

SHAWN RENEE LENT

shawnlent.com | lentshawn@gmail.com

EXPERIENCE

CHICAGO DANCEMAKERS FORUM | CHICAGO, IL

PROGRAMS AND COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR | AUG 2016 – JAN 2025

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSULTANT / REGIONAL DANCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE LAB COORDINATOR | JAN 2016 – JUL 2016

- Spearheaded comprehensive artist granting programs, including improvements in grant program outreach, recruitment, application systems, selection processes, and equity initiatives, resulting in increased applicant diversity and engagement.
- Designed and oversaw city-wide public events and programming; coordinating accessibility efforts (504 compliance).
- Led all public communications strategies, including social media, press outreach, print materials, and e-marketing campaigns. (Tools for management and integration: SmartSheet, Submittable, Salesforce, and Campaign Monitor).
- Managed and maintained website; played a critical role in rebranding process and website re-design.
- Developed and managed project budgets, tracked expenses, created program and grant agreements, and led transparency initiatives around fiscal responsibility, organizational practices, and policy implementation.
- Supervised team of contractual staff, interns, and volunteers, fostering a collaborative and inclusive culture.
- Drove internship programs (up to 8 interns/year), focusing on recruitment, mentoring, and tailoring the experience to cultivate future arts leaders.
- Managed all program evaluation and documentation with comprehensive data analysis and actionable reporting.

MUSIC HOUSE | CHICAGO, IL

MANAGER OF DANCE EDUCATION (PART-TIME) | AUG 2023 – MAY 2025

- Created all dance curricula and student progress reporting tools. Distributed student progress reports.
- Developed recruitment and retention strategies including marketing campaigns, communications templates, and events.
- Consulted on studio policies, class scheduling, class descriptions, and special initiatives.
- Monitored and coached dance faculty. Designed and facilitated professional development offerings and resource sharing.

CREATEQUITY | ONLINE NATIONAL THINK TANK IN THE ARTS | WORKING REMOTELY

ALLIANCE BUILDING LEAD AND EDITORIAL TEAM MEMBER (PART-TIME) | AUG 2015 – DEC 2017

- Collaborated with an editorial team of 11 to produce research-driven content, public interest journalism in the arts.
- Authored in-depth articles on systemic challenges in the arts sector, driving conversation and thought leadership.
- Led strategic partnership cultivation and audience engagement initiatives to expand the platform's reach.

AMIDEAST EGYPT | HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON, D.C. (REMOTE, CONTRACTUAL)

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR | JUL 2015 – JAN 2019

- Developed workshops and educational content for the U.S.-Egypt Higher Education Initiative (HEI), directly supporting student success in higher education pathways.

AMIDEAST | HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON, D.C. (POSTED AT AMIDEAST EGYPT) | CAIRO, EGYPT

EDUCATION USA ADVISER AND NATIONAL COORDINATOR | DEC 2013 - JUL 2015

- Managed EducationUSA's nationwide program activities in Egypt, achieving a record number of Egyptian students enrolled in U.S. programs and an 8% increase in undergraduate enrollments during a turbulent period in the nation's history.
- Tripled workshop attendance, reaching 450 participants monthly, recognized by the U.S. Department of State as a top-performing, innovative, and vibrant EducationUSA center.
- Expanded social media engagement from 3K to 20K monthly active users, leveraging virtual advising to extend reach to remote areas and developing content designed to support marginalized students.
- Oversaw program budget reporting and financial accountability for initiatives supported by the U.S. Embassy Cairo.

- Set the program's calendar and directed national outreach and education fairs, engaging over 10,000 students annually.
- Designed and facilitated workshops, course curricula, and presentations on study in the U.S. and personal development.
- Re-designed and facilitated pre-departure orientation for Fulbright Scholars and Students.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO | CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ARTS PARTNERSHIPS | CHICAGO, IL
ARTS INTEGRATION PROGRAM SPECIALIST | AUG 2006 – JUL 2012

- Managed arts integration programs for 45 classrooms and coordinated professional development institutes for educators.
- Supervised a cohort of 15 teaching artists, ensuring high-quality educational experiences for students.
- Improved budgeting processes, streamlined contracting workflows, and upgraded management systems, resulting in increased fiscal transparency and operational efficiency.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

MASTER OF ARTS MANAGEMENT (M.A.M.) | COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO (CHICAGO, IL) | GRADUATED MAY 2006
 Concentration: Arts in Youth and Community Development | Internship: About Face Youth Theatre's *Home Project* with LGBTQIA+ teens experiencing homelessness

BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS | MILLIKIN UNIVERSITY (DECATUR, IL) | GRADUATED MAY 2000
 Major: Theatre with a concentration in Acting | Minor: Dance

ADDITIONAL TRAINING COURSES & CERTIFICATION

- Kennedy Center: Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability, Seattle, WA (2024)
- Rhythm Works Integrative Dance – Certified Instructor (2023, renews October 2025) | 2023 Scholarship Winner
- Mental Health First Aid (2024, renews October 2026)
- Acrobatic Arts Training (2024) | 2023 International Scholarship Winner for Module Two
- Youth Protection Advocates in Dance – Safety & Wellness Certification (2020 – 2023)
- Grantmakers in the Arts: Racial Equity in Arts Funding (2023)
- Clancy Works' Building Racial Equity in the Arts through Dance aka B.R.E.A.D. (2023)
- Healing Forward: Journey Into Allyship (2021)
- Nonprofit Leadership Alliance: Equity & Inclusion (2018 and 2020)
- U.S. Department of State: EducationUSA Adviser Training (2014)
- United States Institute of Peace: Interfaith Conflict Resolution and Conflict Analysis (2013)

SELECTED HONORS AND ACTIVITIES

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND INTERNATIONAL CONVENING ACTIVITY

- American Red Cross of Greater Chicago, Hero Award Nominee (2025)
- Featured as a case study in *Peace by Peace: Risking Public Action, Creating Social Change* by Lisa Ellen Silvestri (2024)
- *Newcity Magazine's* "Players: The 50 People Who Really Perform for Chicago" (2019, 2022, and 2024)
- U.S. Department of State: Alumni Thematic International Exchange Seminar (Alumni TIES) Grantee (2019 - 2020)
- Syrian Community Network: Iftar Honoree, Recognized for service to refugee families – Chicago (2017)
- U.S. Embassy Cairo: Award issued by Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft, recognized for innovation in using technology and personally engaging tools in promoting international exchange and the benefits of studying in the U.S. (2015)
- 2nd World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, in partnership with UNESCO – Baku, Azerbaijan (2013)
- U.S. Fulbright Scholar – Cairo, Egypt (2012 - 2013)

- British Council's Transatlantic Network 2020 – Belfast (2008), Chicago (2010), and Pristina, Kosovo (2012)
- International Conference on Cultural Rights – Paris (2011)
- NATO/British Council Summit, "Conflict Prevention and Resolution: A New Role for Cultural Relations" – Brussels (2010)
- United Nations Alliance of Civilizations International Fellowship – Doha, Rabat, Fez, Casablanca, Cairo, and Alexandria (2010)

DANCE EDUCATION EXPERIENCE AND SOCIAL PRACTICE

- Ralla Klepak Performing Arts Program for adults with learning and developmental disabilities – Chicago, IL (2022 - present)
- The Edge Performing Arts, competition choreography and guest teacher – Saginaw, MI (2021 - present)
- LBP School of Dance – Chicago, IL (2018 - present)
- Music House – Chicago, IL (2018 - present)
- Marshall Field Garden Apartments, subsidized housing project – Chicago, IL (2017 - 2020)
- U.S. Embassy Cairo, jazz and social dance history workshops as cultural diplomacy – Cairo, Egypt (2014 - 2015)
- Cairo Contemporary Dance Center – Cairo, Egypt (2014 - 2015)
- Most Mira: Bridge of Peace Festival – Prijedor, Bosnia-Herzegovina (2011)

SERVICE AS A GRANT SELECTION PANELIST / NOMINATOR

- Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events: Individual Artist Program (2017 and 2022)
- Americans for the Arts: Johnson Fellowship for Artists Transforming Communities (2021)
- National Endowment for the Arts: Research Grants (2016 - 2017)
- Binational Fulbright Commission in Egypt: Fulbright Scholar Program (2012)

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND LECTURES

- Dance/USA National Conference, "Welcoming Refugees and Immigrants Into the Local Arts Ecosystem" – Chicago, IL (2025)
- National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) Virtual Summit: Changing Spaces for Gender Inclusive Dance, "Balancing Gender-Specific and Degendered Programs" – Virtual (2025)
- Illinois Dance Education Organization (ILDEO) State Conference, Keynote Speaker – Evanston, IL (2025)
- Northwestern University, guest lecturer – Evanston, IL (2023 – 2024)
- Columbia College Chicago, regular guest lecturer – Chicago, IL (2012 – 2023)
- Brigham Young University, guest lecturer in dance diplomacy and social practice – Provo, UT (2018)
- UN Alliance of Civilizations Alumni Event at the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations, "The Role of Media and Civil Society in Fostering Peace" – New York, NY (2017)
- New York University, The Dance + Social Justice Conference – New York, NY (2016)
- National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) Conference, "A Place for Dance in New Diplomacy and Peace" with Jill Staggs of the U.S. Department of State – Washington, DC (2016)
- Dance/USA National Conference, "Social Relevance at the Heart of Practice: The Role of American Dance Companies in Cultural Diplomacy and Peace" with Reggie Harris and Stacie Williams – Austin, TX (2016)
- State University of New York (SUNY) at Purchase, "Movement/Movements" with Doug Varone, Jonathan Hollander, social practice artists, and social sciences faculty – Purchase, NY (2016)
- Universal Exposition, "Celebrating Cultural Diplomacy and Intercultural Dialogue through the Arts" – Milan, Italy, (2015)
- The University of Maryland, "Hostilities, Reconciliation, and Interventions through Dance" – College Park, MD (2014)
- Millikin University: Commencement Address – Decatur, IL (2014)

CONSULTATION, CONTRACT WORK, AND FACILITATION

- Consultant/Thought Partner on Special Programming, West Virginia University – virtual/remote (2023)
- Facilitator for launch of the Artistic Council, Sarah Siddons Society foundation – virtual/remote (2021)
- Consultant/Thought Partner on Special Programming, Brigham Young University – virtual/remote (2020)
- Communications Consultant, Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival, – Chicago, IL (2018 – 2019)
- Research Consultant, Cerqua Rivera Dance Theater's refugee/immigration project – Chicago, IL (2017 – 2018)
- State University of New York (SUNY) at Purchase, community engagement project – Yonkers, NY (2016)

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

- World Refugee Day Chicago; Entertainment/Arts Committee Lead – Chicago, IL (2019 - present)
- MENTEE, nonprofit providing virtual mentorship for students and young professionals around the world who are disadvantaged by local and global systems; Mentor – virtual/remote (2021 - present)
- Dance Peace, community initiative helping refugees integrate and strengthening neighborhood bonds across cultural and religious differences; Founding Director – Chicago, IL (2016 - present)
- Illinois Dance Education Organization (ILDEO), official state affiliate of the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO); Board Member and Professional Development Lead (2020 - 2024)
- Marshall Field Garden Apartments, non-gov subsidized housing project; Dance Program Lead – Chicago, IL (2017 - 2020)
- 57357 Children's Cancer Hospital; Dance Program Lead – Cairo, Egypt (2012 - 2015)
- Global Water Dances; Project Lead – Flint, MI (2017)

PUBLICATIONS AND WRITING

- "Gallant Forty Twa: The National Theatre of Scotland's Black Watch as Exemplary and Relevant Political Theatre," *Theaters of War: Contemporary Perspectives*, Scheyer, Lauri. Bloomsbury Publishing (October 2021).
- Contributing Editor for *The Clyde Fitch Report*, national platform for opinions and perspectives at the nexus of arts and politics. Example authored articles include "#WokeBaby and the Lessons We Learned" (February 2017), "Artist Promotion? Data Scam? My Trip With Voyage Media" (September 2018), "An Open Letter to Acting NEA Chair Mary Anne Carter" (November 2018), and "What We Should Know About Immigration, Refugees and the Arts" (August 2019).
- Writer for *Createquity*, a virtual think tank and arts blog that explored the intersection of arts and culture with other topics, such as politics, economics, and education. Example authored articles include "Who Will Be the Next Arts Revolutionary? The story of how the nonprofit arts sector got started offers would-be changemakers some clues." (March 2016), "The BFA's Dance With Inequality" (May 2016), and "The State: A Friend Indeed to Artists in Need?" (July 2016).
- "Inclusion Strategies for Conservative Dancers," peer-reviewed Journal of Dance Education (December 2016).
- "Am I A Dancer Who Gave Up?," blog post selected as a feature for Huffington Post Arts, 200K+ hits / 30K+ likes; First blog post ever admitted to the Dance Education Literature and Research (DELRdi) national archives (August 2013).