

Michele L. Evans

Profile Statement

I am a detail-oriented communications professional with more than 25 years of experience in writing, editing and design. I successfully promote the transformative power of non-profit program for its constituents to internal and external sources. I am well-versed in branding and editing strategies.

Core Qualifications

- Strong writing, verbal, editing, design and photography skills
- Experience in solicitation of media sponsors; fulfillment of all communication-related aspects of sponsor agreements for organizational events
- Leadership and team member relations; volunteer relations; customer/client relations
- Computer experience with Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Publisher, PowerPoint, Excel, Access), Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign), QuarkXPress, WordPress, Constant Contact, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr; most recent experience on Windows-based operating system

Experience

Special Olympics Illinois (SOILL), Normal, IL

Director of Communications

January 2005-December 2016

- Assured mission statement, graphic standards and language guidelines adhered to throughout the state
- Guided organization through rebranding process, starting in 2013 through total compliance in 2015, ensuring brand's consistent usage and increased awareness helping increase athlete participation
- Served as lead Marketing & Communications (M&C) staff for Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR), helping this grassroots fundraising vehicle benefiting SOILL increase amount raised from less than \$1 million in 1999 to \$4 million in 2016
- Served as lead M&C staff for LETR Polar Plunges, designing all printed materials, helping increase from 1 location in 1999 to 21 in 2016 and increase money raised from \$40,000 in 1999 to \$2 million in 2016
- Solicited media sponsorship throughout Central/Southern Illinois for LETR Polar Plunge, increasing media sponsors by 50 percent in 2 years; fulfilled sponsorship agreements for all statewide partners and event sponsors throughout the year
- Wrote, edited and designed layout for targeted email communication using, including monthly state e-newsletter (distributed to more than 100,000 subscribers) using Constant Contact
- Wrote, edited, designed layout and upload variety of content to website using WordPress
- Wrote, edited and designed layout for variety of informational and promotional printed materials including brochures, flyers and posters
- Pitched story ideas to media statewide to highlight to accomplishments of Special Olympics athletes and served as organizational spokesperson
- Wrote, scheduled posts on organization's social media channels in Social Media Manager's absence
- Digitally photographed competition and fundraising events, edited and cataloged photos, and uploaded to Flickr
- Member of 2-person team to oversee redesign of SOILL website (www.soill.org)
- Spoke about Special Olympics to a variety of college classes and community organizations
- Supervise and review performance of interns

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Manager of Communications

December 1998-December 2004

- Designed, wrote and edited statewide printed quarterly newsletter and annual report (distributed to 20,000 households statewide)
- Wrote and distributed press releases statewide before and after competitions and fundraising events, plus contacted media outlets to pitch story ideas for those events
- Trained Special Olympics athletes (Global Messengers) in speech making and media interviews
- Designed coach and volunteer handbooks for competitions

Immanuel Bible Foundation, Normal, IL

Communications/Public Relations

April 2016-present

- Assist in redesign of website, including creation and editing of content, while maintaining old website until new website is complete
- Write, edit and design layout for targeted email communication using Constant Contact
- Design programs, flyers and signage for fundraising events
- Write press releases for events and distribute to local media
- Digitally photograph events, edit and catalog photos, and upload to Flickr
- Assist with organization's Facebook presence

Special Opportunities Available in Recreation, Bloomington, IL

Program Instructor/Coach

September 2016-present

- Instructor for variety of recreation programs for people with intellectual disabilities
- Coach Unified bocce and Unified tennis teams that combine players with intellectual disabilities and their partners without

Clover Leaf Industries NFP, Hudson, IL

Communications Consultant

January 2015-present

- Designed website, write and edit copy and maintain website as needed for this non-profit organization that provides job training for people with intellectual disabilities in Bloomington-Normal
- Designed organizational logo
- Assist with organization's Facebook presence

The Pantagraph, Bloomington, IL

Business Pages Copy Editor

October 1988-November 1998

- Edited and rewrote local and national business and agriculture stories for daily newspaper with a circulation of 107,000
- Laid out and paginated section pages, wrote headlines and photo captions
- Worked with photographers to select photos to accompany stories
- Created graphics to illustrate stories
- Coordinated, edited and laid out weekly feature "Minding Our Business"
- Worked with public relations firms and other organizations submitting information for publication
- Assumed the duties of the Business Editor during absences

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News Copy Editor

March-October 1988

- Edited general news stories, wrote headlines and captions to accompany stories
- Assisted correspondents in writing stories
- Prepared obituaries

Education

Illinois State University, Normal, IL

- Bachelor of Science, Mass Communications, May 1988
- Various Adobe Creative Suite 6 (Photoshop, Illustrator & InDesign) Classes, 2013

Heartland Community College, Normal, IL

- Introduction to Business, 1994
- Web Page Development and Successful Computer Imaging, 1998
- Various Digital Photo Classes, 2004
- Introduction to Dreamweaver & Intermediate Dreamweaver, March 2008

Volunteerism & Membership

- Volunteer position with Special Olympics Team USA; served as Assistant Director of Communications for 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Shanghai, China; and Director of Communications (member of Management Team) for 2009 World Winter Games in Boise, Idaho, and 2011 World Summer Games in Athens, Greece. In both positions, was member of 2-person communications team responsible for all communications duties related to Team USA before, during and after the Games including writing/distributing press releases and stories about athletes and coaches; writing stories for Team USA website, e-newsletter and social media; responding to national and international media inquiries; communicating with public relations staff at state Special Olympics programs in U.S.
- Member of Illinois State University School of Communications Advisory Board, 2016-present
- Member of Ron Knisley Memorial Shootout Committee in conjunction with State Farm Holiday Classic, Bloomington, 2014-present
- Volunteer as Unified Partner with Special Opportunities Available in Recreation, Bloomington, 2007-2016
- Member of Special Olympics North America Marketing & Communication Committee, 2011-2014
- Member of Special Olympics North America Program Excellence Committee, 2012-2014

Awards & Recognition

- 2011-2012 Outstanding Alumna in Public Relations – School of Communications at Illinois State University, Normal
- Law Enforcement Torch Run License Plates – Designed Illinois LETR license plates for State of Illinois, sales of which benefit Special Olympics Illinois, 2008
- Law Enforcement Torch Run Photo Contest sponsored by International Association of Chiefs of Police – Second (2002 & 2003) and Third Place (2006) in Law Enforcement in Support of the Special Olympics Athletes Themselves/Personal Interaction with the Athlete(s) category