

Maura Shenker

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Summary:

A dynamic leader with public, private, government, and academic experience, dedicated to closing the racial wealth gap, promoting equity, and driving economic opportunities in overlooked and underestimated communities. Skilled in fostering access to resources, breaking down regional barriers, and building local and national networks with a focus on dismantling institutional barriers that hinder entrepreneurship and advancing inclusive programs and policies. Recognized thought leader and advocate for social, racial, and economic justice, contributing insights to esteemed organizations such as the Clinton Foundation, the PEW Research Center, and the Brookings Institution.

Work Experience:

Economic Innovation & Investment Impact Fellowship, Federation of American Scientists

Department of Ecosystem Development, US Small Business Administration

December 2022 - Present

Oversight of a \$7M+ program national program to support innovative entrepreneurs with a focus 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, Women-Owned Business Engagement

WEConnect International

2022

In my role at an international NGO, WEConnect, I managed a global team in a highly matrixed organization that served women entrepreneurs in 155 countries. I'm able to work cross-functionally and establish credibility with partners, staff, and senior leaders from a diverse set of backgrounds.

- Established and developed a new department focused on engaging women-owned businesses, leading efforts to enhance membership on the organization's proprietary online platform, WECommunity.
- Surveyed and identified the needs of women-owned businesses to provide better user experiences accessing WEConnect services.
- Proactively forged strategic partnerships and alliances to establish valuable resources that provide education and support to women-owned businesses, including securing funding opportunities from major multinational corporations and government agencies.
- Implemented a robust evaluation and monitoring system to continuously improve the global certification process, while overseeing the Certification Fulfillment Center which includes a team of 30+ Certification Assessors located worldwide.

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 the establishment of 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

I can effectively integrate 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.

Maura Shenker, Bookkeeper

Owner/Sole Proprietor

- 2013-2014 Full-charge freelance Bookkeeper
- Certified QuickBooks Pro Advisor
- Clients in multiple industries, including Non-Profit, Arts, Hospitality, and Real Estate

Philly Pub n Grub

Owner/Managing Partner (V&J, LLC)

2011 - 2013

- Oversaw all daily operations, hired, trained, and scheduled 35+ employees, processed weekly payroll, and acted as HR Manager.
- Developed budgets, tracked inventory, and created cost-of-goods analysis.
- Planned events and directed promotions and marketing.
- Increased sales by more than 25% in a single year and was voted “One of Philadelphia’s Top 25 Sports Bars” in 2012.

Freelance Writer

Demand Media

2009- 2011

- Professional content creator who authored more than 1,000 articles published online.
- Researched and edited articles conforming to AP standards.

Hot Soup Glass Studio

Philadelphia, PA

Owner Dates: 5/1/04 – 12/31/07

Manager Dates: 11/11/99 – 6/30/01

To purchase my first business, I was able to secure a \$500,000 SBA loan based on my business plan and financial projections. I am skilled at formulating objectives and priorities and implementing plans that are consistent with the long-term interests of the organization. I capitalize on opportunities and manage risks, which has allowed me to achieve success even in challenging and uncertain situations. I believe that seeing opportunities where others see challenges is the basic tenant of entrepreneurship; I have successfully run multiple businesses and achieved significant growth through long-term strategic planning and calculated risk-taking.

- Promoted from Gallery Manager to Operations Manager in 8 months.
- Bought studio in 2004 with a \$500K SBA loan (paid back in full).
- Curated monthly exhibitions, created all marketing materials, and planned a yearly calendar for classes and exhibitions.
- Doubled the studio size, increased private commission, and design work, increased income by 300% in less than two years, and gained national acclaim by creating a line of home décor items.

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 College of Science and Technology

2022 PA SBDC Student Program of the Year “Legal Clinic” in partnership with Temple Beasley College of Law

2021 PA SBDC Creative Funding Award for Most Prolific Fundraiser.

2021 Fox Community Service Award (Temple University).

2021 Team Spirit award in recognition of a collaborative attitude and contributions to the PA SBDC Network.

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. What I learned is that the institutional systems that discourage participation in the political systems are almost identical to the barriers to economic participation. 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.

PhD	POLITICAL SCIENCE		Temple University	est. 2025
MA	POLITICAL SCIENCE		Temple University	2019 – 2023
MS	ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT		Saint Joseph’s University	2014 – 2016
MFA	FINE ARTS (GLASS)		Ohio State University	1994 – 1996
BFA	FINE ARTS (GLASS)		Rhode Island School of Design	1990 – 1994

Professional Development

Wharton Public Policy Certificate Program Philadelphia, PA | 2023

Wharton School of Business/UPenn

Persuasive Communications: Narrative, Evidence, & Impact Kennedy School Executive Education/Harvard University	Cambridge, MA 2022
Behavioral Insights and Public Policy Kennedy School Executive Education/Harvard University	Cambridge, MA 2022
Cultural and Structural Racism: Theories & Frameworks Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research	Ann Arbor, MI 2021
Mixed Methods Research: Combining Qualt & Quant Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research	Ann Arbor, MI 2021
Interpretative Research Methods European Consortium for Political Research	Virtual 2021
Multilevel & Hierarchical Modeling Using R Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research	Ann Arbor, MI 2020
Global Innovation: Entrepreneurship and Education Graduate School of Education/University of Pennsylvania	Philadelphia, PA 2020
Scandinavia: Innovation and Sustainability Copenhagen, DK and Stockholm, SE/Center for Business Education and Research (CIBER)	Scandinavia 2019
Understanding Sustainability and Innovation in Chile Santiago, Chile	Chile 2019
ICF Coaching Leader Program (Nine Month Intensive) GroupWorks Global/Saint Joseph's University	Philadelphia, PA 2017
Advanced Finance Strategy Development for Centers ProEd Director's Institute	Boston, MA 2016