

MICHELLE ASHTON

Strategic Storyteller

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St. Petersburg, FL

SUMMARY

Detailed, organized professional with nearly two decades of experience in mission-driven project management. Proven track record in creating and executing holistic, multi-channel communication plans that deliver meaningful impact. Excel at leading direct reports, internal teams, creative vendors, board members, and diverse stakeholders. Thrive at the intersection of purpose and performance.

EDUCATION

Tulane University

Master of Science in International Development

Louisiana State University

Bachelor of Arts in International Studies
Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology
Minor in French

SKILLS

- Staff Management
- Budget + Financial Management
- Project Management
- Data Analysis
- Strategic Planning
- Partnership Management

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- CMS (WordPress, Joomla)
- AI (ChatGPT, Dall-E)
- Adobe (Creative Suite, PDF)
- Email Marketing (MailChimp, Constant Contact)
- Zapier Integrations
- CRM (Salesforce, Neon)
- GIS (ArcView GIS)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Director of Communications & Events

[Fish & Wildlife Foundation of Florida](#) | 2018 - Present

Develop an annual, data-driven, comprehensive plan and oversee all communications, including all digital and print assets, to build an increasingly large and diverse audience who become financial supporters of Florida's largest conservation nonprofit.

- **STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS** Design and execute holistic, multi-channel communication plans, matching diverse audiences with impactful messages, tools, and tactics to deliver results. Produce print collateral, including award-winning annual reports, advertising campaigns, digital communications, and additional creative. Manage a budget of more than \$300,000. Run analytical reports to monitor campaign progress.
- **CONTENT CREATION** Oversee content creation for website and social media, keeping content fresh, compelling, and visually appealing. Website attracted nearly 300,000 new users in the last fiscal year. While supervising the Digital Marketing Manager, our audience increased 24% across all social media platforms.
- **FUNDRAISING** Develop and implement strategies to spark giving and create an expanding pool of donors to the Foundation. In the last fiscal year, directly raised more than \$200,000 in donations and purchases.
- **EMAIL MARKETING** Develop and manage a comprehensive email strategy. Last fiscal year maintained an unsubscribe rate of 0.15% with an average 40% open rate to more than 45,000 subscribers.
- **MEDIA RELATIONS** Cultivate key members of the media to generate earned media. In the last fiscal year, secured dozens of placements in top tier outlets (NPR, *The Wall Street Journal*, CNN, Science Friday, *The Guardian*, CBS) that resulted in significant donations. Received recognition from media relations professional development group. Trained in advanced crisis communication and reputation risk management.
- **TECH INNOVATION** Set-up automation for several time-consuming processes, like entering donations into our CRM. Integrate AI into workflows when appropriate.
- **EVENT MANAGEMENT** Manage the design and implementation of the Foundation's events, including the gala. The galas under my supervision have grossed more than \$4 million. Supervise an Event & Operations Coordinator to help with implementation.

Communications Supervisor

[Midtown Management District](#) | 2016 - 2018

Developed and implemented strategic communications plan for Midtown Houston, an organization combining nonprofit and public roles to enhance the district and create community. Ensured compelling, consistently branded communications in print and digital platforms, including all marketing and advertising efforts.

- **WEBSITE MANAGEMENT** Maintained all websites, including management of web design contractors, content management, event calendar, and contacts database. Led the redesign of the website and the launch of the organization's inaugural app.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA** Created social media content across all platforms, ensuring alignment in message and brand.
- **EVENT MANAGEMENT** Assisted with the development, conceptualization, and implementation of community events.
- **BOARD MANAGEMENT** Coordinated the logistics, including agendas, packets, notes, minutes, budgets, and more for Urban Planning, Marketing and Economic Development, and Service and Maintenance Board Committees.
- **PROJECT MANAGEMENT** Managed the design, implementation, and analysis of community engagement efforts, including a community-wide survey completed by over 1,450 respondents.

Public Programs Director

[Rothko Chapel](#) | 2012 - 2016

Implemented and managed 100 programs annually from conception, logistics, and production for a world-renowned public art space the centers spirituality and human rights.

- **PROJECT MANAGEMENT** Negotiated contracts and arranged audio/video, set up, receptions, and travel for program presenters. Collected and analyzed data for over 5,000 program attendees per year.
- **BUDGET MANAGEMENT** Managed an annual budget of approximately \$100,000.
- **PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT** Collaborated with 20 community organizations annually to develop joint programming and build target audiences.
- **PROGRAM MARKETING** Authored all marketing language, including copy for print materials, advertising, website, social media, and press releases. Partnered with graphic designers to create all print media. Project managed website redesign and launch. Created weekly podcasts and monthly e-newsletters reaching over 11,000 subscribers.
- **BOARD MANAGEMENT** Led the Program Committee in developing annual season program arc.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Development Coordinator + Data Analyst

[Project GRAD USA](#) | 2008 - 2011

Wrote federal and private grants for nationwide education reform nonprofit, including Department of Education's Race to the Top grants for approximately \$1 million.

Project Coordinator

[NO/AIDS Task Force](#) | 2006 - 2008

Coordinated CDC-funded National HIV Behavioral Surveillance according to national, state, and local protocols in first post-Katrina health survey.

English Teacher

Smt. Kamla Saklecha Gyan Mandir | 2004

Taught 6th-11th grade English in rural India.