

Renée D Cross

Associate Director, University of Houston Center for Public Policy

A native Houstonian, Renée Cross is a graduate of Milby High School in the city's East End. Renée's early professional experience was working as a photographer, instructor and division manager for a national portrait company for thirteen years. With a lifelong avid interest in politics and public service, she returned to college and earned a bachelor of science degree in political science and psychology summa cum laude at the University of Houston. She also earned a masters degree from the University of St. Thomas with a concentration in political science.

Renée worked as the district director in the office of a state representative for two years before joining the staff of the University of Houston Center for Public Policy as a researcher. Now with the Center for over nine years, Renée is the associate director, managing overall operations, external relations, government internships, and research projects. She also serves as the instructor for the government internships offered through the UH department of political science. Her academic interests include Houston and Texas government, politics, and history; civic engagement and the effects of the internet on voter participation; and urban politics and revitalization. Renée teaches upper level political science courses at the University of Houston and the University of Houston-Downtown including Texas Politics, Urban Politics, State Government & Politics, Campaign Politics, and Participation & Democracy in American Politics. She has also been quoted in publications such as the Wall Street Journal, the Chicago Tribune, the Houston Chronicle, the Austin-American Statesman and the Dallas Morning News.

Renée's current professional and community affiliations include serving as a volunteer for the League of Women Voters (former executive board member); a research committee member of the League of Women Voters-Texas; an advisory board member for City Hall Fellows-Houston; a member of the Harris County Election Division's Hispanic Voter Outreach Committee; a graduate of the City of Houston's Project Leadership Institute-Historic Preservation; a member of the City of Houston's Houston Counts (Census 2010) committee; a volunteer for Catahoula Dog Rescue; and a member of the Woodland Heights Historic Preservation Committee. She is also a graduate of the Center for Houston's Future Leadership Forum, and a member in organizations including the Woodland Heights Civic Association, Women Professionals in Government, Historic Houston, and the University of Houston Alumni Organization.

Renée and her husband Stan share their never quite completely restored 1919 bungalow in the Woodland Heights with their dogs Bruno, Miko and Luca and their cats Vito, Tony and Fiorenza.