

## Media Institute for Media Professionals Speaker Bios

**Kemi Alli, M.D.**, Chief Medical Officer, Henry J. Austin Health Center

Dr. Alli has been the Chief Medical Officer at Henry J. Austin Health Center, a federally qualified health center, since 2008. She has been a board certified pediatrician practicing at Henry J. Austin for over 15 years.

**Jessica Cumberbatch Anderson**, HuffPost.Black Voices

Ms. Anderson is [Lifestyle Editor for HuffPost Black Voices](#) and has more than ten years of experience covering women's lifestyle, home design, health and wellness, and travel content. Her work has been featured in *Martha Stewart Living*, *Parenting*, *Essence*, *IN New York* and *Where New York* magazines, and websites including ShelterPop, HGTV, The Nest and ELLEDecor.com. She is also a graduate of Syracuse University and co-founder of the home design blog [PatternPalette.com](#).

**Kim Bardakian**, Director of PR & Partnerships, Visit Oakland

Kim is the Director of PR and Partnership for Visit Oakland, the tourism bureau for the city. She uses her experience, network and passion in her current role to help promote the destination to the local, national and international press.

**Kisha Barton**, President, New York Chapter, National Black Public Relations Society

Kisha Barton, public relations specialist for kbartonPR, is the President of the Black Public Relations Society – NY Chapter. She has over eight years of experience creating and executing national and local events, new business development, strategic public relations campaigns, sponsorship, social media and employee communications in the entertainment, non-profit, business-to-consumer and government industries. Kisha is a member of several professional organizations including New York Association of Black Journalists and is currently pursuing her bachelor's degree at SUNY – Empire State College. Kisha owns kbartonPR, a PR firm serving entertainment, consumer and non-profit industries.

**Karen Taylor Bass**, [Chief Mom](#), **The Brand New Mommy**

Considered one of the premier authorities in the public relations industry, Karen Taylor Bass, has created strategic “out of the box,” public relations, branding, and marketing campaigns for celebrities, athletes, entrepreneurs, and corporations for over 15 years. Now she spends her time as the PR Expert/TaylorMade Media and CEO of The Brand New Mommy.com, a digital destination for savvy women renewing and redefining their personal brand post childbirth.

**Lou Capozzi**, **Foundation President, Public Relations Society of America**

Lou Capozzi is the president of The PRSA Foundation. The non-profit works to attract minority students to careers in public relations. The Foundation's efforts include programs with

universities and research into the challenges faced by minorities in entering the public relations profession. Until his retirement, Lou was chairman of the MSL Group, the world's 4<sup>th</sup>-largest public relations firm. He joined the MS&L in 1990 as director of creative and strategic development, and was named CEO in 1997. Under Lou's leadership, MS&L tripled in size and expanded its network to include 31 offices worldwide.

**Sandra Charet**, President, Charet & Associates

Sandy Charet has been recruiting for the PR and corporate communications industry for over twenty years. She works with specialists in every niche area from change management communications to publicity, from speechwriting to special events, investor relations to celebrity seeding. Though it's always been communications, she works across all industries including banking, consumer, technology and sports.

**Lou Capozzi**, Foundation President, Public Relations Society of America

Lou Capozzi is the president of The PRSA Foundation. The non-profit works to attract minority students to careers in public relations. The Foundation's efforts include programs with universities and research into the challenges faced by minorities in entering the public relations profession.

**Melanie Eversley**, Reporter, USA Today

Melanie is a reporter on the Breaking News Desk at USA Today, where she started working in 2004. The native New Yorker and Oberlin College graduate began her career at WPIX-TV in New York. After earning a master's degree from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, she made a switch to newspapers, working as a reporter at the Poughkeepsie Journal in Upstate New York and the Asbury Park Press in central New Jersey, and as Washington correspondent for the Detroit Free Press and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. She also has been a frequent freelancer for TheRoot.com and TheGrio.com. Her work has taken her from the Million Man March to the White House, and from Selma, Ala., to Staten Island in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

**Anton J. Gunn**, Director of External Affairs, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Anton J. Gunn is the Director of External Affairs in the Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs (IEA) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As Director of External Affairs, Mr. Gunn serves as the principal advisor for cultivating and maintaining relationships with external stakeholders for Secretary Sebelius. Mr. Gunn represents the Secretary in direct official dealings with national, state, and local external organizations. Before serving as the Director of External Affairs, Mr. Gunn served as the Regional Director in the Region IV Office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, covering Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina & Tennessee. Mr. Gunn represented the Secretary in direct official dealings with federal, state, local and tribal government organizations, and other external partners in the Region.

Before his federal service, Anton represented District 79 in the South Carolina House of Representatives, which consists of Richland and Kershaw Counties. Elected in 2008, Representative Gunn was the first African American in history to represent his district, and served on the Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Committee, which handles health care-related legislation. Rep. Gunn was the author and lead sponsor of legislation creating the General Assembly's first and only Joint Electronic Health Information Study Committee to examine the feasibility of increasing the use of Health Information Technology in South Carolina. Rep. Gunn also served the President and CEO of a public affairs and motivational speaking firm called Top Gunn Associates. He previously served as the Executive Director of South Carolina Fair Share, a non-profit consumer advocacy group focused on health care reform. He was a community relations associate for the Alliance for South Carolina's Children, working with community based organizations across the state on Medicaid expansion and the Children's Health Insurance Program. In 2007, he received the Families USA Consumer Health Care Advocate of the Year award. Anton received a BA and Masters of Social Work from the University of South Carolina.

**Kim Heard, Founder & CEO, Absolon**

Mr. Heard is the founder of Absolon, a McLean Virginia based management and information systems technology consulting firm. Mr. Heard has over twenty (20) years of experience using structured methodologies and a complete systems development (SDLC) full life-cycle approach to strategic planning, auditing, designing and implementing large Information Technology solutions for Fortune 50 commercial companies and governmental agencies. In addition, Mr. Heard is an experienced senior level IT strategy architect with extensive experience in the areas of Cloud Computing, Cyber Security, Project Management, Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL), Datacenter Consolidation, Next Generation Networks and Management Consulting. Mr. Heard has the ability to lead complex and dynamic environments, while readily shifting from strategic to tactical planning and operations.

**Kellen Henry, Producer: AP Mobile and Digital Products, Associated Press**

Kellen Henry is a producer for the Associated Press, focusing on mobile and digital platforms and newsroom analytics. She works in the Nerve Center, AP's hub of all-format news coordination, social media and digital products. Before joining AP, Kellen worked for Bloomberg Government and PBS NewsHour. She holds a bachelor's degree from West Virginia University and a master's degree from Northwestern University, where she reported on the energy industry and environmental issues.

**Janaye Ingram, National Action Network**

Ms. Ingram is the Acting National Executive Director of National Action Network (NAN) and oversees NAN's action agenda and legislative advocacy work under Founder and President, Rev. Al Sharpton. In this role, she focuses on various issues including education, criminal justice, housing, technology, economic development and healthcare among others. Janaye has been with the organization for two years, previously serving as the Washington, DC Bureau Chief, during which she led the organization's efforts around the 2012 Voter Engagement Tour, coalition work on issues like Stand Your Ground, planning of the 2012 and 2013 conventions and most recently

planning the “National Action to Realize the Dream Rally and March” in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington.

**Dawn Kelly**, VP, Global Communications Prudential

Dawn Kelly is a vice president in Global Communications, responsible for providing ongoing internal communications and media relations support for Prudential’s Retirement business, which delivers retirement plan solutions for public, private, and non-profit organizations. Since joining Prudential 13 years ago, Kelly has been responsible for developing and implementing multi-faceted communications strategies for the parent company, as well as the Prudential Foundation and a number of corporate initiatives.

**Gabrielle Lee**, Media Strategist/Account Supervisor, FleishmanHillard

Gabrielle Lee is an Account Supervisor at Fleishman-Hillard’s New York City healthcare practice. With more than seven years of healthcare communications, marketing and issues management experience, Gabrielle has provided strategic counsel to clients such as Johnson and Johnson and Genentech/Roche. She has developed and spearheaded highly successful public awareness and medic campaigns around issues such as obesity in minority communities, influenza prevention and Alzheimer’s disease. Gabrielle holds a B.A. degree in journalism and a M.A. degree in public relations both from Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge, LA.

**Jamilah Lemieux**, News and Lifestyle Editor, Digital, EBONY

Jamilah Lemieux is the News & Lifestyle Editor for EBONY.com, a title that cleverly covers many hats. A Chicago native and graduate of Howard University, she helped lead the successful relaunch of the iconic magazine brand’s website in 2012. Previously, her *Beautiful Struggler* blog galvanized a broad national audience for more than six years with her meditations on race, relationships and her own less-than-ordinary life. What began as a hobby quickly became a critically acclaimed online destination establishing Lemieux as an emergent and important voice on issues of gender, race and popular culture.

**Kevin Lewis**, The White House

Kevin Lewis is Director of African American media for the White House Communications Office. He is responsible for strategic communications planning and messaging for constituency media, and is the liaison for African American media including print, online publications, new media, and radio. Lewis was promoted to Director of African American Media in October 2010 after working as an aide under then Press Secretary Robert Gibbs in the White House Press Office since March 2009. Prior to joining the White House press team, he was a spokesman on President Obama’s Inaugural Committee working primarily with African American Media.

Before joining the Presidential Inaugural Committee, Lewis served on the Obama for America (OFA) campaign beginning in February of 2007. Lewis started on the exploratory committee in the Chicago campaign headquarters, just five days before the official announcement in Springfield, Illinois. During the campaign, he travelled throughout the country, working in Ohio, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. Lewis started his career at the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) and is a graduate of YES WE CAN, the campaign

operative training program created by then Senator Obama through his Political Action Committee, Hopefund. Lewis is from Brooklyn, New York and is an alumnus of New York University.

**James McGriff**, CEO, Peniel Solutions

James McGriff is co-founder, President and Chief Technology Officer for [Peniel Solutions, LLC](#) (PSL). Established in 2000, PSL is an innovative software engineering firm primarily servicing the federal government information technology (IT) market. As a former career Navy officer, certified as a Chief Information Officer (CIO), James brings tremendous experience and leadership to his company and the IT industry.

**Darisha Miller**, Public Relations/Communications Specialist, RAM Consulting Group  
With over 17 years of experience, Darisha Miller is the Public Relations/Communications Specialist at RAM Consulting Group. She monitors the web, social media, print industries journals and broadcast media. She keeps track of client availability and works with media professionals to schedule interviews and garner positive exposure throughout the region and country.

**Stacey Miller**, Social Media Manager, Vocus

Stacey Miller is a keynote speaker and Vocus' social media community manager. Her writing has appeared in Forbes, American Express Open Forum and the Washington Business Journal. In 2012, Oracle named Stacey a finalist for its Community Manager of the Year Award. A frequent advisor to industry marketing executives, Stacey has consulted on social media strategy for everyone from beginners to CEOs.

**Rachel Noerdlinger**, President, Noerdlinger Media

Rachel Noerdlinger is President of Noerdlinger Media (NM) and one of the leading Public Relations consultants in the United States. With over nineteen years of experience, she is a talented brand strategist and established newsmakers in the field. Rachel has been featured in Essence Magazine as one of the top ten females in the country making strides in their respective fields for her role in helping shape the message of NM client Reverend Sharpton and National Action Network. (Essence, May 2008).

**Dawn Angelique Roberts**, KD Communications Group, NABJ Associate Representative

Roberts is a media relations consultant, event specialist, social media enthusiast and founding partner of KD Communications Group, a full service communications firm with offices in Delaware, Maryland and Pennsylvania. Recognized as one of Philadelphia's most dynamic public relations professionals, Roberts is known for her leadership skills and passion for the field of communications.

**Darren Sands**, Digital Producer and Reporter, Black Enterprise

Darren Sands is a producer and reporter for Black Enterprise. He has worked for The Boston Globe, Newsday and the Village Voice and has contributed to NPR, City Limits and the New York Observer. He currently resides in Brooklyn.

**Lisa Skriloff**, President, Multicultural Marketing Resources, Inc.

Lisa Skriloff founded Multicultural Marketing Resources, Inc. (MMR) to bring visibility to the nation's top ethnic and niche marketing resources available to corporations and to journalist. Established in 1994, MMR is a public relations and marketing firm representing the leading experts in marketing to Hispanics, Asian Americans, African Americans, GLBT consumers and other ethnic and lifestyle groups. MMR is also the publisher of [The Source Book of Multicultural Experts](#), [MMRNews](#) and a [Speakers Showcase](#).

**Trisch L. Smith**, Executive Vice President, Edelman

Trisch possesses a strong background, broad client portfolio, and extensive skillset in multicultural, public affairs and non-profit communications.

Trisch helps to lead the firm's award-winning multicultural practice providing senior counsel to help organizations raise their profile, build brand loyalty and equity, and grow their diverse stakeholder base. Her focus is on ensuring that clients engage, educate and empower audiences in a meaningful and sustainable manner.

She has managed consumer, community outreach, positioning, and reputation management campaigns for clients seeking to engage varied stakeholders, including Walmart, Time Warner Cable, Chevron, Toyota, Starbucks, United Way of America, National 4-H Council and The Girl Scouts of the USA, among others. Trisch has also developed programs on behalf of several membership organizations, including the American Petroleum Institute and the American Plastics Council.

Trisch is vice-chair of the board of the National Black Child Development Institute, a trustee at Ebenezer A.M.E. Church and a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc

**Terrie M. Williams**, one of *Ebony* magazine's "Power 150" for Activism , *Woman's Day* magazine's "50 Women On A Mission To Change The World" and a Black history makers honoree on the 2013 *theGrio 100* list , is an advocate for change and empowerment.

For more than 30 years, she has used her influence and communications expertise to educate and engage audiences in causes. She launched The Terrie Williams Agency in 1988 with superstar Eddie Murphy and the late jazz legend Miles Davis as her first clients and has continued to represent some of the biggest personalities and businesses in entertainment, sports, business and politics. Terrie is known as a consummate deal maker—connecting the right people with the right situations. She was responsible for the initial financing for the renowned Hue-Man

Bookstore located in Harlem, NY-- and was associate producer for the 2008 Broadway production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.

Terrie's latest critically acclaimed book, entitled *Black Pain: It Just Looks Like We're Not Hurting*, is credited with starting an unprecedented national dialogue that recounts her personal struggles with depression and the impact the stigma of mental illnesses have particularly on the African-American community.