

Stephen P. Ward

stephenward@yahoo.com

Career History

Hawai'i Pacific University 2019–present

Vice President, Communications & Marketing

- Chief marketing communications officer and strategist; advisor to president and executive team.
- Lead external and internal communications that reflect and advance the core Hawaiian values of Aloha, Pono and Kuleana.
- Build and refine multi-media story-telling team to deliver on multi-channel marcom strategies, earning international gold awards from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education in both the communications and marketing improvement categories.
- Lead in collaborative initiatives to package and price the Hawai'i Pacific experience, contributing to a 71 percent year-over-year growth in first-time student enrollment.
- Implement strategic marcom to position the expanded delivery of knowledge through graduate, early college, and professional development and training degree and certificate programs.
- Design and implement comprehensive pandemic communications strategy and crisis communications.
- Direct institutional communications policy development.
- Chair special initiatives including institutional Culture and Communications committee and executive search committee.

University of North Carolina at Charlotte 2011–2019

Associate Vice Chancellor, University Communications

- Chief marketing communications officer; chief spokesperson at North Carolina's fastest-growing university; member of chancellor's cabinet; counsel senior leadership colleagues
- Built powerful owned media and a content strategy focused on outcomes; integrate public relations; regional and national media relations; marketing; digital communications; video communications; brand communications; capital campaign communications; and data analytics.
- Led institutional crisis communications; completed Harvard Kennedy School Crisis Leadership in Higher Education executive education program.
- Led university communications policy development and refinement.
- Provided collaborative leadership in local, state, and national stakeholder engagement and advocacy.
- Oversaw marketing communications agency relationships.
- Led institutional committees and initiatives, including University Communications Council.

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point 2007–2011

Executive Director, Assistant to the Chancellor, University Relations and Communications

- Chief marketing communications officer, member of chancellor's cabinet.
- Counseled chancellor and fellow senior leaders on executive communications.
- Directed university external relations as chief communications officer and university spokesperson.
- Led core and decentralized staffs in institutional integrated marketing communications; also led new media communications, media relations, alumni affairs, publications, university printing and design center, and special events.
- Fostered engagement through local, state, and federal government relations.
- Established and oversaw legislative advocacy network.
- Directed and managed agency relationships.
- Led various committees and initiatives.

Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia 2005–2007

Director of Marketing and Communications

- Chief marketing communications officer.
- Developed and implemented integrated marketing communications strategies and tactics to advance enrollment management, development, and brand image objectives.
- Counseled president and fellow senior leaders on executive communications.
- Served as chief university spokesperson.
- Oversaw all operations of the Marketing and Communications staff.
- Redirected the university's media relations program to meet rigorous objectives in strategic markets and among national targets.
- Represented the president on the Strategic Planning Council; initiated and chaired a president-appointed Marketing Communications Advisory Council.

University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji Islands 2004–2005

12-nation, multi-campus research university at Asian-Pacific gateway

Marketing Communications Consultant/Director of Marketing and Communications

- Developed and implemented a strategic, integrated marketing communications plan for a multi-national university.
- Served as chief university spokesperson, initiated staff development, and coordinated university advancement programs within all levels of the institution.
- Designed and launched a regional corporate sponsorship program.
- Directed cooperative initiatives with members of diplomatic corps; served as lead partner for study abroad programs.

Huntington National Bank, Northwest Region, Grand Rapids, Michigan 2002–2004

Vice President—Community Development

- Established relationships with community agencies and institutions in multiple markets to deliver services to low- and moderate-income communities, ensuring a data basis in planning and measurement, business development, and return on investment.
- Served as lead advocate for Huntington's community service outreach, focusing on partnership building with education (colleges, universities, and K-12), governments, faith-based organizations and churches, and other nonprofits.
- Monitored and advanced compliance with the federal Community Reinvestment Act and standards of the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.
- Directed a major media partnership, "Connecting with Community," with WOOD-TV.

Vice President—Marketing and Communications

- Served as member of executive management and senior leadership teams.
- Counseled president and senior leadership team on strategic communications.
- Directed integrated marketing communications for 74-branch region, including planning and implementation of branding, advertising, and community and media relations.
- Partnered with lines of business in marketing supporting business development strategies.
- Served as chief regional spokesperson.
- Developed and directed professional and college sports, service, and community sponsorships.
- Implemented a budget monitoring system judged "best practice" within the company.

Grand Valley State University, Allendale/Grand Rapids, Michigan 1994–2002

Director of University Communications

- Chief marketing communications officer.
- Led integrated marketing communications team in enrollment and brand marketing, print and digital communications, media relations, at Michigan's fastest-growing regional university.
- Served as chief university spokesperson.
- Enhanced stakeholder relationships via numerous innovations, including partnerships with GVSU's Development and Alumni Relations teams; the launch of the university's website, an award-winning web news daily, a university magazine, and university photography services; and other partnership initiatives, including with the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum.
- Created and executed communications plans for special events, several building openings and program launches, and campus crises.
- Directed agency relationships.

U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 1989–1994

Press Secretary/Legislative Assistant, Staff of Rep. Paul Henry

- Served as chief spokesperson, speechwriter, and communications strategist.
- Developed national and statewide media contacts.
- Integrated legislative agenda into positioning for a planned U.S. Senate campaign; secured numerous national media appearances and placements.
- Served as an Education Committee legislative assistant, key issues included lead sponsorship of College Right-to-Know (Eventual Cleary Act), NEA Reauthorization, and Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

Press Secretary, Staff of Rep. Fred Upton

- Served as chief spokesperson and speechwriter.
- Advised on all legislative and outreach projects.
- Created and produced official constituent communications tools.

American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C. 1989–1990

Congressional Fellow, selected in national competition

- Participated in intensive yearlong study of American government and Canadian Parliament exchange while serving as a professional congressional staff member.

Michigan Public Radio Network, East Lansing, Michigan 1985–1989

15-station statewide news and program network based at Michigan State University

Managing editor, producer, and host of national award-winning daily newsmagazine

- Reported and produced news spots, features, and documentaries, several for national networks.
- Developed successful national, state, and corporate funding, including partnership/recurring funding status with Michigan Council for the Arts, major recurring grants from NEA and NEH, and partnerships with the Michigan Sesquicentennial Commission and Consumers Energy.

WKAR AM-FM/WKAR-TV, East Lansing, Michigan 1983–1989

City/county reporter; news anchor; reporter/producer, TV newsmagazine

WLAV Radio, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1984

State capitol correspondent

Education

The American University, Washington, D.C.—M.A., Public Affairs Communication

Michigan State University—B.A., Journalism

Wheaton College Conservatory of Music

Harvard Kennedy School—Crisis Leadership in Higher Education Executive Program

Select Conference Presentations

Council for the Advancement and Support of Education

- “Best Practices in Multi-Media Campaigns.” CASE III, Atlanta, 2019.
- “The New Storytellers.” CASE III, Atlanta, 2019.
- “Strengthening Crisis Communications Amid Real-World, Real-Time Challenges.” CASE III, Atlanta, 2018.
- “What’s Your Jerusalem? Maximizing the Story with Teamwork and Technology.” CASE III, Nashville, 2017. Selected for CASE webinar series.
- “Exploring the Webcasting Frontier.” CASE III, Orlando, 2015.
- “A Nominating Convention in Our City—Converting Opportunity to Legacy.” CASE III, Atlanta, 2013.
- “Developing a Web-based Advocacy Program.” CASE V, Chicago, 2011.
- “Speaking the Language of Data: Strengthening the Relationship Between Marketing Communications and Institutional Research.” CASE V, Chicago, 2010.
- “With Neighbors Like These, Who Needs Enemies?” CASE V, Chicago, 2008.

Public Relations Society of America

- “Best Laid Plans: Lessons Learned in a Time of Civil Unrest.” PRSA Charlotte, 2017 Symposium.
- “Diffusing Preconceived Notions of Teaching Online—An Overview of Best Practices.” PRSA International Conference, Philadelphia, 2013.

National League of Cities

- “When Hate Comes to Campus: First Amendment and Free Speech Issues on Campus and In Your Communities.” National League of Cities, City Summit, Charlotte, 2017.

Leadership in Higher Education

- “Crisis Communications During the September 2016 Charlotte Riots.” Leadership in Higher Education, National Conference, Baltimore, 2017.

University Communicators

- “What’s Your Jerusalem? Maximizing the Story with Teamwork and Technology.” University Communicators—National Conference, Las Vegas, 2016.

American Association of State Colleges and Universities

- “Creative Collaborations.” AASCU Communicators Conference, Washington, D.C., 2012.

Association for Institutional Research

- “Strengthening the Relationship Between Institutional Research and Marketing Communications.” AIR Forum, Toronto, 2011.

West Virginia University Integrated Marketing Communications Program

- “Finding a Data-Based Edge in Institutional IMC.” Integrate 2011, Morgantown, 2011.

I. M. Comm 2011

- Co-founding co-chair of inaugural communications conference for the University of Wisconsin System universities. Presented on cross-discipline collaboration, Oshkosh, 2011.

Honors

Marketing Communications

- Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), International Circle of Excellence Awards: Best Practices in Communications & Marketing, Platinum Award Finalist, 2021. Communications Improvement, Gold Award, 2020. Marketing Improvement, Gold Award, 2020.. Research Video, Bronze Award 2016.
- CASE VII (West): Communications Improvement, Silver Award, 2021. Video on a Shoestring, Silver Award, 2021. Communications Pivot (Pandemic), 2021.
- CASE III (Southeast): Crisis Communications Plan, 2018, Online Innovation, 2017, Brand Video, Grand Award, 2016, Student Recruitment Publications, 2006, Excellence in Magazine Feature Writing, 2006.
- CASE V (Midwest): Best Practices in Marketing Communications, Gold Award, 2011, 2008.
- Public Relations Society of America, Hawai'i Chapter: Best of Show finalist, Marketing Consumer Services, 2020. Koa Anvil Award (campaigns) 2020. Koa Hammer Award (tactics), Video Series, 2021 and 2020. Award of Excellence, Marketing Campaign, 2021, Webcasts, 2020. Award of Excellence, External Video Programs, 2021 and 2020. PRSA Midwest Award: First Place, Website, 2000. West Michigan Spectrum Awards: 6 individual and team awards, 1998-2003.
- Communicator Awards: 9 individual and team awards, 2013-21.
- Higher Ed Marketing Report: Gold Award, TV Spot, 2021. Bronze Award, Integrated Campaign, 2021. Gold Award, Brand/Social Media, 2017. Merit Award, Total Campaign, 2013. Silver Award, University Viewbook, 2010.
- MarCom Awards: 5 individual and team awards, 2016 and 2010.
- Hermes Creative Awards: 8 awards for team projects, 2011 and 2010.
- AVA Digital Awards, 7 awards for team projects, 2017 and 2018.

Journalism

- Writers Guild of America: Merriman Memorial Award, Outstanding Achievement.
- Corporation for Public Broadcasting: National Award, Best Regional News Program.
- United Press International: 12 awards for individual Reporting.
- Associated Press: 4 awards for individual Reporting.
- Society of Professional Journalists: National and Regional Mark of Excellence Awards.
- Detroit Press Club: 3 awards for Reporting.
- Michigan State University School of Journalism: Milliman Award, Outstanding Capitol Reporting.

Institutional

- Hawai'i Pacific University: Ke Kaukahi Award for singular purpose teamwork, above and beyond, 2021.

Teaching

Hawai'i Pacific University 2021

Staff instructor

HPU 1000, freshman success course.

University of North Carolina at Charlotte 2015–2018

Adjunct instructor

Advise student-run public relations agency serving campus and community clients.

West Virginia University 2006–2018

Adjunct professor

Teach brand equity management in Integrated Marketing Communications master's program.

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point 2007–2011

Guest lecturer, public relations and marketing, in the Department of Communications and the School of Business and Economics

University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji Islands 2004–2005

Guest lecturer, journalism

Huntington National Bank, West Michigan Region 2003–2004

Financial Literacy Education Series

Established recurring seminars presented to nonprofits, colleges and universities.

Grand Valley State University, Allendale/Grand Rapids, Michigan 1994–2002

Adjunct instructor

Taught undergraduate communications and media history courses.

The American University, Washington, D.C. 1990–1991

Teaching assistant

As a Master's Fellow, taught undergraduate and graduate broadcast journalism.

Engagement

Public Relations Society of America, Counselors to Higher Education

Council for the Advancement and Support of Education

Charlotte National PR Advisory Board

WFAE, Charlotte Public Radio, Board of Directors

Leadership Charlotte

American Political Science Association

Wausau Rotary Club

Central Wisconsin Airport, Marketing Committee

Old Main Neighborhood Association, Stevens Point

Statesboro-Bulloch Chamber of Commerce

Statesboro Region High-Tech Business Development Group

Southern Georgia Symphony Orchestra

Michigan Bankers Association, Marketing Committee

Special Olympics, Michigan

Junior Achievement of West Michigan

Kent County Tax Assistance Coalition

Huntington Associates Good Government Fund Disbursement Committee (PAC)

American Cancer Society West Michigan Cattle Barons' Ball Executive Committee

St. Mary's Hospital Cancer Center Marketing Committee

Grand Action, Strategic Initiatives Committee

Urban League of Muskegon

Leadership Grand Rapids and *Inside Grand Rapids* Planning Committee

West Michigan Strategic Alliance, Regional Mindset Committee

Economic Club of Grand Rapids

Michigan Advancement Council

National Science Olympiad Planning Committee

Deacon, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Grand Rapids

Grand Valley Community Orchestra

Wealthy Theatre Board of Directors

Westminster Wind Ensemble

Grand Rapids Bach Festival Board of Directors