



# Find Your Future

## 2019 Fall Forum

The HUB Ballroom  
Tuesday, October 22, 2019

Use hashtags  
#FindYourFuture &  
#MasonCOMMForum19  
to share your experiences  
and photos from the forum.

# Purpose

This event is sponsored by George Mason University's Insight Committee of the Department of Communication, a volunteer advisory board of experienced leaders in professional communication. This group annually sponsors an on-campus event to provide students access to and advice from leading professionals.

# Schedule

8:30 AM	Registration Opens
8:45 AM	Networking Reception and Refreshments <b><i>Sponsored by Airbus</i></b>
9:15 AM	Welcome and Introductions
9:30 AM	<b>Keynote Address: Rana Novack</b> , advocate for refugees and civilians in conflict, writer, and solution owner of IMB's Refugee & Migration Predictive Analytics Solution.
10:00 AM	<b>Mentoring Roundtable Sessions Begin</b> There will be six rounds of 20-minute mentoring sessions.
12:30 PM	Mentoring Sessions End; Event Adjourns

# Keynote Speaker



## Rana Novack

Rana Novack is a Syrian American advocate for refugees and civilians in conflict, writer, TED and keynote speaker, and the solution owner of IBM's Refugee & Migration Predictive Analytics Solution. She is currently leading a global team from across the IBM organization to develop a first-of-a-kind solution leveraging machine learning and cognitive computing to enable Government agencies and humanitarian aid organizations to better manage refugee and migration crises.

Novack has been published in the Wall Street Journal, WIRED magazine, and her work has been cited by Yale University and the Foreign Policy Initiative. She is a Non-Resident Scholar and Global Policy Center Faculty Affiliate of the University of Virginia's Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, and recipient of the 2017 George Mason University Department of Communication Alumnus of the Year and Distinguished Alumna Awards.

# Find Your Future Mentors

**Table 1 Internal Communication / Interpersonal Communication**

Kelsey Agostinelli, Senior Director of Business and Change Communications, Mars Candy

**Table 2 Federal Government Communication**

Jeff Houston, Senior Public Affairs Specialist, Naval Criminal Investigative Service

**Table 3 Local Government / State Government Communication**

Susana Castillo, Press Secretary, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser

**Table 4 External Relations/Corporate Communications / Strategic Marketing**

Patrick Fernandez, Senior Consultant, Booz Allen Hamilton

**Table 4 External Relations/Corporate Communications / Strategic Marketing**

Paige LaPlant, Capital One

**Table 6 Non-Profit**

Suzanne Naylor, Marketing Program Manager, Goodwill Industries International

**Table 7 Trade Associations / Advocacy Organization**

Gavin Gibbons, Vice President of Communications, National Fisheries Institute

**Table 8 Political Communications**

Derrick Robinson, Vice President, Fenton Communications

# Find Your Future Mentors

## **Table 9    Media Relations**

Diana Gulotta, Director of Communications, Prince William County Public Schools

## **Table 10    Media Relations**

Lana Petruzzo, Senior Manager, Global Corporate Communications, Hilton

## **Table 11    Media Production**

Molly Herman, Executive Producer/Owner, The Biscuit Factory

## **Table 12    Journalism**

Marcella Robertson, Reporter, CBS/Channel

## **Table 13    Journalism**

Bill Lord, Formerly General Manager at WJLA, WRC

## **Table 14    Agencies / Public Relations**

Lauren Herchert, Director & U.S. Business Development Lead, H+K Strategies

## **Table 15    Agencies / Public Relations**

Julie Murphy, Partner and Vice President, Sage

## **Table 16    Advertising/Marketing**

Dvon Williams, Senior Director of PR & Celebrity Relations, National 4-H

## **Table 17    Sports Marketing**

Kate Greenberg, Chief Marketing & Development Officer, Washington Nationals Dream Foundation

# Kelsey Agostinelli

Senior Director of Business and Change Communications, Mars Candy, Inc.

Kelsey Agostinelli is Mars, Incorporated's senior director of business and change communications. In this role she is responsible for driving excellence in change communications in support of enterprise-wide transformations, overseeing a team of communicators. She supports communications for Mars Senior Leaders, mobilizing this most critical community to lead enterprise strategy, and supports C-suite led internal communications. Agostinelli joined Mars in early 2019 after 11 years in management consulting at Accenture, where she supported clients with marquis programs and provided cohesive coordination and a foundation of understanding and respect amongst stakeholders; from building and sustaining the communications for global, transformative deployments of technology solutions to successful realization of high-profile legislative mandates. She worked with clients at the most senior levels of government, where what one says and how it is said can have 'front page' implications. She consecutively served internally as the Accenture Federal Management Consulting Engagement Director, driving a network of support and opportunity to fuel a workforce of 600. Kelsey has dual bachelor's degrees in financial economics and psychology from the University of Virginia, grounds she continues to love to visit with her husband (a fellow Cavalier) and their daughter.



# Jeff Houston

Senior Public Affairs Specialist, Naval Criminal Investigative Service

Jeff Houston is a senior public affairs specialist with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service Office of Communications in Quantico, Virginia. In this role, Houston serves as the primary agency spokesperson and advises senior NCIS leaders on news media and strategic communications matters. He also develops, edits and disseminates an array of publications pertaining to the NCIS mission, objectives, programs, policies and activities. From July 2016 to August 2017, Houston served as the first NCIS public affairs liaison to the Navy's Office of Information. In this role, he coordinated NCIS responses to dozens of high-visibility media queries. He also briefed sensitive information memorandums to CHINFO leaders, monitored for opportunities to leverage CHINFO's communications infrastructure to amplify NCIS strategic messaging, and regularly apprised NCIS executives of Navy news affecting NCIS. Prior to joining NCIS in 2014, Houston served as a public relations consultant and a marketing/communications specialist, providing strategic communications guidance to various public and private sector organizations. Houston received a bachelor's degree in marketing communications from the University of Mississippi as well as a master's degree in integrated marketing communications from the University of South Carolina. He completed the Defense Information School's Public Affairs Qualification Course in 2017.



# Susana Castillo

Press Secretary, Office of Communications, Executive Office of DC Mayor Muriel Bowser

Susana Castillo is originally from Bogota, Colombia and has lived in the D.C. metropolitan area since 2006. Her portfolio includes public relations, broadcast journalism and marketing in both Spanish and English. She began her career working at the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC), where she focused on positive youth development, media literacy and substance abuse prevention for D.C. youth. From LAYC, Castillo joined the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs, where she focused on building relationships with non-profit organizations and conveying the mayor's priorities to the local Latino community. She then joined the D.C. Mayor's Office of Communications as a deputy press secretary. She choreographed media bookings and daily press briefings, answered queries raised by local and national media, and managed press logistics to events such as the 2017 Presidential Inauguration and the 2017 Women's March. She currently serves as the press secretary for Mayor Bowser, where she handles the day-to-day media presence and public relations of the mayor and several government agencies. Castillo is also part of the associate board at the Latin America Youth Center where she develops strategies to encourage new contributions.



# Patrick Fernandez

Senior Consultant, Booz Allen Hamilton

Pat Fernandez is a senior consultant at Booz Allen Hamilton. Booz Allen partners with public and private sector clients across the globe to help solve their most difficult challenges and has been doing so for over 100 years. Fernandez has experience ranging from client work for PR firms in the D.C. area, internal and external corporate communications strategy, digital strategy, crisis communications, content strategy and analytics. Fernandez began his career at Booz Allen as an intern in 2016. He currently supports the firm's business and programming in cybersecurity, digital solutions (blockchain, cloud, etc.) and innovation. Fernandez is a George Mason alumnus, having graduated in May 2017 with a bachelor's in communication, minoring in multimedia.



# Paige LePlant

Capital One

Paige LaPlant is the internal communications lead for Capital One Technology Talent imperatives including, Tech Talent Acquisition, the Distinguished Engineering program, and other talent development and retention activities. LaPlant joined Capital One in October 2018, as part of the Tech Chief of Staff team. Prior to joining Capital One, LaPlant provided change management, internal communications, and digital engagement support to U.S. DoD clients as an Associate with Booz Allen Hamilton. Earlier in her career, LaPlant worked in PR at Hill + Knowlton Strategies, where she was known for crisis mitigation and executive positioning in health IT, transportation, energy, disaster relief, and nonprofit industries. She holds a bachelor's in Communication and Public Relations with a minor in French Language Studies from the Honors College at George Mason University. Paige resides in Falls Church, Va. with her boyfriend. When her schedule allows, she enjoys visiting family in Vermont, spending time on either Lake Champlain or the slopes, depending on the season.



# Suzanne Naylor

Marketing Program Manager, Goodwill Industries International

Suzie Naylor is the marketing program manager at Goodwill Industries International (GII), a social enterprise that provides job training, career services, such as credentials and certifications, and support services such as childcare, financial education, youth mentoring and transportation to more than 35 million people a year through the revenue from the sale of donated clothes and household goods. In her role, Naylor works to strengthen brand and mission awareness on a national and local level. Since joining Goodwill in 2015, Naylor has helped drive integrated brand communications and initiatives, including the award-winning national public service announcement campaigns, "Donate Stuff. Create Jobs." and "Bring Good Home®," which have generated more than \$153 million dollars in donated media and more than 10.6 billion impressions. In addition to the development and management of national marketing and advertising campaigns, Naylor collaborates with Goodwill member organizations on optimizing their local marketing and communication strategies. Naylor's career has been focused around nonprofit marketing since earning her bachelor's degree in corporate communication from Marquette University in 2013.



# Gavin Gibbons

Vice President of Communications, National Fisheries Institute

Gavin Gibbons is the vice president for communications at the National Fisheries Institute (NFI), the country's largest seafood trade association. As NFI's spokesman, he has been featured in everything from The Washington Post to The Wall Street Journal and has been the voice of U.S. fisheries issues on CNN, National Public Radio (NPR), the Fox Business Network and China Central Television (CCTV.) Gibbons joined NFI in 2007 after more than a decade as a television news producer, working for a variety of affiliates before MSNBC and the Fox News Channel in Washington. He is an Emmy winner for television news writing and a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.



# Derrick Robinson

Vice President, Fenton Communications

Derrick Robinson is a political communications strategist with a decade of experience working for government agencies, non-profits, political candidates, progressive brands, and social justice organizations to establish and enhance their media and influencer relations, social media, and marketing reach. Robinson joined Fenton in 2019 after serving as director of communications for leading national civil rights organization, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. There, he served as chief spokesperson and managed high-impact integrated public affairs campaigns for criminal justice, voting rights, and immigration rights litigation. Before the Lawyers' Committee, Robinson worked on Capitol Hill as Communications Director for Congressman Karen Bass (D-CA). Derrick began his career in the Obama Administration serving in multiple capacities. He was Deputy Press Secretary at the Department of Energy's nuclear security sub-agency and a researcher in the White House Office of Communications. During his tenure at the White House, he also served on Obama's successful 2012 Presidential campaign as an advance associate.



# Diana Gulotta

Director of Communications, Prince William County Public Schools

As director of communication services for Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS), Diana Gulotta coordinates the promotion of the division's schools through a variety of channels, including the website, electronic newsletters, television, social media and the local media. She also manages crisis communication and event planning. Gulotta has more than 27 years of experience in school public relations, beginning her career with the McKinney Independent School District in McKinney, Texas. She served as assistant superintendent for communications for the Hazelwood School District, located outside of St. Louis, Missouri, for eight years. She came to Virginia in September 2013 to fill the role of executive director of public relations and marketing for Hampton City Schools. She began her position with PWCS in November 2017. She has a bachelor's degree in radio/television from Stephen F. Austin State University, and a master's degree in communications management from Webster University. She is a member of the National School Public Relations Association, and on the board of the Lake Ridge Rotary Club.



# Lana Petruzzo

Senior Manager, Global Corporate Communications, Hilton

Lana Petruzzo is a corporate communications and public relations professional with a decade of industry experience. She is currently a Senior Manager of Corporate Communications at Hilton and leads the strategy and execution of the company's social media channels. In addition, Petruzzo manages PR efforts behind enterprise-wide initiatives. She also manages executive communications for one of Hilton's senior leaders. Prior to her current role at Hilton, she spent half of her career at Cvent where she was a part of the communications and marketing team that helped take the company public in August 2013. She spent the next couple of years focused on raising brand awareness throughout the world. As the company continued to grow, Petruzzo worked directly with the CEO and senior management team to build a robust executive communication and leadership program. In 2016, she was on the core team that supported the \$1.65 billion acquisition of Cvent by Vista Equity Partners. Before Cvent, Petruzzo worked at a few local PR agencies including Focused Image, where she partnered with clients across different industries including technology, government and consumer brands. Petruzzo earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in communication and public relations from George Mason University.



# Molly Herman

Executive Producer/Owner, The Biscuit Factory

Molly Herman is a producer, director and writer whose documentary work spans genres, continents and centuries. Over the past 20 years, Herman has produced award-winning work for PBS, National Geographic Channel, Discovery Channel, Smithsonian Network, Animal Planet, Discovery Science and BBC America. Her work has taken her from the floor of the New York Stock Exchange to a Casablanca mosque, from red rock Utah canyons to the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, and searching for birds of paradise in the jungles of Papua New Guinea. Molly received the CINE Awards Special Jury Prize for the Smithsonian Channel program “9/11: Stories in Fragments” and an Emmy nomination for “Jefferson’s Secret Bible,” both produced in collaboration with the National Museum of American History. Herman is a founding partner of the Falls Church, Virginia-based company, The Biscuit Factory, which has been producing factual programming for the past 11 years. Prior to launching The Biscuit Factory, Herman spent 11 years at Discovery Studios, where she started as an associate producer and progressed into the role of producer/director. Herman holds a bachelor’s degree from Dickinson College and a master’s degree in video and film communications from American University.



# Marcella Robertson

Reporter, CBS/Channel

Marcella Robertson is an award-winning journalist who currently works at WUSA9 in Washington, D.C. She is a Virginia native and proud George Mason University alumna, who is happy to be back home reporting. Robertson started her career at NBC29 in Charlottesville. Prior to joining WUSA9, Marcella spent three years as part of the ABC 13 team in Norfolk. During her career, she has been recognized with two Emmy awards and an Edward R. Murrow award. You can see Robertson weekdays on WUSA9 starting at 4:25 a.m.



# Bill Lord

Former General Manager at WJLA, WRC, Washington, D.C.

Bill Lord attended the University of Washington and then received a master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University. After graduation, he worked as a reporter in Medford, Oregon and Salt Lake City, Utah before becoming one of the youngest correspondents hired by NBC. He spent three years in Beirut covering the civil war for NBC. He interviewed dozens of newsmakers during his years as a reporter—including Yassar Arafat, Golda Meir, King Hussein of Jordan, Anwar Sadat and Ted Bundy. Later, Lord spent more than thirty years as a news director at television stations in Nashville, Seattle, Los Angeles and Washington D.C. He directed coverage and won awards for many stories of national interest, including the O.J. Simpson trial, the Seattle earthquake, the WTO riots, Hurricane Isabel and Washington D.C.'s Navy Yard shootings. He received television's highest award, a Peabody, for leading an investigative reporting team exposing public corruption. He has won two DuPont Columbia awards, multiple Edward R. Murrow awards, AP journalism awards, the National Headliner Award for the country's best newscast, the Robert F. Kennedy Award for reporting on the disadvantaged, a national Emmy for public service and dozens of local news Emmys between 1980 and 2016.



# Lauren Herchert

Director & U.S. Business Development Lead, H+K Strategies

Lauren Herchert leads strategic communications for the world's largest corporate, government and non-profit brands. She specializes in assessing and managing social responsibility programs to advance reputation; developing organization and executive messaging and strategizing on media, social and stakeholder engagement. She advises on internal communications, helping to assess and reimagine employee engagement and counsels organizations in crisis, providing hands-on tactical execution and incident planning. Currently, she's supporting business development for the U.S. region. Most recently, Herchert managed corporate communications for Procter & Gamble, serving as the agency's global liaison and advising the organization's CEO and other top executives on elevating their personal brand through LinkedIn. Her work received a 2017 PRSA Silver Anvil and was recognized as the "top five PRSA Silver Anvil" campaigns. Prior to joining H+K, Herchert worked for a boutique public relations and marketing agency specializing in advocacy. Herchert holds a Bachelor of business administration from James Madison University. While attending James Madison University, she earned a concentration in European business while studying in Antwerp, Belgium. She is a Long Island, New York native but currently resides in Fairfax, Virginia. Herchert was recently recognized as PR News' 2017 PR Agency Account Manager of the Year.



# Julie Murphy

Partner and Vice President, Sage Communications

Julie Murphy is a partner & senior vice president at Sage Communications, where she leads the Public Relations and Social Media disciplines. She brings particular strength in helping enterprise technology organizations improve their acceptance in the public sector, including AT&T, Splunk, Dell, Lookout, and many more. Murphy is a regular convener of industry conversation within cybersecurity, cloud computing, network management, artificial intelligence and big data. She sits on the March of Dimes board and Women in Technology programs committee, and speaks regularly at conferences and academic gatherings. Her professional expertise includes high-impact campaigns, analyst relations and crisis communication. She gained her public communications degree from Syracuse University in 2000.



# Dvon Williams

Senior Director of PR & Celebrity Relations, National 4-H Council

Dvon Williams serves as the senior director of PR & celebrity relations, leading a team dedicated to driving public relations and influencer engagement for 4-H's brand platforms and partnership marketing efforts. Her expertise in developing innovative marketing plans and communications strategies has elevated the brand's awareness and relevance in the marketplace. She also manages the overall influencer engagement strategy for 4-H, establishing and stewarding relationships with celebrities and influencers to help brighten the spotlight on the impact of 4-H. Prior to joining National 4-H Council, Williams served as director of public relations for Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA). Her expertise in media relations, writing, strategic planning and event activation proved successful in creating campaigns and initiatives that positioned BGCA as a leader in youth development. Most notably, Williams led the development and execution of BGCA's annual Back-to-School campaign, winning industry recognition from MarCom Awards and PRSA. Before bringing her talents to the non-profit sector, Williams was with one of the country's foremost PR agencies, Edelman, where she led brand building and PR for several national brands.



# Kate Greenberg

Chief Marketing & Development Officer, Washington Nationals Dream Foundation

Kate Greenberg is the Chief Marketing and Development Officer for the Washington Nationals Dream Foundation, which uses the power of baseball to improve the lives of children and teens in the Washington, D.C. region. In her role, Greenberg oversees the marketing of initiatives focused on academics, the arts, nutrition and sports. Prior to joining the Nationals in 2018, Greenberg was the Vice President of Marketing and Communications for the Trust for the National Mall, where she oversaw the planning and execution of brand strategy, including branded content, media relations, event marketing, strategic relationships, messaging and more. Greenberg has also served as a Senior Vice President for Hill + Knowlton Strategies, a PR Manager for The Walt Disney Company and as an account supervisor for major food brands. She earned a bachelor's degree in communication studies from University of California, Los Angeles, and an MBA from UCLA's Anderson School of Management.



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***Special thanks to Airbus for sponsoring the breakfast reception.***

***Thank you to GMU PRSSA and SPI.***