

Kimberly Pickett, Featured by Influential Women, Demonstrates the Power of Mentorship, Integrity, and Service

SMITHFIELD, NC, UNITED STATES, July 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Interim Town Manager and ICMA Credentialed Manager Inspires Future Leaders Through Resilience, Transparency, and a Commitment to Lifelong Learning

Kimberly Pickett, MPA, ICMA-CM, has built a remarkable career in local government by combining perseverance, ethical leadership, and an unwavering commitment to serving her community. Now serving as Interim Town Manager for the Town of Smithfield, North Carolina, Kimberly continues to lead with integrity while inspiring the next generation of public servants. Her professional journey reflects the lasting impact of mentorship, the importance of lifelong learning, and the belief that strong leadership is defined by character rather than title.



Over more than a decade in municipal government, Kimberly has steadily advanced through positions in finance, administration, and executive leadership, developing a comprehensive understanding of local government operations. Her recent achievement of earning the ICMA Credentialed Manager (ICMA-CM) designation represents a significant milestone in her career. It underscores her dedication to professional excellence, ethical decision-making, and effective public administration.

Kimberly credits much of her success to the mentors who recognized her potential and encouraged her to pursue opportunities beyond what she initially believed possible. Early in her career, a town manager encouraged her to pursue a Master of Public Administration degree after seeing leadership qualities she had yet to fully recognize in herself. That encouragement

became a turning point, setting Kimberly on a path that would expand both her knowledge and confidence as a public servant.

Pursuing graduate education while working full time and raising three young children, including a newborn, was no small undertaking. Yet Kimberly remained committed to her goal, balancing family responsibilities with the demands of graduate coursework. She earned her Master of Public Administration from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke in November 2020 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. One of her proudest moments was walking across the graduation stage so her children could witness firsthand the rewards of perseverance, determination, and hard work.

“My children were a huge motivation for me,” Kimberly says. “I wanted them to see that no matter how challenging life becomes, it’s important to keep pursuing your goals.”

That determination reflects one of Kimberly’s core beliefs—that no one is ever too old to learn something new. Throughout her career, she has consistently embraced opportunities to grow, seeking guidance from experienced professionals who generously shared their knowledge. From mastering the complexities of municipal budgeting to strengthening executive leadership skills, Kimberly believes continuous learning has been essential to her professional development.

She also emphasizes the importance of building meaningful professional relationships. Trusted mentors, experienced city administrators, and respected colleagues have provided valuable advice throughout her career, helping her navigate difficult decisions while encouraging her to expand her capabilities. Kimberly believes that surrounding herself with individuals willing to teach, challenge, and support her has been one of the greatest contributors to her long-term success.

As a leader, Kimberly has learned that public service often requires making difficult decisions under intense public scrutiny. Local government leaders regularly face criticism while balancing the diverse needs of residents, employees, elected officials, and community stakeholders. Rather than allowing negativity to influence her decisions, Kimberly remains focused on doing what is right for the community she serves.

The most valuable career advice she has received is to stay true to herself, ignore unnecessary criticism, and remain committed to her values. This philosophy has helped her maintain confidence while leading through challenging situations, ensuring that every decision is guided by integrity, transparency, and a commitment to serving the greater good.

Honesty has become the foundation of Kimberly’s leadership style. She believes transparency is essential in government because public trust depends on clear, truthful communication. While difficult conversations are sometimes unavoidable, Kimberly approaches them with authenticity and accountability, believing that trust is earned by consistently telling the truth—even when the message may be difficult to hear.

Her commitment to ethical leadership extends beyond daily operations. Kimberly has played an active role in downtown redevelopment and strategic initiatives that are helping transform growing communities throughout Johnston County. She finds tremendous satisfaction in contributing to projects that improve residents' quality of life, strengthen local economies, and create lasting benefits for future generations. For Kimberly, local government provides a unique opportunity to make a visible and meaningful difference through thoughtful planning, collaboration, and responsible stewardship.

Kimberly is equally passionate about encouraging more women to pursue careers in local government leadership. Although progress has been made, she recognizes that the profession remains largely male-dominated, particularly when collaborating with engineers, contractors, and other technical professionals. Throughout her career, she has often been one of the first female managers in the communities she has served, giving her firsthand experience navigating environments where women remain underrepresented.

Her message to aspiring women leaders is both practical and empowering: develop confidence, cultivate resilience, and never allow others to diminish your abilities. She encourages women entering public service to develop a thick skin while remaining authentic and confident in their leadership. Kimberly believes leadership effectiveness is determined by competence, integrity, and dedication—not gender—and hopes her own career demonstrates what is possible for future generations of women.

Outside of her professional responsibilities, Kimberly is a devoted wife and mother of three who treasures spending time with her family. Whether traveling together, relaxing at their beach house, or enjoying a quiet afternoon reading by the water, she values maintaining a healthy balance between her demanding career and personal life. These moments provide perspective and reinforce the importance of leading with compassion, humility, and gratitude.

As Kimberly Pickett continues to serve the Town of Smithfield and the broader community, she remains committed to fostering transparent government, supporting organizational excellence, and mentoring future public servants. Her journey demonstrates that meaningful leadership is built through resilience, continuous learning, and a willingness to invest in both personal growth and the success of others.

By embracing every opportunity to learn, leading with honesty, and remaining steadfast in her commitment to public service, Kimberly has established herself as a respected leader whose influence extends far beyond the office. Her story serves as an inspiring reminder that with determination, strong mentorship, and unwavering integrity, it is possible to create lasting change while empowering others to reach their own potential.

Learn More about Kimberly Pickett:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/kimberly-pickett>

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