

## Biography for Richard B. (R. B.) Smith

As a native of New Orleans, R. B. Smith did not begin his life in Southwest Louisiana, but he got here as fast as he could. A resident of Lake Charles since 1976, R. B.'s career has included working in retail, wholesale, service, and educational industries. He retired in 2011 after 30 years of service working at Sowela Technical Community College in technical education and workforce development.

Smith currently holds the position of Vice President of Business and Workforce Development for the Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance. His focuses include recruiting, retaining, and expanding businesses, and facilitating better communication between the business and education communities of southwest Louisiana to identify needs and resources for building a 21<sup>st</sup> century world class workforce in our region.

He holds degrees from McNeese State University and Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. Active in religious, professional, civic, and fraternal organizations, in his spare time, he enjoys travelling with his wife, Stephanie and children, Robert and Emily.