



NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION

Job Description

Job Title:	Communications Associate
Department/Program:	Public Affairs
Reports to:	Director of Public Affairs

ABOUT US

The National Head Start Association (NHSA) is a nonprofit organization committed to the belief that every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, has the ability to succeed in life. NHSA is the voice for more than one million children, 200,000 staff, and 1,600 Head Start grantees in the United States. Since 1974, NHSA has worked diligently for policy changes that ensure all at-risk children have access to the Head Start model of support for the whole child, the family, and the community.

MISSION AND VISION

NHSA's vision is to lead - to be the untiring voice that will not be quiet until every vulnerable child is served with the Head Start model of support for the whole child, the family, and the community - and to advocate - to work diligently for policy and institutional changes that ensure all vulnerable children and families have what they need to succeed. NHSA's mission is to coalesce, inspire, and support the Head Start field as a leader in early childhood development and education.

OUR CULTURE

NHSA is proud of our inclusive, collaborative, and professional culture. We value and reward teamwork, initiative, creativity, and intellectual and professional growth.

Collaboration

NHSA works in teams— we share ideas, brainstorm endlessly, and constantly seek innovative ideas that advance NHSA's and Head Start's missions.

Vision

NHSA values colleagues who see and seize opportunities, take risks, learn from failure, and bring a relentless passion for our mission.

Creativity

NHSA team members use data to form original insights. We find ways to incorporate innovative ideas and approaches that exist in the rich and vital Head Start community to push our mission.

Mindfulness

NHSA has an organization-wide commitment to strive for excellence; we set clear objectives, achieve ambitious goals, ensure accountability for results, and focus on our impact.

Intellectual Growth

NHSA values those who are curious and hungry for knowledge. Reflecting Head Start's over 50 years of commitment to continuous improvement, our staff is committed to personal and professional growth, understanding, and commitment to NHSA's mission.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The National Head Start Association is seeking a **Communications Associate** to join the public affairs team in its Alexandria, VA, office. The Communications Associate is supervised by and reports to the Director of Public Affairs but will work in coordination with all team members when necessary. This is a great learning opportunity for someone looking to gain experience in the advocacy communications field.

MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Edit communications materials to engage the Head Start community, such as regular newsletters, email updates to practitioners, and remarks for leadership to deliver at NHSA's conferences and other events.
- Draft persuasive and/or informative communications materials to influence external stakeholders and decision makers, such as the media, early childhood education thought leadership, and lawmakers. These materials include blog posts, op-eds, and news releases.
- Draft internal messaging materials, including talking points and issue summaries.
- Contribute to creative brainstorming sessions to develop new ideas for content development and digital/social engagement.
- Provide project management support on major grant-funded communications initiatives.
- Produce a daily news clips compendium highlighting the work of NHSA, successes in the Head Start field, and trends in the early childhood education arena.
- Build and maintain press lists. Conduct analysis of media coverage to determine reach and opportunities for growth.
- Support NHSA conferences and events as needed.
- Other relevant duties as assigned.

THE REQUIREMENTS

- Passion for Head Start's commitment to ensuring every vulnerable child has the opportunity to succeed.
- Strong persuasive writing skills. Must be able to write clearly, concisely and creatively. Experience in pulling information together from multiple sources into one cohesive message.
- Expert editing skills, both in terms of copy-editing and content improvement.
- Excellent organizational skills, including ability to handle and prioritize multiple tasks and meet deadlines.
- Must be able to work independently and proactively while being a dependable team-player.
- Proficient in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel as well as with social media applications.
- A strong instinct for newsworthiness and emerging media trends.
- Great interpersonal skills and humor under pressure.
- Good judgment, flexibility, and problem-solving skills.
- Bachelor's degree required.
- Salary is commensurate upon experience.

These are a plus, but not required:

- Experience in journalism, advocacy campaigns, media relations and/or strategic communications strongly preferred.
- Spanish-writing proficiency.
- Skills with video editing software and photography.
- Experience working on grant-funded projects.
- Knowledge of best practices in PowerPoint presentation and design.

THE PROCESS

Please submit your cover letter and résumé to jobs@nhsa.org with **Communications Associate** in the subject line.

NHSA IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER. All qualified applicants will receive consideration without regard to race, color, national origin, marital status, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, personal appearance, family responsibilities, political affiliation, or enrollment in a college, university, technical school, or adult education.