

Nikky Luna

j.nikky.luna@gmail.com | (304) 641-1135 | Morgantown, W.Va.
nikkyluna.com

Strategic communicator, connector, and writer with 18+ years of experience in higher education communications, marketing, development and recruitment. *CliftonStrengths®* Top 5: Responsibility, Achiever, Harmony, Intellection, Empathy.

EXPERIENCE

Research Project Coordinator, WVU Healthspan Nutrition Lab, West Virginia University
Morgantown, W.Va. *Sept. 2024-present*

- Led the development of a 30-page patient education handbook, coordinating with study researchers and a cross-functional marketing and communications team while providing writing, proofing, editing expertise
- Led the launch of the lab's website, closely coordinating with university professional technologists and photographers
- Serves as primary point for maintaining and updating the website
- Writes/proofreads/edits a wide-range of study-related documents, including patient education and recruitment pieces, research manuscripts, and procedural documentation
- Drafts press releases and internal news announcements as needed
- Supports project planning and implementation, including protocol and workflow development, participant recruitment, collecting data using REDCap software and recruitment of study sites
- Develops and manages interim reports and assets for principal investigators' research publications and presentations
- Liaisons between the project team and internal/external stakeholders and partners
- Assists with writing, proofing/editing, and dissemination of study components, research results, and presentations

Director of Development, The American Pops Orchestra
Washington, D.C.

Sept. 2023-August 2024

- Developed and implemented fundraising goals and strategy in conjunction with APO's annual budget and financial needs
- Collaborated with APO Founder/Music Director, Board President and Board members to identify existing and prospective individual and corporate donors
- Developed/implemented the strategy for the cultivation and solicitation of new and current donors
- Managed APO's development software (Neon CRM), implementing system audits and more regular database maintenance

- Oversaw APO's comprehensive development approach while managing one full-time staff member
- Coordinated with colleagues and external contractors to develop and implement in marketing/communication deliverables
- Managed communications and all development-related logistics for eight APO events and supported overall event strategy, planning and implementation
- Ghost-wrote and/or edited approximately 5-10 messages a month for APO leadership, targeting prospective and current corporate/individual donors

Director, Marketing and Communications, WVU School of Public Health
Morgantown, W.Va.

Aug. 2019-Aug. 2023

Directed the overall communications and marketing strategy to support the school's enrollment, fundraising, and service/outreach goals. This included:

- Developing and implementing integrated marketing communications plans to support the school's strategic planning goals and objectives
- Fulfilling the role of both 'doer' and director/manager, including the management of one full-time communications specialist and providing ongoing coordination and strategic collaboration with communications, marketing, and enrollment colleagues throughout the WVU System
- Writing, proofing, and/or editing various types of content for multiple platforms and audiences; e.g., news stories, pitches, media advisories; e-newsletters for both internal and external constituents; leadership messaging to internal/external stakeholders; and website copy
- Helped plan and execute the School's 10-year anniversary, producing and/or coordinating a wide range of deliverables, including [a microsite](#); suite of brand assets; printed collateral and branded giveaways; an event series; and news/website stories
- Oversaw school's social media channels, providing planning/strategy guidance to the comms. specialist, as well as creating/posting directly to the school's channels
- Provided operations and budgetary oversight to the marketing/communications office and served as liaison to university-wide partners

Senior Marketing Strategist, Rockefeller Neuroscience Institute
Morgantown, W.Va.

Oct. 2018-Aug. 2019

Spearheaded the organization's marketing and communications efforts, elevating the organization at the state, national, and international levels. This included:

- Planning, promoting, and executing the organization's inaugural summit, 'Breaking Barriers,' that brought together hundreds of experts from around the world, as well as the dedication of the RNI's new 60,000 sq.-ft. Innovation Center

- Elevating the RNI through writing, proofing, and editing news stories, marketing collateral (print and digital) and talking points and leadership presentations that highlighted multiple research breakthroughs
- Directing and supporting the development of marketing assets to support patient acquisition, including design/layout of print/digital deliverables, including brochures, digital signage, and video
- Supporting RNI strategic initiatives through active, ongoing participation in strategic planning sessions, departmental and administrative meetings

Comms. Manager., WVU Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design
Morgantown, W.Va. Jan. 2016-Oct. 2018

Supported the college's recruitment and development goals through identifying, developing, finalizing and promoting content for print and digital platforms aimed at a various audiences, including prospective/current students; prospective/current donors; faculty/staff; alumni; government officials; and community stakeholders. Key projects/highlights:

- Helped plan and implement the school's 150th birthday celebration, which included a series of events and communication and marketing deliverables
- Served as editor and primary project manager for the [Davis College's 150th anniversary magazine](#), a 100-page, special edition publication
- Served as editor and writer for College's biannual magazine
- Wrote and edited various news stories, media pitches, and internal news announcements
- Planned and created content for the College's social channels

Director of Donor Relations and Campaign Manager, WVU Foundation
Morgantown, W.Va. Aug. 2013-Dec. 2015

Supported the cultivation and stewardship efforts to further engage WVU donors, friends, and partners by providing direction and strategic oversight of the donor relations program. Highlights of the role include:

- Developed and implemented integrated marketing communication plans, tailored to unique audience segments
- Managed the stewardship process of donors who supported WVU and its affiliates, with a special emphasis on donors at the major gift level (\$25K) and higher
- Oversaw the planning and implementation of internal and external events and special programming, including pre- and post-event communications
- Oversaw the operations of the donor relations office, which included budgetary oversight and the management of three full-time staff and hiring of an additional full-time staff member (associate director) on the Health Sciences campus

Institutional Advancement (various roles), Alderson Broaddus University
Philippi, West Virginia

July 2009-July 2013

Vice President for Institutional Advancement (July 2011-July 2013)

- Oversaw all development, alumni relations and advancement-related activities, including donor/alumni-related communications, and managed a team of five full-time professional staff and four full/part-time support staff.
- Led the university in raising over \$15 million in gifts and pledges in FY 2012, including a one-time \$8.5M gift-in-kind, and an increase in alumni participation rate
- Developed and wrote multiple gift proposals and stewardship reports
- Identified, qualified and cultivated supporters, including prospective Board members
- Served on the President's Cabinet and various committees, including the university's Strategic Planning Task Force

Major Gifts Officer/Dir., Foundation and Government Relations (Aug. 2010-June 2011)

- Responsible for a portfolio of approximately 125 prospects and donors whom I qualified, cultivated and/or solicited at the annual/major gift levels
- Developed grant-writing skills and collaborated with other stakeholders to identify funding needs and help prioritize and communicate organizational needs to potential supporters
- Assisted with the planning and implementation of alumni and donor-related events on- and off-campus
- Promoted to VP for advancement during organizational reorganization

Director of Alumni Relations (July 2009-Aug. 2010)

- Engaged alumni and friends with the institution through the planning and implementation of on- and off-campus events and the development and execution of multi-tiered communications
- Tasks ranged from writing stories to developing alumni newsletters and content for the website to recruiting and organizing volunteers and event sponsors to facilitating regular meetings and ongoing work of the 25-member Alumni Council, the governing committee of the Alumni Association
- Established the university's first Student Alumni Association
- Promoted to Major Gifts Officer/Dir. of Foundation and Government Relations

Director of Annual Giving, West Virginia Wesleyan College
Buckhannon, W.Va.

June 2008-July 2009

Supported the college's fundraising goals by planning/implementing a coordinated matrix of communication and solicitation strategies that included email, direct mail, student phone-a-thons, personal cultivation/stewardship and solicitation visits.

Admissions Counselor, Alderson Broaddus University
Philippi, W.Va.

July 2005-July 2007

Grew the applicant pool by 25% within the first six months of inception and maintained applicant growth within assigned territory, evidenced by a 54% increase in deposited students in the second year. Among many other activities to support enrollment goals, planned and executed quarterly communication plans, targeting prospective students and families.

EDUCATION

Master of Science in Integrated Marketing Communications
Perley Isaac Reed School of Journalism, WVU
Morgantown, W.Va.

August 2012

Bachelor of Arts, with majors in communications and applied music/vocal performance
Magna Cum Laude
Alderson-Broaddus College, Philippi, W.Va.

May 2005

VOLUNTEER WORK

Communications volunteer, WV Faith Collective/Justice & Jubilee
WV Faith Collective

April 2024-Jan. 2025

Helped plan, develop and execute communication and community-building initiatives on behalf of the WV Faith Collective, with a focus on a storytelling project featuring Black women in West Virginia. Recruited and managed seven marketing/comms professionals who served as volunteers. Assisted with a search for a prospective communications position, helping to develop job description and interviewing/vetting candidates.

Mentor, CreateAthon@WVU
WVU Reed College of Media

April 20-21, 2018

Served as a mentor for this annual student-driven event, during which teams develop a comprehensive implementation plan and deliverables for local nonprofits within a 24-hour period. Provided guidance on planning and strategy; helped facilitate work sessions; and provided proofing and editing support.

Member, Board of Directors
Libera, Inc. (<https://www.liberawv.com/>)

Oct. 2015-Jan. 2019

Served on the fundraising committee and helped with the planning and execution of events and communications. Fostered connections between the Executive Director and fundraising advisors and prospective supporters.