

**Kathryn Karnell, M.A.**  
**Communications Strategist and Content Developer**  
[on LinkedIn](#) | [forwardstory@gmail.com](mailto:forwardstory@gmail.com)

**Strategic and versatile communications leader** with proven experience translating complex health, policy, and technology initiatives into high-impact messaging that informs, engages, and drives results. Trusted partner to C-suite executives and cross-functional teams to align voice, vision, and audience strategy — **strengthening reputation, enhancing digital experience, and driving impact**. As your **human in the loop**, I am always adapting and evolving with the latest technology to optimize content development and quality, accelerate workflows, and achieve measurable success.

---

**CORE COMPETENCIES**

**Communications Strategy & Leadership**

- ❖ Executive Messaging
- ❖ Project Management
- ❖ Cross-Functional Team Lead
- ❖ Vendor Management & Budgets
- ❖ Process Improvement
- ❖ Data: SEO/ Data Annotation / Google Analytics

**Content Development & Optimization**

- ❖ Digital Multichannel Content
- ❖ Storytelling (Health/Policy/Programs)
- ❖ AI-Enhanced Workflow
- ❖ Campaign Design
- ❖ Video Production
- ❖ UX Optimization

---

**EXPERIENCE**

**Freelance Marketing and Communications Consultant**

July 2025 – present

- **Emergency Evacuation Plan for EmoEmu LLC:** developed this comprehensive plan for a high-profile production filming on location. Tailored the plan to the geographic location and the complex personnel needs; Same-day delivery. **IMPACT** – Concept to delivery time decreased by estimated 70% due to using AI tools.
- **Marketing Proposal & Press Release for Recreation/Entertainment Startup Company:** developed a marketing package aimed at securing major cruise line partnership, leveraging AI tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, Amazon Nova, Perplexity) for deep research, multimodal processing, image generation, and content drafting. **IMPACT** – successfully secured cruise rep engagement.

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

June 2020 – July 2025

Communications Strategist

**Leadership:** advised C-suite executives on brand strategy and managed vendors for the department that invests over \$1Billion in maternal and child health programs. **IMPACT** –

- **70% increase in newsletter subscriptions** after rebranding and optimizing content strategy.
- **Trained 300+ staff** on storytelling, clear language, and clearance processes, improving internal communication efficiency and alignment.

**Project Management:** executed the **company website overhaul**, coordinating cross-functional teams to integrate best practices, use data analytics, and refine user experience through iterative optimization. **IMPACT** –

- Streamlined content by **70%**, leading to a **10% increase in engagement rate**.
- **503% increase in “clicks to calls”** and **488% clickthrough rate** for the Maternal Mental Health Hotline through targeted **SEO** strategies and website redesign, enhancing customer engagement and conversion.

**Campaign Design & Execution:** pioneered **social media campaigns** for major health observances; produced videos, written stories, toolkits, and managed complex clearance processes. **IMPACT** –

- **1.2 million views** and **500% increased engagement** on Instagram for campaigns such as Black Maternal Health Week and Child Health Day.
- **400 federal, state, and local partners engaged** in a vaccine campaign.

**AI-Enhanced Workflow:** leveraged AI tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, Claude) to tailor communication products (e.g. talking points, summaries, media responses, regulatory announcements, training materials), for audience needs. *IMPACT* –

- Increased **clarity**, **reduced prep time**, maintained **compliance**.

**Ulster University – United Kingdom**  
Communications Strategist

October 2017–April 2020

**Leadership and Engagement:** developed and led the communications strategy for a multinational digital health project (key stakeholders included WHO, CDC, and Latin American Hospitals) to enhance the adoption of a mobile **birth defects surveillance app** in low-resource countries. *IMPACT* –

- **Analyzed outreach effectiveness**, finding that **direct marketing** yielded a **47% higher success rate** in engagement compared to social media or other outreach methods.
- Achieved a **80–91% satisfaction rate** from participants of a public engagement training.
- Promoted the app at an international conference; **finalist** in Digital Commonwealth Awards.

**Digital Multichannel Content:** produced on-demand instructional videos, managed social media, and updated the CMS for web-based resource inventory. *IMPACT* –

- **Saved an estimated \$15K** by producing instructional videos in house.

**U.S. Department of State – Mexico**  
Community Engagement

December 2014 – June 2017

*IMPACT* –

- **Contributed to a \$1.2 million savings** through efficient tracking and processing of background checks and **reduced case resolution time by 75%** through creating an electronic tracking system.
- **4.57/5 client satisfaction rating** achieved, far exceeding regional averages, through tailored communications and stakeholder engagement.

## ADDITIONAL RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Global Health & Development Consultant – Clients included **Deloitte, CDC, USAID, Peace Corps, Johns Hopkins University, University of Washington**. *Example work* – Led communication strategy for the **\$30M U.S. Operational Plan** for HIV/AIDS in Tanzania; Produced educational videos and commercials, managed budgets, wrote white papers, conducted research, drafted speeches.

## PUBLICATIONS

- Editorial Board, National Library of Medicine Bookshelf, 2023–2024
- Global Birth Defects App, Birth Defects Research, 2021. DOI: 10.1002/bdr2.1898
- Scaling-Up Human Resources for Health in Tanzania, 200-page white paper

## AWARDS

**Hubert H. Humphrey Award** for Service to America (2024), **HRSA Honor Award for Innovation** (2023), and other awards related to healthcare content, documentary filmmaking, and social media campaigns.

## **TECHNICAL**

**AI Tools:** ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, Claude, Amazon Nova

**Analytics & Optimization / UX:** Google Analytics, SEO Tools, Data Annotation, Figma

**Content Development:** Canva, Adobe Creative Suite, Drupal, Camtasia, GitHub

**Project Management:** Agile & Scrum, Jira, Teams, Slack

---

## **EDUCATION and RECENT TRAINING**

**M.A. Communications**, Syracuse University – Newhouse School

**B.A. Sociology**, University of California, Santa Barbara

**UC Davis Extension** – Certificate in Big Data, AI, and Ethics

**Google** – Prompting Essentials, Speed Up Data Analysis

**IBM** – Introduction to Agile & Scrum

**UPenn** – Viral Marketing & How to Craft Contagious Content

**Colleague Consulting, LLC** – Leading Organizational Change