



## SCOTT D. SOUTHARD

### Communications Associate

15 Years of Experience

#### Education

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2025-Present Graduate Certification, Michigan State University, Program Evaluation (ongoing)

2002 M.F.A., University of Southern California, Professional Writing

1996 B.A., Aquinas College, English

#### Qualifications

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Expert in social media and outreach, including LinkedIn, Twitter (X), Instagram, BluSky, Threads, and Facebook for businesses.

Superb organizational skills

Experience coordinating meetings, interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

Ability to smoothly execute scheduling and other project-support details

Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with a strong knowledge of grammar rules and their application

#### Relevant Professional Experience

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##### PPA Communications Associate/Research Assistant/Senior Editor Experience

2004-present **Communications Associate. Produce Prescription (PPR) Program Evaluation Consulting.** The Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) has served as a statewide association since 2006 to connect farmers and consumers and to support farmers markets and community-driven marketplaces as vibrant venues to promote local food consumption. The role of MIFMA has accelerated to include convenor of key stakeholders in supporting Produce Prescription (PPR) Programs. PPA is acting as the evaluation consultant for MIFMA, refining an evaluation design of project progress and impacts, carrying out evaluation assessment tasks, assisting in the creation of a strategic plan for the creation of a technical assistance center, and conducting a cost study. Responsibilities include assisting on the literature review and other support tasks.

2024-present **Communications Associate. Building Knowledge about Michigan's License-Exempt Providers, Non-Traditional Hour Care Services, and Quality of Care Improvement.** PPA and the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP) are partnering to study the role that

license-exempt (LE) child care plays in Michigan's mixed-delivery system with federal funding (\$1.9 million over 5 years). The rigorous mixed-methods design is answering research questions focused on parental choice, provider characteristics and quality improvement needs, and the prevalence of non-traditional hour (NTH) care from license-exempt providers (LEPs) includes a comparison of LE and family child care (FCC) providers. Responsibilities include qualitative research assistance, communication needs, and support.

- 2024-present **Communications Associate. Building an Equitable Future Together Framework Update.** The Council of Michigan Foundations (CMF) has enlisted the support of PPA in creating an updated version of their framework document, with the goal to identify new longer-term, systemic policy changes that can be made, and to lift up opportunities where Michigan philanthropy can play a leading role. Responsibilities include research assistance, editing, and assisting on meeting facilitation.
- 2024-present **Communications Associate. Michigan Association of Landbanks (MALB) Consulting Services.** Assisting MALB with external consultation and support to help its policy committee develop, mobilize, and bring to fruition a broad-based policy agenda to support the revitalization of vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties throughout the state of Michigan. Responsibilities include legislative bill tracking and meeting facilitation assistance.
- 2024-present **Communications Associate. Comprehensive Study on Homelessness in Lansing.** PPA is partnering with CityWise in support of the City of Lansing in its pursuit to comprehensively examine and embolden its response to the state of homelessness in the Lansing community. As a key partner in the Region 7 Continuum of Care (CoC), the City is committed to conducting an in-depth examination of the homelessness situation within the Lansing community, with the goal of informing a timely and effective response. Responsibilities include communications outreach, survey support and administrative needs.
- 2023-present **Communications Associate. Evaluation of Resilient Relationships, Resilient Supply.** The Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities (Groundwork) initiative, Resilient Relationships, Resilient Supply, builds upon decades of experience in partnership development. The initiative leverages established partnerships to grow new relationships and strengthen the food system along lower Michigan's Western Lakeshore Region. The effort aims to increase sales of locally grown foods from small and mid-sized producers to schools, early child care and education (ECE) centers, and emergency food providers, and to increase community nutrition security by increasing access to healthy, local food for those with low incomes. Responsibilities include survey production and monitoring.
- 2023-present **Communications Associate. City of Saginaw Food Feasibility Study.** PPA is working with the City of Saginaw through a contract with Guidehouse, on conducting broad community engagement around developing and implementing a

food retail establishment to increase food security and food access in the City. Prior to embarking on these broader community engagement efforts, PPA completed a preliminary food retail feasibility study with recommendations for the City. Responsibilities include outreach, communications, survey creation and oversight, administrative duties, as needed.

- 2023-present **Communications Associate. Michigan Needs Assessment of the Early Childhood System Grant.** Working as a subcontractor/partner to SRI International, PPA is conducting a two-part study to determine opportunities to improve Michigan's early childhood system. PPA is leading the workforce study, which includes a survey of the broad early care and education (ECE) workforce, interviews with ECE administrators, listening-workshopping sessions, following early ECE professionals through monthly surveys, and analysis of secondary data from the state's MiRegistry Registered Education Professional databases and other sources. PPA also co-facilitates partner groups and contributes to the family and community engagement study through the workshopping sessions. Responsibilities include social media outreach and administrative duties.
- 2022-present **Research Assistant. Strategic Consulting for ProsperUS Detroit.** Public Policy Associates, Inc. (PPA) is providing facilitation, consultation, and policy support to ProsperUS Detroit as it helps a group of small business groups develop, mobilize, and bring forward a broad-based policy response plan with tangible impacts and metrics on how the State can use recovery dollars to better reach into communities and target entrepreneurs and businesses owned by low-to-moderate-income individuals, people of color, and immigrants. Responsibilities include providing facilitation assistance, writing needs, meeting planning and notetaking.
- 2022-present **Research Assistant. Evaluation of Project Connect4Success.** As part of a team implementing a five-year program funded by SAMHSA, PPA is evaluating the performance of Project Connect4Success. Child and Family Charities (CFC) is leading Project Connect4Success to assist youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The approach will provide housing, behavioral health counseling, benefits navigation, vocational counseling, and community-member assistance to help youth achieve stability.
- PPA is designing and carrying out the study, which will use existing data and develop new information. In response to the foundational need for stability for the youth participants over time, the evaluation will focus on both whether stability is achieved and how it is achieved. Key evaluation questions are concerned with program performance, effectiveness of existing collaborative partnerships, and youth outcomes relative to established benchmarks in key program areas (e.g., educational placement or attainment on time, employment and retention, counseling attendance, substance abuse treatment, housing placement and retention, public benefits accessed). Responsibilities include admin assistance, scheduling, editing and notetaking.

- 2022-present **Research Assistant. Environmental Scan: Stakeholder Interviews.** Human service and health care organizations struggle to effectively address adverse social determinants of health due to systems-level fragmentation. To address the social problem at a deep level, the United Way of Southeastern Michigan (UWSEM) is developing the infrastructure for a community information exchange (CIE). A CIE would enable the cross-sector sharing of information and coordination of services and resources to provide efficient and whole person-centered care and assistance to those in need. UWSEM contracted with PPA to help them continue their development of a CIE in southeastern Michigan. PPA is gathering input from the community by conducting stakeholder interviews and roundtables with approximately 84 individuals from 50 health and human service organizations in southeast Michigan. Responsibilities include scheduling (roundtable and interviews), notetaking, communication, data entry and analysis, and editing.
- 2022-present **Research Assistant. Grant Management Services.** PPA is providing the grant management services to the Eastside Lansing Food Co-Op. PPA is managing three separate grant awards for ELFCO, from (1) the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), (2) Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and (3) the Reinvestment Fund through their Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI) funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Each of these grants has different timelines, funding parameters, and reporting requirements. PPA is overseeing the timelines and requirements for each grant and helping to ensure that ELFCO submits on schedule necessary paperwork, documentation, and reporting. Responsibilities include admin assistance and editing.
- 2022-present **Research Assistant. Evaluation of Michigan's Provider-Driven QRIS.** Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Policy, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), the research partnership will rigorously evaluate the state's redesigned QRIS to assess the extent to which it achieves its goals of greater participation, equitable access, and satisfaction using quantitative and qualitative data. The partnership collects and analyzes qualitative data by engaging key stakeholder groups such as providers, parents/guardians, and resource centers about their experiences with the GSQ program, QRIS changes, and issues around provider participation. With the use of MiRegistry data, in addition to other secondary and primary sources, the research partnership will also investigate the mediating role of staff turnover on provider quality. Responsibilities include assisting on research, data collection, and communication.
- 2022-present **Research Assistant. Evaluation of AmeriCorps Programming.** PPA is contracted by the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN) to evaluate two of MCAN's signature initiatives: AdviseMI and the College Completion Corps (CCC). PPA is implementing a rigorous, custom-made, actionable evaluation to help drive both program improvement and the achievement of results. PPA is conducting the implementation evaluation using the program's administrative

records data, as well as primary data from a combination of surveys, interviews, and focus groups conducted by PPA staff. The outcomes evaluation will focus on descriptive outcomes to demonstrate current student results and connect these to the implementation changes. Responsibilities include organizing and tracking study participant information and aiding with data collection and analysis.

- 2022–present **Research Assistant. Center for Community Progress.** The Center for Community Progress, Michigan Initiatives (Community Progress) retained PPA to provide external consultation and support to help its staff and partner network develop, mobilize, and bring to fruition a broad-based policy agenda to support the revitalization of vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties throughout the state of Michigan. PPA’s work consists of providing facilitation and planning support for (1) a series of meetings to advise and coach Community Progress staff on how to amplify the issue that results in tangible state policy change; and (2) Community Progress’ policy agenda development process. Responsibilities include research assistance, meeting planning, and notetaking.
- 2021–present **Research Assistant. Upper Peninsula Food As Medicine Program, Upper Peninsula Commission for Area Progress (UPCAP).** The Food As Medicine (FAM) Collaborative consists of a large number of health, human service, and food assistance organizations spanning the 15-county Upper Peninsula (U.P.), dedicated to improving community-clinical linkages to address social determinants of health for U.P. residents. The Collaborative secured funding to implement a two-year U.P.-wide FAM pilot project. The pilot project consists of a Prescription for Health program to improve the food security of low-income residents and invest in the local food infrastructure. Responsibilities include interviewing.
- 2021–present **Research Assistant. Informing Michigan’s Family Co-Payment and Provider Payment Structure Policies and Administration.** With this research planning grant, PPA is partnering with the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Great Start (MDE/OGS) to explore several questions important to the policy and procedural decisions about child care assistance family co-payments and provider payments, with a specific emphasis on the role that administrative burden plays in reducing access to quality child care. Responsibilities include qualitative research (interviewing), planning, communication, data collection and entry, and administrative duties.
- 2020–present **Research Assistant. Strategic Consulting, New Economy Initiative (NEI).** PPA is providing ongoing strategic consulting services to the New Economy Initiative (NEI) of Southeast Michigan. As part of this work, PPA developed a public policy agenda grounded in equity and inclusion in support of microbusinesses in underserved areas in Detroit and Michigan. Responsibilities include note-taking, assisting facilitators and members, and communication.

- 2024      **Communications Associate. Homeless Solutions for Boulder County System Evaluation.** PPA partnered with CityWise to design and conduct an evaluation of the Homeless Solutions for Boulder County (HSBC) system of care. The evaluation design encompassed both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Responsibilities included communications outreach, survey support and administrative needs.
- 2023-2024      **Communications Associate. Frederick County Child Care Market Study.** The Frederick County Office for Children and Families (OCF), together with the Frederick County Interagency Early Childhood Committee (IECC), seeks to increase equitable access to high-quality early care and education (ECE) in the county. To address this need, the PPA team (including consultant Dr. Shira Solomon and community liaison Damaris Jackson) studied its regulated child care landscape, the economic drivers and educational impact of ECE quality and gaps, and the community-specific values that can guide the development of culturally responsive, local solutions. Responsibilities included communications, website design, outreach, and focus group assistance.
- 2022-2024      **Research Assistant. Juvenile Court Services (JCS) Climate Survey.** JCS for the Fifth Judicial Circuit contracted with PPA to assess the organization climate within JCS and support organizational planning to help ensure that ongoing efforts within JCS to bolster employee satisfaction and organizational success are informed by the perspectives of all employees. The assessment was tailored to focus on the topics of greatest interest and relevance for JCS, including a strong focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. PPA previously conducted an organization climate assessment (survey and interviews) and provided JCS with recommendations for improvement. Responsibilities included research assistance and outreach.
- 2023      **Communications Associate. Engagement Sessions for the Michigan Department of Lifelong Learning, and Potential Transition.** PPA, in partnership with Research to Practice, helped the Governor's Office prepare for the launch of a new state department that brings together early childhood, afterschool, and higher education programs and partnerships. The PPA-R2P team facilitated two sessions with designated groups for each of these topic areas, to result in time-bound priorities, barrier identification, legislative considerations, and budget considerations for the transition team. Responsibilities included administrative duties, as needed.
- 2021–2023      **Research Assistant. Michigan Child Care Policy Research Partnership Research Study.** PPA won a \$1.167 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families to study the effects of policy changes within Michigan's Child Development and Care program. PPA worked in partnership with the Michigan Department of Education and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). The project included examining secondary data using an interrupted time series



approach, as well as the collection of primary data from child care providers, families receiving the subsidy, and MDHHS case workers who conduct eligibility screening. Responsibilities included scheduling, quantitative data-collection assistance, planning, and administration duties (communication, writing, and editing).

- 2022 **Research Assistant. Michigan's Current and Future Adult Education Landscape.** For Talent First, PPA oversaw an investigation of adult education in Michigan and the policies that impact it; collecting along the way recommendations to improve the current education environment across the state. Responsibilities included assisting with the advisory group (including communication and taking minutes and other written material); overseeing the collection of the provider survey (including communication); and coordinating and attending the participant focus groups.
- 2022 **Research Assistant. Housing Plan Consultant.** In a collaboration with CityWise—a California-based policy, planning, and evaluation consulting firm—PPA won an RFP with the City of Pasadena to act as a consultant for the city's first housing plan. Responsibilities included coordinating and scheduling the focus groups with the targeted populations with lived experience with homelessness.
- 2020–2022 **Research Assistant. Strategic Planning.** The Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) hired PPA to conduct research and strategic planning. Phase II of the work with MSHDA will result in a statewide housing plan. This plan will be completed through facilitation, interviews, research, and stakeholder and public engagement. Responsibilities include scheduling, quantitative data-collection assistance, planning, and administration duties (communication, writing, and editing).
- 2020–2021 **Research Assistant. Food Security and Health in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.** PPA worked with Feeding America West Michigan to carry out a one-year planning grant to develop a comprehensive, cross-systems strategy to address food security and health in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. PPA provided the facilitation and research services for the project. Responsibilities included communication, scheduling, and facilitation assistance.
- 2020–2021 **Research Assistant. Weatherization Grants for Small Businesses.** The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity approached the Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM) to administer a \$3-million CARES Act grant to help small businesses continue operations during shutdowns and diminished indoor capacity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. SBAM hired PPA to help administer the grant program. Responsibilities included grant application reviews, administration, and communication.

## PPA Editor Experience

- 2005–2016, **Senior Editor. Public Policy Associates, Incorporated.**  
2020–present Edit various proposals, reports, surveys, marketing materials, presentations, business correspondence, and other written material for content, logic, style, grammar, punctuation, and quality production. Organize and track study participant information and project timeline adherence.

## Other Relevant Experience

- 2016–2019 **Senior Technical Writer. Michigan Health Information Network Shared Services.** During tenure was the “voice” of the Michigan Health Information Network Shared Services (MiHIN), overseeing all of the writing shared (externally and internally) by the organization. This included business correspondence, marketing material (one pagers, brochures, and web content), white papers, social media, and presentations. Also, created all of the templates for the organization.
- 2005–2006 **Instructor. English Adjunct Faculty. Aquinas College.** Taught a 300-level scriptwriting course to a diverse student group. Planned lessons and writing projects, edited students’ writing, wrote lectures, and selected course texts. Evaluated student performance. Participated in department discourse.
- 2002–2003 **Administrative Coordinator. Pacific Center for Health Policy and Ethics, University of Southern California Law School.** Wrote and edited the Pacific Center newsletter; planning and facilitating of students’ workshops and faculty luncheons, edited and wrote documentation for these events; scheduled, created agendas. and kept minutes for Pacific Center board meetings; maintained the running of the department; secretarial duties; scheduled conferences and arranged schedule of directors; and tracked and distributed Pacific Center materials across the state.
- 2000–2002 **Student Administrative Assistant. MBA Career Resource Center for the Marshall Business School, University of Southern California.** Performed business writing, editing, and research for department; edited and posted job descriptions; and performed administrative duties.

## Professional Development

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LinkedIn Learning Training including SharePoint Online, Crisis Communication, Integrated Content Marketing, Market Research Foundations, Project Management Foundations, SEO for Social Media, Social Media Marketing for Small Business, Technical Writing: Reports, Word Essential (Office 365), and Writing a Proposal.