

Keith W. Stokes

SENIOR EXECUTIVE

Distinguished public and private sector management career with expertise in government administration, business development, planning, public policy analysis and historic interpretation. Demonstrated accomplishments in capitalizing upon market opportunity to develop new business and sustaining existing business competitiveness. Initiated and completed complex business and community development projects within State of Rhode Island.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Consultant – Economic Planning & Development
Mayforth Group

September 2012 – Present

Led and managed a dynamic business function that serves government authorities, private clients and trade organizations with strategic economic planning, government relations, development, grant writing, and implementation services. The scope of work ranges from broad-based economic development planning and analysis to more focused community development strategies.

Career Highlights

- Conceived, prepared, submitted and obtained on behalf of clients consisting of municipality, chamber of commerce and private developer local and federal grants to develop a co-work center and technology business incubator entitled, Innovate Newport.
<https://innovatenewport.org/>
- Conceived, prepared, and authored “Main Street Storefront & Building Façade Program” and “Commercial Design & Development Standards” reports for chamber of commerce and architecture/design clients.
- Drafted and secured adoption of Defense Economy Work Plan for State of Rhode Island.
- Designed and secured adoption on behalf of consortium of private commercial property owners a flexible land use plan that will enhance property value through mix-use development options.
- Drafted and successfully passed state legislation to establish an African American history curriculum for K-12 public schools in Rhode Island.
- Prepared, submitted, and obtained on behalf of union trade groups, private employers, and nonprofit social service organizations several Real Jobs Rhode Island workforce development grants entitled “Rhode Island Makers” to provide apprenticeship training for minority and inner-city participants.

- Conceived, prepared, and secured multi-year grant funding for Rhode Island Offshore Wind Energy Career Pathway System entitled WinWindRI.
<https://windwinri.com/>
- Successfully represented national and international utility clients to procure water and wastewater design, build and operating contracts before government authorities.

Executive Director**Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation****January 2010 – May 2012**

Appointed by Governor Donald Carcieri in January 2010 and Reappointed by Governor Lincoln Chafee in January 2011.

Experienced economic development executive and business advisor to four Rhode Island Governors, corporate and government leaders. Recognized for efforts to position business for growth by securing government funding, achieving tax cost competitiveness and market driven economic policy formation. Expert communicator and manager. Have cultivated relationships with network of business and political leaders across industry and local, state and federal government systems.

Member of the Governor's Cabinet charged with overseeing State of Rhode Island economic development policy, business development and attraction efforts. Oversee professional staff and six-million-dollar operating budget. Statutory appointments and oversight include Chairman of the Board of the Slater Technology Fund and Quonset Commerce Park Development Corporation.

Career Highlights

- Lead state negotiator to successfully secure America's Cup World Series sailing event to Rhode Island, June 2012.
- Secured \$13 Million in federal funds to recapitalize statewide venture, small business, and minority capital programs.
- Realigned and recapitalized federal and state renewable energy funds to establish a \$6 million dollar grant and revolving loan fund.

Executive Director**1994 – 2010****Newport County Chamber of Commerce****Membership Development**

- Led 200% membership growth within three years.
- Implemented membership plans that successfully recruited local, state and federal government authorities as dues-paying Chamber members.
- Direct Chamber of Commerce with most member programs and services in Southern New England.

Government Relations

- Board of Directors (Treasurer) of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation. Appointed by Governor Bruce Sundlun (D-RI) in 1994 and reappointed by Governor Lincoln Almond (R-RI) in 1998 and Governor Donald Carcieri (R-RI) in 2004. Chair RI Urban Equity Fund and Enterprise Zone Council.
- Chair of Newport Redevelopment Agency charged with planning and developing City of Newport public assets and redevelopment project areas. Appointed by City Council in 1999.
- Former Advisor for United States War College, Newport Rhode Island. Served between 1995 and 1999
- Lead organizer of Tall Ships Rhode Island 2004 representing the State of Rhode Island in organizing one of the largest public festivals of the year in Newport Harbor

Business Development & Strategic Planning

- Author of Rhode Island legislation to create the East Bay Economic Initiative consortium in 1994 representing the business development interests of Rhode Island's boat building and marine trades industry.
- Successfully developed and negotiated access to federal property (US Navy) for planning and reuse as mixed-use marine trade facility.
- Founder and fund administrator for Aquidneck Island Partnership and West Side Master Plan providing redevelopment and land use preservation plan for Aquidneck Island.

Historic Preservation & Community Development

- Former Rhode Island Advisor (1995-1999, 2004-2009) for National Trust for Historic Preservation. Presently Advisor Emeritus.
- Successfully applied for City of Newport's designation as one of the "*Twelve Distinctive Destinations in America*" in 2004 by the National Trust
- Led strategic planning, fund raising and program-design efforts to create Broadway (Newport) Main Street Program and creation of Main Street Rhode Island.
- Successfully attracted private investors to acquire and renovate several historic properties in Rhode Island utilizing historic tax credits and innovative federal, state and local financing mechanisms.
- Published article Suburban Sprawl or Urban Withdrawal: The Challenges of Land Use Planning in Rhode Island. Connections Magazine, The New England Journal of Higher Education – 1999
- Created the Newport/Bristol Heritage Passage – 2005

Senior Policy Advisor**1991-1994****Governor Bruce Sundlun, State of Rhode Island**Business & Economic Development

- Led Governor's Business and Economic planning and policy formation efforts

- Co-author of Rhode Island Enterprise Zone legislation and state program
- Governor's representative on Rhode Island State Planning Council, Human Resources Investment Council and Small Business Council
- Co-author of 1993 Rhode Island Economic Development Plan
- Led administration's successful efforts to repeal Rhode Island sales tax on boats and related marine purchases.
- Led administration's successful efforts to acquire and convert former Shepard's Department Store building into University of Rhode Island's School of Continuing Education.

Executive Director**1987-1991****Omni Development Corporation**Community & Housing Development

- Led one of Rhode Island's most successful non-profit housing and community development corporations.
- Constructed several hundred single and multifamily affordable housing units utilizing public and private funding, and complex tax credit syndications.
- Recipient of 1989 Rhode Island Housing Award for Affordable Housing and Community Achievement in Rhode Island.

City Council Member**1988-1993****City of Newport, Rhode Island**

- Elected member of the City Council
- Oversee 1992 Comprehensive Community Plan
- Restoration of Bellevue Avenue, Adoption of Traditional Maritime Zone and Redevelopment of Easton's Beach, John Clarke School and Cliff Walk

EDUCATIONMaster Degree – Social Policy Administration/SSA – *University of Chicago 1982*Bachelor's Degree – Public Policy & Planning/HSA – *Cornell University 1980*Quill & Dagger Honor Society – *Cornell University***History & Heritage Interpretation Consulting****Vice President 1696 Heritage Group <http://www.1696heritage.com/>**

- Public Historian – African Heritage in America, Jewish Colonial History.
- Recent Public Lectures
 - *Children of the Inquisition – Sephardic Jewish History, 2020*
 - *Legacies Of Slavery, Ghana, Africa 2019*

- *American Irony*, Yale University, 2017
 - *Legacies of Slavery & Freedom, University of West Indies, Jamaica 2016*
 - *Colonial Jewish Heritage*, Center For Jewish Culture, Boston 2016
 - *More Than Chattel Property*, Providence College, 2016
 - *Interpreting African Heritage*, Rhode Island College, 2016
 - *Sable Soldiers*, United States Naval War College, Newport 2016
 - *Interpreting African Heritage*, Rhode Island Historical Society 2017
 - *Gilded Age Newport in Color*, Preservation Society of Newport County 2018
- 1696heritage.com Blog – Author of ongoing discussion of the history and achievements of African Heritage people of America.
 - Lead Researcher – National Parks Services Grant, “Interpreting the Civil Rights History of Rhode Island During the 20th Century.” 2019

Local, State, and National Directorships

- Treasurer and Director - Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation 1994-2010
- President and Board Member - Board of Directors - Touro Synagogue Foundation 1996-
- Vice-President & Trustee - Preservation Society of Newport County 2000 -2010
- Advisor (Rhode Island) - National Trust For Historic Preservation 1995-2005
- Chairman and Board Member, Board of Directors – Quonset Development Corporation 2007-2012
- Chair and Board Member- Newport Redevelopment Agency 2003-2010
- Board of Directors – Business Development Corporation of Rhode Island 1998 -2009
- Board of Directors – The Rhode Island Foundation – 2009-2012
- Board of Directors – Newport Historical Society 2000 – 2006
- Board of Advisors Rhode Island Black Heritage Society, 2015 -

Local, State and National Awards

- Business Leadership Award – Raytheon Company
- Rhode Island Council for the Humanities – Creative Achievement in the Humanities Award
- Rhode Island Black Heritage Society - Leadership Award
- Daughters of the American Revolution – Excellence in Community Service Award
- Newport County NAACP - Community Leadership & Appreciation Awards
- Providence NAACP – Community Leadership Award
- Omni Development Corporation Affordable Housing, Community Development & Preservation Award
- United States Small Business Administration - RI Small Business Advocate of the Year Award
- American Sail Training Association – Stewardship Award
- Rhode Island Community & Justice – Leadership Award
- African Alliance of Rhode Island – Leadership Award
- Rhode Island Black Heritage Society – Fredrick Williamson Award
- Rhode Island State Martin Luther King State Holiday Commission – Keeper of the Dream Award

REFERENCES

Furnished upon request

Keith W. Stokes

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Keith W. Stokes is a native Newport, Rhode Island resident. Mr. Stokes has served as a Rhode Island Advisor for the National Trust for Historic Preservation along with serving on numerous regional and national historic preservation boards including Chairman of the Touro Synagogue Foundation, Vice President & Trustee of the Preservation Society for Newport County, advisory board of the Rhode Island Black Heritage

Society and board member of the Newport Historical Society. Mr. Stokes has a long and distinguished career in business, history and community development, with degrees from Cornell University and University of Chicago.

Mr. Stokes is a frequent national, state and local lecturer in community & regional planning, historic preservation and interpretation with an expertise in early African and Jewish American history. Mr. Stokes has lectured extensively to regional, national and international organizations, providing training in the fields of African and Jewish American history, developing historic interpretation programs, historic main street planning and historic site recovery. He has been the recipient of the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society's Fredrick Williamson Award, Daughters of the American Revolution Excellence in Community Service Award and along with his wife, is the recipient of the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities Prize for Creative Achievement in the Humanities.

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