KAREN CHENOA SERGENT

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**Professional Summary**

Strategic communications leader with 15+ years of experience crafting data-informed messaging strategies, leading digital transformation initiatives, and elevating institutional reputation through integrated storytelling. Adept at aligning content, brand, and engagement across complex organizations—including colleges, research centers, and community programs. Known for turning vision into action through cross-functional collaboration, process optimization, and award-winning storytelling. Passionate about mission-driven work that amplifies visibility, fosters connection, and drives organizational success.

**Core Strengths & Tools**

**Strengths:** Strategic Planning • Content Strategy • Team Leadership • UX Writing & Digital Accessibility
Internal Communications • Brand Development • Cross-Functional Collaboration • Workflow Optimization
**Tools:** Trello, Salesforce, WordPress, Site improve, Adobe CC, Google Analytics, HTML/CSS
**Certifications**: SEO (UC Davis), UI/UX Design (CalArts), AI Product Management (Duke), Salesforce Sales Ops

**Professional Experience**

**The University of Tennessee**, Knoxville, TN *(April 2018 - present)*

**Content Strategist, College of Arts and Sciences** *(May 2024 – Present)*

* Lead strategic communications for UT’s largest and most diverse college, aligning messaging across 20+ departments, 12 interdisciplinary programs, and 15 research centers.
* Launched the college’s first dedicated Strategy Team, implementing scalable systems that integrate design thinking and strategic planning.
* Created the CAS Hub intranet, improving internal communications and standardizing event/resource coordination.
* Developed branded toolkits for recruitment, promotion, and faculty visibility; aligned storytelling with Enrollment, Advancement, and academic priorities.
* Partnered with an external firm to reimagine the college’s brand identity and feature publication.
* **Results:**
	+ 24 departments integrated into new internal systems
	+ 11,000+ CAS Hub page views from 1,200+ users
	+ 34,903 social media engagements (+54% YoY)
	+ Reduced redundant requests and launched college-wide content tracking
* Current priorities include launching a student storytelling program, formalizing SEO strategy, and expanding brand performance metrics.

**Digital Content Strategist, Ofﬁce of Communication and Marketing** *(March 2023 – May 2024)*

* Led content development and UX for UT’s first enterprise-wide intranet, supporting 24,000+ users across 46 academic and administrative units.
* Developed content migration and architecture strategies, ensuring logical structure and accessibility.
* Built a training hub with video tutorials, how-to guides, and governance documentation.
* Facilitated town halls and in-person support to guide adoption and change management.
* Earned Chancellor-level recognition for enhancing internal communications and operational efficiency.

**Creative Content Specialist, UT Extension Family and Consumer Sciences** *(April 2018 – Oct 2022)*

* Directed statewide digital communications for Extension programming across all 95 Tennessee counties.
* Managed 19 public-facing websites and 8 social media accounts, streamlining messaging and design.
* Built and maintained an internal intranet for county agents and subject matter experts.
* Pivoted outreach programs during COVID-19 to digital and hybrid formats, expanding access and engagement.
* Produced accessible content on public health, personal finance, and family well-being for rural and underserved audiences.
* Earned multiple national awards for innovation in social media and digital engagement.

**Adjunct Faculty *–* Ux/UI Design**

**Southern New Hampshire University** (Online) *(March 2023 – Present)*Teach courses in graphic design and media arts with a focus on user experience. Recognized with SNHU’s Outstanding Educator Award in 2024 for student engagement and innovative curriculum.

**Freelance Art Director & Strategist
Chenoa Creative** *(Jan 2005 – Present)*Deliver brand strategy, digital content, and design services for nonprofits, education clients, and small businesses. Lead creative direction, UX/UI, and multichannel campaign development.

**Previous Experience (2003-2017)**

* **Program Director and Visual Arts Instructor, Heritage Academy**, Columbus, MS*(2009 - 2010, 2013 - 2017)*
* **Art Director, International Expeditions**, Helena, AL *(2007 – 2009)*
* **Designer & Business Manager, Clark Creative**, Savannah, GA *(2006 – 2007)*
* **Assistant Art Director, Scuba Diving Magazine**, Savannah, GA *(2006)*
* **Communications Director, Columbus First Methodist**, Columbus, MS *(2003 – 2005)*

*Earlier roles focused on design leadership, team coordination, and communications for print and digital media across education, nonprofit, and travel sectors.*

**Education**

**Master of Arts, Graphic Design**

**Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, GA**

*Award-winning portfolio and recognized for contributions to community engagement*

**Bachelor of Science, Communications**

**Mississippi University for Women, Columbus, MS**

*Concentration in Journalism & Public Relations, with a minor in History.*

**Certiﬁcations**

* **SEO Certiﬁcation** – UC Davis
* **UI/UX Design** – California Institute of the Arts
* **AI Product Management Specialization** – Duke University
* **Salesforce Sales Operations Specialist** – Salesforce Pathstream
* **Certiﬁed Journalism Educator (CJE) –** National Journalism Educator Association

**National Leadership & Advocacy**

* **Chair, UCDA Afﬁnity Group –** Advanced inclusive practices across national Extension networks.
* **Co-Chair, National Marketing Efforts** – Strengthened program visibility across U.S. land-grant institutions
* **Speaker** – Presented at national conferences on inclusive strategy and communications innovation.

**Awards and Recognition**

**National Awards:**

* **Outstanding Educator –** SNHU, 2024
* **NEAFCS Awards (Social Media, Social Marketing Series, Video),** 2021-2022
* **Ace Awards (Poster, Logo Design, Marketing Communications Campaign),** 2021

**Regional Awards:**

* **TEAFCS Awards (video Series, Social Marketing Series)**, 2021-2022
* **Diversity Team Award – UCDA Afﬁnity Group** – TN ESP Chapter, 2021
* **Logo Design Appreciation** – TN ESP Chapter, 2020