

# BARBARA AYOTTE

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## SUMMARY

Senior strategic communications leader with extensive experience increasing the visibility, reputation, and impact of nonprofit global health, human rights, and arts organizations. Expert writer/editor and visual storyteller. Known for enhancing brands by engaging key stakeholders with creative and compelling content and managing and motivating high-performing communications teams. Exceptional interpersonal skills working in complex environments around the world.

## SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Trusted strategic communications advisor to CEOs and Vice Presidents. Modernized and supervised the communications departments at four leading organizations.
- Produced more than 200 global health and human rights publications and printed materials, three complex websites and social media platforms, dozens of videos, and three innovative campaigns. Editor of leading documentary photography magazine. Track record of tripling stakeholder engagement on diverse online platforms.
- Chief media strategist and spokesperson for co-recipients of 1997 Nobel Peace Prize. Cultivated relationships with reporters of prominent local, national and international media outlets and pitched and placed hundreds of news stories, opinion pieces and influencer conversations.
- Performed hands-on crisis communications planning and messaging for various complex emergencies at leading nonprofits, working with teams in over 35 developing countries in Africa.
- Programmed dozens of high-profile educational events at the United Nations in New York City and Geneva to Capitol Hill, Washington, DC, to the Institute of Contemporary Art and the American Repertory Theatre.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS, Concord, MA

Jan 2018 – Present

### Strategic Communications Consultant

- Writing, editing, and strategic communications planning for diverse nonprofit organizations.

SOCIAL DOCUMENTARY NETWORK, Concord, MA

2008 – Present

### Editor, **ZEKE Magazine** (2015-present)

- The leading print magazine devoted to global documentary photography, ZEKE features photography and journalism from around the world. Work with writers and photographers to produce biannual print and digital magazine. [www.zekemagazine.com](http://www.zekemagazine.com)

### Communications Director (2008-present)

- External relations, e-marketing, media relations, social media, event programming and gallery exhibitions for documentary photography network presenting visual stories on global themes. [www.socialdocumentary.net](http://www.socialdocumentary.net)

MANAGEMENT SCIENCES FOR HEALTH, Medford, MA

2009 – 2017

### Senior Director, Strategic Communications (2015-2017)

- Led external and internal strategic communications, marketing, and public relations for leading large global health nonprofit organization working in over 35 developing countries.
- Senior member of management team serving as strategic advisor to CEO and Vice Presidents on strategic communications, branding, and messaging.
- Developed and implemented crisis communications plan.
- Led and mentored a high-performing cross-organizational team of communications professionals that produced compelling creative content. Managed \$750,000 budget.

- Led year-long rebranding and messaging strategy and developed and implemented strategic communications and marketing plan.
- Co-built division devoted to global partnerships with outreach to private sector partners and donors.
- Created and managed thought leadership and media relations program.
- Managed internal communications and developed intranet and employee engagement strategies.
- Developed and executed public relations plan and strategy for former CEO's forthcoming book, End of Epidemics (St Martin's Press)([www.endofepidemics.com](http://www.endofepidemics.com))
- Co-created advocacy campaign No More Epidemics ([www.nomoreepidemics.org](http://www.nomoreepidemics.org)) and managed communications strategy. Produced day-long conference at Harvard Medical School on pandemic prevention.
- Created and implemented major public events at high-level international conferences at the UN General Assembly and World Health Assembly.
- Worked with U.S. Government agencies and with health ministers in dozens of countries.

#### **Director, Strategic Communications (2009-2015)**

- Modernized and built the communications department: created blog, social media presence, and email marketing program, and redesigned the website, [www.msh.org](http://www.msh.org), significantly building traffic and engagement.
- Built the MSH brand, repositioning the \$300 million nonprofit to key external audiences in the public sector and increased awareness of MSH's work and leadership in health systems strengthening and technical excellence.
- Managed high-performing communications team of eight and \$750,000 communications budget.
- Developed and implemented communications and social media protocols and standard operating policies.
- Raised over \$1M from The Rockefeller Foundation to develop and lead the Health for All advocacy campaign for universal health coverage in three countries in Africa.
- Managed MSH's 40th year celebration, including recruiting journalists and photographers for a major book Go to the People and producing gala events and videos.
- Developed and increased CEO external engagement: managed speaking calendar, wrote speeches and talking points, and wrote op-eds and blogs.
- Created Photo Fellows Program, sending six leading photographers to 12 countries to create new photo library for use in materials.
- Built communications capacity of country teams and mentored teams in dozens of developing countries, mostly in Africa.
- Instituted measurement and evaluation metrics to track and monitor list growth, loyalty, user engagement, and fundraising.
- Managed MSH presence at dozens of international global health conferences around the world.

#### INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW INSTITUTE, Chicago, IL

2008 – 2009

#### **Consultant, DePaul University, College of Law, Iraq History Project**

- Writer, editor, and marketing strategist for four publications of victim-centered testimonies on human right abuses in Iraq, covering the period under Saddam Hussein and violations in the war from 2003-2008.

#### PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (PHR), Cambridge, MA

1990 – 2008

#### **Director of Communications (1997-2008)**

- Increased visibility and impact of leading human rights nonprofit that was a founding member of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and shared the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize. Served as spokesperson for PHR at the Nobel ceremony in Oslo.
- Edited, co-wrote, and produced over 100 human rights reports, journal articles. Extensive print production experience including books, posters, brochures, cards, newsletters, and photo books.
- Created materials and curriculums for PHR's over 70 medical student chapters.

- Developed comprehensive international, national, regional and medical media strategies and implemented plans for print, broadcast, and digital outlets. Pitched and conducted extensive interviews with leading journalists resulting in placement of over 100 articles in leading outlets such as *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, *Financial Times*, and others.
- Wrote and edited press releases, opinion pieces, letters to the editor, and speeches. Oversight of all news conferences and events. Developed press lists, press kits, and press clip library.
- Oversaw 20th Anniversary media campaign resulting in dozens of national and regional media features and articles.
- Redesigned website ([www.physiciansforhumanrights.org](http://www.physiciansforhumanrights.org)) including site architecture, database conversion, transfer of hundreds of site pages and creation of new sections. Developed interactive web tools to increase online fundraising, advocacy and constituency-building. Created online communities and the first social network for health professionals and scientists interested in human rights issues.
- Instituted evaluation metrics to track and monitor list growth, loyalty, user engagement, and fundraising.
- Developed and implemented new branding identity guidelines and collateral materials production. Editor-in-Chief of bi-annual newsletter and annual report. Ensured consistent quality, tone, and style of all PHR messaging.
- Created and developed PHR's presence on social media such as Facebook, Flickr, and Twitter. Managed PHR's digital library.
- Produced multimedia videos for PHR's Darfur Survival Campaign and Campaign Against Torture. Created PHR's YouTube channel.

#### **Senior Program Associate (1993-1997)**

- Provided logistics and programming support for international health and human rights fact-finding investigations to Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chiapas, Rwanda, Burundi, India, Israel and the Palestinian Territories, Thailand, and Venezuela.
- Operated PHR's Asylum Network, a consortium of health professionals providing medical evaluations to assist asylum seekers in the US and PHR's Emergency Medical Aid Fund, which facilitated free emergency medical care for asylum seekers.
- Managed PHR's 10th Anniversary Symposium and gala dinner and production of 10th Anniversary Annual report and video.
- Organized the first health and human rights symposium at Harvard Medical School.
- Managed PHR's media relations and publications for multiple investigations in Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Iraqi Kurdistan during the Persian Gulf War.
- Coordinated PHR's Colleagues at Risk program, an alert network to advocate for the release of imprisoned health professional colleagues.

#### U.S. CAMPAIGN TO BAN LANDMINES (USCBL), Washington, DC

1998 – 2001

##### **Communications Director**

- Managed all communications events for Ban Landmines Week in Washington, DC, garnering press coverage on *NBC Nightly News*, *Good Morning America*, *Nightline* and high profile press events featuring Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan.
- Conducted editorial board campaign resulting in dozens of editorials nationwide calling for U.S. ban on landmines.
- Organized public events with retired generals, health professionals and veterans.

#### INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO BAN LANDMINES (ICBL)

1994 – 1997

*Winner of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize*

##### **Communications Coordinator**

- Seconded by PHR to coordinate communications strategies and international advocacy for the ICBL, a network of hundreds of organizations worldwide calling for a ban on the use, production and stockpiling of anti-personnel landmines, at key international meetings and conferences, including the Mine Ban Treaty negotiations in Oslo.

Coordinated international media relations and events at international ICBL meetings in Geneva, Ottawa, Rome, and Oslo.

- Managed media relations for PHR and the ICBL at the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Oslo and the Mine Ban Treaty signing ceremony in Ottawa.
- Facilitated workshops and events at ICBL international meetings and created and managed production of ICBL collateral materials, including production of brochure in three languages.

ROBINSON ASSOCIATES, Boston, MA

1987 – 1990

### **Production Manager**

- Coordinated print and broadcast production of all materials (printing, typesetting, photography, PSA's, video, and audio) for full-service advertising and PR agency.
- Winner of 1989 Hatch Merit Award, Public Service, for Production Management of Collateral Poster for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Boston Chapter.
- Liaison with talent, film production companies and editing facilities.

## **E D U C A T I O N**

**Bachelor of Arts**, English, *cum laude*, BOSTON COLLEGE, SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, Chestnut Hill, MA (1986)

**Graphic Design and Fine Arts Coursework**, MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF ART and the MUSEUM SCHOOL OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, Boston, MA (1989 – 1992)

## **P R O F E S S I O N A L A F F I L I A T I O N S**

THE ADVOCACY PROJECT

2005 – 2006

### **Member of Board of Directors**

- The Advocacy Project helps community-based advocates and networks for peace and human rights become self-sufficient in the use of information and communication technologies.

CENTER FOR BALKAN DEVELOPMENT

1996 – 2001

### **Documentary Producer (Volunteer)**

- Traveled to Bosnia and Kosovo following the wars there and conducted interviews and wrote text for two documentary photography exhibits. Curated exhibits displayed at galleries and universities across the U.S. and at the Ministry of Culture in Pristina, Kosovo.

## **T E C H N I C A L S K I L L S**

**Hardware:** • PC and Macintosh systems

**Software:** • Proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Google (Gmail, GDrive, Gsheets, Gslides), Convio CMS and databases, Raiser's Edge, Donor Perfect, Salesforce, Adobe Acrobat, Google Analytics and Adwords

**Social Media/Blog:** • Word Press, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, MailChimp.

**Visual/Print Communications:** • Extensive experience with digital photography, offset and lithographic printing, and curation of gallery exhibitions.