

Tareka Wheeler, PMP

wheeler.tareka@gmail.com | 512.825.6915 | <https://www.linkedin.com/in/tareka-wheeler-pmp/>

Program Officer & Strategic Project Leader

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT • PROJECT MANAGEMENT • STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT • TEAM LEADERSHIP

Proactive and results-driven results-oriented *Program Officer and Strategic Project Leader* with more than **20+ years** of exceptional experience in driving impactful initiatives within the public and private sectors. Demonstrated expertise in domestic and international program and project management, consistently delivering superior outcomes through meticulous planning, execution, and collaboration with diverse stakeholders. Adept at developing innovative strategies to address complex challenges and achieve sustainable organizational objectives. Proven track record of fostering cohesive teams, optimizing resources, and maximizing efficiency to drive long-term success.

- **Achieved exceptional success as a leader in spearheading the seamless implementation and evaluation** of both domestic and international programs.
- **Orchestrated and cultivated diverse cross-functional teams** fostering collaborative and inclusive environments that inspired optimal performance and success.
- **Consistently acknowledged for fearlessly tackling challenging projects and clients**, proactively identifying risk-mitigation opportunities, while maintaining a high-level of professionalism and polished public presence.

Area of Expertise

Program Management • Strategic Planning • Project Leadership • Stakeholder Engagement • Budget Management • Leading Organizational Change • Partnership Building • Data Analysis • Strategic Communications

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

IVA'AL Solutions, LLC – Washington, DC (Consulting)

June 2020 - Present

Program Manager – September 2020 – Present

- **Led a dynamic team of 15 project members through the successful execution of a complex IT project**, employing agile methodology to ensure adaptive planning, continuous improvement, and on-time delivery for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Chief Data Officer.
- **Orchestrated cross-functional collaboration**, ensuring effective communication and coordination among developers, designers, testers, and stakeholders, resulting in streamlined workflows and enhanced project outcomes.
- **Championed agile principles**, promoting self-organization and empowerment within the team, fostering a culture of accountability, innovation, and adaptability that significantly improved team morale and project efficiency.
- **Proactively identified and mitigated potential risks**, employing agile practices to address challenges promptly and maintain project momentum, resulting in successful iterations and the delivery of high-quality software solutions.

Strategic Communications Consultant – June 2020 – September 2020

- **Orchestrated end-to-end conceptualization, development, and production of a diverse range of internal and external communications materials** for a pioneering federal data sharing platform project under the purview of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Chief Data Officer.
- **Composed engaging and informative blogs, social media content**, and various communication materials tailored for federal channels and senior leadership, effectively conveying complex information to diverse audience while maintaining consistent messaging and tone.
- **Championed brand strategy efforts** behind the development of a new federal agency mark, logo, and brand visibility guidelines.

Office of Minority Health Resource Center, Landover, MD (Contract)

July 2017– Present

BlackFish Federal | Project Director – March 2020 – Present

- **Managed and directed the largest federal contract for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health** with an annual value of more than \$4M.
- **Championed a multifaceted leadership role** managing a team of 3 senior managers and 16 support staff, advising federal agency leadership and executive staff, and engaging key stakeholders.

- **Led all elements of project management:** defining project scope and objectives, creating detailed work plans and schedules, analyzing risks, and building critical relationships to cultivate and maintain business opportunities.
- **Provided data-driven strategy and analysis to make recommendations** for health communication campaigns and program design, implementation, and evaluation; information services and inquiry response; and operations and maintenance of the nation's largest repository for minority health data.
- **Served as a trusted advisor to client senior leadership** during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and provided a comprehensive strategy for advancing the agency's response to mitigating the impacts of COVID-19 amongst racial and ethnic minority communities and other vulnerable populations.
- **Directed a high-impact website redesign and migration project** using agile methodology and effectively collaborated with cross-functional teams to prioritize tasks, streamline workflows, and deliver iterative updates within prescribed timelines and budget.
- **Developed relationships with existing client base** at all levels of the hierarchy the yielded retaining current business valued at a total of \$12M, and gained new business valued at \$1M.

HeiTech Services | Deputy Project Director – October 2018 – March 2020

- **Supported all elements of project management**, leading a Communications and Information Technology team of 2 senior managers and 5 support staff.
- **Clarified, translated, and validated monthly financial information** with Chief Financial Officer and Controller that exposed potential issues and financial opportunities.
- **Improved relationships with stakeholders** by focusing on the reduction of response times and providing sound alternative solutions to problems.

AMTIS Inc. | Communications Manager – September 2017 – October 2018

- **Spearheaded planning, conceptualization, development and execution** of communications strategies and tactics.
- **Managed the Communications Team** and identified performance metrics for all campaigns including print; website development; email marketing; Google Ad Words; social media integration; and event management.
- **Developed strategic an integrated communication plans** to analyze and document objectives, target audiences, strategy and positioning, key messages, and specific tactical recommendations for senior leadership.
- **Led a new email marketing campaign which increased subscriber size by 325%** through deployment of new web capture tools.
- **Created and developed positioning and re-branding strategy** for re-launch of a federally funded program implemented by minority serving institutions.
- **Created and implemented a new social and digital media strategy**, resulting in growth in social media engagement (245%), and e-news subscribers (195%).
- **Directed and grew web-based campaigns and messaging** to expand awareness through the Office of Minority Health's website (www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov) and various social media networking channels (notably Facebook and Twitter).

Children's National Health System, Washington, D.C. Safe Kids Worldwide

December 2012 – September 2017

Director of Programs

Responsible for designing, implementing, and managing corporate sponsored programs. Worked directly with the Chief Program Officer on strategic planning, developing executive level internal communication, and supervision of staff and subcontractors.

- **Directed a team of public health professionals**, overseeing the successful delivery of high-quality programs to over 400 domestic and international partners, resulting in enhanced global impact and stakeholder satisfaction.
- **Spearheaded a diverse portfolio of corporate social responsibility programs**, valued at over \$15 million annually. Developed and executed comprehensive annual program plans, aligning strategies and goals to acquire, renew, and upgrade support from corporate sponsors, contributing to consistent program growth and financial success.
- **Led the meticulous logistics planning and execution of a transformative global corporate social responsibility program** in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, creating a lasting positive impact on the local community and strengthening the organization's global reputation.

- **Oversaw the development, implementation, and evaluation of domestic and international health communication campaigns and programs** focused on reducing injury rates within targeted populations across 400 coalitions in the U.S. and in 25 countries around the world.
- **Strengthened the organization's relationships with key domestic and international stakeholders** by spearheading the development and implementation of a highly successful Strategic Partner Engagement Plan, fostering long-term collaborations, and driving mutual success.

Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas– Austin, TX

October 2005 – December 2012

Injury Prevention Coordinator

Served as Coordinator for a grass-roots coalition led by a Level 1 pediatric trauma center that serviced a 46-county region in Central Texas. Provided direct oversight of more than 45 organizations implementing programs and executing special projects in identified communities.

- **Managed an annual budget** of \$450K and achieved a remarkable 140% increase in revenue within one year.
- **Proactively identified, cultivated, and engaged new sponsors** to support community-based programs, driving sustainable funding and expansion opportunities.
- **Established and nurtured diverse relationships** with the general public, business community, and local government agencies. Collaborated with stakeholders to identify opportunities for enhanced program delivery efficiency and effectiveness, ensuring alignment with community needs.
- **Conceptualized and launched a highly impactful mass media campaign** focused on child safety issues. The campaign garnered an average monthly reach of more than 1.6 million, effectively raising awareness and driving positive behavioral change in target audiences.
- **Successfully served as the organization's spokesperson to the media**, establishing a lasting partnership with the local FOX News affiliate. By fostering a strong media presence, the earned media value and reach significantly increased, amplifying the organization's mission and visibility.
- **Co-authored published peer-reviewed research articles** centered around pediatric injury prevention, contributing valuable insights to the field. (List of publications available upon request.)

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science | Organizational Communications | St. Edwards's University, Austin, Texas

CERTIFICATION

Certification: Project Management Institute | Project Management Professional (PMP) | 2018 – Present

TECHNOLOGICAL SNAPSHOT

Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Project) | SharePoint | Asana | Jira | Cision | Falcon | Vocus

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

PMO Global Institute | Member | 2021 – Present

Public Relations Society of America | Member | 2019 - Present

Project Management Institute | Member & Volunteer | 2018 – Present

National Communications Association | Member | 2017 - Present

American Public Health Association | Member | 2013 – Present