



Deborah Kekone

Graphic Designer

Contact

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Portfolio:
<https://bit.ly/deborahkekone>

Education

Woodbury University
Burbank, CA
Graphic Design Studies

Brooks College
Long Beach, CA
AS, Visual Communications
Dean's List, Honor Roll

Mt. San Antonio College
Walnut, CA
Misc. undergraduate studies
photography, graphic design and
general education studies

Expertise

Graphic Design for Print and Digital
Creative / Art Direction
Creative / Technical Collaboration
Brand Identity and Development
Brand Management
Web / UI Design
Color Theory
Typography
Visual Hierarchy
Copywriting
Generative AI Curation
Data-driven Processes

I am an award-winning seasoned Graphic Designer boasting two decades of hands-on experience in art direction, print and packaging design, web design, and corporate identity and brand development and management. Highly skilled in creating and telling stories through the use of visual narratives, I have a comprehensive skill set and thrive both in the autonomy of individual projects and the dynamism of collaborative creative environments, both in-person and remotely. I have a fundamental understanding of how to meet audience needs and my broad experience includes working with clients in a wide array of sectors including education (preschool through higher ed), government agencies, non-profit and professional associations, healthcare, beauty and wellness, fashion, dining and travel, entertainment, music, film, home goods, automotive, real estate (both commercial and residential), manufacturing, and others.

Professional Experience

Senior Graphic Designer / VMA Communications / Claremont, CA
February 2020 - present

Collaborate with the creative team, clients, writers, videographers, photographers, and programmers to design and develop award-winning digital and print collateral/outreach materials and branding for government agencies, public school districts, higher education institutes, public transportation, non-profit organizations, automotive technology companies, health district, and public infrastructure partners. Additional responsibilities include copywriting and editing, implementing and training staff on new technology, and establishing formalized processes for the creative department.

Recognitions:

- *2022 Publications and Digital Media Award*, National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) - Hacienda La Puente Unified School District *Facts at a Glance Brochure* design
- *2023 Golden Achievement Award*, National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) - Lynwood Unified School District, collateral design for *Lynwood on the Rise: Rebuilding a Fallen Community*
- *2024 Award of Excellence*, California School Public Relations Association (CalSPRA) - Newport Mesa Unified School District, *District Brag Sheet* design

Freelance Graphic Designer / Group Concepts / Manhattan Beach, CA
October 2018 - present

Design print and digital marketing collateral, stakeholder communications, and conference/convention materials for professional associations.

Freelance Art Director, Graphic Designer / Self-Employed/ Claremont, CA
September 2006 - present

Design print and digital collateral and advertising, stakeholder communications, packaging, tradeshow and point-of-purchase displays, logos and branding, and marketing materials for clients across a broad array of sectors including higher education institutes, preschool and K-12 education, nonprofit organizations, entertainment industry, fashion and luxury goods, healthcare and senior care, food and restaurant, and other small to medium-size businesses. Additional responsibilities include collaborating and developing relationships with in-house staff to identify communications needs over both short- and long-term bases and fulfilling the role of art director to establish effective creative and brand strategy and copywriting.

Freelance Graphic Designer / Rodin Marketing / Sherman Oaks, CA
October 2008 - April 2020

Design print and digital marketing collateral, tradeshow and point-of-purchase displays, and logos and branding for nonprofit, healthcare and senior care, private education, wealth management, commercial real estate, logistics, and other small to medium-size business clients.

Technical Skills

Apple/Mac OS
Adobe Creative Cloud
Adobe InDesign
Adobe Photoshop
Adobe Illustrator
Adobe Express
Adobe Firefly
Adobe Lightroom
Adobe Acrobat
Generative AI
Canva
Wordpress
HTML/CSS
Photo Retouching
Apple Numbers / Keynote / Pages
Microsoft Office / Google G-Suite
Email Marketing:
Constant Contact / MailChimp
Project Management:
Asana / Figma
Client and Time Management:
BigTime / Zoho
File Management and Sharing:
Dropbox / Google Drive /
Microsoft OneDrive / HighTail
Social Media

Soft Skills

- Quickly learn and adopt new technology, skills, and processes
- Early identification of design and communications trends
- Strong understanding of how to have a strategically targeted approach while empathetically meeting the needs of broad audiences
- Thrive in collaborative environments
- Effective communication
- Abstract and macro-level strategic approach
- Attention to detail
- Quick decision-making
- Resilient and able to quickly pivot, as needed
- Flexible and smoothly transition across different team roles
- Strong understanding of business operations including profit-margin and ROI

Board Co-President / Claremont Educational Foundation / Claremont, CA July 2019 - June 2022

Three-year, volunteer co-presidential term (approximately 10-15 hours per week), fulfilling the role of Executive Director. Duties include leading the implementation of a multi-year strategic plan, collaborating with board members, executing fundraising and giving programs, hiring and managing paid staff, leading recruitment and onboarding of new board members, cultivating relationships with donors and business partners, and implementing new policies, programs, and initiatives including development of the organization's first DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) policy and full-day summer camp program.

Freelance Graphic Designer / Sterling Strategic Management / Laguna Beach, CA

May 2012 - October 2018

Design print and digital marketing collateral, stakeholder communications, and conference/convention materials for professional associations.

Graphic Designer (Part-Time Auxilliary Staff) / Earl Burns Miller Japanese Garden, CSULB / Long Beach, CA

April 2009 - December 2017

Work with the Garden's Development and Special Events staff members to create branded materials for print and web, communicating Garden news and events and promoting special event opportunities.

Freelance Graphic Designer / Skilset Communications / Eagle Rock, CA

December 2008 - June 2012

Develop and design branded marketing and communications pieces for large technology, financial, and healthcare companies.

Senior Graphic Designer / Rabuck Stranger / Culver City, CA

January 2008 - December 2008

Collaborate with the creative team to develop brand and marketing strategy for luxury goods, education, and technology companies. Responsibilities included designing for print and web advertising, corporate collateral, direct mail, brand identity, websites, and new media.

Volunteer Experience

Jed Leano for State Assembly

Art Director (Summer 2023 - March 2024)

Jed Leano for Claremont City Council

Art Director (2022)

Claremont Educational Foundation (CEF)

Co-President of the Board (2019 - 2022)

Various Committee and Leadership Positions: Executive Committee Member (2018 - 2023); Communications Committee Chair and Member (2018 - 2024); Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee Member and Facilitator (2021 - 2024); Development Committee Co-Chair (2020 - 2021); Hiring Committee Member (2019 - 2023); SLICE of Summer Program Committee Member (2019 - 2023)

Bob Fass for Claremont School Board

Communications Committee Co-Chair (2019 - 2020)

Yes! for Claremont - Measure CR (Sales Tax Measure)

Art Director, Committee Member (2018)