

RACHELLE CHASE

DES MOINES, IA | RACHELLE@RACHELLECHASE.COM

WRITER

Published writer and experienced public speaker with a record of success reaching diverse audiences through professional and creative mediums. Leverage extensive career as a business analyst to establish program goals, identify and implement solutions, and break down complex projects into action-oriented tasks for all organizational levels. Exceptional communicator who fosters a culture of teamwork and builds long-term relationships with business partners, clients, sponsors, donors, vendors, and team members.

Areas of expertise and technical skills:

Writing (Journalism, Books, Nonfiction, Fiction, Marketing, Technical, Business, Newsletters, Blog Content)
Project/Program Management | Research | Strategic Planning | Public Speaking
MS Office (PowerPoint, Word, Excel, Visio, Project, SharePoint) | Parsley | Presto | WordPress

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

UNITING THROUGH HISTORY

Founder / Executive Director (01/2021–Present)

- Establish and implement organization's strategic direction.
- Recruit, train, and manage administrative staff to support Hip History Contest.
- Create and launch business plans, programs, and projects, including:
 - ***Hip History Scholarship Contest***: Secured ~\$30K in 2021 and 2022 from a corporate sponsor and grant for this flagship project. Funding obtained from first and only two organizations contacted. (Contest paused until 2024).
 - ***History Book Club***: Create and lead online monthly history book club.
 - ***University of Northern Iowa Project***: Helped create mini-documentary "Dancing Through the Red Lines" by conducting interviews, editing script, recording voiceovers, and providing updates to finished product.
 - ***Buxton Puppet Show***: Consulted with Eulenspiegel Puppet Theatre to help create educational puppet show and participated in performances in various Iowa communities (2022–2023).
- Created and currently maintain website.
- Plans to reorganize, obtain funding, and grow programs in progress for 2024.

COMMUNICATION

Public Speaker / Media Relations Specialist / Author / Journalist / Marketer (04/2004–Present)

JOURNALISM

- Former columnist at the *Des Moines Register*, Iowa's largest newspaper. Focus was sharing opinion, history and positive stories of accomplishments by innovative Iowans. Article from recent month-long trip to Uganda appeared in *USA TODAY* (2023).
- Wrote 25+ articles as the Waterloo reporter for *Iowa Starting Line* while managing other professional writing projects. (2020)
- Composed multiple articles for *Ottumwa Life Magazine* (2015, 2018) and a feature story for *Iowa History Journal* (2020).
- Received George Mills-Louise Noun Popular History Award from the State Historical Society of Iowa for the most significant article on an Iowa history topic published in popular history (award signed by Iowa governor and lieutenant governor). (2021)

NONFICTION & FICTION

- Completed middle grade historical fiction novel on Susan Clark and the famous 1868 school desegregation court case to be released in 2024. Collaborating with educators to incorporate novel into Iowa school curriculum.
- Wrote 5 fiction books through various publishers, including Kensington Publishing (2004–2015), and 2 historical nonfiction books, *Creating the Black Utopia of Buxton, Iowa* (The History Press, 2019) and *Lost Buxton*, (Arcadia Publishing, 2017).
- Create marketing campaigns and online ads, one of which resulted in selling out book's first printings within weeks of release.

PUBLIC SPEAKING & MEDIA APPEARANCES

- Created and presented 120+ multimedia presentations on Buxton's history to universities, libraries, and historical societies since 2017. Speak to standing-room-only crowds of 25–1.2K attendees. Lead Zoom discussions with hundreds of participants.
- Made ~60 media appearances on *Iowa Public Radio*, podcasts, newspapers, and TV stations, which included appearances with Sen. Cory Booker discussing his connections to Buxton (2014–2023). Recently featured in three documentaries discussing Buxton, one of which, "Telling Our Own Story: Black History" has been nominated for an Emmy (2023).
- Served as moderator for Iowa state senatorial debate (2020), plus author events in Des Moines (2023).
- Participated in the Storyteller's Project for *Des Moines Register*, sharing story of history and finding home to audience of 1.5K+.

- Presented to Omaha Chamber of Commerce, Organization Development Network-Omaha Chapter (ODN), and other businesses using expertise on Buxton as an example of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the corporate world. (2021)
- Spoke directly before 6 U.S. presidential candidates at the Brown and Black Democratic Presidential Forum presenting Buxton as direction and inspiration for national unity. (2020)
- Conducted 2 online radio shows—*Chatting with Chase* and *SingleMindedWomen.com Talk Radio*—amassing 19K+ profile views and 40K listens. Resulted in interview request from *The Today Show*. (2008–2009)

TEACHING

- Lead writing workshops for organizations, such as Okoboji Writers' Retreat (IA), Indian Hills Community College (IA), Women's Fiction Festival (Italy), and Romance Writers of America (nationwide). Coach writers and public speakers. (2004–2023)
- Developed, sponsored, and co-hosted Chase the Dream Contest, matching aspiring romance authors with New York publishers and agents. Engaged 5K+ online participants (800 unique views per day), drawing 100+ entries per week and ensuring most finalists landed submission requests, book deals, and/or agents. Instructed participants on how to write a compelling opening in 1,000 words by providing feedback on entries I selected as finalists and facilitating discussion. (2007–2010)

FREELANCE BUSINESS ANALYSIS

Product Manager / Sr. Business Analyst / Project Manager / Business Systems Analysis Manager (01/2000–07/2020)

- Completed projects for high-profile companies, such as AIG, Wells Fargo, Global Atlantic, TIAA, ShareBuilder 401k, Genworth Financial, BlackRock, Charles Schwab, Visa, eBay, Hewlett Packard, and U. of California-San Francisco. Accomplishments include:
 - **Wells Fargo:** Improved issue resolution efficiency on home loan applications; decreased customer service resolutions from 4 hours to 10 minutes.
 - **TIAA:** Received Release Champion Award for successfully delivering Agency Search Phase 1 Project for SUNY.
 - **Charles Schwab:** Earned Excellence in Service Award for delivering level II billing product with team members and business partners from 12+ organizations.
 - **Visa:** Managed 12+ merchant implementations of Verified by Visa (online purchasing security service). Maintained concurrent project plans for each implementation while liaising between third-party technology provider, Visa, and merchants. Provided pre-installation support to Visa sales and marketing personnel.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Managed projects and products through all phases, from client engagement through post-implementation.
- Mapped processes, gathered/created requirements documentation, and developed website mockups. Identified cross-functional business issues/needs and implemented software solutions.
- Redesigned 401k website to engage and convert visitors seeking retirement products from prospects to customers.
- Created, owned, and managed product backlog and strategic roadmap for product releases and updates.
- Evaluated success of website changes and online marketing; analyzed competitors, web traffic, and account conversion.

COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION

- Liaised between cross-functional teams at all organizational levels, including collaboration with marketing, client services, developers, data modelers, testers, third-party vendors, and management.
- Trained and coached junior business analysts.
- Created and presented product ideas and project status reports to upper management.

OTHER NOTABLE EXPERIENCE

- Communications Consultant for GLOFORD, a youth and agricultural nonprofit, in Lira, Uganda. (03/2023)
- Business English Instructor in Santiago, Chile at Neilson, Novartis, Deloitte, and other corporations. (2011)

EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR UNIVERSITY, Belmont, CA
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Biology

Certified Scrum Product Owner | TESOL/TEFL Teaching Certification | Series 7 and Series 63 Stockbroker Licensure

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Chase, R.** (2024). *The Time I Was Susan Clark*. The Stanley Center and The Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine.
- Chase, R.** (2019). *Creating the Black Utopia of Buxton, Iowa*. The History Press.
- Chase, R.** (2017). *Lost Buxton*. Images of America Series, Arcadia Publishing.