

Texas Book Festival Leadership



Marianne DeLeón, Chief Executive Officer

Marianne serves as Texas Book Festival's CEO. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Austin and a master's degree from Southern Methodist University where she documented the story of her family's immigration experience from Cuba to the US. Marianne dedicated over three years to full-time volunteer service in the United States Peace Corps (Republic of Moldova from 2000-2002) and AmeriCorps VISTA (Dallas, Texas from 2002–2003) where she developed a passion for fundraising for mission-driven organizations. She has since spent the last two decades developing her skills as an organizational leader and social entrepreneur. Most recently, she served as the Chief Revenue Officer for Pease Park Conservancy, where she helped finalize the \$15M capital campaign to revitalize, operate, and maintain Austin's beloved Pease Park. She currently serves on the boards of directors for Raasin in the Sun and Austin Outside.



Dalia Azim, Chief Operations Officer

Dalia serves as the Texas Book Festival's Chief Operations Officer. She holds a bachelor's degree in Modern Thought and Literature from Stanford University and published her first book, *Country of Origin*, in 2022. Her writing has appeared in *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Texas Highways*, *American Short Fiction*, *Aperture*, *Glimmer Train*, and *Other Voices*, among other places. Before joining TBF, she was the manager of executive initiatives and chief diversity and inclusion officer at the Blanton Museum of Art, where she helped oversee the realization of Ellsworth Kelly's *Austin*, the Blanton's new grounds initiative, and the museum's DEAI priorities. She was an Op-Ed Public Voices Fellow at the University of Texas at Austin and has received the First Star honor from *American Short Fiction*, the Discovery Award from the Writers League of Texas, the Staff Excellence Award from the Blanton Museum of Art, and the Lee Tenenbaum Award for exceptional curatorial work at MoMA. She is a member of the Austin Bat Cave Board of Directors.



Susannah Auby, Development Director

Susannah Auby serves as the Texas Book Festival's Development Director. She received her MBA from Columbia University and her bachelor's degree from the University of California at Berkeley. Prior to joining Texas Book Festival, she was a volunteer in Austin in many roles focused on education fundraising, literacy outreach, libraries, and her greatest passion, introducing children to authors. Her prior professional experience was in New York and included management consulting, strategic planning, and financial analysis.



Hannah Gabel, Literary Director

Hannah joined the Texas Book Festival as the Literary Director in 2023. She holds a double bachelor's degree from Boston University in Advertising and History. Hannah has spent the majority of her professional career in corporate event management, marketing, and design. A native Austinite, she previously directed events and marketing strategy at The Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA) and Stream Realty Partners. Prior to joining TBF, Hannah founded HLG Creative, a freelance graphic design and marketing agency, where she worked with a variety of clients on everything from logos and branding to website design and content creation. She is also the founder of the book blog and social community, Bookmarkparty, which has enabled her to connect with authors, publishers, and fellow book lovers around the world.



Michelle Hernandez, Director of Youth Programs

Michelle serves as the Director of Youth Programs, responsible for Reading Rock Stars, Real Reads, and Library Grants programs. She received both her master's degree in education and bachelor's degree in psychology from Texas State University. Prior to joining Texas Book Festival, Michelle worked in various roles in K-12 education, including 11 years as an elementary school teacher. Her love of children's books, and their authors and illustrators, started in the classroom while engaging with stories and poems with students.