

DONNA HARTER

WRITER | EDITOR | RESEARCHER

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Communications professional with comprehensive experience in content development, research, marketing, and fundraising. Adept in creating heartfelt stories to inspire action, as well as research-based articles and brochures to provide technical information.

EXPERIENCE

FREELANCE WRITER, REMOTE – 7/2024 TO PRESENT

- Research, interview, and write articles for print and/or electronic distribution.
- Write and edit newsletter content utilizing Wild Apricot and other CRM systems.

DIRECTOR OF PROSPECT MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON, FREDERICKSBURG, VA - 7/2020 – 7/2024

- Identified donors to feature in UMW's award-winning *Gift Planning Connections*. Through the years, this semiannual newsletter led to several six- and seven-figure estate gifts.
- Facilitated interviews, wrote feature articles, coordinated photos, layout, printing, and mail distribution.
- Created web pages (WordPress) and eblasts (Imodules and Crescendo) targeting 12,000 constituents with the purpose of prompting "clicks" to cultivate current donors and inspire future gifts.
- Managed the screening of more than 90,000 constituents to analyze capacity and inclination to give.
- Researched donors and created custom profiles for President and Vice President for Advancement.

DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES, UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON, FREDERICKSBURG, VA - 12/2003 TO 6/2020

- Concepted, wrote, and led the development of the Mary Washington First Campaign case statement and website to publicly launch the \$50-million Campaign.
- Developed ads for *UMW Magazine*, identified news release and media coverage opportunities for lead gifts, and facilitated social media posts for special gifts and events.
- Partnered with President's Office to strategically draft speeches, targeted newsletters, and other presentation materials in "his/her voice" to support fundraising campaigns and special events.
- Developed solicitation plans, proposals, terms of agreement, and resolutions.
- Supervised Director of Advancement Events and part-time audio/video technician to ensure campaign and donor events were top-notch and memorable.
- Utilized Banner database and custom Excel reports to research donors and analyze data for preparation of articles and board presentations.
- Facilitated discussions with Annual Giving, Stewardship, Gift Processing, and Gift Planning to ensure continuity of messages, streamlining of processes, and application of best practices.
- Consulted on special projects with professors and campus leaders to analyze and offer guidance for communications and fundraising needs.
- Pioneered successful six-week Founders Day Challenge in 2015 to raise \$107,000 in unrestricted funds to celebrate UMW's 107th anniversary. Presented results to governing boards.
- Planned, developed, and implemented two successful programs to steward and cultivate unique donor groups for engagement and giving.
- Strategically planned donor communications for fundraising and events through challenges of presidential retirements and inaugurations, institutional name change, and a Centennial Celebration.

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATIONS, MARY WASHINGTON COLLEGE, FREDERICKSBURG, VA - PART-TIME, 9/2000 TO 11/2003

- Concepted and wrote text for UMW's first GIVING website.
- Facilitated communications to help acquire and celebrate a Kresge grant through the implementation of the Kresge Challenge.
- Developed creative "key theme" and lapel pins for award-winning Annual Giving campaigns; helped create and plan the first and subsequent President's Key Receptions.
- Coordinated celebrations and publications for the successful conclusion of the \$5.6 million campaign to fund and build the Jepson Alumni Executive Center.

FREELANCE WRITER, FREDERICKSBURG, VA AND KANSAS CITY, MO - 6/95 TO 8/2000

- Researched, interviewed subject matter experts, and wrote technical copy for publicity, training, and advertising targeted to alfalfa growers and dealers, corn growers, and golf course superintendents.
- Articles were placed in trade publications, including *Florida Grower*, *Farm Industry News*, *Pecan South*, and *Golf Course Management*.
- Communications projects included newsletters and web articles for WestAgro dairy products; training workbooks and telemarketing scripts for Western Star Trucks; mailers and advertorials for MERIT, PREMISE, and TEMPO insecticides from Bayer.

WRITER/PROJECT MANAGER, THE DUFF CO., KANSAS CITY, MO - 3/93 TO 6/95

- Assisted in annual planning and budgeting for America's Alfalfa and Gustafson Seed Treatments.
- Managed advertising and public relations projects and wrote copy for newsletters, brochures, press releases, and promotional material.
- Was instrumental in planning, presenting to and capturing new Duff client, Western Star Trucks. Managed roll-out and implementation of new training program for 1,100 parts people at truck dealerships in U.S. and Canada. Wrote reader-friendly instructional materials, promotional letters, and technical training workbooks.

EDUCATION

Missouri State University (formerly Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri)

Bachelor of Science degree received Magna Cum Laude in Electronic Media

(Custom major to cover courses in journalism, speech, public relations, marketing, and accounting.)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Award of Excellence - Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE)
- Best Quarterly Newsletter – Crescendo Integrated Marketing
- 1st Place Writing - Virginia Press Women (8 awards)
- 1st Place Writing - National Federation of Press Women
- 2nd Place Writing - Virginia Press Women (4 awards)
- 2nd Place Writing - National Federation of Press Women (2 awards)
- Special Merit Campaigns - CASE (2 awards)
- \$500 Employee Creative Idea - Valentine- Radford (2 awards)