

# SARAH CARKHUFF FIZELL

sarah@postrockpr.com

1746 SW Webster Avenue  
Topeka, KS 66604

(785) 218-6320

## *PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE*

### **Post Rock PR – Owner (2007–Present)**

- Develop organizational strategic plans and define communications and outreach goals.
- Translate complicated policy information to be easily understood.
- Plan and manage 6-10 signature events annually such as fundraisers, receptions, and weddings with budgets of up to \$70,000 and 500 attendees.
- Successfully lobby for the reinstatement of public funding and structure for the arts in Kansas following the elimination of the Kansas Arts Commission in 2011.
- Current clients include Networks Plus, Inc., Kansas Enrichment Network, Kansas Economic Progress Council, Connections Unlimited and PT's Coffee Roasting Company.
- Build original Web sites on the Wordpress platform.

### **Strategic Communications of Kansas – Senior Director of Communications and Marketing (2008–2011)**

- Engaged in public and government relations for a broad range of clients on issues such as tax policy, transportation funding, gaming, higher education and health reform implementation.
- Planned and executed 10-20 events annually intended to influence and inform key stakeholders.
- Assisted clients in utilizing technology to maximize the reach and impact of their message.
- Was a key member of teams that worked to pass the 2009 T-WORKS transportation funding package and gained approval from the state for the new state-owned casino near Wichita.

### **Kansas Health Institute – Communications Specialist/Policy Analyst (2007–2008)**

- Worked to streamline internal and external communications while managing all policy-related communications between staff and members of the media.
- Coordinated and managed all policy-related events on behalf of the organization.
- Developed collaborative relationships with legislators, university faculty and staff, and other parties involved in the creation of health policy in the state of Kansas.
- Researched and wrote analysis of health policy initiatives in Kansas and prepared legislative analysis, testimony, and other materials to support work with the legislature.

### **The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation – Communications Associate (2004–2007)**

- Managed inquiries from national and local media outlets, coordinated interviews with policy staff, and cultivated working relationships with reporters.
- Coordinated policy briefings and panel discussions from start to finish for live and online audiences with VIPs such as Nelson Mandela and Senators Barack Obama, Hilary Clinton, and John Kerry, including coordination of media coverage and outreach.
- Played a vital role in the creation, design, and promotion of interactive tools, such as a DVD toolkit on health policy issues stemming from Hurricane Katrina.

# SARAH CARKHUFF FIZELL , cont.

## **National Assoc. of Insurance Commissioners – Communications Specialist (2003–2004)**

- Responded to inquiries from the trade press and national media, coordinated interviews with state insurance department officials and staff.
- Wrote speeches, congressional testimony and press releases for state insurance commissioners.
- Directed *Get Smart About Insurance Week*, a national consumer awareness campaign, and increased participation from 35 to 46 states and media impressions from 68 to 90 million.
- Coordinated outreach to and maintained relationships with state insurance department public information officers by providing customized information and support for their media activities.

## **Kansas Insurance Department – Consumer Assistance Representative (2001–2003)**

- Collaborated directly with insurance companies and consumers to resolve complaints and provide accurate information in a regulatory setting.
- Analyzed and synthesized state statutes, mandates, and laws as well as a great deal of health and insurance policy terminology and technical information.
- Edited consumer guides and wrote speeches for the Commissioner.

## **Kathleen Sebelius for Governor – Grassroots Programs Director (2002)**

- Responsible for facilitating activities including voter registration and GOTV efforts.
- Managed campaign volunteers in all 105 counties. Oversaw the distribution of campaign-related materials, including the placement of 15,000 signs statewide.
- Developed text and graphics layout for campaign literature and correspondence, which included creating and organizing a database for a statewide event with 6,000 invitees.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

**Friends of the Mulvane, Board of Directors (2010–present):** Serve as a member of the marketing committee and planning committee for the *Mountain/Plains Art Fair*.

**ARTSConnect Topeka (2009–2012):** Founded and co-chaired the *Arty Party*, which was attended by more than 450 and raised more than \$10,000 for Topeka arts in 2010.

**YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment (2008–present):** Serve on the planning committee for *Concealed/Revealed*, an annual art auction and primary fundraiser.

**Leadership Greater Topeka (Class of 2009):** 100 hours of work dedicated to enhancing skills as a community leader and civic participant.

## **EDUCATION**

**University of Kansas – B.A. Communications Studies (1996–2001):** Emphases in Intercultural and Interpersonal Communications.