

Philanthropy At Fenton

Philanthropy Practice Area Overview

2023

Fenton 

Fenton

Overview

We are the first national communications agency dedicated exclusively to advancing social issues and causes.

For more than 40 years, our team of experts has helped to shape national health policy, fight voter suppression, protect reproductive rights, advance racial equity, expand economic opportunity, liberate the LGBTQ+ community, demand climate action and more.

We partner with clients to spark movements, change minds, influence behaviors, advance policies, and support communities to create a more just, healthy and equitable world.



We know philanthropy

Fenton is an essential partner to funders committed to advancing equity, transforming futures and improving communities. We understand the culture of philanthropy and the mechanics of grantmaking, regularly supporting not just foundations themselves, but also their grantees.





From communications strategy, messaging, graphic design and content development to grantee capacity building and media relations, we are a go-to partner for leading local, state, and national foundations across the U.S.

We intuitively understand how foundations work and, more importantly, share the same values.

Our unique combination of philanthropic expertise, communications skills and content knowledge enables us to help funders spur action on issues like health care, education, racial and economic equity, housing, civil rights, climate change, justice reform, youth development and more.



Our Clients



Who we work with



THE KRESGE FOUNDATION



How We Support Funders

National and regional foundations routinely partner with us to advance systemic change; change the narrative and promote dialogue on key issues impacting diverse, under-resourced communities; and capture the attention of decision-makers and news outlets. Family foundations, community foundations and others call on us to help define their identities, engage and cultivate donors, raise their profiles, embark on innovative campaigns, drive meaningful change, facilitate communications with and among their grantees, and even sunset giving priorities.



Core Competencies

As a full-service agency with decades of experience, we are experts at crafting integrated communications strategies built to serve immediate needs or designed to accomplish long-term goals. We know how to position organizations as thought leaders to expand their influence. We understand how to build the capacity of grantees and other partners to be more effective changemakers for equity.

Core Services

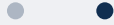
- Campaign development
- Grantee capacity building and communications training
- Storytelling
- Donor engagement and cultivation
- Thought leadership
- Branding, rebranding and message development
- Communicating impact
- Media relations to influence public opinion
- Public policy advocacy
- On-the-ground organizing support and training
- Crisis communications and rapid response
- Paid advertising
- Graphic design and materials development
- Best-in-class project management



We Know the Issues

Like the funders we serve, Fenton is a mission-driven organization, committed solely to upholding the public interest. You need a firm that not only has core communications skills, but also a deeper level of content knowledge and understanding about the key issues that funders are seeking to change. We have expertise on the most pressing issues of the day including health care, education, racial equity, housing, civil rights, climate change, justice reform, youth development and more.





Issue Area Focus

National and regional foundations partner with us to advance systemic change, shift narratives, engage policymakers and media and spur action that leads to positive social change. They bring us on because of our extensive track record of successful campaigns, our expertise in reaching multicultural communities and our deep knowledge of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors.

Over four decades, Fenton has advanced issues and changed lives in hundreds of communities across the U.S. and around the world. We understand complexities and nuances of the diverse issues on which we work, and we bring not just expertise, but passion and personal connection to the causes we help our clients champion.

Issue Area Expertise

- Children and families
- Education equity
- Health equity
- Mental and behavioral health
- Immigration
- Racial justice
- Economic development
- Voting rights & civic engagement
- Youth development
- Environmental issues
- Worker rights
- College access & success



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at Fenton

Fenton is an anti-racist and intersectional organization that prioritizes the needs of those who have been historically marginalized or oppressed.

We believe to truly create change that dismantles white supremacy, racism, misogyny, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, heteronormativity, ableism, classism, religious discrimination and other forms of oppression, we must learn from the wisdom of those whose identities and experiences closely align with the problems we see today. And we honor the value of their lived experiences — domestically and globally — by continually building and sustaining a workplace that is inclusive and rooted in justice and equity.

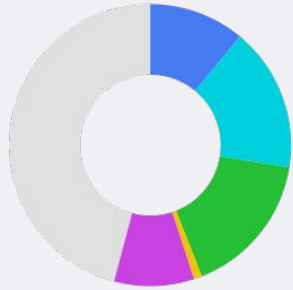
Fenton is highly intentional when it comes to our commitment to equity and inclusion, both in our approach to our work the makeup of our staff. Our agency now leads the industry in diverse employee representation, with 55% of our staff and 54% of our leadership team being people of color (national PR firm averages are 21% staff of color and 7% leadership of color).

Our diversity helps us maintain both an inclusive culture at Fenton and to better servicing our clients. It is deeply meaningful and impactful that we can relate to the lived experiences of the diverse communities our clients are serving. Diverse communities and individuals we serve are NOT “them.” Diverse communities are “us.”



Our Racial and Gender Diversity

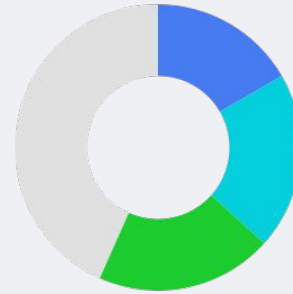
ALL STAFF



12 asian, 18 black or african american, 18 latinx,
1 native hawaiian & pacific islander, 10 two or more races, 50 white

NATIONAL AVERAGE:19% PEOPLE OF COLOR, 81% WHITE

LEADERSHIP



5 asian, 5 black or african american, 6 latinx, 13 white

Source: Diversity Action Alliance. 2020 & 2021 Race And Ethnicity. In Public Relations And Communications Benchmark Report.

DEI TASK FORCE

In 2019 Fenton created the DEI Task Force, a body of staff dedicated to ensuring our agency lives its values. The team includes a diverse mix of staff across all levels within the firm including our CEO and CPO. A DEI roadmap that we developed with staff input details agency goals and an action plan to operationalize inclusive practices. [Fenton's DEI statement is found here.](#)

ERGs

Fenton also supports five active staff-led employee resource groups (ERGs) which create community, provide programming and social events: **The Asiancy** (AAPI Staff), **BERG** (Black staff); **Palante** (Latine staff); **Prism** (LGBTQIA+ staff); and **WoOf — Women Of Fenton** (Women-identifying staff).



THE ANNIE E. CASEY
FOUNDATION

For 30 years, the Annie E. Casey Foundation has compiled the KIDS COUNT Data Book to report on child and youth well-being across the U.S.

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Annie E. Casey Foundation: Driving National and State-level Media Attention

Fenton connects this data to national dialogues about family and children, drives national coverage and coordinates with more than 50 grantees to secure tailored, state-level news coverage. Fenton has also worked to build the communications capacity of the Foundation's grantees through webinars on high-level communications strategies.

In 2022, we focused our outreach on youth mental health data, resulting in the report's largest-ever amount of media coverage. Stories appeared in 261 media outlets, including 3,100 state-focused stories, 352 national stories and [an op-ed by the Foundation's president and CEO published in The Hill.](#)





For 10 years, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) has partnered with Fenton on a wide range of initiatives.

W. K Kellogg Foundation: Strategic Communications Support and Capacity Building

School District Transformation: As part of a \$51 million WKKF grant to transform Battle Creek Public Schools, Fenton serves as the district's integrated communications partner, providing strategic counsel, rebuilding their reputation, implementing crisis communications strategies and raising awareness of progress. We're also capturing stakeholder voices, enabling WKKF to share lessons to support the field.

Immigrant Rights: To address declining Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) applications, WKKF tapped Fenton to create a coordinated outreach campaign during the application's final week. In seven days, our integrated, bilingual paid and earned media campaign garnered more than 3.5 million impressions and generated news coverage in outlets nationwide.

Grantee Capacity Building: Fenton has consistently provided communications training, capacity building and support to WKKF grantees. We developed a nine-month training program for 70 organizations, holding monthly trainings on communications strategy, message development, digital communications, rapid and crisis response, and other key topics.





Los Angeles County is deemed the nation's hardest-to-count county. In the 2020 Census, the California Community Foundation united a coalition of more than 115 community-based organizations to get out the count through the We Count LA campaign.

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

California Community Foundation: Driving Census Participation in the Nation's Hardest-to-Count Region

Fenton oversaw We Count LA's strategic communications campaign. To overcome the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Fenton agilely shifted to virtual strategies, leveraging digital engagement and a \$1 million, multi-platform paid advertising buy. Tactics included multilingual social media and digital video, an online digital toolkit and a surround-sound campaign combining geo-targeted digital ads and direct mail to reach 500,000 households in areas with low response rates. The campaign was a resounding success, helping America's hardest-to-count County achieve a response rate of 65% in the most difficult Census in modern memory.



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