

Maura Shenker

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Summary:

A visionary leader and connector, I bring a wealth of experience across public, private, government, and academic sectors. I am dedicated to bridging the racial wealth gap and driving economic opportunities in underserved communities through unlocking resources, dismantling barriers, and building strong local and national networks. As a thought leader and advocate for social, racial, and economic justice, I have contributed insights to esteemed organizations such as the Clinton Foundation, the PEW Research Center, and the Brookings Institution.

Work Experience:**Program Director, Make Startups Executive Fellowship**

Make Startups

2024 (6-Month Contract)

The Make Startups Executive Fellowship (MSEF) is a six-month initiative designed to train ecosystem builders and economic developers to access federal workforce funding for entrepreneurial training programs in their communities and states. Over 6 months, the MSEF program will work with Entrepreneurial Support Organization (ESO) executives nationally, helping them convene local industry councils and industry-recognized credentials eligible for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding.

- Design program curriculum and structure (with Make Startups leadership team) incorporating bi-weekly online training, in-person immersions, and peer coaching sessions.
- Manage all necessary program operations, including online sessions and in-person events.
- Implement a system for tracking program progress, participant engagement, and outcomes.
- Evaluate the program's effectiveness and adapt strategies for future scalability.

Grant Fundraising Coach-In-Residence

Goodie Nation

2024 (6-Month Contract)

As part of the Tech Equity Collective Impact Fund: Responsible for guiding and coaching early-stage nonprofit founders on effective grant writing, fundraising strategies, and financial sustainability practices. Work closely with founders to unlock new funding opportunities and build robust networks of support.

- One-on-one coaching sessions with 20 tech workforce development nonprofit startups.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of fundraising strategies, providing regular feedback and adjustments as needed.
- Facilitate connections between founders and potential funders, including foundations, government agencies, and corporate giving programs.

Economic Innovation & Investment Impact Fellowship, Federation of American Scientists

Department of Ecosystem Development, US Small Business Administration

2022 – 2024

Oversight of a \$7M+ program national program to support innovative entrepreneurs focusing on building equity in underserved and undercapitalized communities. Established program metrics and collected and analyzed data to understand the successes and challenges of the program. During my fellowship at the SBA, I have been commended several times for finding elegant solutions that satisfy the divergent needs of multiple stakeholders without losing sight of the agency's objectives.

- Developed innovative policy and program ideas to foster the participation of underserved communities in the SBA's ecosystem-building initiatives, including America's Seed Fund; briefed/advised executives and high-ranking officials about methods to achieve program objectives.
- Produced compelling memos, white papers, and other impactful materials highlighting the critical role of inclusion and equity in federal science and economic policy.
- Served as co-chair to set up a new inter-agency Community of Practice for Inclusive Ecosystem Building

Director, Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

Fox School of Business, Temple University

2018 - 2022

I successfully navigated the challenges of the COVID era by developing partnerships in the community and implementing innovative strategies to quickly share information. My leadership resulted in significant departmental expansion, securing over \$4M in additional funding leading to significant departmental expansion from three to 21 employees and establishing two new Centers of Excellence at the University.

- Developed and implemented comprehensive strategies and operational systems to drive entrepreneur and small business growth in the Philadelphia region.
- In 2021, collaborated with 1780 clients, resulting in the creation of 62 new businesses, facilitated access to more than \$21M in capital for entrepreneurs, generated/retained nearly 5,000 living wage jobs, and organized 280 highly attended webinars with 7540 participants.
- Actively contributed to thought leadership by delivering testimonies, participating in panels, leading workshops, presenting at conferences, and joining working groups and coalitions.

Director, Centers, Professional Development & Food Marketing

Haub School of Business, Saint Joseph's University

2016 – 2018

As Director of the Center for Professional Development at St. Joseph's University, I created award-winning programs for individuals (rather than organizations) which opened an entirely new customer base and significantly increased our visibility and revenue. Worked with executives of global multinational corporations to introduce new technology and trend forecasts in their industries.

- Oversaw the end-to-end process of program development, including proposal creation, client pitching, budget management, logistics coordination, contract administration, and program evaluation.

- Pioneered the creation of open enrollment programs at SJU, introducing the highly successful Coaching Leader Program (CLP), which received the prestigious Best New Program award at the international CMED conference in Austin, TX (2017).
- Achieved a notable 20% increase in departmental revenue through effective business development strategies and successful lobbying efforts at the State level for line-item funding.
- Led the design and delivery of proposals, accurately estimating program costs, and managing invoicing for all ad hoc programs and projects, including the highly acclaimed symposium "What Women Want," recognized with the 2016 Best Special Event/Initiative award by SJU.

Vice President of Development

FINANTA (CDFI)

2015 - 2016

Connected underserved small business owners with capital, focusing on New American and Hispanic populations. Responsible for understanding and interpreting new policies and policy changes as related to federal funding from SBA and Treasury.

- Led all grant and fundraising activities, successfully securing funding from diverse sources, including Federal, State, City, and Private Foundations, amounting to over \$1 billion in CDFI funding.
- Significantly increased SBA technical assistance funding by an impressive 81%, enabling expanded support for small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Cultivated new partnerships with Bank CRA departments and Corporate Philanthropic Foundations, expanding the organization's network of supporters and potential funding opportunities.
- Received the esteemed SBA "Jodi Raskind CDFI of the Year" award, recognizing exceptional contributions to community development and economic empowerment, with the privilege of being invited to the White House in 2015.

Strategic Communications Manager

St. Christopher's Foundation for Children

2014-2015

Effectively integrated new technology into existing systems, ensuring seamless implementation, and reducing the potential for disruption. As Strategic Communications Manager at St. Christopher's Foundation for Children, I was responsible for choosing a new CRM system and transferring data, as well as moving all the organization's files to a common SharePoint site.

- Effectively managed a portfolio of 30+ donor-restricted funds at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, ensuring compliance with donor intent and maximizing impact.
- Designed and executed a highly successful Annual Fund Campaign, resulting in a remarkable 22% increase in revenue and donor participation.
- Conducted thorough research, evaluation, and selection of a new donor CRM system, successfully leading the transition process, and optimizing data management while achieving a significant 60% annual cost savings.
- Spearheaded the migration to a cloud-based server and served as the SharePoint architect for the organization's file management system, improving efficiency, accessibility, and collaboration among team members.

Recent Awards and Honors

2022 PA SBDC Creative Funding Award for Most Prolific Fundraiser.
2022 PA SBDC Student Program of the Year “Digital Connect” in partnership with Temple CST.
2022 PA SBDC Student Program of the Year “Legal Clinic” in partnership with Beasley College of Law.
2021 PA SBDC Creative Funding Award for Most Prolific Fundraiser. 2021 Fox Community Service Award.
2021 Team Spirit Award in recognition of a collaborative attitude and contributions to the PA SBDC.
2020 Fox Impact Community Engagement Pillar Award (Temple University).
2017 Best New Program at the ProEd Conference for Management and Executive Development (CMED).
2016 Best Special Event/Initiative at Saint Joseph University for “What Women Want” Symposium.
2016 SBA Raskind Award Winner – Mission Lender of the Year, invited to the White House (FINANTA).

Education

After more than a decade of boots-on-the-ground community and economic development work, I started my Ph.D. in political science to explore the barriers to direct participation by marginalized communities. My research focuses on how institutions can create programs and policies that can encourage active participation in the legitimate economy and political activism, agency, and advocacy in historically disenfranchised communities – race and gender.

Ph.D.	POLITICAL SCIENCE		Temple University (est. 2025)
MA	POLITICAL SCIENCE		Temple University
MS	ORG DEVELOPMENT		Saint Joseph’s University
MFA	FINE ARTS (GLASS)		Ohio State University
BFA	FINE ARTS (GLASS)		Rhode Island School of Design

Professional Development

<i>Wharton Public Policy Certificate Program</i>	Philadelphia, PA		2024
Wharton School of Business/UPenn			
<i>Persuasive Communications: Narrative, Evidence, & Impact</i>	Cambridge, MA		2022
Kennedy School Executive Education/Harvard University			
<i>Behavioral Insights and Public Policy</i>	Cambridge, MA		2022
Kennedy School Executive Education/Harvard University			
<i>Cultural and Structural Racism: Theories & Frameworks</i>	Ann Arbor, MI		2021
Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research			
<i>Mixed Methods Research: Combining Qualt & Quant</i>	Ann Arbor, MI		2021
Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research			
Scandinavia: Innovation & Sustainability	Scandinavia		2019
Copenhagen, DK and Stockholm, SE (CIBER)			
<i>Understanding Sustainability and Innovation in Chile</i>	Chile		2019
Santiago, Chile (CIBER)			
<i>ICF Coaching Leader Program (Nine-Month Intensive)</i>	Philadelphia, PA		2017
GroupWorks Global/Saint Joseph’s University			
<i>Advanced Finance Strategy Development for Centers</i>	Boston, MA		2016
ProEd Director’s Institute			