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At a Glance

Allena provides service through her boutique communications organization, GardenWall Publications, with over a decade of expertise focused on the power of writing, editing and translation. Its mission is to accomplish positive and just social change primarily through serving, supporting and collaborating with educational/academic organizations, nonprofits, policy makers, organized communities and intercultural teams.

Key Characteristics

Planner and goal setter with marked desire to contribute professionally
Service-minded and client-centric
Self-starter, motivated to produce
Driven learner, highly curious
Calm demeanor with ability to prioritize and manage multiple, competing demands
Adaptable and easy to work with
Quality-oriented with attention to detail
Proven critical thinking, analysis and conceptual abilities

Key Abilities

Demonstrated strength in print and digital communications
Exceptional expertise in grammar, syntax and editing
Efficient production of publish-ready copy (grammar/structure/editorial)
Strong and engaging tone in both writing and editing practices
Ability to craft and shift voice/style according to audience and goal
Comfortable with informative, persuasive, emotive composition, etc.
Aware of both print and online publishing needs/environments
Excellent project management abilities in engaging teams, setting goals, budgets and deadlines
Superb crafting and/or amplification of messaging in pursuit of communication or organizational goals
Effective positioning of narratives and other communications across all media
Measurement of communications goals through metric data collection and analysis
Use of several tools available for data analysis in measuring effectiveness of communications
Fact checking, exhaustive research abilities
AP, APA, Chicago (16), MLA, house style
Content Management Systems, Wordpress, Wiki platforms
CSS, HTML, XML markup
MS Office, Adobe, Acrobat, InDesign, InCopy, some Photoshop
SEO/SEM/Keyword research

Reporting (Print Publications)

Abilities:

- Identify high-interest stories and arcs and undertake strategic content planning to help publications meet content objectives

- Skilled in developing and producing stories, narratives or messaging pieces as directed, including those needing sophisticated text or dealing with complex or sensitive issues
- Synthesis of multiple sources, inputs and research in order to create cogent stories

Credits:

- *Adelante* Forward magazine (Latino-centric regional quarterly): managing editor, writer, blogger, reporter, fact checker, since 2005
- Latino Leaders magazine (monthly trade): past contributor of profiles and original reporting, highlights include Julian Castro, Supreme Court Justice Sonya Sotomayor, former Chicago Mayor Richard Daley
- Hispanic Executive magazine (monthly trade): former contributor of interview-based profiles of C-suite execs
- Green Building and Design magazine (monthly trade): former contributor, reporter
- Bitch magazine (feminist national quarterly): former book reviewer
- PTO Today magazine (monthly): former contributor, including well feature “Spend, Save, Grow”
- Positively magazine (consumer regional monthly): former contributor, general interest/how-to pieces
- FAITH magazine (statewide monthly): internship, including editorial, sidebars, filler, research and one special feature
- PDFs and links available, also see www.gardenwallpublications.com

Simplifying (Tech, Medical & Science Writing)

Abilities:

- Can accurately abridge, shorten or simplify complex ideas for specific audiences
- Use of multiple inputs and sources of information to produce logical, consistent text/compositions
- Preparation of documentation that is to exacting specifications and meets organization’s goals
- Proactive relationship development with scientists, medical professionals, engineers, developers
- Eagerly focused on working with varied, diverse teams; receptive and curious learning-oriented character

Credits:

- Al Raheleh Publications: ongoing contracted editor for a monthly medical magazine for internal hospital users and employees
- St. Joseph Mercy Health System: Spanish translation of PowerPoint project “Great Cases in Dermatology,” including advanced medical vocabulary and concepts
- Michigan State University Center for Water Sciences: staff position working with grants (NIH, NSF and more), science journals, departmental projects, community-focused educational materials and the publications of researchers, professors and fellows (2006-2007)
- Michigan State University Center for Advancing Microbial Risk Assessment: staff position supporting research scientists in grant proposals, grant management, workshop and educational collateral and website maintenance (2006-2007)
- International Journal of Environmental Health: staff position assisting the Journal’s North American Managing Editor, research scientist Dr. Joan Rose (staff position, 2006-2007)
- Green Building and Design magazine (monthly trade magazine): past regular contributor, simplifying engineering and architectural information for a more general audience
- FYI Learning: creation of two full online courses in allied health, inc. 30 lessons each, 60+ assessments, projects and teacher’s guide
- Gale Cengage: Spanish translation of dozens of medical- and health-related essays for Gale’s Health and Wellness Resource Center

- SERO Project: Spanish translation of informational materials and brochures on HIV advocacy, including specialized medical terminology (partially pro bono)

Relating (Essays)

Abilities:

- Positive relationship development with readers through text
- Identification of high-interest and relevant subject matter
- Deft handling of sensitive topics

Credits:

- Midwestern Society for the Study of Literature: presenter, “The Kidney Stone in the Bottle,” nonfiction essay category)
- Chicken Soup for the Soul, Family Matters: “The Best-Laid Plans” semi-finalist
- Michigan NOCIRC: “Who Owns Benny?” 2004 honorable mention
- “I Believe in Strong Women” considered for NPR’s “For This I Believe” series
- “Follow My Lead” considered for the anthology “Professor, Can I Bring My Baby to Class?”

Exploring (Travel Writing)

Abilities:

- Ability to relate to readers and subjects of varying cultural and language backgrounds
- Developed and emotionally intelligent cultural and community awareness
- Identification of high-interest and relevant subject matter
- Skillful handling of sensitive or complex topics
- Advanced Spanish language abilities, including dialectical and regional applicability
- Knowledge of rhetorical practices of several regions

Credits:

- “Jewels of Michoacán; A Tour of the Ocampo,” in development with Mexico Travel Board
- “The Top 10 Volunteer Travel Opportunities,” Matador Travel

Building & Perfecting (Editing & Proofreading)

Abilities:

- Focused eye for copy mistakes with ability to change mindset based on chosen style (CMS, AP, APA)
- Dedicated shepherding of beginning drafts to ending polished product
- Familiar with various states of production, can edit on hard copy, soft copy, PDF, Word, internal systems
- Familiar with specialized publication steps, such as slugging of first pass, second pass cold read
- Aiding publications to analyze, audit, evaluate and establish direction of content using goals and objectives
- Manage editorial calendars, including calendars used across several teams/users/contractors/departments/mediums
- Able to identify trending stories and high-interest arcs
- Can simplify complex text/ideas for targeted readers

- Employ a proactive, positive author/writer/editor relationship
- Easily cooperate with all players in publications process from beginning to final print
- Able to manage volume projects across multiple vendors/sub-contractors

Credits:

- *Adelante* Forward Magazine (regional quarterly): managing editor with complete production responsibilities from helping to set edition themes to collection and editing of content, to partnering with graphics professionals and final proofread and printing preparation (since 2005)
- Al Rahelah (publisher in Riyadh, KSA): copyediting and proofreading of publisher's client's documents, often non-native English
- Michigan State University, Dept. of Fisheries and Wildlife: staff assistant position that included web and document editing (2006-2007)
- Lansing Community College: staff position as publications editor responsible for marketing pieces and internal documents (2005-2006)
- Laureate Education (a division of Sylvan): former contracted long-term copyeditor for Walden University online classes and National Hispanic University marketing texts
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: former sub-contracted proofreading of Broward County, FL curriculum portal
- Bill Smith Group: proofreading and soft annotation of K-6 leveled readers K-6, multiple projects
- Daydream Education: soft annotation and language localization, multiple projects)
- Eisemann: contracted editing of several projects, including final audit of alignment with Texas and California state education standards
- Current Events (national weekly children's newspaper): former long-term copyeditor
- Geneva Times (English-language magazine based in Geneva): former long-term copyeditor
- Int'l Journal of Environmental Health: assistant to the North American Managing Editor (staff position through MSU)
- Faith Publishing Service: editorial intern for publisher of Catholic magazines and custom prints nationwide
- "Latino History and Culture: An Encyclopedia" by Lugo-Lugo, Sharpe Publishing, second pass cold read of galleys
- "Lesson Plans That Wow" by McCormick, Teaching Press, soft annotation
- Dissertation support (multiple, various)
- Book proposal prep and support (multiple, various)

Positioning (Web, SEO, Blogging & Social)

Abilities:

- Application of yearly, required SEO, keyword and Google algorithm training from IAC Corp
- Aiding organizations to establish key performance indicators for digital, social media or other (combined) campaigns, including measurements
- Supporting client's strategic content planning by helping in auditing, analysis and evaluation of practices and objectives for digital campaigns
- Aiding in establishing the direction of client content driven by goals and objectives
- Analysis of metrics and data and use of information in refining production, including Google, Facebook, email and Twitter analytics, and tools such as Hootsuite, ShareTally, etc.
- Management of editorial calendars, including calendars used across several teams, contractors and departments
- Understanding of content marketing concepts and practices that produce measurable results

- Producing sophisticated messaging relating to sensitive or complex issues
- Creation of content based on current trends, and optimization of content/campaigns based on engaging targeted audiences
- Authentic connection with influencers and VIPs who will amplify messaging and content

Credits:

- Huffington Post: occasional blogger, parenting, Latino, social justice, immigration topics
- IAC/Interactive Corp's About.com network: contracted writer, blogger, managing editor of Freelance Writing site (since 2006)
- Working Mother magazine: occasional blogger
- *Adelante Forward* magazine: social media launch, campaign designer and maintenance
- City of Lansing/Lansing Regional Sister Cities Committee: social media launch, campaign designer and maintenance (volunteer, 2 years)
- Lansing Community College: teacher/lecturer "Intro to Facebook," "Social Media Marketing," and "Twitter- What's the Big Deal?"
- Adoptive Families magazine: SEO/Keyword research and overhaul of internal metadata
- MediaBistro: former contributor, original reporting and service pieces
- Gale Cengage: several content projects over three-years span
- ParentingDiva.com: former long-term blogger
- The Moderate Vegetarian/DietDetective.com: former long-term blogger
- WritersUnbound/451 Press Network: former blogger/page editor
- Women on Writing: former regular contributor of research pieces and how-tos

Convincing (MarComm/Copywriting/PR/Media)

Abilities:

- Simplification of complex text/ideas for specific audiences (internal and external)
- Development, production and implementation of communication policies and goals
- Reporting and analysis of measurement data, post-campaign
- Ability to adapt messaging in response to needs, such as those inherent in sensitive or complex issues
- Management of volume and/or multi-level projects across platforms, outlets, publications, vendors and contractors
- Accurate reading of trends with the ability to implement and produce responsive campaigns
- Optimization of campaigns based on targeted audiences
- Media outreach ability demonstrated by successful pitching and established media relationships
- Employment of practice-based skills in media relations, media strategy and community outreach
- Identification of stories and arcs of high-interest to media outlets

Credits:

- Progress Michigan: current, ongoing contract with social justice writing/editing, media outreach and pitching responsibilities
- *Adelante Forward* magazine: ongoing editorial manager position which includes interface with and service of several large regional advertisers (since 2005)
- Michigan State University: staff position with Web copy and marketing responsibilities (2006-07)
- Lansing Community College: staff position with marketing and PR responsibilities (2005-06)
- Michigan Association on Problem Gambling: rebranding project with copy and graphic coordination
- Laureate Education: marketing editorial project for National Hispanic University collateral pieces
- Conn Education: school supply catalog project, providing sales copy/copywriting

- Lansing Regional Sister Cities Commission: publicity chair for fundraising event, full multi-media campaign coordination (volunteer, 2014)
- Cristo Rey Church Fiesta: publicity chair for 5-figure fundraising event, full multi-media campaign (volunteer, 2013)
- Lansing for César E. Chávez Committee: publicity chair for fundraising dinner including media outreach (volunteer, 2014)

Changing (Justice, Grant Writing and Nonprofits)

Abilities:

- Experience in working on justice and advocacy projects with varied and diverse team members
- Significant work history in public/political affairs and community and civic engagement
- Service ethic focused on community and the well-being of others
- Can apply an understanding of the dynamics of inequality and inequity to work and writing
- Listening- and learning-focused in complex, sensitive or controversial situations
- Employ characteristics of emotional intelligence and sensitivity in working with diverse populations
- Service as a storyteller able to craft reflective, compelling and sophisticated messaging in all mediums
- Simplification and editing of complex text/ideas/stories for specific audiences (internal and external)
- Can create cogent text from multiple, disparate sources
- Can use policies, research and best practices to produce, change, maintain and/or implement text and campaigns
- Experience in curation and empathetic use of individual's narratives and applicable stories
- Employ compassion and kindness in the collection/use of quotes, stories and anecdotes
- Appropriate use, dissemination and release of messages in pursuit of organizational goals
- Management of editorial calendars, including multi-level, mixed-media production calendars used by teams
- Coordination of multi-level, multi-media and multi-person publicity/marketing campaigns
- Can form relationships with influencers, VIPs, board members, grantors and others in a position to support causes
- Development and implementation of communications policies and goals, and ability to acquire stakeholder's support in reaching them
- Can report and analyze metric data to use for refining of messaging, policies or goals

Credits:

- Huffington Post: occasional blogger on justice and development topics
- *Adelante* Forward magazine: managing editor for this publication with a focus on the wellbeing and education of Latinos in the region (current, since 2005)
- Progress/Engage Michigan: ongoing contractual provision of talking points, news releases, PR, social media, web content and translation in pursuit of organization's policy goals (since 2011)
- Michigan United: ongoing communications service to this justice-oriented organization through Progress/Engage Michigan (see above, since 2011)
- Michigan Alliance of Latinos Moving Toward Advancement: ongoing occasional provision of talking points/speech on policy and justice topics such as the DACA program, driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants
- Michigan Association on Problem Gambling: past intern in grant research and proposal writing
- Michigan Association on Problem Gambling: completed several projects including rebranding and brochure production

- “Writing for Social Justice” online class: designer and instructor of three cohorts over the course of 2013-2014 through Women on Writing
- Lansing Regional Sister Cities Commission: provision of writing services, including grants, web, social media, and publicity pieces (former volunteer)

Educating (Curriculum and Test Writing)

Abilities:

- Classroom teaching experience (K-12, college freshman, returning adults)
- Familiarity with K-12 and post-secondary learning environment, research and practice
- Production of lesson plans that connect with students at their level/interest
- Simplification of complex text/ideas for specific, leveled audiences
- Synthesis of multiple sources of information to create required text
- Training in assessment, rubrics, curriculum, lessons, including specialized training for online schools
- Understanding of Common Core standards and curriculum alignment
- Use of Blooms taxonomy, Webb’s depth of knowledge, multiple intelligences systems and more
- Able to match prose to Lexile, Fountas Pinnell, Gunning fog and/or Flesch-Kincaid using proprietary tools

Credits:

- FYI Learning: creation of two full online courses in allied health, inc. 30 lessons each, 60+ assessments, projects and teacher’s guide
- Educational Testing Service (ETS): rubric-based essay scoring (multiple projects)
- Pearson Educational Management: rubric-based essay scoring (multiple projects)
- ACT Work Keys Program: test question writing
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: proofreading of Broward County, FL curriculum portal
- Laureate Education: editorial work for Walden University online classes
- Council on Aid to Education: rubric-based essay scoring
- Eisemann: curriculum writing and alignment to Texas and California state education standards
- Remilon: writing of online undergrad lessons for several different platforms, specializing in literature and business topics

Sharing (Teaching & Lectures)

Abilities:

- Familiarity with K-12 and post-secondary learning environment, research and practice
- Classroom teaching experience (K-12, college freshman, returning adults)
- Can simplify complex text/ideas for student understanding
- Lesson plans that connect with students at their level/interest
- Specialty training in assessment and rubrics for online schools
- Training and experience in application of Common Core
- Able to provide specialized lectures and training to adult learners in person or online

Credits:

- U.S. Department of Education/Michigan State University Upward Bound: summer program instructor for composition and literature grades 9-11

- Michigan State University, Dept. of Writing and Rhetoric: graduate student teaching assistant for freshman composition (heavy ESL student population)
- Lansing Community College: adjunct faculty, teaching seminars and workshops
- Midwest Society for the Study of Literature: seminar presentation on writing nonfiction essays
- Writing at the Ledges: guest speaker, “Breaking Into Freelance Writing and Editing”
- Boomers & Beyond Recharge: guest speaker, “Using Social Networking”
- LCC Entrepreneur Conference: guest speaker, “Social Media,” and “Forming Your Home Business LLC”
- Women on Writing: developed, wrote and taught online writing classes “How to Become a PAID Book Reviewer” and “Writing for Social Justice” (three cohorts over the course of two years)

Recommending (Reviewing)

Abilities:

- Even-handed evaluation of books and products
- Ability to produce relatable reviews that address audience needs

Credits:

- Kirkus Reviews: contractual reviewer of independently published titles and Spanish language titles
- IAC/About.com: reviews of books and writer’s resources
- Bitch magazine: former regular contributor of book reviews
- EBSCO: writer of business book summaries
- Sacramento Book Review: book reviewer of nonfiction, modern lit and republished classics
- Apex Book Promotion: reviewed nonfiction and fiction (multiple projects)
- International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences: reviewed websites in consideration for Webby Awards (multiple years)
- Delos Literary Magazine: long fiction reviewer
- Women on Writing: developed, wrote and taught class “How to Become a PAID Book Reviewer,” three cohorts over the course of two years, online

Bridging (Spanish/English Translation)

Abilities:

- Accurate, polished English/Spanish translation, transliteration and text localization
- Cultural/community awareness as a support to translation
- Use of multiple Spanish dialects with knowledge of regional applicability
- Understanding of Latino community, including rhetorical practices

Credits:

- Progress/Engage Michigan and Michigan United: ongoing contract for English-Spanish translation of media documents and interface with Spanish-language media
- MI Protection and Advocacy Service: brochure project “Who We Are”
- St. Joseph Mercy Health System: PowerPoint project “Great Cases in Dermatology”
- Gale Cengage: multiple projects, medical and health related, including translation of dozens of essays for Gale’s Health and Wellness Resource Center
- Gale Cengage: translation of portions of “Encyclopedia of Cuba”
- Bill Smith Group: proofreading Spanish/bilingual leveled readers

- SERO Project: translation of informational materials and brochures on HIV advocacy, including specialized medical terminology (partially pro bono)

Education

- Michigan State University: MA in Pro Writing (Literacy and Pedagogy specialization), one year completed
- Michigan State University: BA in English, Minors in Education and Spanish, 2005
- Internships: FAITH magazine (editorial) and MI Association on Problem Gambling (grant writing)

Training/Conferences/Seminars

- Rhetoric Society America: workshop “Latino Rhetoric” (competitive entry workshop)
- American Writers and Artists Institute: copywriting seminar
- MSU Alumni College: seminars on grant seeking and proposal writing
- IAC Corporation/About.com: annual training (SEO, SERPS, Google, content, social) 2008-2015
- Nielsen Corporation: webinar “State of the Hispanic Consumer”
- The Storytelling Non Profit Conference 2016
- Center for Story Based Strategy, various webinars/workshops:
 - Introduction of Story Based Strategy, Detroit 2013 (competitive entry workshop)
 - Online Organizing; A Trick or a Treat?
 - Dissecting Disintermediation, Messaging Middlemen
- Education Writers Association: various conferences, seminars, webinars
 - 68th Annual Seminar, Cost and Benefits, Covering the Economics of Education, full scholarship awarded for travel/attendance, 2015
 - Mine the Gap: Working with Data, 2013
 - Visiting School Campuses: Guide for Reporters, 2013
 - Common Core Coverage Deep Dive, 2013
 - Gender Disparities in the Classroom, 2015
 - School District Finance and Bonds, 2015
 - Covering Common Core in the Classroom, 2016
- Immigrant Learning Center Public Education Institute: various webinars
 - Immigrant Student Success Models and Tools, 2012
 - Data and Trends in US Immigration, 2013
 - Comprehensive Immigration Reform, 2013
 - New Messaging Strategies; Positioning Immigrants as Assets, 2014
 - Building United Communities of Immigrants and African Americans, 2015
 - Immigrants and Health Care, 2016
- 4Good Organization: various webinars
 - Amplify Your Brand
 - Excel for Grant Writers
 - How To Tell Donors a Story
 - State Your Case; Crafting Advocacy Messages
 - How to Plan for Grant Application Success
 - Building Meaningful Online Engagement
 - 3 Key Ingredients for a Successful Online Campaign
 - Supercharge Your Fundraising with Content Marketing
 - Storytelling for Nonprofits
 - LinkedIn for Nonprofits
 - Journalism Tricks to Spice Up Grant Proposals

- Raise More Money with Smarter Email Marketing
- How to Tell Your Stories on Social Media
- Grantwriter as Strategic Leader
- Mobile Impact 101
- Numbers and Narrative: How to Construct the Crucial Evaluation Piece of Grant Proposals and Reports
- Nonprofit Blogging
- How to use Data to Get Grants
- Leveraging Soc Media for Nonprofit Fundraising
- Email Marketing 101
- Telling the Right Story for Your Online Campaign
- Data Mining for Direct Mail
- Fundraising with Soc Media
- SEO 101 for Nonprofits
- Diversity Awareness for Nonprofits
- Pinning for Good; How Nonprofits Can Use Pinterest
- Crisis Communications for Nonprofits
- 35 Ways to Max Fundraising Through Your Website
- Perfect Phrases for Fundraising
- Google Analytics for the Nonprofit Beginner
- Indie Publishing for the Nonprofit
- Writing Amazing Appeal Letters
- Google Apps for Nonprofits
- Social Media Metrics; Turning Data Into Content

Committee/Volunteer Work

Past:

- Commissioner (appointed), Lansing Sister Cities Commission, Guadalajara sub-committee
- Publicity Chair, Lansing Sister Cities Commission
- Campaign to Bring Chávez to Lansing Theatres
- Meals on Wheels (Eaton County, MI)
- ACTION Lansing (immigrants' rights)
- SERO Project (HIV advocacy)
- Publicity Chair, Cristo Rey Church Fiesta
- Publicity for Lansing for César E. Chávez dinner/fundraiser
- Organizer, Waverly Middle School contingent to GVSU Latino Youth Conference
- Waverly Community Schools Human Growth & Development parent representative
- Waverly Community Schools Marketing Committee
- Waverly Community Schools PTO

Present:

- Judge, Michigan Women's Hall of Fame, 2014-2016
- Latino Media Summit committee member, Michigan State University's Samora Research Institute
- Waverly Education Foundation, volunteer

Membership

- National Writers Union UAW Local 1981/AFL-CIO

- Education Writers Association
- Editorial Freelancers Association
- Freelancers Union
- Greater Lansing Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Awards

- Michigan NOCIRC: “Who Owns Benny?” honorable mention, essay category, 2004
- Rhetoric Society of America: Latino Rhetoric Workshop, competitive entry, 2013
- MSU Office of Inclusion: Chávez Community Service Award (w/*Adelante* Forward magazine), 2015
- Educational Writers Association: 68th Annual Seminar full travel scholarship, 2015

References

Ryan Bates, Director, Michigan United, Ryan@michiganunited.org

Lonnie Scott, Director, Progress Michigan, Lonnie@progressmichigan.org

Dr. Nino Rodriguez, Publisher of *Adelante* Forward Magazine, 517-505-4772

Wendy Perdero, former Editor-in-Chief of Latino Leaders magazine, wrperdero@yahoo.com