

Jill Konopka

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Award-winning storyteller, communications leader and former television news investigative reporter and anchor with 25 years of experience in corporate communications, media relations, reputation management, and brand storytelling. I identify stories that matter, uncovering newsworthy angles, while translating complex topics into compelling narratives that drive business goals, visibility, and engagement. A trusted advisor to executives and public officials, leading strategic communications campaigns, securing local and national earned media coverage, managing high-profile crisis issues, preparing spokespeople for media interviews, and building authentic stories that drive visibility, strengthen brands and stakeholder trust.

Experience

February 2022 – July 2026

Associate Director, Public Relations and Public Affairs, Mower, Albany, NY

- Essential account leadership duties, both tactical and strategic, fostering the link between the Mower agency and maintaining strong client relationships. Managing the internal account team in delivering superior service in a timely, efficient, and effective manner. Oversee client budgets, project estimates, and statements of work.
- Storyteller exploring all channels to deliver client stories effectively to a variety of audiences. Offering sound advice while facing difficult issues. Providing exceptional counsel on deadline.
- Develop communications campaigns and media relations strategy supporting clients in the for profit and not for profit space, aligning organizational messaging with business priorities, executive leadership objectives, and brand reputation goals.
- Write and edit press releases, talking points, crisis statements, media responses, website content, award submissions, and thought leadership materials for senior leadership initiatives.
- Manage multiple clients simultaneously. Collaborate with cross-functional leaders and subject matter experts across clients, and agency colleagues to help reveal newsworthy stories and translate complex initiatives into engaging content for internal and external audiences.
- Lead client discussions around specific public relations and public affairs strategies and recommend appropriate tactics. Bring innovative ideas to clients on a regular basis. Provide counsel to clients facing crisis situations, including issues management, advocacy, community relations campaigns, and initiatives to meet evolving situations.
- Strong written skills, including Associated Press Stylebook formats. Strong verbal and presentation skills for client facing meetings and in business settings. Lead client conversation on social media strategy, planning, and execution. Understanding current social media platforms and digital tools like Cision, Muckrack and Meltwater.
- Plan and execute communications strategies and editorial calendars to maximize earned media opportunities, stakeholder engagement, and measurable communications outcomes.
- Develop and implement crisis communication strategies, including executive briefings, holding statements, Q&A documents, response protocols, and stakeholder communications to ensure timely, accurate information sharing and to reduce misinformation in maintaining message consistency.
- Manage high-volume media inquiries, coordinating spokesperson preparation, interview coordination, briefing materials, and message development across multiple business functions.

- Conduct media training for executive leadership by preparing spokespersons for interviews, press conferences, and public appearances through message development, mock interviews, and anticipated Q&A preparation.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with national and local journalists, broadcast outlets, and industry media.
- Represent the organization at media events, industry conferences, community engagements, and public-facing announcements, serving as a communications advisor on site.
- Recognize and avoid potential legal, regulatory, and ethical issues involving client communications activity, taking corrective action, as necessary. Monitor and assess positions, strengths and weaknesses of individuals and groups opposing clients and offer quick counsel and guidance.
- Track media performance, sentiment, and audience engagement through monitoring and analytics platforms, using data-driven insights to refine communications strategies and demonstrate results.

August 2023 – Present

Visiting Assistant Professor, UAlbany, Communications Department, Journalism Program

- Instruct undergraduate journalism courses, equipping students with strong storytelling, multimedia, ethical decision-making, and communication skills.
- Develop and maintain curriculum for *Foundations of Journalism*, *Media Law & Ethics*, and *Mobile Journalism & Social Media Storytelling*, aligning coursework with evolving industry standards.
- Mentor students on writing, interviewing, public speaking, critical thinking, and professional development, helping secure internships and full-time media positions through coaching and recommendations.
- Build partnerships with local television, radio, and print news organizations to create firsthand learning opportunities and industry exposure.
- Write recommendations for internships and employment, coordinate educational field experiences with television, radio, and newspaper organizations, and support student engagement through graduation and departmental activities.

March 2024 – Present

Communications Consultant, City of Cohoes, NY

- Serve as media relations contact for city's public relations and public affairs efforts, managing press inquiries and maintaining strong relationships with community stakeholders as well as broadcast, print, radio, and digital journalists.
- Draft press releases, media advisories, statements, and strategic communications materials for Mayor Bill Keeler. Serve as strategic advisor on crisis issues management and reputation of the city.
- Support communications related events and activities, media requests, message development, and stakeholder communications including writing city newsletter. Update social media channels.
- Secure earned media coverage through initiative-taking media outreach, strategic pitching, and strong relationships with local journalists.
- Plan and execute press, media availability, and public events, including spokesperson preparation, logistics coordination, and message delivery.
- Monitor local media coverage and identify emerging issues, trends, and news opportunities to inform message development and initiative-taking media engagement.

May 2025 – March 2026

Morning Anchor, CBS6 Albany, WRGB-TV, Niskayuna, NY

- Selected to anchor the CBS affiliate's 3.5-hour live morning newscast in Albany, NY on a freelance basis during three maternity leave assignments, demonstrating trusted on-air leadership, credibility, and versatility.
- Produced and delivered engaging daily content for a top-rated morning news program, researching, writing, and presenting stories that informed and connected with viewers across New York's Capital Region.
- Cultivated relationships with community leaders, public officials, and local organizations to secure compelling live, in-studio interviews highlighting issues, events, and initiatives impacting the region.
- Delivered authentic, community-focused storytelling that elevated local voices and strengthened audience engagement through meaningful coverage of the people, places, and events shaping the Capital District.

June 2021 – February 2022

Director of Communications, Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America, Boston, MA

- Oversaw communications for nationwide non-profit, NACA, including 47 NACA offices across the United States.
- Established national and local media connections. Updated reporter databases in Microsoft Excel and on Meltwater.
- Delivered authentic, community-focused storytelling that elevated local voices and strengthened audience engagement through meaningful coverage of the people, places, and events impacted by NACA.
- Managed daily reporter requests for information and interviews from print, radio, and TV news outlets. Facilitated interviews with NACA CEO and members.
- Managed the creation and distribution of press releases. Planned and executed NACA's Boston/Atlanta Mayoral Candidates Affordable Housing Forums in August, September, and October 2021. Developed social media strategies and managed three junior communication specialists into competent team members.

Local Television Journalist (News Anchor, Investigative Reporter, Videographer, Writer/Producer) – 23 Years

Boston 25 News, Dedham, MA, March 2022 - March 2024
Fox 61 News, Hartford CT, April 2021 - June 2021
WNYT-News Channel 13, Albany, NY, November 2018 - December 2020
NBC Connecticut, West Hartford, CT, November 2015 – November 2018
WFSB-TV, Rocky Hill, CT, October 2008 – October 2015
WBRE-TV, Wilkes-Barre, PA, October 2005 – October 2008
KEVN-TV, Rapid City, SD, March 2004 – March 2005
Capital News 9, Albany, NY, August 2002 – March 2004
13 WHAM News, Rochester, NY, August 2001 – May 2002
CBS6 Albany, WRGB-TV, Albany, NY, June 2001 – August 2001

- Covered issues impacting the public in greater Boston (MA), Hartford (CT), Albany (NY), Vermont, the Berkshires of Massachusetts, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton (PA) and Rapid City (SD) delivering live and recorded reports for station's multiple news programs while communicating complex topics for diverse audiences.
- Maintained constant contact with local law enforcement officials regarding drug busts, racially motivated hate crimes, guns and gang violence, political issues, tragedies, and triumphs. Gained a better understanding of the issues impacting communities across New York and New England to help inform the public. Coordinated on-camera interviews with police as well as federal, state, and local lawmakers.

- Reported from major breaking news and crisis events, including FBI raids, public figure controversies, severe weather events, presidential visits, the Sandy Hook school shooting, and countless high profile court cases, providing timely, accurate information under deadline pressure.
- Researched, wrote, and produced multiple stories daily under tight deadlines, ensuring accuracy, clarity, and editorial integrity across broadcast and digital platforms.
- Delivered digital content for station websites and mobile platforms. Collaborated with social media teams to develop audience engagement strategies and distribute content across multiple platforms.
- Cultivated trusted relationships with public officials, community leaders, law enforcement agencies, and local organizations to identify exclusive stories, secure interviews, and enhance public access to information by building and maintaining strong professional relationships with media colleagues, police, lawmakers, corporate and community leaders.
- Served as a trusted representative of various news outlets, protecting organizational credibility and reputation through credible journalism and public engagement.
- Supported community engagement initiatives through volunteer participation in local fundraising and public outreach events.
- Managed weekend newsroom operations, making editorial decisions for broadcast, directing staff assignments, overseeing digital content across web and social platforms.
- Spent time off completing the FBI New Haven Citizens Academy in 2014 as well as the West Hartford Police Department Citizens Academy in 2016 and Albany Police Department Citizens Academy in 2019 to develop law enforcement ties in the community.

Education

December 2012: Master of Science, Organizational Communication, Central Connecticut State University.

May 2002: Bachelor of Arts, Communication, State University of New York at Geneseo. Minors: Public Relations/Sociology.

Skills

• Media Relations & Crisis Communications • Public Speaking, Media Training & On-Camera Communications • Strategic Communications & Messaging • Social Media & Digital Content Strategy • AP Style • Squarespace & WordPress • MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook) • Stakeholder Engagement • Strategic Communicator

Volunteer

Media Relations/Communications, Center Square Association, Albany, NY April 2025 – Present

- Draft and edit press releases related to initiatives involving Center Square Association.
- Collaborate with volunteers/organizations to ensure consistent messaging and effective event marketing.
- Conduct targeted media outreach and coordinating with local news outlets, to secure coverage and promote events and news conferences to members of the media and broader audiences.
- Prepare organizers for media interviews by crafting key talking points and anticipating potential questions from journalists to maintain consistent messaging.

Outside Activities

- Finisher of 19 marathons
- Certified yoga instructor and spinning instructor