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P a o l a D i a z - T o r r e s

Summary of Qualifications

Having worked with foundations, federal, state, business, nonprofit organizations, Economic Development agencies and International NGO's in Ecuador and in the U.S. has allowed me to widely develop **public relations competencies** that help me to communicate effectively across diverse audiences. Furthermore, my experience working within the private industry including decision-makers of the top hundred fortune companies in Ecuador, the media, and business development networks in the U.S. has sharpened my understanding of **stakeholder's relationships** at all levels including the social, political and economic settings.

As I have a generalist training in business administration and public administration and have extensive experience in overseeing and creating projects and programs in both environments, I have strong **management and multi-task skills** with emphasis in the implementation of **strategic direction, business planning** including **process improvement, marketing** (product and market development, media and donor relationships, fundraising, etc), **administration and operations**(standard operating procedures, organizational policies, performance measurement, strategic planning, etc), and **financial analysis** (budgeting, business and personal financial planning, procurement, etc.).

I have also learned to keep a constant learning attitude, to be organized under pressure, to complete plans on time and on budget, and to keep highly motivated sales departments and nonprofit program staff as a their supervisor. Additionally, I have a great interest and awareness of International Affairs, world literature, arts, graphic design tools, and computer skills.

Experience

Director, 06/04 - 02/06

SBA Women's Business Center at Cobb Microenterprise Center (CMC)

Atlanta, GA

www.cobbmicro.org

As the Director of the Advanced Business Services or the SBA Women's Center division at CMC, I **exceeded programmatic milestones**, and position the agency as the second best in the nation in the first year of funding, beating out other 104 centers as old as 15 years within the federal program that funds this initiative.

My strategy to succeed was to **set up the right priorities**, to create an **efficient client-in-take and data collection process** complemented with appropriate **internal policies and administrative procedures**, and to allow for continuous participation from the program participants, whose opinion was taken into account to design and execute new services that met their unique needs. My experience working with **minority populations** was also a key factor to successfully implement the organizational **partnership-building** strategy and to reach out to other populations including immigrants and Hispanics.

I devoted 25% of my time to provide **direct services** including **business training and business consulting on loan packaging and procurement**, in English and Spanish to over 40 clients a month. I also contributed to the recruiting of board of directors, advisory board members, and actively shared responsibilities with senior management on **fundraising activities** including federal/private grant writing, donor management, and constituency building (partnerships with the public and private sectors).

Director, 09/02 – 06/04

SBA Atlanta Women's Business Center (AWBC)

Atlanta, GA

www.graspnet.org

As the director of the key program from the four divisions under the umbrella of GRASP Enterprises, I managed day-to-day operations including **supervision of staff and volunteers** and **program design, monitoring & evaluation**, I created a **database management system** for clients and partners including a component of client service surveys, and the process for the **financial and programmatic reports** for all stakeholders. I also provided **direct services** including: business training in English and Spanish and **loan packaging, marketing, and business-plan writing consulting services** (average of 90 hours and 60 clients a month), and assisted the CEO on board of directors/advisors' recruitment.

As the organization wanted to generate a greater local economic impact, I **designed and implemented an new marketing strategy** to grow the **minority business owners** client base (most clients were aspiring entrepreneurs), for which I designed customized programs, marketing materials and a fundraising campaign geared towards raising philanthropic money from minority small business owners.

My leadership and management skills allowed the organization to exceed programmatic milestones on budget, and to significantly improve donor relationships and customer service ratings; therefore, the CEO delegated to me some key responsibilities including fundraising (federal/private grant writing and donor management), and constituency building.

Micro Enterprise Unit Coordinator, 12/01 – 02/03

Refugee Women's Network, Inc. (RWN)

Atlanta, GA

www.riwn.org

As I successfully developed the **Hispanic Component for the Micro Enterprise Program** in a record timeline, I was soon charged with the reformulation of the entire unit and the corporate **marketing strategy**, grant writing and performance reports for my Unit.

Through my work, RWN **enhanced its partnerships and strategic alliances** with local organizations related to micro enterprise, refugee, and immigrant ethnicities, and significantly improved and **upgraded its operational and data collection processes** (I created databases for monitoring and management purposes and client intake and follow up procedures).

I provided **business training** to 34 women in business plan writing and generated **exceptional outcomes** as 25 women started or expanded their own businesses during and after 5 months of the intervention. I also provided business information to over 400 aspiring entrepreneurs in Atlanta and 8 other states through the phone, radio and on-line forums.

Marketing Component Coordinator, 03/1999 – 11/00

CARE Ecuador

Ecuador

www.care.org

My first task within CARE's Economic Development Unit (EDU) was to create "Marketing Strategic Plans" to secure the sustainability of its small business projects, for which I **reformulated the production and operational processes of rural micro businesses**, and created a commercial support for their products which demanded intensive marketing research locally and within the international fair trade networks supporting international aid programs. My **approach** was based in promoting "**ownership and responsibility**" through **empowerment training** to beneficiaries and their commercial partners in marketing, cultural awareness and leadership. The programs I worked with found a local market niche and learned management skills to survive in a competitive market without external subsidies, which was a great achievement considering that I implemented the initiative with little resources, time, and initial hostile attitude from participants. I also performed budgeting activities and prepared grant proposals for the EDU to USAID, PL480, and Individual Donors, and was in charge of hiring technical advisors and consultants.

Marketing Executive, 03/97 – 03/99 **Ecuador**
Andipapel Ecuador (Kimberly Clark Dealer) **www.kimberly-clark.com**

I managed the triple task of designing and executing **marketing strategies** by product for Ecuador's 3 regional market segments. I also organized **tradeshows**, created the **telemarketing department**, provided **sales training**, supported and **supervised 45 sales representatives**, and managed a client's portfolio of over a thousand customers nationwide. This experience sharpened my **adaptability skills** as I constantly traveled across the country and learned to adjust to diverse audiences.

Agency "La Coruña" (The largest real state agency of Quito) **Ecuador**
Sales & Leasing Department Unit Manager, 12/95 – 02/97

Supported and provided sales training to 20 sales representatives in the leasing department and developed **market research** for the-first-of-its-kind "**upper class special project**" to sell country club memberships and expensive real estate. I also provided customers with key administrative support in legal and financial issues.

Commercial Coordinator, 11/94 – 12/95 **Ecuador**
Provided administrative support to the Vice President of Marketing and her sales team from one of the largest financial and investment companies in Ecuador.

Consulting Jobs **2004 - 2006**

Cobb Micro Enterprise Center **www.cobbmicro.org**

- Assisting in operations and program design activities for a technology grant.
- Coordinating special fundraising event.

Women's Economic Development Agency **www.weda-atlanta.org**

- Providing Business training and one-on-one consulting.

COMERCIO Magazine **www.comerciomag.com**

- Marketing and minority certification consulting.

Various Individual clients

- Business Consulting (business plan writing, feasibility studies, market research, procurement, loan packaging)

Education

Master in Public Administration Program **Graduation 5/06**

Non Profit Management with emphasis in International NGO's.
Georgia State University

MBA equivalent- Concentration Marketing **1999**

Catholic University of Ecuador (Jesuits University)

Bachelor in Business Administration – Concentration Accounting **1997**

Catholic University of Ecuador (Jesuits University)

Seminars, Certifications, Training and Courses

- Georgia – U.S., 2002-2006
- Certified Instructor for Nx Level Business Training™ and Kauffman Foundation – Fast Trac™ Materials.
- "Leadership Training for Refugee and Immigrant Women", provided by RWN.
- Various workshops related to micro enterprise, immigration and business laws, consumer rights, proposal writing, loan packaging, and procurement.

- Quito – Ecuador, 1994-2000
- Symposium of Civil and Fiscal Policies against Poverty

- Seminars of sales management, telemarketing, strategic marketing plan, productivity techniques, direct marketing.

Computer Knowledge

MS Office: Word, Excel, Power Point, Access, Publisher; Internet Explorer, MS Outlook, Outlook Express, MS Project (expert knowledge); and Corel Draw, File Maker, Adobe Acrobat, MS Front Page (intermediate knowledge).

Honors and Memberships

2001-2006

- Board of Directors member of the Georgia Resource Capital, Inc, nonprofit corporation providing access to real estate capital for small business through 504 SBA Guaranteed loans.
- Member of the South East Small Business Administration Region's Latino Task Force, geared towards increasing access to capital for minority businesses in the south-east states.
- Plaque for the "Contribution to the Success of Refugee Women Project", awarded by RWN.
- Panelist for the "US expert entrepreneurial education & training Roundtable": www.projecttsunami.org
- Economic Development Committee Director, "Latino Council of Community Leaders" (Coordinadora de Líderes Comunitarios de Georgia) for 2 years.
- Advanced Level Winner of the "English Language Program" for Dekalb, Rockdale, Newton and Morgan Counties - Georgia.
- Featured in several articles in local newspapers including Atlanta Journal Constitution, Atlanta Business Chronicle, Marietta Journal, Mundo Hispanico, La Vision de Georgia, Atlanta Latino, La Voz del Pueblo, among other Hispanic media.

Languages

Spanish (Native), English (Fluent).