

TaKeyia M. Dickens, MBA, CFEE

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Career Overview

Highly skilled in sponsorship, partnerships, fundraising, and communications, with over 10 years of experience driving community engagement and brand activations. A dynamic leader in community partnerships, I've developed and executed impactful programs with the National Cherry Blossom Festival, such as Kites in the Classroom, Blossom Kicks for Kids, and the Blossom Tea Party—creating meaningful connections and expanding the Festival's reach.

Areas of Expertise (10+ years)

Community Relations

Strategic Planning and Communications

Contract Negotiations

Advance with Online Programs (*Adobe Products, Microsoft Office, MailChimp, Monday.com, and Slack*)

Media Relations Skills (*traditional and new*)

Social Media Management (*Create, manage, and develop accounts and campaigns*)

Education

Certified Festival & Events Executive, International Festival & Events Association, September 2024

Master of Business Administration, *University of Maryland University College, Adelphi, MD, September 2012*

Master of Entertainment Business, Full Sail University, Winter Park, FL, August 2010

BS Journalism and Mass Communication/Media Management, *North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, NC, May 2009*

Experience

Community Partnerships Manager, National Cherry Blossom Festival, Washington, DC, 2021 - present

Develop strategies and manage programs designed to represent the National Cherry Blossom Festival favorably and make positive contributions to the community. Builds community strategy, business development, sponsor procurement, community relations, execution, and facilitation, including:

- Secured over \$300k of monetary sponsors and over \$280k of in-kind sponsors, build and cultivate relationships with both traditional and non-traditional business partners
- Created and managed four new community programs: Kites in the Classroom, Blossom Kicks for Kids, Blossom Tea Party, and Cherry Nights
- Setting community engagement growth goals and developing and executing strategies to attain them
- Manage, teach, make independent decisions, and assume responsibility
- Serve as the strategic lead for the culture and partnerships brand pillar, collaborating with the team to validate and enhance cultural relevance for the Festival's brand
- Identify and nurture relationships with industry-relevant influencers and partners while considering key markets, brand alignment, and cultural impact.
- Manage eight budgeting accounts for community programs and 10+ accounts and new prospects; maintaining a comprehensive/up-to-date database of prospects and participants
- Hire and manage contractors and interns to ensure they understand desired results and, work is of high quality, on time, and within budget
- Working with multiple departments as needed on coordination and promotion of the programs
- Assist in early Festival planning, developing and executing long and short-range sponsorship and fundraising plans to ensure the achievement of established objectives.
- Participate in developing general and tailored proposals and presentations for sponsor and donor solicitations
- Supporting the activation and fulfillment of a portfolio of assigned accounts
- Responsible for execution of sponsor and donor benefits before, during, and after the Festival, including creating recap reports after the Festival
- Identify and collaborate with vendors and venues to create memorable hospitality moments, ensuring high-quality service and seamless execution throughout the Festival

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- Work with Marketing and Brands to cultivate and maintain client/partner relationships to ensure CRM data hygiene, measure client engagement across the Festival and select scaled channels, proactively identify creative and strategic opportunities to collect client information
- Gather and analyze partners' feedback post-events to assess the effectiveness of hospitality initiatives, making data-driven adjustments to improve future experiences and meet evolving client expectations

Advancement Coordinator, AFI Silver Theater & Cultural Center, Silver Spring, MD, 2018 - 2021

The main liaison to the Advancement Team and responsible for implementing the fundraising, partnerships, and constituency-building efforts of the AFI Silver Theater, including:

- Secure corporate and local sponsors for festivals, theater events, and campaigns
- Drive revenue for the theater by seeking partnerships and sponsorships with various direct clients and agencies
- Create compelling sales propositions utilizing internal and external data for respective regions
- Conducting prospect research brands for new business development.
- Developing proposals and pitch decks and leading creative development, including the design and layout of pitch documents and decks.
- Supporting the activation and fulfillment of a portfolio of assigned accounts.
- Assist in the development of communications strategies to support all AFI Silver's fundraising, sponsorship, marketing, and other ongoing efforts
- Collaborate with the marketing team to create and maintain regular email updates, events, mailing lists, videos, etc.

Marketing, Media & Design Lead, Pilgrim Baptist Church, Washington, DC, 2014 - 2024

Oversee communications strategies, including:

- Manage production and dissemination of printed publications for PBC, including ministry brochures, event postcards, website banners, and social media platforms
- Provide editorial assistance for ministry announcements and other editing tasks as assigned
- Identify pitch stories to the media to heighten awareness of PBC and its positive impact on the community
- Develop materials of high quality that are consistent with the PBC brand and editorial guidelines.

Communication and Development Associate (Contractor), Young Ladies of Tomorrow, Washington, DC, 2018

Execute strategies to improve organizational visibility and public relations activities, including:

- Managing creative production and distribution of regular external emails, developing text and graphics templates, and managing the interface with our website;
- Write and edit newsletters and program brochures
- Implemented online fundraising strategies, campaigns, and calls to action, including tactics for online mobilization, outreach and small donor fundraising, and monitoring metrics

Senior Media and Marketing Specialist; Haute Hipsters Media, Washington, DC 2013 - 2018

Implemented innovative and creative strategies to enhance the agency's communications process, including:

- Developing a proactive media outreach program to include media monitoring,
- Creating press kits, writing and issuing press releases, and conducting initial and follow-up calls to media
- Managing the association's public relations writing needs, including marketing materials, media talking points, and key messages
- Develop strategic digital outreach and promotion support, identifying creative ways to frame content, write a blog or social media text, interact with online audiences, and support social media on-site events