

MELISSA P. SHADOWENS

BIOGRAPHY

Melissa Perez Shadowens holds a Bachelor's in Sociology and a Master's of Library Science from the University of North Texas. Her journey into the world of libraries began in college with a part-time job at both the Cozby Library in Coppell and Lewisville Public Library, where her curiosity of the role quickly grew into a passion for librarianship. Soon, she served as an Assistant Librarian at St. Rita Catholic School in Dallas, serving Pre-K through 8 students. She then moved to the Grand Prairie Public Library as a Children's & Youth Services Supervisor for three years before joining the City of Plano, where she spent 12 years as a Library Manager at the Plano Public Library.

In Plano, Melissa directed the daily operations of the Harrington Library and led impactful projects such as the recent renovation and expansion of the library spanning over 34,000 square feet. Melissa also played a key role in leading collaborative efforts to offer crucial support to vulnerable populations, particularly those from underprivileged communities. Additionally, Melissa is bilingual in Spanish, which has been invaluable in her work with diverse populations.

Her commitment to library services goes beyond traditional roles. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she coordinated librarians to staff the City of Plano's COVID-19 hotline, providing vital information and support to community members.

Melissa currently chairs the District 5 Unit for the Texas Library Association, which includes all types of libraries across 33 counties, and serves on the American Library Association's Policy Monitoring Committee.

Outside of work, Melissa loves traveling, whether it's embarking on short road trips or flying across the country, with a particular fondness for mountain views. She also enjoys listening to music, reading books and audiobooks, discovering new podcasts, collecting vinyl records, attending concerts, and spending quality time with her family.
