

Melissa A Schweisguth

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fullcircleimpact.com

Experienced professional with strong track record building social responsibility and sustainability programs, crafting high-impact communications and implementing successful media relations.

Dedicated to creating positive social, economic and environmental returns for business and society, with a particular focus on small-scale producers and sustainable agriculture.

Professional Experience

Freelance: Sustainable/Socially Responsible Business, Communications 8/09-present

Provide resources, tools and guidance to help businesses understand key sustainability issues, develop and implement solid strategies, build values-driven markets, engage stakeholders and yield triple-bottom-line benefits

- *Socially Responsible & Sustainable Business Consulting*
 - Provide support for strategic planning: visioning, priorities, goals and tactics
 - Advise on implementation: internal capacity building, change management, external resources
 - Craft business case and issues analyses for internal decision makers
 - Identify key metrics, develop data collection and tracking tools, benchmark performance against peers
 - Create employee education and engagement materials, consult on external stakeholder engagement
 - Advise on strategies to improve ethical sourcing and supply chain sustainability
- *Communications: Writing, Speaking, Media Relations*
 - Develop clear and compelling external communications content: print, web, social media
 - Write Social Responsibility/Sustainability Reports and other disclosures (e.g., Carbon Disclosure Project)
 - Produce whitepapers, businesses cases, guidance documents, reports, executive briefings
 - Craft captivating, on-target marketing copy: collateral, packaging, etc
 - Write high-quality articles for diverse audiences (sustainable business & lifestyles, agriculture)
 - Create and give engaging presentations (sustainability management & issues, communications, chocolate)
 - Draft high-impact press releases, pitch stories to media and obtain placements (traditional/new media)
- *Representative clients: Ashland Green Business, Chocolate Marketing, Standing Stone Brewing Co., Sustainable Supply Consulting. Pro bono: Ashland-Talent Growers Community Supported Ag, Village Farm, THRIVE*

Food Trade Sustainability Leadership Assoc., Director Membership Development/Education 8/09-present

Develop and implement educational and skill-building programs to help organic food companies adopt successful, leading-edge sustainability practices from farm to retail; Oversee recruitment strategy and efforts

- Produce events, tools and services to advance sustainability practices across membership and food trade
 - Create metrics set, guidance documents and other resources to guide sustainability management
 - Advise members on strategy, measurement, reporting and implementation to engender positive results
 - Develop and present at workshops, webinars and intensive learning sessions
 - Write monthly e-newsletter and twitter feed to keep members informed of issues and best practices
 - Recruit and manage interns (undergraduate & graduate) to create materials, events and programs
- Drive planning and implementation for recruiting activities, including promotional materials, networking events, direct outreach, written communications, cross-industry partnerships and media engagement

The Hershey Company Corporate Social Responsibility Manager 12/07-8/09

Launched and managed CSR program and communications for \$5bn global corporation; advanced efforts around Environmental Stewardship, Supply Chain Sustainability and CSR Commercialization

- Co-developed strategy, objectives, goals, metrics, reporting systems, CSR Leadership team
- Created issues analyses, business cases, benchmarking, CSR e-news, executive briefings
- Drafted external communications: website, documents, presentations, video, stakeholder responses, CDP
- Developed communications engaging 13,000 employees: intranet, presentations, environmental campaign
- Via Environmental Stewardship Work Group, developed objectives, data tools, action plans
- Led team upgrading office recycling, diverting 300 tons from the landfill with a 400% ROI in 9 mos.
- Via CSR commercialization team, developed consumer research, vetted product/marketing innovations
- Produced CSR communications for 1,000 field sales

DAGOBA Organic Chocolate Manager, Marketing and Full Circle Sustainability 7/04-12/07

Manage Marketing and PR (7/04-12/07)

- Realized sales growth of 134% from 2005-06 and 117% from 2004-05
- Directly responsible for PR (doubling hits annually), content writing, collateral, ads, website
- Successfully led new product launches across multiple categories and channels
- Launched and managed on-line store, driving 70-75% growth from 2005-07
- Represented company at conferences, trade shows, forums and organizations

Develop and Manage Full Circle Sustainability (social responsibility) program (1/06-12/07)

- Created Full Circle Sustainability concept, operating principles, internal e-news and training tools
- Led cross-functional team and Green Business Certification, yielding measured improvements
- Developed carbon footprint tool including travel and commuting, managed offsets
- Established facility recycling/composting and Recycling Team, tripling recycling
- Oversaw donation program reaching over 100 organizations annually

Manage Sales (7/04-12/05)

- Supervised national broker network across natural channel
- Developed and managed trade budget, promotional calendar and customer marketing programs
- Cultivated strong working relationships with distributors and key retail customers

Global Exchange Fair Trade Coordinator 9/01-5/04

- Ran national campaigns building consumer and industry purchasing of Fair Trade cocoa and coffee
- Created education/action guides, website, listserv and campaigns reaching thousands of consumers
- Recruited and provided ongoing support for hundreds of organizers
- Cultivated relationships with over 200 partner organizations, and Fair Trade businesses
- Visited Nicaraguan Fair Trade farms, documented through multimedia
- Secured several national media hits and organized five national speaking tours with Fair Trade producers
- Managed numerous interns and volunteers

Education

- Permaculture Design Certificate Ashland, OR. 2006
- Ph. D Candidate, Joint Doctoral Program in Language & Communicative Disorders San Diego, CA. 2001
University of California/San Diego California State University San Diego
- B.S. (Honors, *summa cum laude*), Human Resources, University of Delaware Newark, DE. 1996

Volunteer Service

- Ashland-Talent Growers Community Supported Ag, marketing/PR 2/10-present
- Village Farm: PR, marketing and farming (seasonal) 2/10-present, 8/09-11/09
- Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops: Metrics Committee Member 2/09-present
- Big Tree Climate Fund: Advisory Board member 7/08-present
- Birds of a Feather Benefit Run: Fundraising Raffle Manager 8/09-10/09
- FTSLA, Volunteer Committee Member (Recruitment & Marketing, Metrics, Member Kit) 10/08-8/09
- Kiss Hershey Back: PR/marketing, logistics and volunteer recruitment 2/08-4/09
- Eagle Mill Farm: PR, marketing and farming (seasonal) 8/06-11/06, 4/07-11/07
- Ashland Conservation Commission (incl. Green Business, Education committees) 4/06-12/07
- KS Wild, Volunteer Outreach, education and event support, 1/06-2/07

Relevant Skills, Personal Activities

- Freelance journalism: sustainable business and lifestyles, agriculture 4/06-present
- Skills: MS Office (Word, Excel, Power Point, Pagemaker), Photoshop, Basic HTML, Dreamweaver, Wordpress, FTP, Photography Social Media (twitter, facebook)
- Personal: Piano, photography, trail and mountain distance running, organic gardening and farming, hiking

References available upon request. Portfolio at fullcircleimpact.com