

Contact

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(LinkedIn)

www.karamaneal.com (Personal)
sowhatcanido.blogspot.com (Blog)

Top Skills

Community Development

Public Speaking

Public Policy

Publications

Overlapping Lsp-2 gene sequences target expression to both the larval and adult *Drosophila* fat body

Shahrazad's Last Story

Preserving family farms in Arkansas

Heir Property and Economic Mobility: Tools for Policy and Practice

Assessment of a State TANF Funded IDA Initiative: A Case Study

Karama Neal, PhD

Promoting equity in education, health, and opportunity through research, advocacy, teaching, practice, and service.

Little Rock, Arkansas, United States

Summary

Prior to joining the US Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, as Administrator of Rural Business-Cooperative Service, I served as President of Southern Bancorp Community Partners, a CDFI loan fund and financial development organization promoting economic mobility in rural Arkansas and Mississippi through development lending, public policy advocacy, and asset building programs.

In 2021, I launched the Heirs Property Information Project which grew out of a statewide grassroots organization I started in 2013 to promote passage of the Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act. The legislation was passed with no dissent in 2015. In 2014, I founded Ife Opportunity to provide educational and other opportunities to improve individual, family, and community well being. I am the author of the award winning blog, So What Can I Do, and served on the boards of the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, Arkansas Access to Justice, and the Little Rock Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

After a career in the basic biosciences, I transitioned to work that has a more immediate effect on human well-being. I speak frequently on family economic security, internet equity, and career development and have taught both online and in the classroom at Emory University, Loyola University Chicago, Shorter College, and the Arkansas School for Mathematics and Sciences.

After graduating from the historic Little Rock Central High School, I completed earned a BA in biology at Swarthmore College and later a doctorate in genetics from Emory University and a master's in bioethics from Loyola University Chicago. I also completed executive education in impact investing at the University of Oxford Said School of Business.

Access to my writing, musical compositions, and more is available at www.karamaneal.com, on Twitter [@karamaneal](https://twitter.com/karamaneal) or at karamaneal@gmail.com. ORCID ID orcid.org/0000-0002-0337-9963

Experience

USDA Rural Development

Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service

April 2021 - Present (2 years 5 months)

Southern Bancorp Community Partners

12 years 4 months

President

July 2018 - April 2021 (2 years 10 months)

Little Rock, Arkansas Area

Chief Operating Officer

December 2014 - July 2018 (3 years 8 months)

Little Rock, Arkansas

Director

January 2012 - December 2014 (3 years)

Little Rock, Arkansas

* Managed asset building, workforce development, and public policy programs at the nonprofit affiliate of Southern Bancorp, one of the largest community development banks in the United States.

* Facilitated growth of the Individual Development Account program by 90% over two years and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program by 56% over four years.

* Initiated an evidence-based program improvement and evaluation process for the housing and credit counseling program in 2011.

* Managed a staff of eight in four locations in Arkansas and Mississippi.

Director of Southern Good Faith Fund

June 2011 - December 2011 (7 months)

Little Rock, Arkansas

Managed programs at the \$1.3 million asset development nonprofit which has a mission of increasing the incomes and assets of low-income residents of rural Arkansas and Mississippi.

Interim Director of Southern Good Faith Fund

October 2009 - June 2011 (1 year 9 months)

Little Rock, Arkansas

Managed programs at the \$1.3 million asset development nonprofit which has a mission of increasing the incomes and assets of low-income residents of rural Arkansas and Mississippi.

Senior Grant Writer

January 2009 - October 2009 (10 months)

Little Rock, Arkansas

Wrote grant proposals for private, corporate, state, and federal funding resulting in \$878,317 in funding for community development activities.

Prepared newsletters, award applications, funder reports, and other materials in support of fundraising.

Led a grant writing team including one full-time and one contract grant writer.

Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis

Little Rock Branch Director

September 2015 - March 2021 (5 years 7 months)

Heirs Property Information Project

Founder

2021 - 2021 (less than a year)

The Heirs Property Information Project provides legal, financial, federal, academic and other curated resources to help family landowners get the most out of their property now and in the future. We also work with heirs property researchers, service providers, policy makers, and others to help families protect their land.

Ife Opportunity

Founder/Principal

December 2014 - 2021 (7 years)

Ife Opportunity develops solutions that help individuals and families live better lives, now and in the future. Ife means expansion.

The Neal Firm, the B2B arm of Iife Opportunity, works with companies, organizations, and individuals to help them understand and expand the quality and quantity of their social, health, and other impacts. www.nealfirm.co

Heirs of Arkansas

Founder

October 2013 - December 2020 (7 years 3 months)

Arkansas

Founded the statewide, grassroots campaign that led to the passage of the Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act with no dissent in 2015.

Shorter College

Instructor

August 2012 - May 2013 (10 months)

North Little Rock, Arkansas

Taught biology and general orientation at the private, two-year, liberal arts college. Served as president of the Faculty Senate as the institution successfully sought re-accreditation. Founder's Day speaker.

So What Can I Do?

Founder and editor

October 2004 - December 2009 (5 years 3 months)

<https://payhip.com/b/YsJG>

So What Can I Do, the public service weblog promoting ethics in action presents hundreds of ways we can live as Mahatma Ghandi suggests and "Be the change you want to see in the world."

This award-winning blog has been featured in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Sync Weekly, Positive Thinking Magazine, DarynKagan.com, Our Day to End Poverty, and numerous other print and online publications.

* 2009 Twelfth on the list of 100 Best Blogs for Those Who Want To Change the World

* 2009 Black Web Award for Most Original Blog

* 2009 Associated Content Green for Good - Runner-up

Online at <http://sowhatcanido.blogspot.com>

Emory University

4 years

Adjunct Assistant Professor

June 2007 - December 2008 (1 year 7 months)

Atlanta, Georgia

Taught research ethics and responsible conduct of research to classes of 80-100 graduate science students.

Developed curriculum for the Values in Science course.

Senior Program Associate

January 2005 - December 2008 (4 years)

Atlanta, Georgia

Managed the Emory University office of the National Science Foundation FACES Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate, which is aimed at broadening participation in the sciences and science professoriate.

Advised 20 science graduate students in career development.

Created and wrote the FACES newsletter that was distributed to participating faculty, staff, and students on four metropolitan-Atlanta campuses.

Garbrook Knowledge Resources

Curator

March 2007 - November 2008 (1 year 9 months)

Collected and surveyed primary source materials for the Advanced Biofuels Resource database.

Curation focused on biodiesel, ethanol, and other biofuel feedstocks and the food and fuel balance.

Loyola University Chicago

Visiting Lecturer

January 2006 - May 2006 (5 months)

. Taught in the Genetics and Bioethics course. John Hardt, PhD, Instructor.

Designed and led course discussions on "Race," Genetics, and Medicine; Ethics and Nonhuman Genetic Technologies; and Ethical, Legal and Social Issues relating to the Human Genome Project.

Taught 18 students in a distance learning setting.

Incyte Corporation

4 years 11 months

Scientific Editor

July 2002 - January 2005 (2 years 7 months)

Edited for databases of mammalian genetic information for Incyte Corporation.
Managed team of five scientific curators.
Contributed to database design.

Assistant Editor

March 2000 - June 2002 (2 years 4 months)

Edited for databases of mammalian genetic information for Incyte Genomics.
Managed team of five scientific curators.

Aid to Children of Imprisoned Mothers

Program Assistant

2002 - 2003 (1 year)

Atlanta, Georgia

Worked in the after-school education program for elementary students.

Proteome (Incyte Corporation)

Scientific curator

February 2000 - March 2000 (2 months)

Collected and surveyed primary source materials for the G Protein Coupled Receptor Targeted Database from Proteome, Inc.

Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts

Chemistry teacher

June 1993 - June 1994 (1 year 1 month)

Hot Springs, Arkansas

General, organic, and biological chemistry teacher at the selective, statewide, public, residential high school during its inaugural year.

Education

Swarthmore College

BA, Biology

Emory University

PhD, Genetics and Molecular Biology

University of Oxford - Said Business School

Executive Education, Impact Investing · (2013)

Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine

MA, Bioethics and Health Policy

Little Rock Central High
Diploma