

Ishmael Harris is a devoted husband and father of three—sons Ishmael II and Michael, and daughter Izybella. He has been married to Tabatha Harris for 18 years. A native of Bastrop, Texas, he was born in 1981 at Breckenridge Hospital in Austin to Carlton and Renia Harris. He always dreamed of raising his family in Bastrop.

Growing up in Bastrop in the 1980s, Ishmael spent much of his time with his late grandparents, CP and Ruby Johnson, who lived in the city for over 40 years. His grandmother was a caregiver, and his grandfather was a rancher and town bus driver. He and his sister, Shamael, were often by their side.

At age 6, Ishmael participated in a special grant-funded program for gifted students, studying the Colorado River. His commitment to the community began at 15 with his first summer job at the Boys and Girls Club of Bastrop, where he worked for four years. He also started volunteering and coaching youth sports, helping to launch HoopStars. Over the years, he has continued coaching in Bastrop, now mentoring the children of those he coached in his younger days.

For over 20 years, Ishmael has worked in the Wastewater Department for Austin Water, gaining expertise in advanced wastewater treatment and the effects of growth and development on city infrastructure.

His involvement in city government began in 2019 when he spoke before the Planning and Zoning Commission to oppose a proposed gas station, sharing his vision for Bastrop's future. Though he later ran for a city council seat and lost to the incumbent, he remained engaged and was appointed to the Planning and Zoning Commission. He has served for nearly six years, including the last year and a half as chair. In this role, he has worked to strengthen relationships with residents, modernize zoning codes, and advocate for community needs.

For the past five years, Ishmael has been an active member of the Bastrop Juneteenth Celebration Committee, serving as Vice Chair for the last four. He has played a key role in expanding the festival and fostering a strong partnership with the city. He also represented Bastrop in a cultural exchange with Evangeline Parish.

With a lifelong dedication to his hometown, Ishmael continues to serve and invest in the future of Bastrop.