

Lawrence D. P. “Larry” Vellani, MPA
Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer
Smart Start of Forsyth County, Inc.
Winston-Salem, NC



Larry Vellani is the Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer of Smart Start of Forsyth County, Inc. (SSFC), an eight-million dollar, community-based, early education service and policy organization in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Vellani has an extensive career in organizational change, public policy formation, and higher education advancement, holding posts in the private, non-profit sector and in the judicial branch of state government in Ohio, Indiana, and North Carolina.

His executive service has included positions as director of development for the North Carolina Humanities Council in Greensboro, NC (2011); director of corporate and foundation relations at Elon University in Elon, NC (2002-2010); assistant administrator for program services at the N.C. Administrative Office of the Courts in Raleigh, NC (1994-2002); executive director, Indiana Sentencing Resource Center, an agency of the Indiana state courts, in Indianapolis, IN (1988–1994); executive director of Community Corrections Resources, Inc., in Winston-Salem, N.C. (1986–1988); and co-executive director of the North Carolina Prison and Jail Project, Inc., in Durham, N.C. (1980-1986).

Vellani has also provided contractual service and consultation in fifteen US states, two Canadian provinces, one Mexican state, and one Italian region.

From 2003 - 2012, Vellani served on the board of directors of the Alamance Partnership for Children, Inc., in Burlington, NC, the NCPC-affiliated program serving the Greater Alamance-Burlington Community.

As a volunteer with the Alamance Partnership, he co-chaired Alamance County’s NC Pre-K Committee, presented at the National Smart Start Conference, and served two years as the Partnership’s board chair. He led a crucial board self-study that guided a reorganization of the board and staff in Alamance County, and later helped apply for and lead participation in a joint-venture board development and training program in partnership with NCPC in Raleigh, NC, and BoardSource, Inc., of Washington, DC.

A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the Ohio State University, with degrees from the Ohio State University and Indiana University in history, education, and public administration, Vellani has held faculty appointments at Martin University and

Indiana University, both in Indianapolis, IN, and at Elon University, where he remains associated with the Elon Center for Public Affairs. He has authored and taught courses on organizational behavior, judicial administration, leadership, and Italian language and culture.

An avid performing artist, Vellani grew up in the Hilltop Community of Columbus, Ohio, in an extended family of Reggio Emilian emigrants, learning how to sing in Latin before he could read in English. A solo and ensemble musician, his musical performances draw upon source material from lands and peoples on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as the waters of the Mediterranean and the Gulf of Mexico.

A solo and ensemble musician, he has been privileged to perform with some of the recent generations' most respected interpreters of narrative song, including Guy and Candy Carawan, Barbara Dane, Fran McKendree, Mimi Fariña, Ronnie Gilbert, Beverly Grant, Si Kahn, Rhiannon Giddens Laffan, Michela Musolino, Holly Near, Bruce Phillips, and Baldemar Velasquez. He has also performed with some of the Southeast's most renowned traditional musicians, including Lonny Austin, Marvin Gaster, Tommy Jarrell, Mike Seeger, Lauchlin Shaw, Paul Taylor, and Joe Thompson.

Vellani lives in Mebane, NC with his wife and musical collaborator, Peggy Boswell, the curator of the Scott Family Collection at the Alamance Community College, Graham, NC. Their son, Ben (Elon '09), works for J Crew Corporation in Mebane, NC, and their daughter, Ginny (Agnes Scott '10), serves on the staff of Elon Hillel at Elon University in Elon, NC.