

JESSICA D. THORPE

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Executive Profile

Broadly experienced **Communications Strategist / Writer / Editor** successful in developing and implementing innovative, measurable nonprofit branding and development strategies; writing complex feature articles, storytelling narratives, support cases, editorial pieces, web content and standard operating procedures. Strong technical command of the English language: familiarity with a wide range of writing styles. Committed to journalistic excellence and integrity; and to the identification and articulation of concepts and connections across disciplines and genres.

Skill Highlights

- Expert writing and editing
- Project management
- Strategic planning / branding
- Exceptional problem solver
- Leadership / communication skills
- Skilled multi-tasker
- Exceptional creativity
- Dedicated team player

Core Accomplishments

- **Rebranded liberal arts Caribbean university to broaden capacity for institutional advancement/resource development and diversify enrollment.**
- **Ran development communications and public relations efforts on higher education strategic branding projects with budgets totaling \$100,000+.**
- Developed and implemented post-disaster communications strategy to keep multiple island campuses current on recovery resources.
- Researched and wrote content for cultural tourism visitor's guide now in its fifth reprinting.
- Promoted after one year from campaign writer to director of campaign communications for \$750M higher education capital campaign.
- **Supported advancement of pharmacy school through development copywriting and creative graphic design.**
- Designed, developed, implemented and administered award-winning storytelling database of alumni, faculty, staff and student first-person narratives to support major gift cultivation for higher education capital campaign.
- Founded marketing and development communications business.

Professional Experience

Owner / Chief Creative Officer outside the box

Sep 2001- Current

1272 Delaware Avenue Buffalo NY 14209

- Development and implementation of integrated marketing and development strategies to engage individual donors, major funding sources and support institutional advancement.
- Development of a brand identity, including a distinctive graphic style and tone, to accurately represent organizational vision / mission.
- Design and facilitation of communications workshops to articulate core messages and define cost-effective marketing / development communications strategies across all organizational components.
- Design and implementation of innovative, targeted fundraising and development special events.
- Copy writing, design and layout, and production management of generic and targeted print communications, including annual reports, annual appeals, newsletters, brochures, logos and advertisements.
- Copy writing, design and maintenance of web content and web presence.
- Copy writing / editing of communications messaging to ensure quality brand management.
- Wrote and designed annual reports and annual appeals.
- Copy writing and design of special project communications.
- Artistic design and production of special event signage.
- Created communications collateral, including web pages, direct mail pieces, brochures and posters.
- CEO speech writing.

Director of Campaign Communications/Campaign Writer University at Buffalo / UB Foundation

Jan 1999 - Sep 2001

P.O. Box 900 Buffalo NY 14226 716-645-3013

- Wrote support cases for each of the university's 13 schools to support cultivation of major gifts in \$750M capital campaign.
- Wrote and designed effective, award-winning development communications strategies and collateral.
- Developed, wrote, implemented and managed award-winning "story bank" of first-person narratives.
- Designed and implemented award-winning internal employee web presence.
- Designed and managed department's first internal employee communications system to distribute news and critical information.
- Designed optimal communications strategies to reach target audiences.

Professional Experience *[cont'd.]*

Director of Public Relations
University of the Virgin Islands

Jan 1994 - Dec 1998

#2 John Brewers Bay St. Thomas USVI 00802

- Directed territorial, regional and national marketing initiatives.
- Developed a brand identity, including a distinctive graphic style and tone, for institutional advancement, communications.
- Served on the president's cabinet.
- Wrote speeches for the president.
- Directed alumni affairs office; oversaw eight direct reports.
- Achieved notable successes in cost control, revenue generation and marketing effectiveness.
- Evaluated advertising and promotion programs for compatibility with public relations efforts.
- Edited and revised all marketing content to guarantee the highest quality of writing.
- Managed crisis communications.
- Designed optimal communications strategies to reach target audiences.
- Wrote 3-4 press releases and media advisories each week.
- Developed and implemented communications strategies and information programs.
- Designed and managed all commencement communications and media outreach.
- Designed and produced media kits.
- Managed press for all special events.
- Wrote, designed and produced collateral for all events.
- Managed VIP visits.

Executive Assistant to the Commissioner for Marketing
Virgin Islands Department of Health

Aug 1988 - Dec 1993

St. Croix USVI

- Designed and implemented territorial health education/prevention strategies.
- Designed and produced health education posters, flyers, brochures.
- Coordinated with FEMA to design and implement post-disaster/disaster recovery communications.
- Managed crisis communications.
- Wrote speeches for the commissioner.
- Wrote and disseminated press releases and media advisories on health department events and initiatives.

Professional Experience *[cont'd.]*

Assistant Editor / Crime and Courts Reporter

Apr 1987 - Aug 1988

St. Croix Avis Daily

St. Croix USVI

- Defined story assignments
- Edited reporters' copy
- Designed layout
- Oversaw press production

Editor - Information Division

Sep 1979 - Mar 1982

Educational Testing Service

Princeton NJ

- Developed editorial focus, wrote copy for corporate media advisories and marketing collateral.
- Developed editorial focus, wrote copy and oversaw production of visitor's center publication.
- Wrote feature stories and short articles for corporate development magazine.

Education

Bachelor of Arts, English

May 1977

Lincoln University Lincoln PA

- Member, Melvin B. Tolson Literary Society
- First Prize, Gwendolyn Brooks-sponsored poetry contest
- First woman Poet Laureate

Publications

- *SAGE Encyclopedia of African Cultural Heritage in North America*
- *The Buffalo News*
- *The Challenger News*
- *Artvoice*
- *The Utica Observer-Dispatch*
- *The Caribbean Writer*
- *The Virgin Islands Daily News*
- *The St. Croix Avis*
- *Essence Magazine*