

## Summary

Strategic leader with 20+ years of experience driving engagement, equity, and impact across higher education, nonprofit, and civic sectors. I specialize in high-visibility initiatives, inclusive learning design, and mission-driven communications that build trust and inspire action. With an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and a passion for cross-sector collaboration, I bring a holistic, data-informed approach to storytelling, stakeholder engagement, and organizational change. I have led communications for public universities and consulted for civic organizations and education networks, bringing a service-oriented mindset to statewide engagement and public-sector innovation.

## Leadership Strengths

- **Strategic Communication & Public Engagement** – Lead messaging that aligns mission, values, and voice across internal and external platforms; manage high-stakes comms and represent organizations as spokesperson.
- **Organizational Alignment & Strategic Planning** – Co-lead inclusive planning processes and implement communication frameworks that connect institutional goals with community needs.
- **Culture Building & Internal Communication** – Foster transparency, staff alignment, and shared ownership of goals through leader messaging, inclusive storytelling, and cross-team collaboration.
- **Stakeholder & Member Engagement** – Build and sustain partnerships with education networks, public agencies, and community organizations to drive collective impact.
- **Fiscal & Operational Stewardship** – Oversee budgets and align resources with mission outcomes; explore innovation and service development to support sustainability.

## Tools & Technologies

- **Project & Team Tools** – Asana, Monday.com, Trello, Microsoft Teams, Slack
- **CRM & Campaigns** – Salesforce, HubSpot, Marketo, Microsoft Dynamics
- **Web, Content & Accessibility** – Canva, Adobe CC, WordPress, Drupal, AEM; WCAG compliance tools: WAVE, Siteimprove
- **Data & Engagement** – Google Analytics, Qualtrics, SurveyMonkey, dashboards
- **Marketing Platforms** – Mailchimp, LinkedIn Campaign Manager, Meta Ads, SEMrush
- **AI & Emerging Tech** – Generative AI tools for content, strategy, and operational efficiency; emphasis on ethical, human-centered use

## Experience

Washington State University Everett

January 2022 to Current

### Executive Director, Marketing & Communications

Member of the executive leadership team for a public branch campus serving primarily first-generation, transfer, and nontraditional students. Lead cross-functional strategies to advance institutional planning, stakeholder engagement, and equity-centered student access. Serve as a key driver of internal communication and public presence to support campus priorities and initiatives.

- Co-led campus strategic plan development and led the communications roadmap to align operations with long-term goals and shared values.
- Originated and launched the Degree Partnership Program, securing multi-institutional buy-in and a formal MOU to expand regional transfer pathways.
- Shaped messaging and outreach to support enrollment growth, new program launches, and stakeholder visibility.
- Designed high-impact events that build civic trust and legislative support, including commencements, congressional visits, and regional roundtables.
- Serve as senior communications lead and spokesperson; manage crisis response, emergency messaging, and multi-agency coordination in alignment with FEMA and ICS protocols.
- Led internal campaigns and trainings to reinforce transparency, inclusive communication, and campus-wide alignment.

- Built a high-performing team of staff and student professionals; fostered a culture of shared leadership and continuous improvement.
- Cultivated partnerships with civic leaders, education networks, and media to amplify campus voice and mission.

## **Independent Strategic Consultant**

June 2020 to Current

Advise mission-driven organizations—including education institutions, nonprofits, and civic networks—on strategic communication, organizational alignment, and stakeholder engagement during times of growth and transformation.

- Designed and led workshops on responsible AI integration, ethical communication, and change leadership for education and nonprofit leaders.
- Guided executive teams through leadership transitions and restructuring, developing internal messaging frameworks and alignment strategies.
- Partnered with organizations such as Housing Hope and the Everett Chamber Women's Network to design campaigns that deepen engagement and amplify mission impact.
- Developed equity-centered storytelling strategies to reach diverse stakeholders and increase public participation.
- Applied AI tools and analytics to personalize engagement, inform outreach strategy, and assess campaign effectiveness.
- Advised public-sector organizations and education cooperatives on statewide communication, brand identity, and innovation strategy.

Edward R. Murrow College of Communication, Washington State University

January 2016 to December 2022

## **Director, Marketing & Communications / Clinical Assistant Professor**

Led strategic communications and educational initiatives for one of the university's flagship academic colleges. Oversaw external relations, branding, and public engagement while contributing to teaching, event leadership, and institutional advancement.

- Directed college-wide communications strategy to increase visibility, enrollment, and alumni connection—strengthening brand presence and donor engagement.
- Produced the Murrow Symposium, a nationally recognized event supporting fundraising and public outreach; managed speaker curation, logistics, and cross-platform promotion.
- Supervised a cross-functional team in digital media, events, and content creation; ensured brand consistency and accessibility across channels.
- Taught undergraduate and graduate courses in PR, advertising, and communication research, integrating inclusive pedagogy and real-world application.
- Spokesperson and media liaison, managing institutional messaging/ media relations during key public moments.

Wilder2 Agency

December 2002 to January 2018

## **Managing Partner, Creative Director**

Co-founded and led a strategic communications agency serving education institutions, nonprofits, workforce initiatives, and public-sector organizations. Directed brand strategy, stakeholder engagement, and community-facing campaigns that supported institutional growth, civic engagement, and student success.

- Facilitated strategic planning and branding workshops focused on inclusive messaging, audience alignment, and collaborative decision-making.
- Launched *Take Flight Snohomish County*, a regional education and workforce initiative connecting students to aerospace career pathways.
- Served as long-term communications partner to WSU Everett, supporting audience research, brand development, and storytelling campaigns during campus expansion.
- Provided counsel on public relations and crisis response during leadership transitions and reputational challenges.
- Developed DEI-informed content strategies for nonprofits and educational partners.
- Oversaw agency operations, business development, and client service—maintaining a 92% client retention rate and strong regional reputation.

Time Inc.

June 2002 to December 2008

## Art Director, Marketing & Creative Services

Led integrated marketing and brand campaigns for two national consumer publications. Developed advertiser engagement strategies, managed cross-platform promotional events, and executed branding initiatives that built audience loyalty and partner value.

## Education and Training

- **Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership**, Washington State University, Everett, WA.  
*Dissertation: Interinstitutional collaboration and equitable frameworks for degree partnership programs.*
- **Master of Science (M.S.) in Technical Communication**, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ  
*Capstone: Designed an online orientation using user research to improve success for degree-completion students.*
- **Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Human Resources**, University of Delaware, Newark, DE
- **Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Graphic Design**, Parsons School of Design, New York, NY

## Select Service Commitments & Recognitions

- **Board Member**, Imagine Children's Museum
- **Chair**, Women's Professional Network, Greater Everett Chamber of Commerce
- **Member**, WSU System Brand Advisory Committee
- **Alumna**, Leadership Snohomish County
- **Recipient**, UPEA Marketing, Enrollment Management & Student Success (MEMS) Award, 2023

## Select Speaking & Facilitation

- **Keynotes & TEDx**
  - TEDx Speaker – *The Power of Practice*, TEDx Belltown Women (2024)
  - *Women in Finance*, Baird Wealth Management (2025)
  - *Leading Beyond Limits*, 4IR Leadership Summit (2024)
- **Workshop Facilitation**
  - *Corporate Leadership & AI Ethics*, The Teaching Professor Conference (2024)
  - *AI Demystified*, Drexel University & WSU Ed.D. Programs (2024)
  - *AI for Qualitative Research*, UCEA Conference (2024)
- **Panelist & Presenter**
  - *AI in Education*, WA Higher Ed IT Leadership Summit (2024)
  - *AI & Ethics*, AAUW (2024)

## Select Publications

- Wilder, C., & Calderone, S. (2025). Empowering educational leadership research with generative AI: Insights and innovations from a qualitative EdD dissertation. *Impacting Education: Journal on Transforming Professional Practice*, 10(1), 18–26.  
<https://doi.org/10.5195/ie.2025.489>
- Wilder, C. (2024). *Intersecting Cultures: Exploring the Impact of Interorganizational Dynamics on Degree Partnership Programs*. Doctoral dissertation, Washington State University.
- Wilder, C. A. (2023). Other Duties as Assigned: The Universal Impact of a Small Branch Campus. *The EvoLLLution*, <https://evolllution.com>.

References are available upon request.