

STACEY STEARNS

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SUMMARY

Communication professional that excels at strategic and high-impact communications with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion. Develops content strategy to elevate brand profiles and maintain consistent messaging across all brand touch points. Proven ability to lead teams and work independently. Demonstrated strengths in: agriculture, facilitation, advocacy, project management, organizational development, and volunteer management.

SKILLS & EXPERTISE

- Communications • Marketing • Branding • Customer Relationship Management (CRM) • Strategic Planning
- Project Coordination • Public Relations • Public Speaking • Adobe Creative Suite • Microsoft Office Suite

EXPERIENCE

UConn Extension | Storrs, CT

Program Specialist – Educational Outreach

2013 – Present

- **Communications, marketing, and public relations**, including social media for UConn Extension with a reach of over 123,000. Facilitate media coverage for Extension on the local, state, and national levels. Content creation including writing articles and producing videos. Coordinating podcast initiatives.
 - [Highlights of Extension](#): editor, author, and coordinator of annual publication (2014-present).
 - [Annual Extension Impact Sheet](#) and bi-annual [map of Extension programs](#) (2014-present).
- **Strategic Communication Committee** for College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources (CAHNR):
 - Team member on website redesign for CAHNR, Kinesiology, and Nutritional Sciences.
 - Developed strategic communication committee goals and objectives with team members.
- **Customer Relationship Manager (CRM)** administrator for Extension. Use CRM to streamline communications, build brand recognition, and increase audiences. CRM management, email marketing, and training and support for faculty and staff. Platforms used: InfusionSoft, Salesforce, and MailChimp.
- **Fellowships**: 2020-2021 eXtension Foundation Fellow and 2019-2020 Initiative on Campus Dialogues.
- **USDA Plan of Work and Report of Accomplishment** yearly reporting for \$2.1 million Smith-Lever funding.
- **Website content development and design coordination** for over 40 program and department websites.
- **Academic facilitation** for seven independent study students on communications and marketing projects.
- **Supervisor** for summer marketing interns and work-study student. Facilitate projects for student workers.
- **Executive producer** of Extension videos: farm energy (4), how to grow a farm (8), poultry series (10), GMO animations (2), Ask UConn Extension (3), Extension centennial, and agriculture team (2) videos.
- **External Funding**: \$13,000 in grants from eXtension Foundation and Northeast AgEnhancement.
- **Professional Development**: Ongoing, includes: 2018 Inclusive Science Communication Conference (URI).
- **Cooperative Extension System Bull Innovative Programming Grant** – member of three awarded teams.

STACEY STEARNS | Mansfield, CT

Facilitator and Instructor

2019 - present

- **National FFA New Century Farmer Conference** – July 2019 – Indianapolis, IN – 36 students (ages 18-23).
- **National FFA NextGen: Animal Systems** – February 2020 – Kansas City, MO – 50 students (ages 14-18).

Feature Writer/Communications Specialist

2010 – present

- **Publications Include**: Massachusetts and Connecticut Horse Magazines, Equitrekking.com, FEI.org (International Equestrian Federation), Equestrian Sport Life, ProEquest, and The Morgan Horse Magazine.

Research Specialist, Department of Psychology

2008 – 2015

- **Data management and coordination** for Southeast AIDS Research and Evaluation Project. Collaborated on the Anti-Vaccine Surveillance and Alert System on a grant-funded project from the Gates Foundation.

CONNECTICUT FARM BUREAU ASSOCIATION | Windsor, CT

Director of Programs and Public Relations

2003 - 2005

- **Member service support** and coordination for the organization with over 5,500 members.
- **Communications lead** including website, newsletter, email marketing, and public relations.
- **Project and event management** of the annual meeting, young farmer programs, and promotional events.
- **Volunteer management and supervision** county boards of directors, state and regional committees.

Other Experience: Assistant Dairy Manager, Assistant Manager/Horse Trainer, and Public Service Specialist.

CERTIFICATIONS

QUALTRICS - Research Core Expert	2018
GOOGLE ANALYTICS - Advanced and Data Studio	2018 and 2020
COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE - Research	2015
FEMA - Information Officer and Effective Communication	2020

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA Gainesville, FL	2015
Master of Science, Agricultural Education and Communication	
Certificates: Leadership in Agriculture & Natural Resources; Teaching & Learning - Extension	
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT Storrs, CT	2002
Bachelor of Science, Animal Science	

PROFESSIONAL

ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNICATION EXCELLENCE (ACE)	2016 - present
2020-21 Media Relations and Writing Learning Community (LC) Vice-Chair; 2021 Conference Committee Co-Chair, Diversity LC Member, Leadership and Management LC Member, others.	
SOCIETY OF AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATORS	2019 - present
NATIONAL EXTENSION PROGRAM & STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS	2020 - present

AWARDS

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT	
Spirit Award Winner – Unsung Hero (2018), Alpha Chi Chapter Award (2017), Outstanding Staff Award (2016), Arland R. Meade Communications Award (2015)	
ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNICATION EXCELLENCE (ACE)	
Gold and Silver Awards – Marketing Campaigns - Team	2020
Bronze Award – Writing for Publication - Individual	2020
Gold Award – Social Media; Bronze Award - Marketing	2019

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles: 9 published or accepted in: Journal of Extension, Journal of Applied Communications, and the Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development. Select examples include:

Stearns, S. F., & Bonelli, J. (2020). Communication Helped UConn Extension Address Needs of Agricultural Producers. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, & Community Dev.* doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2020.101.008

Stearns, S. F. (2018). Developing Internal Partnerships to Enhance a Local Food Campaign. *Journal of Extension*, 55(4). Available at: <https://joe.org/joe/2018august/rb5.php>

Other Articles: Over 200 news articles, press releases, newsletters, and other media and public relations pieces authored or co-authored while at UConn. Select examples include:

Velazquez Answers Nutrition Questions on Radio Amor. (2020). Available at <https://today.uconn.edu/>

Growing Food and Health with the Mashantucket Tribe. (2020). Available at: <http://cag.uconn.edu/ces/highlights/>

When did GMO become a dirty word? (May 14, 2019). Originally distributed to 89,000. Re-published by nine organizations. Available at: <https://www.morningagclips.com/when-did-gmo-become-a-dirty-word/>

PRESENTATIONS

Presentations for local, state, and national audiences include eight to national audiences and over 20 total. Select examples include:

Alexander, J., Bergland-Riese, M., Stearns, S. F., Wirth, M. ACE Professional Conference, *The Extension web (r)evolution: Lessons and solutions from the front lines.* (June 24, 2020).

Stearns, S. F., Tian, X., & Burr, B. ACE, *Dialogue on GMOs: How to communicate consistently.* (June 22, 2020).

Stearns, S. F., National Association of Extension 4-H Agents, *Data Visualization.* (November 3, 2019).

Stearns, S. F., Ag Media Summit, (1) *Building Collaboration Among Social Media Managers*, and (2) *Case Studies: Using Social Media Events and Stories.* (Aug. 2018).

VIDEOGRAPHY

Creator or executive producer on over 50 video projects. Select examples include:

- What is Extension (2020)
- That 4-H Feeling (2020)
- Grow with us: Master Gardeners (2020)
- Ask UConn Extension – three videos (2019)
- UConn Tick Testing (2020)
- PEP: Empowering Communities (2020)
- Operation Community Impact – two (2020)
- We are UConn CAHNR Extension (2020)
- Biodegradable Plastic Mulch – two (2019)
- GMO Animations – three (2018 and 2019)

PERSONAL

CULTIVATING NEW FRONTIERS IN AGRICULTURE (CNFA)

July – September 2020

Virtual Communications and Marketing Volunteer in Malawi

CONNECTICUT GREENWAYS COUNCIL

2016 - present

Council Member and Connecticut Trail Symposium Committee Member

CONNECTICUT FARM BUREAU ASSOCIATION

2014 - present

State Strategic Visioning Committee, and Tolland County Board of Directors

Other Volunteer and Personal Experience: Town of Mansfield Agriculture Committee, Young Dairy Leaders Institute, and Connecticut and New England Morgan Horse Associations Boards of Directors.