

LEAH GESOURAS

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST | MARKETING & DONOR RELATIONS

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Community-centered communications and engagement professional with 7 years of experience driving membership growth, social media strategy, donor cultivation, sponsorship revenue, and philanthropic investment in support of independent local journalism. Skilled at blending strategic marketing, authentic relationship-building, and powerful storytelling to mobilize community support, grow sustainable revenue, and strengthen public trust. Well-suited to community engagement, community coordination, marketing, and communications roles that call for a mission-driven connector who can build partnerships and translate organizational goals into messages that inspire action.

Background in professional theatre and public speaking brings a rare ability to communicate with empathy, presence, and clarity, translating complex missions into messages that resonate with diverse audiences. Track record includes leading multi-channel membership and email marketing campaigns, cultivating corporate sponsors and philanthropic partners, and generating and qualifying leads through strategic networking, CRM systems, and community events. Known for building trust quickly, facilitating cross-functional collaboration, and representing mission-driven organizations with integrity in both public and private settings.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Community Engagement & Partnerships | Membership Strategy & Retention | Donor Cultivation & Stewardship | Sponsorship & Corporate Giving | Marketing & Campaign Strategy
Email Marketing & Social Media | Sales & Client Relations | Event Coordination & Operations | Public Speaking & Facilitation | Storytelling & Brand Messaging | Cross-Functional Leadership

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

SOURCE MEDIA PROPERTIES / RICHLAND SOURCE |

June 2019 - May 2026

Mansfield, Ohio

Head of Community Investment

Lead community engagement, marketing, and revenue strategy for an independent local journalism organization, driving membership growth, donor cultivation, sponsorship revenue, and philanthropic partnerships that directly sustain community-focused reporting.

- Develop and execute revenue and community engagement strategies that build membership, donor relationships, and sponsorship income with a focus on long-term community impact.
- Manage quarterly newsletter production and compile annual impact reports that communicate organizational outcomes and value to community and corporate funders.
- Build and lead multi-channel membership marketing campaigns on a quarterly basis, strengthening recurring revenue and deepening reader relationships.
- Cultivate and steward relationships with corporate sponsors and philanthropic partners, aligning donor values with high-impact community journalism initiatives.
- Develop donor-centered messaging and storytelling content that connects programmatic outcomes to real community impact, increasing trust and long-term engagement.
- Serve as internal lead for community partnerships, events, and sponsorship opportunities, coordinating across editorial, product, and leadership teams.
- Facilitate internal planning and alignment meetings that strengthen organizational culture, transparency, and shared mission.

THE DARYL ROTH OFF-BROADWAY THEATRE | New York,

January 2018 - 2019

NY

Assistant House Manager / Usher

Served as a front-of-house leader for high-profile theatrical productions in an intimate performance setting, managing guest experience, safety, and communications in a fast-paced, live-event environment.

- Led front-of-house operations for high-profile theatrical productions, ensuring a polished and professional guest experience from arrival through departure.
- Managed the audience experience across the full performance cycle, from entry to exit, prioritizing safety, clarity, and comfort for every guest.
- Handled sensitive guest situations with discretion, including accessibility needs, medical concerns, and privacy requests.
- Escorted VIP guests and maintained a calm, professional presence in high-pressure, live-event environments.
- Developed strong instincts in audience psychology, tone management, and emotional intelligence through direct, high-volume guest interaction.
- Represented the venue's brand and hospitality standards in every guest interaction, contributing to a consistently positive theatre-going experience.

LUSH COSMETICS | New York, NY

October 2016 - 2018

Sales Associate / Spa Specialist

Delivered personalized, values-based retail and spa consultations for a globally recognized ethical beauty brand, combining sales expertise with brand storytelling to build customer trust and loyalty.

- Delivered personalized, values-based sales experiences rooted in ethical sourcing and brand storytelling.
- Conducted one-on-one consultations with customers to identify individual needs and recommend tailored product solutions.
- Managed appointment scheduling and confirmation campaigns to support a consistent and reliable spa service calendar.

- Provided attentive in-person client experience management, ensuring every customer interaction reflected brand standards and values.
- Built ongoing customer relationships through attentive service and product education, encouraging repeat visits and loyalty.
- Communicated the brand's ethical sourcing and sustainability mission to customers, translating company values into everyday sales conversations.

REEDPOP, CAREERGROUP, REMX

Convention Crew Worker

Worked event operations roles at major national conventions through staffing agencies, supporting guest experience, crowd management, and day-to-day operations for large-scale public events.

- Worked major national conventions including New York Comic Con, Star Wars Celebration, C2E2, and Wizard World.
- Served as guest liaison for celebrities and VIP attendees, coordinating logistics to ensure a seamless experience.
- Managed crowd flow and line management to maintain safety and efficiency during high-attendance events.
- Supported attendee experience through clear communication and hands-on problem-solving in fast-paced environments.
- Assisted with security, registration, and merchandise operations across multiple event days.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Communication, Specialization in Musical Theatre
Bowling Green State University, 2015

Cum Laude, 3.65 GPA
Grant-in-Aid Scholarship Recipient

TECHNOLOGY & TOOLS

HubSpot | Canva | ActiveCampaign | Ignite | Newspack | PandaDoc | Eventbrite | Metorik | Google Workspace | Slack | Zoom | Teamwork | CRM Systems