



## **Communications Consultant, Short-Term Contract**

**Organization:** Early Milestones Colorado

**Application Due:** January 26, 2017

**Send to:** [recruiting@earlymilestones.org](mailto:recruiting@earlymilestones.org)

**Contact:** Jennifer Nash, Director of Operations

Early Milestones Colorado is seeking a communications consultant for a short-term contract, with an option to extend the contract through 2018, to finalize the organization's foundational elements for communications. Deliverables include a review and refresh of existing materials and the development of internal guidelines for communications strategy. The consultant will also develop recommendations for the next phase of communications strategy for Early Milestones Colorado.

### **BACKGROUND**

Early Milestones Colorado (Milestones) brings expertise and innovation to complex early childhood systems in order to make Colorado the best place to raise a child. Milestones' team of strategists partners with local communities, state agencies, and national experts to create lasting improvements for children prenatal through age eight.

The vision for this organization began in the early 2000s, as hundreds of Colorado stakeholders embarked on a major effort to design a governance plan for the state that would increase coordination and efficiencies and generate better results for children. Colorado has made great progress in increasing early childhood coordination through implementation of the "three-legged stool" vision, including: the consolidation of programs and funding streams into the Office of Early Childhood (first leg); the expansion of local early childhood councils (second leg); and the creation of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (seat of the stool). Founded in 2014 by a group of Colorado's leading early childhood funders, Milestones completes the third "leg" of the plan: an agile, flexible nonprofit to accelerate public goals in all areas of the Early Childhood Colorado Framework (Framework), navigate between government and communities, maximize resources, and hold systems accountable for results.

Since its launch, Milestones has demonstrated its value to a variety of stakeholders with work that spans the domains of the Early Childhood Colorado Framework: 1) Family Support and Education, 2) Health and Well-Being and, 3) Learning and Development. For example, in the past year, Milestones, in partnership with the Office of Early Childhood at the Colorado Department of Human Services, is supporting 15 communities throughout Colorado in developing local systems plans concerning child maltreatment prevention using the newly developed Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action. Milestones is also partnering with stakeholders in Summit County to design a universal Pre-K model with elements similar to the Denver Preschool Program (DPP) and ensure additional systems considerations are in place to protect and sustain the program results. In addition, we have expanded our work in the health and well-being domain; this year we will begin educating local early childhood and health stakeholders concerning opportunities within the Accountable Care Collaborative (ACC) 2.0 to expand behavioral health integration and further health and well-being systems work. Finally, we supported the development of a state plan, released new statewide data on the workforce and its economic impact, and completed planning for a new phase of local innovation efforts to launch in 2018 as part of the Transforming the Early Childhood Workforce initiative.

Milestones has created a strategic initiatives reserve fund and has begun work on the organization's first internally initiated project; a comprehensive history of early childhood efforts in Colorado. The outcomes of this work are to: 1) educate new policymakers, 2) help inform priority-setting, 3) provide additional analysis of principles and conditions to guide next steps and, 4) share the Colorado story with national stakeholders. We are collaborating with other partners including the Early Childhood Leadership Commission, the Colorado Children's Campaign, and Clayton Early Learning.

Early Milestones Colorado believes even greater impact can result from a strong communications effort. Milestones' current needs include the completion of basic communications templates, tools and messaging, as well as guidance on future strategy and resource and staffing needs.

### **KEY EXPECTATIONS AND DELIVERABLES**

1. Solidify basic communications foundational elements for organization including:
  - a. Review and finalize current Style Guide and Brand Guide
  - b. Develop guidelines for co-branding, authorship, and acknowledgements (for projects involving multiple partners)
  - c. Manage the development of a branded power point template for the organization
  - d. Provide recommendations for a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, including suggested guidance on implementation and use
2. Develop media guide/toolkit including:
  - a. Consistent talking points for Milestones board and staff
  - b. Basic media and message training for staff and board members
  - c. Press Release template
  - d. Press List, including relevant influencers, bloggers, etc.
  - e. Develop a media pitch
3. Manage work with existing design firm to review and refresh if necessary including:
  - a. Website design and content
  - b. Letterhead and other collateral
4. Social Media Plan
  - a. Conduct a basic social media audit
  - b. Develop social media guidelines and protocols, as well as a content calendar
  - c. Train staff on social media channels, guidelines, and protocols
5. Marketing and collateral materials
  - a. Review and revise Milestones "overview" for meetings and other interactions
  - b. Create templates for case studies and longer reports
  - c. With staff, prioritize national conferences and other potential speaking opportunities that would help the organization meet communications' goals.
  - d. Develop stories of impact for Milestones' projects to illustrate the organization's mission and efficacy
  - e. Recommend and develop other collateral materials (e.g., brief annual report), as necessary
6. Provide recommendations concerning basic analytics and data to measure impact of the organization's ongoing communications efforts
7. Develop 12-month communications calendar for 2018-2019 and recommendations for needed expertise, staffing and other resources to fill the organization's ongoing communications needs

## **APPLICATIONS**

Please send resume, cover letter and a summary of similar engagements in which you have been involved to [recruiting@earlymilestones.org](mailto:recruiting@earlymilestones.org). Application deadline is January 26, 2018. Final candidates to be interviewed the week of January 29, 2018. Contract rate based on relevant experience.