

Debra (Baggett) Garza, R.Ph.



Debbie Garza joined the Texas Pharmacy Association as Chief Executive Officer in August 2017. A business-savvy executive with keen strategic vision and a passion for pharmacy, Debbie is a skilled communicator who explains complex policy issues clearly and concisely with the prowess to change mindsets and build positive public sentiment for the pharmacy profession. She is a top-performing leader with a proven aptitude for securing results to contribute to the growth and success of an organization. In addition, she possesses the inherent ability to proactively identify and assess public policy trends in health care and bridge those to pharmacy.

Debbie has significant accomplishments in government relations, public policy, and operations in pharmacy, health care, and retail. She collaborates to get things done and prides herself in coalition building and ally development. Debbie possesses hands-on knowledge of legislative, regulatory, and political processes and is well-versed in Medicare Part D, Medicaid, and pharmacist scope of practice. She has been intimately involved with drug payment policy, delivery system reform and a broader role for pharmacists. She has served as a trusted advisor to several company CEOs and navigated an organization through landmark health legislation of Medicare Part D and the Affordable Care Act.

Debbie spent more than three decades with Walgreens, advancing through the company while taking on higher roles with increased responsibilities. She started in the cosmetics department in 1984, worked as a pharmacy technician, became a pharmacist, supervised pharmacy operations in the Austin district, and rose to Divisional Vice President of Government and Community Relations in 2007. In that role she built the Government and Community Relations department and led federal, state, and local government affairs, public policy, pharmacy affairs working with state boards of pharmacy, and community relations in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. She opened and ran Walgreens' Washington, D.C. office and served as chief lobbyist for the organization. In 2016 Debbie began utilizing her vast experience and expertise as an independent consultant providing consulting and advisory services in the pharmacy and health care industries.

In 2014 Debbie was recognized as one of the leading women in retail pharmacy by Drug Store News Women Leaders Report. Debbie is a member of the American Pharmacists Association and The University of Texas College of Pharmacy Dean's Advisory Council. She previously served on the board of directors of the National Association of Chain Drug Stores Foundation and the Coalition for Community Pharmacy Action, an alliance between the National Association of Chain Drug Stores and the National Community Pharmacists Association. Her leadership roles in Texas include president of the Texas Federation of Drug Stores from 2003 to 2005, a member of the Texas Pharmacy Association, and taskforces convened by the Texas State Board of Pharmacy.

Debbie received a B.S. in pharmacy from The University of Texas at Austin. She and her husband, José, enjoy traveling, gardening, and raising African cichlids. Having been a mentor throughout her career, Debbie enjoys mentoring pharmacists and helping to shape the next generation of pharmacy leaders.