

LINDSEY HARNESS, Ph.D.

Waubeka, WI

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PROFILE SUMMARY: Dedicated and results-driven leader with 15+ years of experience in women’s issues research, public policy development, stakeholder engagement, community education, gender equity advocacy, and organizational leadership. Expertise in policy research, legislative collaboration, program development, and strategic planning. Proven ability to build consensus among stakeholders, manage multi-faceted programs, and advocate for policies that promote women-centered equity and inclusion. Proven expertise in equity-focused research and programming, with a strong background in LGBTQ+ advocacy. Experience includes facilitating university workshops, representing the U.S. Speakers Program in international initiatives, engaging in high-level institutional and policy research, and developing community-based programs that support LGBTQ+ individuals. Skilled in fostering inclusive policies and initiatives that drive meaningful change. Passionate about empowering women and advancing systemic change through research, program initiatives, and strategic partnerships.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Organizational Communication Strategy
Equity-Focused Program Development
Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration
Strategic Planning and Execution
Research Design and Analysis
Grant Writing and Fundraising
Policy Analysis and Development
Policy Advocacy and Community Organizing

Budget and Resource Management
Staff Leadership and Mentorship
Curriculum and Training Development
Institutional Review Board Protocol Management
Program Development and Implementation
Board and Council Leadership
Group Facilitation and Consensus-Building
Local, National, and International Public Speaking

WORK EXPERIENCE

Alverno College, WI Executive Director, Research Center for Women and Girls 2021 – Present

Nonprofit research organization focused on advancing gender equity through research, policy advocacy, and community organizing.

- Conducted comprehensive research design, data collection, and analysis to address societal challenges, producing actionable insights to inform gender equity initiatives.
- Collaborated with legislators, policymakers, and community organizations to develop and implement policy initiatives that address gender disparities and advocate for impactful change.
- Secured significant funding through successful grant writing and donor cultivation, increasing annual contributions.
- Built strategic partnerships with global and local organizations, scaling impact and fostering collaborative programs.
- Facilitated stakeholder engagement through professional presentations and strategic communications, strengthening organizational alignment and visibility.
- Directed cross-functional teams using agile methodologies, achieving an improvement in project completion and outcomes.
- Managed communication strategies, including website and social media platforms, leading to an increase in audience engagement.
- Integrated data solutions into workflows to enhance operational efficiency and improve stakeholder access to real-time insights.
- Led public engagement efforts, including presentations, reports, and media relations to elevate awareness of gender equity issues.

Alverno College, WI Associate Professor, Communication & Technology Dept. 2021 – 2024

Educational institution dedicated to innovative, student-centered learning and professional development.

- Designed and delivered innovative courses, such as Women’s History and Leadership, Introduction to Women & Gender Studies, Persuasion & Advocacy, Research Methods, Writing/Editing, and Public Relations/Social Media Management.
- Mentored doctoral candidates on interdisciplinary research, resulting in impactful studies on equity, education, and cybersecurity.

- Facilitated learning focus on analyzing policy and public discourse, exploring ethical frameworks to make value-based decisions of persuasion and advocacy.

Alverno College, WI Director, Women and Gender Studies Program 2019 – 2021

Academic program promoting interdisciplinary scholarship and advocacy for gender equity.

- Led research and teaching efforts focused on gender equity, developing interdisciplinary curricula that addressed global and local challenges.
- Facilitated community partnerships to promote advocacy and research-driven gender equity initiatives.
- Created and implemented inclusive teaching strategies to foster student engagement and promote critical thinking on social justice issues.
- Conducted and supported research projects on equity and inclusion, producing actionable recommendations for systemic change.
- Directed strategic communication efforts to enhance program visibility and engagement, including digital outreach and advocacy campaigns.

Milwaukee, WI Senior Researcher, National Research Center for Distance Education and Technological Advancements 2014 – 2023

National nonprofit dedicated to advancing distance and competency-based education through research and innovation.

- Conducted and published research on distance and competency-based education, influencing national policies and best practices.
- Coordinated the National Summit at Educause, engaging stakeholders to advance innovation in distance education strategies.
- Secured grant funding to support groundbreaking research projects, expanding the center’s impact and reach.
- Developed teaching and learning assessments tailored for distance education, improving learner outcomes and program alignment with standards.
- Fostered partnerships with stakeholders to implement and scale innovative educational initiatives.

EDUCATION

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Ph.D. in Communication Studies, May 2016

Missouri State University – Master of Arts in Communication Studies, August 2008

Missouri State University – Bachelor of Science in Organizational Communication Studies, June 2006

ADDITIONAL CREDENTIALS

Graduate Certificate in Rhetorical Leadership – University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2011

Rhetorical Leadership focuses on mastering persuasive communication and strategic messaging to influence and inspire effectively.

Invited Member, United States Speaker Bureau – U.S. Department of State, 2024

U.S. Speaker Bureau connects events with expert speakers, managing selection, contracts, and logistics to ensure impactful presentations

HONORS & LEADERSHIP

Community Partner, WWC Factsheets, Wisconsin, Wisconsin Women’s Council

Steering Committee, Status of Women in Wisconsin, Wisconsin Women’s Council

Consultant, WI Women’s Well-Being Index, Women’s Fund of Greater Milwaukee/Women’s Fund of Fox Valley

Invited Member, United States Speakers Bureau, U.S. Department of State

Keynote Speaker & Policy Advocacy, Slovenia Ministry of Education & U.S. Department of State

PUBLICATIONS & REPORTS (a complete list can be provided upon request)

The Alverno Report: Women in Public Life (2022)

Great Lakes Women’s Leadership Report: Executive Summary (2024)

Impact Report, Women’s Fund of Greater Milwaukee Annual Event (2024)

Values-Based Decision-Making in a Digital Age, Slovenian Educational Network