

Denise Taylor

SKILLS

- Strategic communications
- Media management
- Press events
- Public relations
- Project management
- Event coordination
- Plain language
- Crisis communications
- Community engagement
- Reputation management
- Inclusive communications
- Partnership development
- Team management
- Policy development
- Digital and print strategy
- Marketing
- Social media
- Content creation & editing
- Speeches and op eds
- Mass mailings
- Reverse 911 systems

PROFILE

Pronouns

(she/her/hers)

Languages

English

German

Driven Communications Director, public servant, and former journalist with more than a decade of progressive communications responsibility. Proven record of innovation, desired impacts, adept crisis navigation, and supportive team management within a mission-driven organization. As equally passionate about finding the right turn of phrase or most compelling photo as discovering the best tools and strategies to reach and inspire diverse constituents. Demonstrated excellence in multi-channel communications, marketing, and media relations that grow reach, participation, media coverage, speaker requests, and inclusion. Grammar nerd. Unabashed believer in the good government can do.

EXPERIENCE

Executive Director of Communications & Community Engagement

City of Somerville, MA (*promotion*)

2013-present

Guide communications and public information services supporting 57 departments and divisions. Supervise and mentor staff in multidivisional department: Run core city communications; closely oversee web, video, and multilingual services; support constituent services; and drive community engagement efforts. Coordinate critical and emergency communications with Police, Fire, Emergency Management, and Somerville Public Schools. Manage ~\$1M budget. Ensure public information compliance with communications protocols, and privacy and legal requirements. Provide citywide media management as well as executive communications to Mayor's Office: statements, speeches, media, etc. Develop multi-format public information campaigns for policies, initiatives, and programs. Oversee and coordinate specific community engagement efforts including surveys, public processes, community meetings. Deliver public ceremonies: inaugurations, ribbon cuttings, flag raisings, etc. Oversee web, video, multilingual, constituent, and core communications services.

Select Accomplishments:

- Grew City alert system subscriptions more than 125% (from 35.6k to 80k+).

- Created new multilingual communications and immigrant services (now Office of Immigrant Affairs/SOIA) catalyzing organization-wide culture change around equity, inclusion, and language access. Continue to oversee and evolve SOIA services.
- Built citywide social media across departments and established/grew/oversaw @SomervilleCity feeds on multiple platforms with peak post reach of more than 200k for highest interest posts.
- Initiated and oversaw human-centered website overhaul in 2015 and managed team maintaining usability without major investment for past decade. More than doubling visitors from ~420k to ~1Mk uniques/year.
- Established, promoted, and continue to oversee City e-newsletter exponentially growing subscribers to current 27,875.
- Collaborated to raise standards on inclusive surveying; recently doubling participation and achieving statistical thresholds for more than 70 demographic groups.
- Fundraising: Initiated and lead fundraising for Somerville Cares COVID-19 relief fund 1.0: raising >\$1M in 9 mo. Spearheaded United Immigrant Legal Fund creation and co-fundraised ~\$500k. Established Emergency Fire Fund with Somerville Homeless Coalition raising funds for multiple fires over time. Initiated, successfully applied for, secured 200k+ in funding, and oversaw city's Code for America fellowship.
- Initiated and oversaw creation of City's first ever emergency template library to speed crisis communications during critical response in seven core languages.

EXPERIENCE (...)

2020—2023

COVID-19 Incident Command Chief Public Information Officer

City of Somerville, MA, Emergency Response Incident Command Structure (ICS)
(*expansion of role*)

- Oversaw 20+ person interdepartmental Public Information Unit providing media and public relations, crisis communications, multilingual public information, emergency alerts, social media, video, radio, mass SMS, e-news, website, ad campaigns, mailings, flyers, signage, reverse 911 calls, virtual Town Halls, Facebook Live events, webinars, call center services, etc.
- Advised on critical policy and operations decisions as member of ICS core leadership.
- Advance equity by establishing Immigrant Services Unit within Incident Command.

2011-2013

Citywide Social Media Manager & Community Engagement Specialist

Communications Office, City of Somerville, MA

- Built, managed, and exponentially grew City's main social media feeds, established departmental feeds, trained departmental social media managers, developed and maintained social media protocols, and created page graphics.

- With Mayor's leadership and staff collaboration helped transform the City's civic engagement ethos to deep commitment to public participation in decision-making.
- Founded SomerViva immigrant outreach program increasing service access and civic participation by otherwise marginalized residents.
- Increased annual attendance at neighborhood meetings ~8-fold (~175 to >1,500).
- Quintupled e-news subscribers via digital marketing and new content.
- Developed entrepreneurial digital campaigns and creative outreach initiatives.

2010-2011

Editor, SomervillePatch.com

Boston, MA

- Served as first editor of SomervillePatch.com offering 7 days per week of Somerville news coverage
- Supervised freelance and part-time staff; sourced, wrote, and edited stories; provided photography, produced videos, established and ran social media

1998-2010

Boston Globe Correspondent & Arts Columnist

Boston, MA

- Served as reporter and feature writer for Globe West covering news, arts, local economic trends, human interest, food, and education (8 years).
- Authored weekly *Arts* column for Globe West (same 8 years).
- Served as *Cheap Eats* food critic for *Calendar* section (same 8 years).
- Wrote *Calendar* section cover stories and features (4 years).
- Coauthored *Cheap Eats 52 Real Meal Deals in Greater Boston* Vols. 1, 2, 3.

Pre 1998

Nonprofit Fundraising and Communications Consultant

Boston and Somerville, MA

National Environmental Advocate, Director FCKW STOP,

Bonn, Germany

EDUCATION

University of Maryland at College Park, B.A. English

- **Honors:** *magna cum laude*, Phi Kappa Phi
- **Scholarships:** UM Academic Scholarships, German Academic Exchange Scholarship