

# Karlyn K. Wade-Richardson

Cincinnati, OH 45237 | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]

## Strategic Community Relations and Engagement Leader

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Proactive, innovative and inclusive *Community Relations and Engagement Director* with 20+ years of project management, business management and strategic planning experience. Effective relationship builder with the ability to align, prioritize and maximize the impact of an organization's community relations and engagement strategy. Persuasive communicator who can turn data into a story and has the capability to execute multiple projects within budget and on-time. Passionate collaborator emboldened to ensure positive customer/employee relations and increase organizational awareness through procedure optimization, data collection and evaluation. Ability to work across all levels and teams in a fast-paced, creative environment.

### Key Achievements:

- **Compassionate Leader:** Relationships built within the community by way of community conversations, support groups and community canvasses. These events were the catalyst for 520 low-income pregnant women to receive the medical care needed to have a healthy full-term birth.
- **Innovative Relationship Builder:** Strategic designer of the community relations/charitable giving strategy for a global retail company. Increased corporate partnerships by 266.67% and employee participation by 100%.
- **Experienced Strategic Partner:** Increased sales by 21% through identifying, developing, and maintaining external relationships. Educated partners through marketing, community engagement and outreach.

## AREAS OF EXPERTISE

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Community Relations and Engagement | Program Management | Project Management | Relationship Building  
Strategic Planning | Employee Management | Budgeting | Data Analysis | Stakeholder Management  
Government Relations | Marketing | Sales | Internal & External Communications | Public Speaking

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

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### RIDERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MANAGER | SORTA/Metro | Cincinnati, OH

11/2017 – Present

Increase southwest Ohio's public transportation system's ridership. Partner with internal and external partners to improve customer relations and the public transportation experience. Responsibilities include: Ridership Development, Community Engagement, Project Management, Internal and External Relations, Contract Management, Sales, Marketing and Government Relations.

#### Ridership Development

- Identify, develop, and maintain relationships with government entities, community members and businesses, which have increased Metro bus pass sales by 21%.
- Preserve relationships with multiple corporate organizations to maintain contracts, retaining 98%. Build relationships with new organizations, increasing partnerships by 3%.
- Create and manage the "How Can Metro Move You?" campaign, educating the southwest Ohio community about the environmental and cost benefits of riding Metro, through the formation of presentations, brochures, banners, and marketing materials.

### COMMUNITY RELATIONS MANAGER | Luxottica | Mason, OH

8/2015 – 5/2017

Strategic planning role charged with creating the community relations and charitable giving strategy for a global retail company. Managed internal and external stakeholder relationships to increase community relations, brand awareness and employee engagement. Responsibilities included: Project/Program Management, Community Relations, Charitable Giving, Budgeting, Communications, Employee Engagement, Strategic Planning, Event Management, Marketing, Retail and Stakeholder Engagement.

#### Community Relations

- Developed and implemented the community relations and charitable giving strategy, supporting aligned diverse and inclusive mission based non-profit organizations. Collaborated with global leadership to align strategies, resources, messaging, and marketing to company vision. Increased the number of community partners from three to 11 organizations, planning 15+ events to connect employees with local non-profit organizations.
- Oversaw charitable giving budget of \$300k, providing project management to ensure events and programs were executed on time and on budget. Supported five Employee Resource Groups on 7-10 internal programs; program content ranged from sustainability to diversity and inclusion.
- Managed national award-winning student mentoring program in collaboration with a local non-profit organization and high school, pairing 45 high school students with 45 employees, where 99% of the students who participated in the program graduated. Planned monthly mentoring sessions, incorporating topics to help the students plan and prepare for their future.

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## **Communications**

- Created and executed a communications plan for community engagement activities. Wrote executive messaging for community events. Increased employee participation by 100% through internal communications.
- Drafted external communications for social media, highlighting employees and community engagement activities.

## **SPECIALIST, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | Every Child Succeeds at CCHMC | Cincinnati, OH**

**10/2013 – 6/2015**

Managed community engagement efforts for a grant-funded initiative, StartStrong, a collaborative between three health care providers in Cincinnati, OH. Engaged over 45 community leaders and organizations in the shared goal of helping 520 pregnant women receive the comprehensive care needed to have a healthy full-term birth. Responsibilities included: Community and Stakeholder Engagement, Project Management, Marketing, Event Management, Employee Management and Public Health.

### **Community Engagement**

- Built new and maintained existing partnerships with more than 45 community leaders and organizations in the two identified urban communities, ranging from faith-based to business entities.
- Constructed, administered, and evaluated marketing and communications plans to engage, educate, and empower community members on the importance of prenatal care through community events including: Bi-weekly Family Groups, providing families a safe place to meet, eat and learn; Quarterly "Think Like a Parent" community feasts, with an average attendance of 37 participants; "StartStrong Sunday" in collaboration with 14 churches; and grassroots community canvasses reaching more than 1,000 residents.

### **Event Management**

- Supervised the logistics of events from planning to execution to final review; coordinated with cross-functional teams to ensure participation.
- Coordinated with local media to highlight events. Spokesperson for initiative.

## **SENIOR PROJECT DIRECTOR (promoted from Project Director) | Ipsos UU | Cincinnati, OH**

**8/2011 – 10/2013**

Organized and executed multiple, complex global qualitative market research projects simultaneously from initiation to delivery. Cultivated relationships by identifying needs, probing for understanding and/or translating requirements into action plans and being solution driven. Responsibilities included: Global Project Management, Proposal Creation, Vendor Management, Contract Management, Survey Creation, Budget Management and Data Collection.

### **Project Management**

- Simultaneously built detailed project plans for 25+ qualitative market research projects, including specifications for project scope, quality, schedule, budget, human resources, facility location, materials, suppliers, moderators, and clients.
- Created project proposals and RFP's to engage clients while responsible for managing costs and overall budgets ranging up to \$150k.
- Designed recruiting questionnaire based on study specifications and client input.
- Executed daily internal and external communications regarding project status, project risks and project schedule.

## **PROGRAM MANAGER | Learning Through Art, Incorporated | Cincinnati, OH**

**12/2008 – 7/2011**

Organized and facilitated the training and scheduling of a four-time Emmy® nominated literacy program. Planned logistics for an annual event at the top zoo in the country from scheduling performers and volunteers to maintaining the budget. Responsibilities included: Community Relations, Event Management, Volunteer Management, Budgeting, and Contract Negotiation.

### **Program Management**

- Planned, managed, and operated the Books Alive! For Kids® performing arts literacy program for 17 local and national schools and 42 Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency Head Start sites.
- Researched books and supportive educational components for Books Alive! For Kids®, as well as explored and scheduled performing artists, reaching over 9,000 pre-K-3rd grade students throughout 13 states. Trained over 15 teachers, principals, and educational administrators on materials.

### **Event Management**

- Prepared and operated event logistics for an annual festival at the top zoo in the country, with attendance ranging from 10,000-34,000 visitors.
- Negotiated performer and vendor contracts, crafted event schedule, coordinated and managed over 100 volunteers, fostered and nurtured relationships with sponsors and served as main contact with event space.

## **EDUCATION & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

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**Master of Science in Education, Health, Human Performance & Recreation – Baylor University, Waco, TX**

**Bachelor of Science, Leisure/Sports Management – Elon University, Elon, NC**

Minor: Business Administration      Study Abroad: London, England

### **AFFILIATIONS, RECOGNITION & VOLUNTEERISM**

Chatfield College, Mentor; Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber C-Change Leadership Program, Class V; Dress for Success Cincinnati Fashion Show Steering Committee; Peace Corps, St. Vincent & the Grenadines; The Links, Incorporated, Central Area Chair, Vendors and Exhibits, Cincinnati (OH) Chapter, Archivist; YWCA Rising Star; Zeta Phi Beta, Sorority, Incorporated