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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Award-winning design and ops executive, military veteran, and hands-on creative leader with 20+ years in design, 7+ leading multidisciplinary teams, and 5+ in academia. Expert in user-centered, scalable solutions across sectors, aligning creative strategy w/ business goals, integrating genAI & emerging tech, and building high-performing teams through empathy, mentorship, and design ops excellence. Detailed CV [available](#).

WORK EXPERIENCE

Exec Creative Director/Design Ops *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* 07/2020–08/2025

- Directed cross-functional design operations across 6 teams (45 FTEs, 15 CTRs), managing \$12M budget, delivering ≈4000 digital & print products annually for 20+ offices—with 97% client approval and 95% on-time or early launches via industry best practices, genAI integration, and proprietary PM tools.
- Built scalable, unified design systems and visual identities across multi-channel campaigns, ensuring consistency, ADA/508 compliance, enhancing enterprise-wide design governance & execution quality.
- Streamlined workflows thru genAI & Adobe Express adoption, reduced delivery and production time by 80 & 90%; led offering rationalization & process refinement, improving output efficiency across agency.
- Provided executive creative leadership and succession planning during 25% budget reduction—secured \$1M in supplemental funding, upskilling & equipment upgrades, and worked with multidisciplinary teams (UX, web engineering, comms) through rapid change and complex stakeholder environments.

National Board President *AIGA, professional assoc for design* 07/2024–present

- Chairs board, providing strategic & financial leadership, advancing AIGA's mission, oversees multi-million dollar budget, mentors executive staff & elevates organization's influence & industry standing.

Assistant Professor *Universities in TX, GA, & TN* 08/2012–12/2023

- Taught (online & on-site) undergrad and grad level design courses and provided student mentorship.

Creative Director/Consultant *ecesarrivera.com* 02/2015–07/2020

- Led multidisciplinary design team in developing strategic, brand-aligned visual communications across digital & print, integrating UX, marketing, and data-driven principles to support high-impact campaigns.
- Directed team workflows, training, & quality control while ensuring compliance with design standards, ADA accessibility & regulatory guidelines; continuously improved processes using research & analytics.
- Presented creative strategies to stakeholders & worked cross-functionally to translate complex ideas into user-centered designs, visual storytelling, & cohesive branding, increasing audience engagement.

Chief Creative Officer *SioTeX Corporation* 02/2014–02/2015

- Co-founded a green tech startup & led the end-to-end visual communications strategy, helping secure \$250K in angel investment through data-driven storytelling & UX-aligned branding.
- Directed cross-functional teams to build scalable design systems, tools, & assets that aligned with scientific messaging, business goals, & innovation objectives.
- Represented executive leadership in stakeholder meetings, assessed audience engagement, & continuously optimized design strategy across digital & print channels.

Art Director–Sr Art Director *Multiple Agencies and Studios* 06/2006–08/2014

- Developed design systems for brands such as Miller Lite, WellMed, Texas State University, & Goodwill.

EDUCATION

- MFA and BFA Communication Design, Texas State University
- **Certifications:** MindEdge Intro to Business Analysis & IBM Design Thinking, and Team Essentials for AI

AWARDS, PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

- 50+ Design Awards such as Graphis, AIGA, and AdFed
- 10 Design Annuals, 3 Journal Publications, 4 Articles Online, 10 Exhibitions

- 23 Lectures/Presentations/Workshops Conducted
- 8 US Military Honors with Honorable Discharge

SKILLS

- Expert with Adobe CC InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, Acrobat Pro, Apple OS & iOS, typography, collaborating across videography, photography, illustration, data science, social media, software engineering, written and oral communications, influence, persuasion, flexibility, team leadership, team development, collaboration, and inspiration—remote, on-site, & hybrid.
- Capable with Adobe AfterEffects, Express, Friefly, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Teams, OneNote, OneDrive, Figma, Keynote, CMS, HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript, Processing, genAI, SEO, metadata, Jira, Basecamp, Windows, PC, and conflict resolution.

SELECTED WORKS PORTFOLIO