of the response to hurricanes Gustav and Ike. Additionally, the agency led the taskforce to assist the response to the long-term economic and human services impacts of the 2010 Deep Horizon oil spill.

Oversaw a budget of approximately \$14.9 billion for recovery programs. Served as the chief liaison to a 17-member Board of Directors that included elected officials and influential business leaders from the state. Managed staff of 150 and oversaw contractors with approximately 400 employees to implement disaster recovery programs.

As cabinet member, reported to the Governor on recovery progress. Met regularly with New Orleans mayor and 53 Parish Presidents on status of recovery in parishes and to clear logjams on programs. Met regularly with Louisiana Congressional delegation as well as other members of Congress to brief members on progress and advocate for additional resources for housing, infrastructure and economic recovery. Worked closely with senior officials at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Small Business Administration, Federal Emergency Management Agency and other federal agencies to remove roadblocks to recovery programs. Presented on the status of the recovery to state and local legislative bodies as well as numerous civic and government groups locally and nationally.

Led cabinet-level taskforce following the 2010 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill to create and implement the state's response on economic and social issues caused by the crisis.

Chief of Staff

March 2008 - December 2009 (1 year 10 months)

Baton Rouge, Louisiana Area

Directed implementation of more than 25 disaster recovery programs that included the repair and redevelopment of affordable housing options, redesign and rebuilding of the health care infrastructure, major reinvestment in core infrastructure including sewer, roads and public safety, as well as the repair and investment in the state's economy. Led agency response to 2008 hurricanes Gustav and Ike and secured more than \$1 billion in federal resources for the recovery from these devastating storms.

Director of Economic and Workforce Recovery

May 2006 - February 2008 (1 year 10 months)

Baton Rouge, Louisiana Area

Developed and oversaw implementation of programs to invest more than \$400 million in federal recovery funding into a strategy to ensure the economic recovery of impacted communities following the 2005 storms. Efforts included support to restart small businesses, reinvestment in the commercial research and business opportunities at local universities, and retraining of local workforce for post-recovery jobs in construction, healthcare and other industries. Regularly met with small business owners and entrepreneurs, laborers, workforce trainers and community members to ensure that programs were successful in repairing economic damage. Oversaw taskforce of high level government, community and business representatives responsible for developing solutions for economic issues facing impacted communities. Managed research projects on the impacts of the hurricanes on the parishes. Reported regularly to state and local legislative bodies on the progress of recovery efforts. Advocated in Congress and locally for additional funding for economic recovery. Worked with senior officials at the Small Business Administration, HUD and other federal agencies to remove barriers to funding recovery of small businesses.

Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation

Adjunct Professor

January 2006 - May 2006 (5 months)

Designed and taught graduate-level course on the economic development impact of the arts in New York City. Led 10 students in independent field research of local best practices of economic development through the arts.

Center for an Urban Future

5 years

Deputy Director

January 2002 - April 2006 (4 years 4 months)

Greater New York City Area

Deputy Director

2001 - 2005 (4 years)

Supported Executive Director to implement more than 25 disaster recovery programs that included the repair and redevelopment of affordable housing options, redesign and rebuilding of the health care infrastructure, major reinvestment in core infrastructure including sewer, roads and public safety, as well as the repair and investment in the state's economy. Led agency response to 2008 hurricanes Gustav and Ike and secured more than \$1 billion in federal resources for the recovery from these devastating storms.

Education

Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation

Master of Science in Urban Planning, Urban Planning, Housing, Economic Development · (1996 - 1998)

Macalester College

Bachelor of Arts, Religious Studies · (1989 - 1993)