



## GENERAL INFORMATION

EIN: 51-0595149  
DUNS: 788593031  
CAGE: 4XW60

## CERTIFICATIONS

SBA HUBZone CERTIFIED  
SBA 8(a) CERTIFIED | Case #306239  
SBA ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED MBE  
SBE | NCTRCA  
DBE | NCTRCA  
MBE | NMSDC  
HUB | STATE OF TEXAS  
LEAD SAFE CERTIFIED FIRM | EPA CITY  
OF TAMPA: MBE & SLBE  
FLORIDA GC LICENSE #CGC1527860

## NAICS CODES

115210 Branding  
541430 Graphic Design Services  
54161 Management Consulting Services  
541611 Strategic Planning Consulting Services  
541613 Marketing Management Consulting Services  
541720 Research and Development in the Social Sciences and Humanities  
541810 Advertising Agencies  
541910 Marketing Research and Public Opinion Polling  
541930 Translation and Interpretation Services  
561110 Office Administrative Services  
561410 Document Preparation Services  
611430 Professional and Management Development Training  
611710 Educational Testing Evaluation Services  
923140 Administration of Veterans' Affairs  
925120 Administration of Urban Planning and Community and Rural Development

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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**We pay attention to the specific needs of our clients,** making our client outcomes highly effective. We listen carefully to learn about client goals and concerns so that our work toward viable solutions is specifically informed by what we learn.

Our connectivity, our wide network of thought leaders, our vast community outreach footprint, and our deep grounding in pop-culture set BlackStar Communications and Community Engagement Group apart from traditional agencies that, too often, deploy structures and strategies that are rigid and outdated. As agile communications and community engagement experts, we work quickly, efficiently and within budget.

We are known for our expertise in culturally nuanced communications. We have built a powerful network of over 200 community-based organizations, allowing us to effectively engage and amplify messaging in urban and rural epicenters across the nation. Through an array of projects successfully executed over the past two decades, BlackStar Communications and Community Engagement Group knows how to move culture, communities and highly effective communications forward.

We are proud to be an SBA Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB) and a Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB) as well as a verified Veterans Affairs (VA) Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB).

## OUR PROJECT SERVICES AND APPROACH

Our services include strategy consulting, creative and visual communication, design and development, project management, public relations, and community-based organization engagement/partnership.

Our approach combines innovative techniques and exceptional creativity while also relying on quantifiable research. This combined approach of qualitative and quantitative research has proven to be a hallmark in designing winning campaigns for our clients. Your success is our bottom line.

## OUR COMPETENCIES

Our core competencies include:

- Community Engagement + Outreach
- Strategic Outreach
- Behavioral Change Communications
- Health Communications
- Vaccination Education
- Market Research and Public Opinion Polling & Surveys
- Data Collection
- Insightful Data Analysis
- Reliable Results
- Inclusive Communications

## OUR CLIENTS



*Blackstar Communications and Community Engagement Group (BSCCEG) is the division of The BlackStar Companies, LLC that specializes in energy efficiency, sustainability, and infrastructure improvement solutions in the government, education, commercial, and industrial sectors. BSCCEG offers a full range of sustainable solutions focusing on renewable energy.*

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Office of the Associate Director for Communication**

We composed Grand Rounds Web content for the CDC Website and YouTube products, including updating the Web with new information. With the contract value of \$2.3 M, we provided health communication support services to the OADC Office of Communication Science on a day-to-day basis to improve and sustain the agency's ability to communicate health messages effectively. We also coordinated with social media, IPTV, and Web teams within the CDC to consolidate viewership metrics and ensure all Grand Rounds products are delivered through appropriate media channels. Moreover, we became familiar with the Department of Health and Human Services Healthy People initiative and with the Office of Communication Science's internet and intranet pages. We also provided deliverables and complied with the Public Law 111-274 and the Plain Writing Act of 2010.

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response**

As a team, we proposed six specific vehicle strategies designed to ensure the client was to receive detailed, actionable recommendations on how to make optimal use of the following key communication vehicles and activities: Google AdWords Campaign, Google Banner Advertising, Google Mobile App Search Campaign, Google Mobile App Banner Ads, Facebook Ads, and Twitter Ads. During our \$1.89 million one-year contract, we were able to maximize the seasonal search trends and increase their online presence throughout the year with the use of pay-per-click searches and paid advertising in social media and applications. As an extension of the overall strategic planning process, we also worked collaboratively with clients and their staff members to develop key messages for the marketing communication program.

### **Center for Disease and Control and Prevention National Center for Injury Prevention and Control**

Developed content for the programmatic website and for print for distribution to partner meetings in preparation for administration transition. We successfully created one-pagers and templates for the state, budget, and priority of growth for NCPIC-funded programs including the Public Health Injury Surveillance and Prevention Program, National Violent Death Reporting System, Rape Prevention and Education Program, Academic Centers for Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention, Older Adult Fall Prevention, Injury Control Research Centers (ICRCs), and more. During our \$2 million contract, we recommended approaches related to how we establish key messages, define the problems and burdens, establish responses, and ensure the content delivers toward the target audience. Moreover, we remained compliant with Section 508. With our assistance, the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control had strong communication and community outreach to over 1,400 public health centers across the United States.

### **Office of Advocacy and Outreach Department of Agriculture**

Drove the effort to gain agency head support for a dramatic increase in intern/scholars' opportunities from 84 interns in 2015 to 117 interns in 2016 across the United States and Puerto Rico. Responsible for managing the organization's financial resources effectively and efficiently through program planning and evaluation; ensuring proper utilization of funds, seeking opportunities to reduce program and administrative costs, and adhering to Federal regulations. As a result, the successful implementation of the FY2016 2501 Grant Program, in which \$8.4 million was budgeted/allocated to support the work of 45 partner organizations in 25 states that provide training, outreach, and technical assistance for socially disadvantaged, tribal, and veteran farmers and ranchers was awarded. An additional \$400,000 will help maintain the Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Research Center at Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi.

### **USDA Rural Business Service Business and Industry (B&I) Division**

Managed a comprehensive human management program including the B&I Division's administrative budget and a financial program budget of up to \$2.1 billion. Assigned to ensure Agency policies and regulations governing B&I programs are current and reflect the needs and expectations of the General Accounting Office, USDA and meet the needs of rural communities. Carolyn also provided counsel to Agency state offices regarding interpretation and implementation of policies and procedures for B&I loan processing, servicing, monitoring, and assessment activities nationwide. Through these state offices, the B&I Division annually processes over 1000 loan packages and awarded 463 loans effecting communities nationwide, creating and saving a total of 27,763 jobs.

### **USDA Rural Business Service Loan Servicing**

Tasked to oversee portfolio management of the Business and Industry Guaranteed and Insured Loan Program, the Intermediary Relending Program, and the management of several Grant programs. Monitoring a National B&I Guaranteed Loan Portfolio involved approving workouts and liquidations of businesses with loans in excess of \$25 million. Alongside directing and participating in nationwide training for employees in all 46-area offices throughout the country, she also directed and conducted reviews of area offices to determine actions taken were consistent with the goals and procedures for administering Agency programs.

### **USDA Rural Business Service, Deputy Director Liaison for Programs**

Primarily assisted the Director in managing staff and workflow of the National Office of Outreach in response to the Secretary's Civil Rights Action Plan. Worked with Agency Outreach Coordinators to review Agency Strategic Plans and developed actions to eliminate barriers for low-income and minority applicants in order to allow equal opportunity to participate in Agency programs. Managed the Section 2501 Small Farmer Program.

### **USDA Rural Business Service, Administrator Liaison**

Liaison for the Associate Administrator; Provided direction and guidance to mid-level managers responsible for the administration of Agency programs and budget work. Attended Congressional hearings, assisting the Associate Administration in questions on proposed bills for changes to Rural Business Programs and a major contributor in the creation of the Empowerment Zone Enterprise Community Initiative. Reviewed and responded to proposed regulations to ensure the intent of Congress was being met. Prepared testimony to be presented on the Hill regarding the Agencies Program Budget and responded to budget questions from members of the House and Senate, which affected the Agency's program budget.

### **University of District Columbia (UDC)**

We were honored to be invited to assist the University of the District of Columbia, an 1890 Land Grant Institution, in its effort to provide capacity building assets through training/professional development and strategic planning to further the goals and objectives of the organization. The goal was to provide staff with tools, clear indicators and a roadmap to drive success. The professional development and strategic planning engagement with the University of the District of Columbia elevated existing infrastructure and capabilities; policies and processes; strategic goals; marketing strategy; and strategy for communicating accomplishments as well as university advancement and outreach and relationships.

## The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA)

We were engaged to conduct a large-scale outreach effort to New York City residents by conducting door-to-door canvassing of households that may be eligible for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). Using a ERAP Target List, we developed a plan for coordinating visits to each resident at approximately 50,000 apartment units for the \$239,500 contract. The plan included assembling and managing the human resources (outreach staff, including supervisors), devising a schedule for canvassing a massive scale, and developing a system for capturing outcomes of good-faith attempts to have dialogue with the Head of Household. Our management of the project relied on meticulous execution to ensure the staff adhered to a schedule for outreach to residents to (1) verify the identity of the resident (2) briefly explain the purpose of the visit, and (3) obtain consent by electronically recording the tenant's consent on a NYCHA-supplied mobile device connected to its tenant database. In addition, we provided and executed a plan to provide the same/similar services to NYCHA's property management offices, development lobbies, community centers, and other locations.

## The New York City Department of Education

We were engaged by the largest school system in the United States to develop the Transition Plan in preparation for the transfer of 5,400 School Safety Agents (SSAs) from NYPD to the NYC DOE as part of the school system's strategy to reimagine school safety. With a \$500,000 contract value, we created a powerful Transition Plan with goals, priorities, strategies, action steps, and change management communications strategy required to support a successful transition between the two agencies. Within a contentious political and public climate that included multiple and diverse stakeholders with varying and competing interests, we drove strategic planning, communications and media relations strategy, issues mapping, community engagement with 32 NYC Community Education Councils, executive media coaching for DOE leaders, crisis management planning, and a strategy to address a climate dominated by NYPD union culture. We developed culture change strategies to support the successful transition of SSAs from NYPD/Union culture to DOE culture. We also provided strategic recommendations to support all aspects of the Transition Planning Process, including stakeholder assessment, organizational assessment, target audience analysis, community engagement recommendations, and communications and marketing.

## OUR EXPERT TEAM



### TASHION MACON, PhD, MBA, Chief Strategy Officer

With almost twenty years of exceptional achievements in both the for-purpose and for-profit realms, Tashion Macon is widely known as a leading marcom and traditional/transmedia expert with an unwavering emphasis on results. A true visionary, Tashion sees changes and trends in the market before anyone else, frequently finding extraordinary and lucrative opportunities by innately recognizing what can be different and better. After she predicts the future, she gets in front of it. A gifted and highly respected culturalist and strategist, she regularly originates marketing and communications strategies that dramatically influence new consumer realms. She helms pace-setting marketing initiatives that generate multi-million-dollar profits and successfully managed and navigated \$500MM media budgets to drive double digit percentage boosts in ROI. With a rare meteoric mind and transformational ability to galvanize like-minded people, she collaborates with corporate and client leaders to mobilize cross-functional teams. She is regularly sought out as a subject matter expert in pop culture, global social enterprise, philanthropy, politics/policies and impact programming and crafts important conversations that become part of the social lexicon. Tashion holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology and a Master of Business Administration in Strategic Marketing. She has a number of professional affiliations and associations.



### CAROLYN PARKER, MA, Executive Vice President

Carolyn Parker is a successful business owner and works with nonprofits organizations to help them reach their goals in fundraising, cultural communication, and community involvement/outreach. Ms. Parker has held many positions in the federal government for 38 years and has retired as a senior executive at the United States Department of Agriculture. Ms. Parker is a dedicated professional highly skilled in oversight and management, strategic planning, outreach to underserved/underrepresented groups, capacity building, staff development, and technical assistance to small resource-constrained organizations and financing of multi-million-dollar loan making, and loan servicing to businesses. She served as the Departmental liaison to a wide variety of groups across the country. Carolyn was the first permanent Director for the Office of Advocacy and Outreach, worked across the entire department to ensure equal access to all USDA programs. Ms. Parker was responsible for awards to Minority Farmers and Ranchers, New and Beginning Farmers, Native American programs. She was instrumental in working with Community Based Organizations in the settlement of Black Farmers, Hispanics and Women Claim as well as the Keepseagle Settlement for Native American Farmers and Ranchers. Ms. Parker worked to bridge the professional achievement gap by providing talented and diverse young people with the opportunity to support the agricultural industry in the 21st century.

## OUR MANAGEMENT TEAM



**Les Allen, Jr.**  
President

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