

Gérald R. Checco



BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

Born in Bangui, Central African Republic into a French / Tunisian family, Gérald spent his youth between France and the lesser Antilles on the island of Guadeloupe. A gifted mathematician, he obtained a Bachelor of Mathematics degree just one year after graduating from high school. He then studied two majors in tandem: Education at the Sorbonne and Engineering and Public Administration at the School of Public Works (École Speciale des Travaux Publics) in Paris, France.

He married American artist Jan Brown Checco in 1981 and they had two daughters Amanda and Emilie, and they now have 3 grandsons. Having completed his military duties as a lieutenant in the French artillery, Gérald established himself professionally as a consulting engineer on projects commissioned by family members of the King of Saudi Arabia, for whom he designed palaces, mosques and gardens.

In 1984, the young Checco family moved to Cincinnati, where they have resided ever since. An American diploma would now be essential for engineering practice, so Gérald enrolled at the University of Cincinnati where he obtained a Masters Degree in Structural Engineering in just 9 months. Certified as a Professional Engineer (P.E.) in Ohio and neighboring states, he was employed as Project Manager for an architectural design firm. In 1991, Gérald was hired by the City of Cincinnati's Park Board, and became Superintendent in 1999. A nationally recognized expert in parks management, he has taught parks administrators throughout the nation in a North Carolina State University course, and has also lectured internationally on parks-related topics in Japan, France, Germany, Ukraine and China.

In 2013 Gérald was asked by Cincinnati's City Manager to become the Director of Public Works, a department that was in leadership crisis with lackluster performance. With improvements completed, in 2015 the Mayor asked him to become the Director of the Metropolitan Sewer District, a department facing multiple audits due to questionable managerial practices and looming Consent Decree deadlines. These last two appointments earned him the nickname "Cincinnati's Fixer" for his ability to quickly reorganize troubled departments, improving performance and establishing ethical behaviors.

After retiring from City service in 2018, Gérald went on the 500-mile hike of his dreams - the Camino de Santiago in Northern Spain, and then wrote a reflective, philosophical book - "The Tao of My Camino." Now as a volunteer, he tutors Kindergarteners and first graders in math, and has translated from the original French, a play by West African author. Gérald is a Director on the Boards of the Mill Creek Valley Conservancy District, the Charter Committee of Greater Cincinnati, Green Umbrella and the Sawyer Point Board of Visitors. He also works as a consultant for government efficiency and effectiveness. He and Jan are active leaders in community service projects in Clifton where they reside in their solar and geothermal-powered home.

EDUCATION

University of Cincinnati, Ohio, USA
Masters in Structural Engineering (1986)

Ecole Spéciale des Travaux Publics, Paris, France
Masters Decree in Civil/Environmental Engineering and Public Administration (1981)

Ecole Spéciale des Travaux Publics, Paris, France
Bachelors Decree in Civil/Environmental Engineering and Public Administration (1980)

Université de la Sorbonne, Paris, France
Bachelors Certificate in Science of Education (1980)
Université de Bordeaux, France
Bachelors of Mathematics (1977)

Teaching Certificate, Pointe à Pitre, Guadeloupe
Primary School Level (1975)

POSITIONS

2015-2018

Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati

Director

Magnitude: \$200 million Operating Budget , \$300 million Capital Budget, 600 FTE, Consent Decree, City/ County Government

2013-2015

Department of Public Services, City of Cincinnati

Director

Magnitude: \$50 million Operating Budget, \$10 million Capital Budget, 200 FTE, City Government

1991-2013

Cincinnati Park Board

Superintendent of Operations and Land Management

Magnitude: \$10 million Operating, 100 FTE, Independent City Board

1986-1991

Smith, Stevens and Young, Architects, Engineers, Planners

Project Manager

Commercial and Industrial developments

1981-1985

OGER International Architecture, Engineering and Construction Company

Project Manager

Palaces, Mosques, Gardens

LECTURES/ TEACHING

Managing with Cost Centers | *City of Munich, Germany, October 2000*

Modern Maintenance Techniques | *City of Munich, Germany, November 2000*

Maintenance Planning Using GIS Technology | *National Recreation and Park Association, Denver October 2001*

GIS Technology In Environmental Management | *ESRI, Cincinnati, November 2001*
Using GPS for Trail Mapping | *NAI, Cincinnati, February 2002*
Public Art Management | *College Art Association, Seattle, February 2003*
Environmental Ethics and Practices | *NCSU⁽¹⁾, Maintenance Management School (2004-2019)*
Professional Development | *NCSU⁽¹⁾, Maintenance Management School (2004-2019)*
Maintenance Planning | *NCSU⁽¹⁾, Maintenance Management School (2004-2019)*
Playground Design & Maintenance | *NCSU⁽¹⁾, Maintenance Management School (2004-2019)*
Volunteer Management | *City of Liuzhou, China, 2008*
Environmental Management | *City of Liuzhou, China, 2008*
Maintenance Management | *City of Liuzhou, China, 2008*
Making Your Home Energy Efficient | *Krohn Conservatory, Cincinnati, Ohio 2009*
Understanding Your Energy Bills | *Krohn Conservatory, Cincinnati, Ohio 2009*
Making Your Garden Green | *Krohn Conservatory, Cincinnati, Ohio 2009*
Understand Cap-and-Trade | *Krohn Conservatory, Cincinnati, Ohio 2010*
Creating a Culture of Innovation | *Staff Training*
Operating our Parks Environmentally | *Staff Training*
Basic Leadership Skills | *Staff Training*
Understand and Managing Union Contracts | *Staff Training*
Basic Computer Skills | *Staff Training*

COMPUTER SOFTWARE FLUENCY

Microsoft: Word, Excel, PowerPoint
Adobe: IndDesign, Illustrator