

## **Cecilia Gilbert**

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### **SUMMARY**

Extensive experience in communications, media relations, coordination of special event projects, governmental relations, community relations and community outreach. A veteran professional specializing in event planning with a proven history of spearheading efforts on behalf of the City of Milwaukee with diverse community groups, non-profit and charitable organizations, and for-profit entities within the Greater Milwaukee area, regionally, and nationally.

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

#### **2013-2017 Support for Business Liaison Department of Public Works**

Responsible for managing and coordinating all services provided by the Department of Public Works needed to successfully plan, implement and develop all materials and resources for the Support for Business Program minimizing the impact of paving and bridge projects that are a part of the annual capital improvements program.

- Advocate on behalf of neighborhood businesses and residents' problems that fall under the realm of DPW, and refer problems to other government organizations when necessary.
- Determine the needs of businesses before the construction begins in order to create signage and work with project team to determine alternate means for parking, access routes, etc. Provide information to businesses on how to get assistance in marketing their business during constructions projects.
- Arrange public information meetings with area businesses and stakeholders prior to the project being implemented. Prepare and disseminate information on the various construction projects via newsletter, email communication and the Support for Business program website.

#### **2001-2013: Permits and Communications Manager Department of Public Works**

Special Event Responsibilities Included:

- Coordinating meetings for major annual events, such as The Great Circus Parade; Bastille Days; RiverSplash; St. Patrick's Day Parade; Miller Lite Ride for the Arts; Holiday Parade; and large conventions that require Department services.
- Serving as liaison to Common Council members, Mayor's Office, business leaders and business organizations located in the requested permitted areas regarding permit restrictions and impact.
- Coordinating with other inter-governmental agencies and businesses affected by special events, such as the Milwaukee Police Department's Planning and Operations Division; Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department; State Department of Transportation; Milwaukee County Transit System; Milwaukee County Parks System and U.S. Coast Guard.
- Approving all other permits for block parties, film shoots, temporary shuttle bus service, and banner permits.

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**Communications Responsibilities Include:**

- Communicating with various segments of the media on a weekly basis regarding routine D.P.W. activities and making important announcements that affect the general public, via press releases and news conferences.
- Serving as official spokeswoman for the Department in television and radio interviews.
- Coordinating requests for media interviews and preparing Commissioner, division directors, and management to answer inquiries.
- Responding to requests for “open records” information from the media, attorneys and citizens, and responding to requests for statistical data regarding D.P.W. operations.

**1990 – 2000: Marketing Program Coordinator**  
**Department of City Development/Marketing & Civic Development**

Was responsible for building ongoing awareness of the various programs the Department had to offer to businesses, community organizations, and individuals to further economic growth within the City by:

- Producing support materials, such as informational brochures, video tapes, displays, etc.
- Coordinating conferences, informational seminars, and annual meetings that highlighted economic development programs.
- Producing and gathering specialized materials for specific endeavors to gain national and regional recognition, such as contest support materials, displays, magazine requests and slides for reproduction.
- Providing support services to initiatives and projects initiated by other divisions with City government, such as demographic research, real estate data, and visual components to interest businesses in locating in Milwaukee, i.e., Rockwell International.
- Managing the City of Milwaukee’s Dr. M. L. King Jr. Celebration activities since 1991, including contest activities for school children, maintaining sponsorship relations with various corporations, scheduling location and speaker for annual scholarship luncheon, and preparing program activities for annual Dr. King Birthday Celebration at the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts.

**1989-1990: Common Council Liaison**  
**Department of City Development/Commissioner’s Office**

- Coordinated meetings among elected officials, staff and developers.
- Managed the approval process of documentation on behalf of the Mayor, City Attorney, Common Council, etc.
- Coordinated the City’s first Operation Install program, designed to insure that homes within the north and south communities of the City were equipped with working fire detectors. This included working with donors of fire detectors, the Milwaukee Fire Department, Building Inspection, numerous volunteers, and social and community organizations
- Scheduled legislative files for Common Council committee meetings for development of projects in the City of Milwaukee.

**1988-1989: Public Information Officer**  
**City of Milwaukee/Emergency Government**

- Created and disseminated information on emergency preparedness, including disaster plans in various languages.

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- Provided workshops on emergency preparedness (snow storms, hazardous material spills/explosions, flooding) to community organizations, school groups, nursing homes and residential facilities, and coordinated annual Emergency Government Conference.
- Served as media spokeswoman during the flood of 1986 to provide updates on status of damage and victim services.

**1983-1986: Legislative Assistant**  
**City of Milwaukee/Common Council**

- Responded to businesses' and constituent complaints, concerns and correspondence of behalf of the 4<sup>th</sup> District Alderman.
- Assisted the alderman in facilitating neighborhood and downtown residential and business improvements
- Collaborated with City, State and other governmental agencies to improve consistent access to services.
- Coordinated special events, which included working with City departments, downtown associations, businesses and volunteer organizations to insure a safe and well-run event.
- Represented the alderman at City government, neighborhood and downtown business association meetings on various matters.
- Designed, wrote and edited aldermanic newsletters, brochures and other relevant correspondence.

**1980-1983: Administrative Assistant**

**Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors**

- Assisted the 17<sup>th</sup> District County Supervisor with issues concerning the district
- Responded to constituent inquiries regarding social service assistance and worked with county staff to insure follow-up.
- Assisted County Supervisor in preparing agendas for neighborhood, business and committee meetings.
- Worked with County Executive, County Parks, Dept. of Public Works and the Sheriff's Department in response to issues concerning the district (programs, services, etc.).

**1976-1980: Community Relations Analyst**

**City of Milwaukee Commission on Community Relations**

- Investigated discrimination complaints in the areas of employment, housing and public accommodations
- Conducted workshops in diversity training for City departments, non-profit organizations, school groups and community agencies.
- Served as volunteer coordinator of the Milwaukee Community Pride Expo, a special event held to educate residents about health programs, fire/safety education, and provide self-esteem exercises and information about educational opportunities.
- Served as spokeswoman for Commission on television/radio talk programs and spoke at numerous community/business programs.

**SPECIAL EVENT PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION**

The following special event projects represent a sample of my event planning experience including the planning, execution and promotion of large-scale events. Engaging community partners and vendors, I have a full range of accomplishments with success in all aspects of special events from logistics, to marketing, to fundraising with diverse communities and constituencies.

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- City/County Tree Lighting Ceremony (1993- 2013)
- National League of Cities, National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials Reception (2013)
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. City-Wide Event (1991-2000)
- RiverSplash (1990–1997)
- Central City Tour of Homes (1991-1993)
- City of Milwaukee Neighborhood Tour Brochures (1990- 1996)

#### PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS

- Board member, *Cathedral Square Friends*, 2021
- Board member, *Lakefront Festival of the Arts*, 2015 - present
- Board member/*Co-Chair Milwaukee Repertory Theater*, 2013-2017 ("The Color Purple", 2014 "Dreamgirls", 2015 community outreach)
- Board member, *Pabst Mansion*, 2001 - 2018
- Board member, *VISIT Milwaukee*, 2005 - 2017
- *Chair, Diversity & Inclusion Committee, VISIT Milwaukee*, 2005-2017
- Member, *Multicultural Tourism Committee, Greater Milwaukee Convention & Tourism Bureau*, 1993-2005
- Board (and member), *Black Public Relations Society*, 2005-2012
- *Board Chair, International Arts Festival Advisory Board*, "A Celebration of Praise", 2003
- *Co-Chair, YWCA Circle of Women*, 1992
- Board member, *Milwaukee Repertory Theater*, 1995-2005

#### AWARDS

- Debra Usinger Outstanding Community Partner Award, 2018
- Lamplighter Award, *VISIT Milwaukee*, 2013
- Downtown Cheerleader, *Downtown Business Improvement District*, 2009
- Standing Ovation Award, *VISIT Milwaukee*, 2008
- Friends of Brady Street Award, Brady Street Area Association, 2003

#### EDUCATION

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
B.A. Early Childhood Education, 1975  
B.A. Community Education, 1976

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