

Strategic Communication Leadership Network



Sara Blasing, VP Corporate Narrative Communications, NIKE, Inc.

As head of corporate narrative communications at NIKE, Inc., Sara sets long-term vision for Nike's global communications team, defining opportunities and shaping strategy across the function and business. She guides the acceleration of Nike's future narrative through global insights, storyline development, message strategy, media and influencer relations, and multi-platform storytelling. Sara is passionate about helping youth succeed and the intersection of people and innovation. She has a proven track record of driving transformation through strategic communications. Previously, she held leadership roles across Nike's Jordan Brand, Innovation, Women's, and North America communications teams, overseeing high-profile product launches, key innovation storytelling, upstream strategy development, and global and local brand positioning. Before Nike, Sara managed global accounts at Waggener Edstrom (now WE Communications), leading worldwide campaigns for clients including Microsoft, HTC, MasterCard, and other consumer, technology, and healthcare brands. She also spent time early in her career as a communications director for Teach for America and has spent time living and working in London, New York City, Seattle, Sydney and Portland. A graduate of the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication, Sara currently lives with her husband, two children, and dog in Portland, Oregon. She loves mentoring youth, helping people develop in their careers and building teams and she aspires to make a difference by being the best leader, mother, and wife that she can be.



Kelley Bonsall, Corporate Communications Director, Port of Portland

Kelley is an accomplished communications strategist with experience in companies and the public sector. Kelley currently serves as the director of corporate communications for the Port of Portland, leading marketing and communications for PDX airport (A.K.A: "America's Best Airport") and the Port's marine terminals and industrial properties. Previously, Kelley spearheaded media relations for a variety of Bay Area companies including LifeLock, Levi Strauss & Co., and Yahoo Inc. She specializes in issues management and telling stories with clear and consistent messaging. Kelley is passionate about helping organizations connect their business goals with a greater good in the world. At Levi Strauss & Co., Kelley launched "A Care Tag for Our Planet", a campaign to help educate and inspire consumers to change their laundry habits to help make a difference for the environment. Kelley began her career in Washington, DC as a press secretary for a number of congressmen including U.S. Senator John Kerry. She served as deputy communications director on John Kerry's presidential campaign. Kelley lives in Portland, Oregon with her husband and two daughters (4 and 3). She is picky about a perfect cup of coffee first thing in the morning and loves to discover great food in near and far places.



Lindsey Bastani, General Manager, SVP at WE Communications

As a key executive at WE Communications, Lindsey serves as the North America lead for the agency's global Intel client and is responsible for the development of talent, culture, new business and operations of WE's Portland office.

During nearly two decades in communications, Lindsey has helped global brands connect authentically with audiences through award-winning integrated campaigns and storytelling, spanning earned, social and digital, employee communications and executive communications. Her focus on finding new ways into the cultural conversation has delivered impact for clients including Intel, Microsoft, Volvo, McDonald's, LEGO and Rover. Lindsey served as a lead on WE's Microsoft account for 10+ years, across corporate global integration, consumer campaigns, retail, product teams and executive communications. Prior to WE, Lindsey worked at DeVries Global in New York, managing integrated campaigns for P&G brands including Crest, Scope and Glide.

Lindsey earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications from Loyola University Chicago. At home in NE Portland, Lindsey spends time with her husband and two children, trying new recipes and sinking into a good book whenever possible.



Louis Capozzi, Former Chairman, MSL Group

Capozzi has a broad background in public relations and corporate communications. After 40 years experience in both major public relations firms and with large multinational corporations, he now teaches in the Strategic Communication master's program at the University of Oregon. He served as CEO of Manning, Selvage and Lee (MS&L), one of the world's largest public relations firms, from 1999 until 2002, when it was acquired by Publicis; in 2003, it was named "Agency of the Year." At Publicis, he led the MSL Group, which included nearly 30 firms around the world, until his retirement in 2008. Capozzi was awarded the PRSA Gold Anvil for lifetime achievement in 2017. He served for three years as president of the PRSA Foundation. In that role, he worked to drive diversity in the public relations profession. He is a member of the Arthur Page Society, a former chairman of the Council of Public Relations Firms and the International Communications Consultants Organization, as well as an accredited member of the Public Relations Society of America and a member of its College of Fellows.



Ryan Cudney, General Manager, Pacific Northwest

Ryan Cudney, who leads Edelman's integrated team in the Pacific Northwest with offices in Seattle and Portland, is an 8-year veteran of the agency. Previously, as executive vice president within Edelman's Corporate Advisory Services practice, Ryan counseled some of the firm's largest clients on enterprise transformation, including recovery in the wake of a crisis, portfolio realignment and culture change. Ryan also served as global chief of staff to Edelman CEO Richard Edelman where he partnered with senior leaders of the firm to pursue strategic opportunities, recruit and retain top talent, and advance Edelman's intellectual property and thought leadership.



J. Cory Curtis, VP of Corporate Communications, The Omidyar Group

Cory leads a group of communication and marketing professionals who provide counsel and service across The Omidyar Group portfolio of work. Founded by Pierre and Pam Omidyar, The Omidyar Group is a diverse collection of companies, organizations and initiatives working to catalyze social impact. Most recently, Cory served as vice president of communications at Intellectual Ventures where he led the invention company's global communication team. Prior to that, he served as managing director for the Seattle office of global public relations firm, Porter Novelli. As communications director for Washington Governor Chris Gregoire, Cory served on the governor's executive staff and advised the governor and cabinet on daily communications efforts including key policy initiatives and critical crisis responses. Cory has served in a variety of marketing, communications and spokesperson roles with Porter Novelli, Waggener Edstrom, Human Rights Campaign, the Seattle City Council and Lifelong AIDS Alliance. He has represented a diverse list of clients, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Microsoft Corp., Puget Sound Energy, Challenge Seattle, Safeco and many more and has helped guide those teams as they overcame complex, contentious and sensitive issues. Cory is originally from Jackson Hole, Wyoming and is a graduate of Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon.



Jennifer Gehrt, Co-Founder, Communiqué Public Relations

Jennifer is a co-founder of Communiqué PR and co-author of “Strategic Public Relations: 10 Principles to Harness the Power of PR.” Jennifer has more than 25 years of PR experience, developing and managing corporate and consumer campaigns for a wide variety of companies, from Fortune 500 giants to nimble startups. She is also a frequent speaker on the topics of social media and public relations. Prior to founding Communiqué PR, Jennifer was with Waggener Edstrom where she held positions such as account director and director of business development. Before joining Waggener Edstrom, she was director of marketing communications for Tegic Communications, and then with AOL after Tegic was acquired in December 1999.



Mary Ellen Glynn, Director of Corporate Communications, Columbia Sportswear

Mary Ellen is the Director of Corporate Communications for Columbia Sportswear Company, a portfolio of brands that includes Columbia, Sorel, Mountain Hardwear and prAna.

Mary Ellen has more than two decades of communications experience, including as the Deputy Press Secretary at the White House; Assistant Spokesman at the U.S. Department of State; Communications Director for the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and Communications Director for Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski. She has also run a state policy commission, and most recently, was the Executive Director of the Oregon Association of Relief Nurseries, a statewide non-profit that helps families at risk of abuse and neglect. She holds an M.A. in International Relations and Communications from Boston University and a B.A. in Economics from Northwestern University.

Mary Ellen lives in SE Portland with her husband and two children. She is active in the local public schools, coaches youth soccer and skis, hikes and runs whenever she is not watching her kids play sports.



Erin Hart, Chief Innovation Officer, Spitfire Strategies

Erin believes that communication is a powerful driver for social change. She’s worked with foundations, nonprofits, government agencies and more to help them engage their audiences and develop programs that make a difference for people’s health, the environment and social justice. At Spitfire Erin directs the firm’s learning work and collaborates with clients including The California Wellness Foundation, Conservation Law Foundation, Gates Foundation and Heising-Simons Foundation.

Before coming to Spitfire, Erin served as Fenton’s chief client officer and built the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation’s first strategic communications department. Erin has developed public education campaigns on a variety of issues. She created a California campaign on the need to grow and diversify the state’s healthcare workforce, and the campaign included Health Jobs Start Here speaking directly to youth and young adults. Erin worked with the American Legacy Foundation – and its popular truth® campaign – and state and local health departments to develop tobacco-control campaigns that prevented youth from starting to smoke. Her government work includes serving as the state of Florida’s environmental education director and developing environmental citizenship campaigns.

She has a bachelor’s in journalism from the University of Florida, which recognized her as a 2016 Alumna of Distinction. She collaborates with the first-ever chair in public interest communications to grow and diversify the field through work including the program for frank. She and her Spitfire colleague Kristen Grimm co-teach strategies for policy impact at the University of New Hampshire’s Carsey School of Public Policy.



Melissa Havel, Senior Director Brand, Marketing and Communications, Portland General Electric

Melissa recently moved to Portland General Electric as the Senior Director of Brand, Marketing and Communications. Previously, she was the Executive Vice President in the Technology Sector and General Manager at WE Communications. Melissa is a communications pro with moxie, constantly pushing herself to be at the leading edge of the craft of brand storytelling. She has more than 25 years of communications strategy and storytelling experience that spans corporate, executive communications, crisis and issues management and product for companies in all phases of their life cycle - from start ups looking to secure their first round of funding to established companies working to transform and enter their next chapter. Before WE, Melissa spent four years at Fleishman-Hillard Inc. In this role she worked on a wide variety of business-to-business, financial, healthcare, consumer and nonprofit public relations programs. Her diverse client roster at Fleishman-Hillard included Bank of Montreal, Anheuser-Busch, Industrial Development Board for Northern Ireland, McDonald's Corp., Muscular Dystrophy Association, SBC/ Cellular One and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Melissa has a bachelor's degree in advertising with an emphasis in public relations from Michigan State University.



Orest Holubec, Senior VP/Chief Communications & External Affairs Officer, Providence St. Joseph Health

Orest is a results and mission-driven professional who is reinventing the communication and external affairs practice at Providence St. Joseph Health, a seven-state, \$22 billion, 50-hospital, 1,000 clinic integrated health and social services system with 106,000 employees. Holubec is passionate about nurturing PSJH's culture, brand and reputation while working to advance the integration of an evolving collaborative system – all to ease the way of patients and consumers, especially the poor and vulnerable, seeking a compassionate and innovative health partner for life. As senior vice president of communication and external affairs, Holubec is accountable for organizational communication, media relations, reputation management, stakeholder relations, creative services and brand strategy for the PSJH family of brands. Previously, Holubec served as director of external communication for Mercy Health in Ohio. Prior to working in health care, Orest served as Director of Communication and Press Secretary to Ohio Governor Bob Taft, led communication strategy for statewide political campaigns, and held communication leadership roles for the Ohio Legislature and the Ohio Secretary of State's office. Orest holds a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy from John Carroll University. Orest and his wife Natalie are raising their three sons in the great Pacific Northwest.



Richie C. Hunter, Vice President for University Communications, University of Oregon

Richie oversees the University of Oregon's communications and marketing efforts, providing strategic direction to telling the UO's stories of academic achievement, student success and impact as a public research university.

Richie is a communications leader with more than 25 years of experience in higher education, healthcare and business. She came to the UO from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, the nation's oldest technological university, where she served as vice president of strategic communications and external relations. While at RPI, Hunter rebuilt and strengthened the institute's brand, communications, and marketing portfolio to expand local relevance, increase national competitiveness, and build global name recognition.

Prior to RPI she held executive communications positions at the University of Houston, the University of Houston System, and for-profit healthcare organizations. She holds a bachelor of science in business administration from the University of Southern California and a master of science in business administration from Lamar University.



Kelly Jankowski, Managing Director, Corporate Practice, MSL Group

Kelly specializes helping organizations and their leaders build reputations. As managing director of MSL's corporate practice, she oversees a national team focused on telling stories that shift perception internally and externally. These teams create market-shaping campaigns, employee engagement programs, purpose consulting, newsroom management and executive positioning that drive business results and consumer choices.

Prior to joining MSL, Kelly led corporate communications practice at Edelman where she worked with Regeneron, Northwestern Mutual and Booking Holdings. She launched an integrated digital campaign for Regeneron featuring the scientists who drive the company. She specialized in companies with a story tell about their contributions to the world and their financial results. Kelly also managed Edelman's work with PayPal in North America, including issues management, financial communications and a CEO-led web series.

Kelly earned a bachelor's degree from Duke and an MBA from the Yale School of Management. She is a member of the Milken Institute Young Leaders Circle, a participant in the Aspen Institute's Society of Fellows and she sits on the board of directors for CureSMA. She is in the process of moving to Seattle, Washington, with her husband and daughter.



Michelle Maggs, Vice President Global Communications & PR, D-Wave Systems

Michelle brings 20+ years of technology sector expertise representing a variety of innovations including cloud-based services, aerospace solutions, e-commerce offerings, mobile software and applications, and connected entertainment products. She counsels B2B and B2C technology companies on thought leadership, brand positioning, and strategic storytelling that explains digital transformation and change in ways that resonate with technology, business and consumer audiences.

Michelle is actively involved in the Seattle community, supporting local non-profits including Treehouse, Wellspring Family Services, Washington STEM, and YWCA. She is a member of the Association of Women in Communications and Public Relations Society of America. She also is deeply committed to diversity and inclusion in the workplace, participating in various initiatives including: 100% Talent/Women's Funding Alliance, Diversity and Inclusion in the PNW, and the NW Diversity Learning Series from the Institute for Sustainable Diversity and Inclusion. A foodie and oenophile, Michelle loves embarking on culinary adventures, especially those involving French cuisine. She's an admittedly terrible singer, but has a reputation for epic karaoke performances, complete with choreography.

Michelle has a bachelor of arts degree in journalism, specializing in public relations, from the University of Oregon. She lives in Seattle with her husband, daughter and two yellow Labradors.



Tina McCorkindale, PhD, APR, President and CEO for Institute of Public Relations

Tina McCorkindale, Ph.D., APR, is the President and CEO of the Institute for Public Relations. Previously, she taught as a full-time professor and worked in corporate communication and analytics. She is a member of the Page Society, The Seminar, the Commission for Public Relations Education Steering Committee, the Diversity Action Alliance Steering Committee, the AMEC Academic Advisory Board, and the University of Florida School of Journalism and Communications Public Relations Advisory Board. She frequently publishes in academic journals and industry publications about the current and future state of the public relations and communication industry. McCorkindale is the recipient of the 2017 PRSA David Ferguson Award and the 2020 PRSA Puget Sound Professional of the Year award. She was inducted in the PR News Measurement Hall of Fame in 2018. In 2019, she was selected as one of 40 national leaders to participate in the 91st Joint Civilian Orientation Conference hosted by the Department of Defense. McCorkindale received her bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Southern Mississippi, a master's degree in corporate communication from the University of South Alabama, and her Ph.D. in communication from the University of Miami. She lives in Seattle, Washington.



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Frank X. Shaw, Corporate VP of Communications, Microsoft Corporation

In this role, Shaw is responsible for defining and managing Microsoft's communications strategies worldwide, company-wide storytelling, including planning and execution, product PR, consumer marketing, media relations, executive communications, employee communications, global agency management and military affairs. Frank is an avid technologist and digital conversationalist with a Twitter following of more than 26K <@fxshaw>. In 2016 he was recognized by Business Insider as #1 on a listing of the 50 best PR people in Tech, and was awarded a SABRE Award for Outstanding Individual Achievement in 2016. With more than 20 years of experience in communications, Frank has led diverse teams representing government, entertainment, food and retail. Prior to joining Microsoft in 2009, he was president of the Microsoft account worldwide at Waggener Edstrom Worldwide where he held key responsibilities for all global PR, communications and influence efforts. Frank proudly served in the US Marine Corps and is a graduate of the Department of Defense Information School. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism from the University of Oregon and is a current board member of the Seattle YMCA.

University of Oregon - School of Journalism and Communication



Donna Z. Davis, Strategic Communication Master's Program Director and Associate Professor

Donna joined the SOJC faculty in fall 2010, when she taught in Eugene for one year. She now directs the Strategic Communication Master's Program at the George S. Turnbull Portland Center. She brings more than 25 years experience in public relations, fundraising, and nonprofit communication to the classroom, including 10 years as producer and host of Family Album Radio, an award-winning, daily, two-minute radio program distributed through NPR. Davis earned her PhD in mass communication from the University of Florida. Her ethnographic research continues to focus on the potential uses of virtual worlds, gamification, and other emerging social media, with special interest in disability communities. She is currently working on a three-year National Science Foundation grant: "Virtual Worlds, Disability, and New Cultures of the Embodied Self" that explores effects of embodiment and communities in virtual worlds. She is also an inaugural faculty fellow for the SOJC Agora Journalism Center for Innovation and Civic Engagement.



Juan-Carlos Molleda, Edwin L. Artzt Dean and Professor

Juan-Carlos Molleda is a tenured professor and the Edwin L. Artzt Dean of the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Oregon. He is also a US Fulbright Senior Specialist. Molleda has accumulated 22 years of experience teaching and researching public relations and communication management at the University of Florida (2000–2016), University of South Carolina (1997–2000), and Radford University (1995–1997). Molleda received his bachelor of science in social communication (1990) from Universidad del Zulia in Venezuela, a master of science in corporate and professional communications (1997) from Radford University in Virginia, and a doctor of philosophy degree in journalism and mass communications with an emphasis on international public relations and international business (2000) from the University of South Carolina. Since his doctoral studies in South Carolina, Molleda has become a leading teacher and scholar in global corporate public relations management. In 2010, he was awarded the University of South Carolina's School of Journalism and Mass Communications Outstanding Young Alumni Award. In addition to his outreach to the professional community, Molleda is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Institute for Public Relations and a founding member of its Commission on Global Public Relations Research, the Latin American liaison of the Public Relations Society of America's Certification in Education for Public Relations, a member of The LAGRANT Foundation Board of Directors, and a Public Relations committee member for the HIV Alliance in Eugene, Oregon.



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