

# BLAKE GIBBONS

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## Summary

An enthusiastic ambassador of public transit, Blake's vision for transportation in the U.S. is a "car-light" model in which there is increased integration and access to diverse modes of mobility. Notable accomplishments have been streamlining data within The COMET planning department, maximizing utilization and efficiency of CAD/AVL and scheduling software, as well as contributing to the Marketing and Community Affairs Department being an outspoken advocate of transit.

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## Education

### **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA – BACHELOR OF ARTS IN GEOGRAPHY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE (AUGUST 2019 – MAY 2023) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- GPA: 3.7/4.0
- Courses centered around Public Administration and Urban Advancement/GIS

### **UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN - GERALD R. FORD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, (JUNE - AUGUST 2022) (ANN ARBOR, MI)**

- Public Policy and International Affairs (PPIA) Fellow
  - Completed intensive quantitative, writing, critical thinking, and policy training at the Junior Summer Institute (JSI)
  - Course evaluations and professor comments available upon request
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## Internships and Related Experience

### **TRANSIT SERVICES INTERN – CENTRAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY DBA THE COMET (DECEMBER 2020 – PRESENT) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Assisting in the planning & development department by prioritizing amenities, collecting data on stop/route levels, and compiling data into reports for board members and staff
- Collaborate with members of other departments to improve operational, budgetary, and marketing initiatives
- Created new data streams with technology, organized company assets, and created efficient workflows

### **FELLOW - THE BLUE LAB SOUTH CAROLINA (MAY - JUNE 2020) (VIRTUAL – SC)**

- Completed required coursework for The Blue Lab SC, a digital campaign course for young Democratic talent in South Carolina
- Collaborated with peers to produce a campaign plan for a candidate in a hypothetical campaign
- Gained valuable insight and knowledge for how to be a dynamic and efficient member of a political or issues-based campaign

### **FELLOW - OBAMA FOUNDATION COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP (MAY - JUNE 2020) (VIRTUAL – NATIONWIDE)**

- Worked with individuals across the country to learn more about our local communities and how to assist them
- Created an action plan for the city of Columbia that addresses economic development alongside other community wide issues

### **PAGE – SC HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (JANUARY - MARCH 2020) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Compiled documents and assembled paperwork for committee meetings
- Delivered relevant information and documents to house members
- Attended to the needs and requests of office and committee staff

### **FELLOW - PALMETTO BOYS STATE (JUNE 2019) (ANDERSON, SC)**

- Completed intensive courses in government, public administration, and public policy at The American Legion's Boys State Program
- Participated in mock elections running for office at the local and statewide level
- Elected as party commissioner thus helping lead the party and assisting candidates

## Activities and Leadership Experience

### LEADERSHIP

#### **DIVISION SECRETARY OF CAMPUS WELLNESS (STUDENT GOVERNMENT) (MAY 2022 – MAY 2023) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Managed three departments pertaining to Sustainability, Safety & Transportation, and Health & Wellness.
- Managed a team of ten individuals comprising of deputy secretaries and committee members.
- Ensured each department was completing objectives and injected innovative ideas into each department.

#### **OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM (OSP) MENTOR (AUGUST 2020 – MAY 2023) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Mentored three students each year who were first generation college students as a part of the Opportunity Scholars Program on campus.
- Close collaboration with OSP and TRiO staff on ways to guide students to success.

#### **ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLUB DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION (AUGUST 2021 – MAY 2022) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Worked closely with the President and Vice President to ensure smooth operation of the organization and maintained email threads, rosters, and room reservations.

#### **SECRETARY OF SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION (STUDENT GOVERNMENT) (MAY 2021 – MAY 2022) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Lead a committee of students to create solutions to issues pertaining to safety and transportation on campus. Many reports were created such as Smart Parking Cards, Safety Graphics, new University signage, etc.

#### **RUSSELL HOUSE UNIVERSITY UNION (RHUU) LEAD (MAY 2020-MAY 2021) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Lead the RHUU Steering Committee and organized meetings with student leaders to shape the future of USC's student union.
- Close collaboration with RHUU Director in shaping the committee's future

#### **DIRECTOR OF CITY ADVOCACY COMMISSION (CAC – STUDENT GOVERNMENT) (MAY 2020 – MAY 2021) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Lead the USC Student Government City Advocacy Commission and lead a team of eight individuals to create projects that would be implemented by the City of Columbia and neighboring entities.

#### **RHA SENATOR (DECEMBER 2019 – MAY 2020) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Relayed the voices of the student body at Green Quad residence hall and voted on legislation to improve the lives of campus residents.

#### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH DIRECTOR (JANUARY 2020 - MARCH 2020) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Coordinated with local businesses to sponsor the Hannah White & Issy Rushton campaign.
- Over 50 businesses were contacted, and sponsorships were made.

### SERVICE

#### **CITY OF COLUMBIA WALK BIKE AMBASSADOR (NOVEMBER 2021 - PRESENT) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Completed training from the city's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) to serve as a community ambassador of pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- Route segments were audited occasionally and scored on walk and bikeability.
- Concerns were sent to the City of Columbia for repair and planning considerations.

#### **CITY OF COLUMBIA BIKE/PED COUNTS (AUGUST 2020 - PRESENT) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Counted the number of pedestrians, cyclists, ADA users, strollers, and those utilizing transit for route segments around the City of Columbia.
- Data was compiled and sent to the Planning and Development department for planning reports and future plans.

#### **PARKING APPELLATE COURT COMMITTEE (AUGUST 2021 - PRESENT) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Served on the University Parking Appellate Court Committee and would review dockets of parking appeals, voting on each ticket. Votes were compiled and tickets were either voided, waived, reduced, or fined.

#### **TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AUGUST 2021 – PRESENT) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Served on the University Transit Advisory Committee and engaged in conversations with the office of Transportation on campus.
- Advocated for improvements to transit service on campus.

#### **BLUEBIKESC BRAND AMBASSADOR (JUNE 2019 - PRESENT) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Marketed and created initiatives for Columbias bike share network.
- Reshared and liked posts to increase engagement, participated in photoshoots that are used in marketing purposes, lead group rides, and served as a trainer for individuals new to the bike share system.

#### **TEAM TALLO (AUGUST 2020 – MAY 2022) (VIRTUAL – NATIONWIDE)**

- Engaged in meetings with team members of Tallo, a software company that serves as a "talent locator" connecting students with individuals of the workforce, higher education, and financial aid.
- Assisted in creation of the Tallo Community module which allows students to collaborate with other students.

#### **BUDDIES BEYOND BORDERS (JANUARY – MAY 2022) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Was paired with a foreign exchange student to ease their fears about being in the U.S. and helped them to overcome cultural barriers.
- Formed a friendship with students and gave them a safe place and person to talk to.

#### **SC EQUALITY YOUTH ADVISORY ACTION COMMITTEE MEMBER (SEPTEMBER 2019 – MAY 2020) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Collaborated with other LGBTQ+ individuals and stakeholders to advocate for passage and revision of laws in South Carolina that would protect LGBTQ+ individuals.

#### **RUSSELL HOUSE UNIVERSITY UNION (RHUU) CHAIR (SEPTEMBER 2019 – MAY 2020) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Chaired the RHUU Steering Committee with student leaders to shape the future of USC's student union.

#### **DYLAN GUNNELS FOR COLUMBIA (AUGUST – DECEMBER 2019) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- Participated in the campaign for Dylan Gunnels who was campaigning for the City of Columbia at-large seat.
- Using grassroots techniques, canvassing was performed, and data was collected on demographics for the campaign.

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## Skills & Abilities

### **MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS**

- Strong communication ability when assisting clients and works well with others and easily adaptable to new environments
- Knowledgeable on social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Hootsuite) and analytics within them.
- Experience with design platforms such as Microsoft Publisher and Canva

### **TECHNOLOGY**

- Proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, Publisher) and Google Workspace (Gmail, Calendar, Drive, Docs, Sheets, Slides)
- Knowledgeable in cloud meeting platforms (Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, WebEx)
- Established in geospatial mapping technologies (ArcMap, ArcCloud, Google Earth Pro, Remix Transit & Scheduling)

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## Honors and Awards

### **PPIA FELLOWSHIP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN (JUNE – AUGUST 2022) (ANN ARBOR, MI)**

- Public Policy and International Affairs (PPIA) Fellow. Completed intensive quantitative, writing, critical thinking, and policy training at the Junior Summer Institute (JSI).

### **DEAN'S LIST:**

- Fall 2019, Spring 2020, and Fall 2021

### **RECIPIENT OF THE BENNETT S. MASACHI MEMORIAL UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN GEOGRAPHY (FEBRUARY 2021) (COLUMBIA, SC)**

- This scholarship was designed to further the studies of two undergraduate geography students each year
- Scholarship is based on academic and personal statements relating to the geography department.

## RECIPIENT OF 2019 STEM SIGNING DAY AWARD (JUNE 2019) (COLUMBIA, SC)

- In conjunction with Boeing, BMW, Tallo, and the South Carolina Manufacturing Alliance, STEM Signing Day allows recently accepted college students to meet with legislators and receive mentoring opportunities
- Close collaboration with Boeing staff and mentors throughout the program and well into college

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## Publications & Presentations

- Transportation Association Of South Carolina (TASC) Multimodal Planning (March 2023)
- Discover USC (April 2023)
- Climate Ready Columbia (2022)
- USC Fleet Electrification Feasibility – Senior Capstone (December 2022)

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## Interests

- Multi-mobility comingling fixed route, paratransit, micro transit, bikeshare, scooter share, and adequate infrastructure
- Return to the city with emphasis on mixed-use development and integrated neighborhoods
- Maintenance and addition of city amenities such as bike lanes, sidewalks, transit, streetlights, etc.