



Valerie Stone Hawthorne, PhD  
*BS Genetics & Biochemistry – Texas A&M University*  
*PhD Cancer Biology and Cellular Biology – University of Texas at Houston HSC*  
*Post-Doctoral Fellowship of Translational Medicine – UT MD Anderson Cancer Center*

Valerie Stone Hawthorne, PhD, is the Director of Government Relations at the North Texas Food Bank. Formerly, she was the Chair of Public Policy and Advocacy at Susan G Komen Houston, followed by her position as Government Relations Officer at the Houston Food Bank.

Dr. Hawthorne is a classically trained scientist who was awarded her bachelor's degree in Genetics and Biochemistry at Texas A&M University, and her PhD in both Cancer Biology and Cell Biology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. While at MD Anderson, Valerie helped secure the funding and assisted in the opening the Inflammatory Breast Cancer Clinic, the first of its kind in Texas helping women fight this difficult and particularly devastating disease.

A series of moves around the globe landed her in Public Policy advocating for Medicaid expansion and universal healthcare coverage at Susan G Komen. After which, she transitioned into hunger policy, recognizing the overlap of cancer diagnoses and outcome with proper nutrition and health. Always a scientist first, she approaches advocacy and lobbying with scientific methodology. She serves as a subject matter expert on anti-hunger policy, statistical data, and root cause drivers of hunger.

At both Houston and North Texas Food Bank, Valerie developed their current Public Policy and Advocacy program. Under her leadership, both food banks were awarded entry into Feeding America's Advocacy Hall of Fame and have been recognized nationally for their approach to food policy work. Additionally, Valerie was also accepted into Feeding America's Advocacy Academy, and awarded a Fellowship and recognition by the Tableau Foundation for her implementation of data-based visualizations.

As a skilled lobbyist, since 2014 she has worked on multiple federal initiatives in cooperation with other policy leaders such as: the Child Nutrition Reauthorization, The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) commodity improvement with the American Commodities Distribution Association, protection of nutrition education at schools, and the Farm Bill. At the State level, she helped increase produce funding in the state budget, fought against threats to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or food stamps) accessibility, and provided testimony and data visualization to many legislative offices in support of bills seeking to fight hunger in Texas. Locally she is on the leadership team of the Dallas Coalition for Hunger Solutions, serves on the Board of Directors for the Dallas Development Fund, was appointed to the Dallas Public Facility Corporation by the Dallas City Council, and was recently chosen as a co-chair for the North Texas Food Policy Alliance.

Valerie lives in Oak Cliff with her husband, Jason, her teen twins Zane and Lily, and her three-legged rescue cat Norah. Valerie rounds out her work life through serving as a troop leader for the Juniors of Girl Scout Troop 6895 and is a triathlete, having completed the North American Championship Ironman in 2017.