

Akila-Ka Ma'at, PhD

Consulting Excellence

(also publishes as Jennifer R. Warren)

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Professional Consulting Summary

Dynamic Health and Science Communications Specialist with extensive experience in strategic communication, health prevention, community engagement, professional development and marketing. Proven ability to improve systems, craft compelling messages, manage relationships with diverse stakeholders, and execute communication strategies that drive organizational excellence, public awareness and policy impact. Highly skilled in project management, health message design, and digital media, with a strong understanding of equitable health prevention. Excellent presentation and written and interpersonal communication skills, with a track record of collaborating effectively within multidisciplinary teams to achieve organizational goals.

Expert Skills & Knowledge

Health/Science Communications	Community Engagement
Marketing, Media Relations	Stakeholder Engagement
Project Management	Health Prevention
Research, Data Analytics	Evaluation
Health Message Design	Public Outreach & Education
Proactive Problem-Solving	Training & Development

Consulting Experience

Systems Improvement Consultant, 06/2023 to 08/2023

Center for African American Health – Denver, CO

- **Articulated a cohesive communication strategy** that successfully aligned senior administrators, community health navigators, and stakeholders around a shared vision for organizational change, driving buy-in and effective collaboration.
- **Led strategic communication efforts during multi-method impact analyses**, enhancing the implementation of SMART goals and ensuring the alignment of messaging with organizational change management activities.
- **Implemented communication methodologies** that drove relational and individual change strategies, resulting in increased productivity and more effective program evaluation, contributing to improved organizational outcomes.
- **Developed and executed internal communication policies and digital reporting systems**, significantly boosting transparency, accountability, and information sharing across the organization.
- **Fostered open channels of communication** with health navigators, leveraging strong interpersonal skills and active listening to prevent issue escalation and maintain a positive working environment.

Community Health Consultant, 02/2020 to 05/2021

Center for African American Health – Denver, CO

- **Led a strategic community-based social marketing campaign** aimed at increasing COVID-19 vaccine uptake, successfully raising vaccination rates by 20% at center events through the design of culturally tailored prevention messages.
- **Developed and communicated clear campaign strategies and goals** to a team of six, ensuring alignment and enhancing the overall effectiveness of the initiative.
- **Created and implemented a logic model** to guide campaign planning, execution, and evaluation, enabling precise tracking of progress and outcomes.
- **Analyzed state-wide COVID-19 data** to identify trends and develop targeted communication approaches that resonated with specific communities.
- **Directed community-engaged data collection and analysis**, translating findings into actionable recommendations that informed campaign adjustments and increased impact.
- **Strengthened team collaboration** and maintained professionalism under crisis conditions, ensuring the campaign's success in a challenging environment.

System Improvement Consultant, 04/2019 to 08/2019

New Jersey Department of Health – Trenton, NJ

- **Conceptualized and communicated a unified vision** to enhance the quality of patient care for underserved populations, gaining the support of senior administrators and cross-functional teams.
- **Collaborated with multidisciplinary teams** to design and execute strategic initiatives in alignment with state-level policies and organizational change management goals, driving improvements in healthcare delivery.
- **Developed reporting metrics** for CDC sub-award grantees and designed assessment tools to evaluate physician bias in cancer care, advancing efforts to promote equity in patient services.
- **Designed and facilitated 10 hybrid continuing education sessions** focused on anti-oppressive practices for 60 healthcare professionals, significantly improving their ability to provide equitable care.
- **Expedited the development of the Diabetes Action Plan Report**, coordinating data collection from 23 federally subsidized health centers and contributing to statewide efforts to improve diabetes management.

Self-Sufficiency Consultant, 8/2017 to 12/2019

Vocational Arts Sciences Training Center (VAST) – Trenton, NJ.

- **Authored and secured grant proposals**, doubling funding streams and expanding resources for underrepresented communities through targeted training programs.
- **Established a community coalition board** to guide the VAST job training program, enhancing recruitment efforts for individuals transitioning from social services to employment.
- **Negotiated and managed memorandums of agreement with partners**, ensuring alignment on procedures and outcomes related to vocational programming, boosting program effectiveness.
- **Developed a state-aligned Health Certification Program**, including Community Health Worker and Behavioral Health Technician certifications, resulting in a 60% increase in participant enrollment.

Public Housing & Health Consultant, 02/2017 to 08/2020

Trenton Housing Authority – Trenton, NJ

- **Served as Vice President of the Board of Commissioners**, overseeing fiduciary responsibilities and leading efforts to address barriers to healthcare and housing for senior residents with hypertension.
- **Collaborated with senior administrators** to develop a strategic plan that addressed intersectional inequities related to community, housing, and health, aligning with HUD policies.
- **Implemented a comprehensive impact analysis**, increasing organizational readiness and capacity to sustain long-term changes through targeted communication and training efforts.
- **Led a rigorous community-based assessment**, engaging over 300 respondents and key stakeholders to evaluate social determinants of health, resulting in the formation of a task force and strategic initiatives that improved living conditions for 3,200 residents.
- **Spearheaded the development of actionable insights** that informed organizational decision-making, leading to significant structural modifications that enhanced access to nutritional food and safe exercise areas.

Founder/CEO, 06/2018 to 06/2024

Center for African American Health Disparities Education & Research, 501(c)(3) – Atlantic City, NJ.

- **Led an international awarded and recognized nonprofit research center**, managing a \$2.5 million budget and driving strategic communication initiatives to advance health equity education and research through national and international dissemination efforts.
- **Collaborated with organizational leadership and board of directors** to guide operational strategy, secure funding grants, and provide regular updates, demonstrating strong capabilities in stakeholder engagement and strategic communication.
- **Established a community-engaged pipeline program** for diverse students and professionals in health-related fields, effectively communicating the importance of community-clinic collaborations in improving patient care.
- **Mentored and trained 17 students** from 15 universities, including Ivy League institutions, facilitating their successful entrance into health profession programs and emphasizing the importance of anti-oppressive research practices.
- **Led program initiatives through active research and educational engagement**, enhancing participants' communication skills and leadership capacity in promoting health equity and anti-oppressive practices.
- **Managed strategic partnerships and crafted compelling communications**, effectively expanding the institute's reach, influence, and impact through well-articulated messaging and stakeholder collaboration.
- **Conducted ongoing assessments of performance and organizational capacity**, actively advocating for students and professionals facing discrimination, and promoting a culture of equity and inclusion.

Program Evaluator Consultant, 01/2016 to 12/2016

New Jersey Department of Health – Trenton, NJ

- **Led the performance management process** for the Healthy Communities Program, appraising implementation across 10 sites in New Jersey, with a focus on healthy eating policies and accessibility to community farming for individuals with mobility disabilities.
- **Developed and communicated performance metrics**, enhancing alignment with state guidelines and improving the effectiveness of the program's implementation.
- **Excelled in data analytics and reporting**, increasing the capacity of program administrators to guide community partners in making data-informed decisions for quality improvements.

Additional Consulting

- **Anschutz Medical Campus, CO.** Designed and led an experiential Public Health Leadership course, in partnership with Colorado's Preventive Medicine Residency Program, which led to the effective implementation of the Health Equity Committee mandated by the Affordable Healthcare Act.
- **Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, NY.** Developed and facilitated biobehavioral health course and served on the Public Health Program Curriculum Committee.
- **Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, NY.** Developed and facilitated Crisis Communication Workshop for Occupational Medicine Residents.
- **Trenton Soup Kitchen, NJ.** Developed and facilitated workshop on Trauma-Informed Care among homeless persons.
- **REAL Prevention, NJ.** Facilitate Middle School Teacher Training in evidence-based SAMSHA awarded substance use prevention program in MD and ND.
- **Planned Parenthood of Doylestown, PA.** Led qualitative data collection efforts in the design and development of on-site digital HPV education and text-based vaccination reminders.
- **More Consulting Experience upon Request**

Earlier Relevant Consultant & Work Experience

Community-Engagement Specialist

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

- **Led the launch of a high-impact community-engaged research** project focused on evaluating and communicating perceptions of Minnesota's smoking policies among Black American tobacco users.
- **Convened and directed a community advisory board**, driving strategic planning and effective implementation of research initiatives.
- **Managed media relations by creating compelling communications** that highlighted project progress and findings to both internal and external stakeholders.
- **Supervised and trained research staff**, significantly increasing community outreach and data collection efforts.
- **Analyzed research data and produced a comprehensive report** that informed policy changes, enhancing the cultural relevance of smoking cessation programs within the organization.

Project Director/Community-Engagement Specialist

University of Minnesota Medical School, Minneapolis, MN

- **Directed a multi-faceted community-based research** project aimed at reducing environmental tobacco smoke exposure in young children, translating complex research findings into a successful public health intervention.
- **Led a clinical trial involving vulnerable populations**, coordinating stakeholder engagement, and ensuring ethical recruitment and research practices.
- **Spearheaded communication efforts** by developing press releases, reports, and outreach materials that effectively conveyed research outcomes to diverse audiences, including policymakers and community members.
- **Managed a research team**, facilitating regular meetings to ensure project alignment with objectives, maintaining high standards of data integrity, and addressing emerging issues proactively.

Volunteerism

2024-Present: Member and Advocacy Training

New Jersey Council for the Blind, Trenton, NJ

- Active member of council contributing insights and feedback. Director of advocacy training for the Board of Directors and members to increase membership, establish partnerships.

- Advocate at the local and state level for access to more effective and accessible resources to facilitate daily living.

2024-Present: Workshop Facilitator

Family Success Center, Oceanside I. Atlantic City, NJ

- Teach computer literacy, Computer research and information quality, Health self- advocacy series, Self-encouragement, motivation, and success series, Maternal and child health educational series.

2022-2023: Co-Chair

Health Committee. NAACP, Fairfax, VA

- Collaborated on health education webinar series and scheduling.
- Conducted membership assessment to evaluate health topics of relevance.

2020-2022: Member

Digital Perinatal Tool Workgroup, Virtual

- Collaborating with Family Health Initiative and the Southern Perinatal Cooperative provided support and expert guidance in the development of culturally/communally relevant tool for use among pregnant Medicaid recipients.

2019-2021: Member

Community Advisory Board. Trenton Health Team, Trenton, NJ

- Participated in identifying best practices in community health, community partners, and funding streams to support health programs/services of the Trenton Health Team and other nonprofit entities.

2018- 2019: Member

Community Stakeholders for Public Education, Trenton, NJ

- Invested in the health, welfare, and success of our public schools and its students.
- Interfaced with administrators, teachers, staff members, students, parents, families, community members, local business leaders, and elected officials such as school board members, city council, and state representatives to address health challenges through interventions and policy change.

2016: Workshop Facilitator

Trenton Area Soup Kitchen, Trenton, NJ

- Provided staff a series of educational workshops on trauma-related care and its application in working homeless persons seeking their services.

2015- 2019: Co-Director & Community Educator

Task Force for Senior and Disabled Citizens, Trenton, NJ

- Helped establish and manage a coalition of resident councils, tenant associations, and other stakeholders to identify social determinants and subsidized housing policies and practices that adversely impact the quality of life and health of senior/disabled residents.
- Educated senior and disabled residents on their rights as residents in low- income housing and to build change capacity. Fostered relationships with community stakeholders and low-income property owners and managers to mitigate practices and policies that undermine the health and safety of senior/disabled residents.

2012- 2014: Commissioner

Trenton Housing Authority, Trenton, NJ

- Responsible for fiduciary oversight, property development/redevelopment goals, and strategic planning.

References Upon Request