

Melinda D. Church



Melinda Church co-leads the Strategic Communications practice area. She brings to the firm more than 25 years of experience in communications and marketing in the higher education and healthcare sectors, with expertise in strategy development, philanthropic case development, executive communications, and organizational structures and planning.

Prior to joining GG+A, Melinda served in numerous leadership positions at The Ohio State University. As Vice President, Advancement Integration and Communications, she played a key role in strategy development and proposal writing for eight- and nine-figure gifts, creating optimal structures for fundraising communications across the institution, and developing engaging events for volunteer leaders. As Vice President of University Communications and Marketing, Melinda oversaw the full range of marketing, branding, communications, and public relations functions for the University. She developed a unified visual identity to strengthen national brand reputation, led communications strategy for all corporate affinity partnerships and the \$483 million monetization of parking assets, and created metrics for guiding her team's efforts and reporting to the Board. Melinda conceived and directed communications and events to introduce the University's new President in 2014, resulting in more than 150 million potential media impressions and more than 420,000 key constituents reached via social media.

Prior to that appointment, Melinda served as Executive Officer to the President of Ohio State, leading the operations and staff of the President's Office, special events, the University Residence, and executive communications. To maximize the effectiveness of the University's senior leadership team, she developed and led a new approach to planning and staging the implementation of major institution-wide initiatives. To extend the reach of the president's vision and core institutional messages, Melinda launched various social media efforts on his behalf, including the president's Twitter account in January 2009. He was the first university president on Twitter, and the number of his followers grew to more than 50,000. She planned the president's international travel to develop and grow higher education and business partnerships, and she served as a University delegate throughout China, Turkey, India, Iceland, Europe, and the United Kingdom. She conceived and executed the 2012 opening events for Ohio State's Gateway Office in Mumbai.

Melinda has served in executive and philanthropic communications roles for other colleges and universities, including the University of Virginia, Virginia Military Institute, and Washington and Lee University. She has also taught writing at Harford County Community College. Prior to her work in higher education, she was managing editor of *Indiana Business* magazine. Melinda has edited and designed several academic and general-audience books. She is an award-winning writer, artist, designer, and silversmith.

Melinda holds a master's degree in journalism from Indiana University and a bachelor's degree in English (creative writing) from the University of Washington.

During her tenure with GG+A, Melinda Church has provided counsel to the following client institutions:

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago Foundation

Barack Obama Foundation

University of Cambridge

The University of Chicago Medicine

Columbus Foundation

Curtis Institute of Music

Hawai'i Pacific University

King's College London

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

Oregon State University

Pratt Institute

Smithsonian Institution

University of Virginia