

POET Public Outreach &
Engagement Team

LET US TELL THE STORY.

The **Public Outreach and Engagement Team** at Rutgers-Bloustein (POET) is a multi-disciplinary group with expertise in planning, public policy, marketing, communication, and public engagement techniques. POET offers a full range of outreach and engagement services, from concept and advisory to full implementation of outreach and engagement events. Our team specializes in innovative outreach methods tailored to the specific demographic and community profile of the target population.



OUR SERVICES

POET at Rutgers-Bloustein offers a wide-variety of customized, innovative, and targeted outreach, public and stakeholder engagement, and communications services, including:

**Public Engagement
and Outreach**

- Public engagement plan development
- Open house, workshop and conference execution
- Mobile outreach development and deployment
- Training and educational activities for children and teens

**Marketing and
Communications**

- Project-related marketing and recruitment strategy development
- Public relations, earned media, and social media marketing
- Website, newsletter and electronic communication and material production
- Multi-media production, including short videos, podcasts and web features

**Stakeholder
Engagement**

- Development, management and recruitment for working groups, task forces, and advisory committees
- Expert facilitation for meetings, workshops, or focus groups

OUR TEAM

POET at Rutgers-Bloustein has a unique blend of policy/planning expertise and marketing/outreach expertise well-suited to understand the complexity of the current issues and challenges communities are facing, along with the ability to translate those issues into language and context that can be easily received by the general public. Senior staff members include:



Miriam Salerno is a Senior Public Engagement and Outreach Specialist at the Bloustein School. She has over 15 years of experience in communications and energy/environmental policy, and has worked extensively in both the public and nonprofit sectors. Since joining the Bloustein School in 2011, Miriam has managed extensive stakeholder and public engagement efforts for a variety of projects and clients, including Together North Jersey, NJTPA and NJDEP. Previous experience includes developing and deploying technical assistance and training events in a variety of disciplines at the federal and international scale, including bilateral and multilateral programs with Asian and European countries. She also has extensive experience in public relations and public affairs, including managing advocacy campaigns, in-house corporate communications, and Congressional affairs.

Her areas of expertise include: technical assistance and training; public outreach and community engagement; event production and management; public relations; energy efficiency and environmental policy; climate change; green business practices; regional planning; resiliency; and international development and diplomacy. She holds a Master's Degree in International Environmental Policy and International Development from The Johns Hopkins University - School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Miriam can be reached at **848-932-2876** or miriam.salerno@ejb.rutgers.edu.



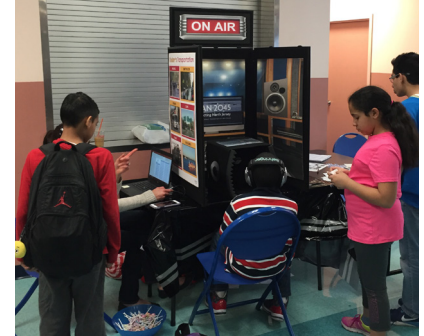
Trish Sanchez is an experienced Marketing Director and Project Manager with a demonstrated history of working in the higher education industry and a major financial corporation. She manages projects that provide services, training, coordination and technical assistance directly to local and regional governments, schools and school districts and other organizations throughout NJ with the goal of improving and encouraging active transportation. She also specializes in youth and community outreach, assisting communities with gathering feedback on local initiatives related to the economy, community and business development. Trish has extensive background and work experience in marketing and communications and currently manages social media and websites for the department.

Prior to VTC, she was the Senior Director of Marketing at American Express, responsible for developing and implementing strategic marketing plans utilizing both traditional (print, direct mail, advertising and telemarketing) and online channels (email, websites, online tools). As brand manager, she ensured consistency and quality while following the strategy and led a team that analyzed customer satisfaction and brand recognition to guide the strategy. She received an MBA in Marketing and Finance from Columbia University. Trish can be reached at **848-932-2376** or trish.sanchez@rutgers.edu.

SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE

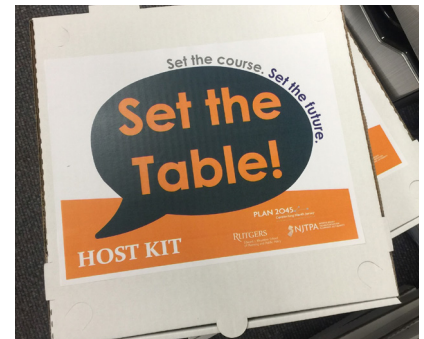
NJTPA “On Air!”

POET teamed up with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) to engage children and teens for the upcoming Regional Transportation Plan. POET developed a simple and fun pop-up activity booth reimagined as a radio studio. Kids sat “inside” the booth and listened to an introductory “newscast” about transportation. They were then “interviewed” and asked to talk into the microphone about what they imagine transportation will be like in the future. POET deployed the activity in kid-friendly locations, including the Liberty Science Center and Boys and Girls Club after school programs.



Set the Table!

POET developed, coordinated, and managed Set the Table!, a civic dinner party program designed to engage Millennials in NJTPA’s Regional Transportation Plan process. Adults ages 18-29 volunteered to host dinner parties with their friends where they discussed elements of the regional plan, such as technology, resiliency, the environment and the economy. POET designed a “meeting-in-a-box” to assist each dinner host, including a card game with questions and facts to guide the conversation and forms to collect feedback. POET also created the program’s branding and successful social media campaign, attracting many applicants.



ESL Outreach

POET developed a customized English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom activity to collect feedback from Limited-English Proficient (LEP) residents for NJTPA’s Regional Transportation Plan. POET ran workshops in classes throughout northern NJ, collecting feedback from 150 LEP individuals from over 30 countries. The four-part classroom activity was designed in consultation with trained ESL facilitators to provide a valuable learning experience for participants. The activities provided students an opportunity to improve fluency and confidence in discussing issues that impact their communities.



Summer Engagement Series on NJ.com

POET launched a summer-long engagement series in 2014 for Together North Jersey (TNJ) in partnership with The Star-Ledger and NJ.com. The series, branded “Improving New Jersey,” of 35 op-eds, articles, live chats, polls, and other interactive activities featured on NJ.com (also in the print edition of the Star-Ledger) was an opportunity for residents to be involved in improving NJ’s quality of life. The posts garnered thousands of comments and questions, many of which were addressed by featured experts during live chats and by TNJ staff.



SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE

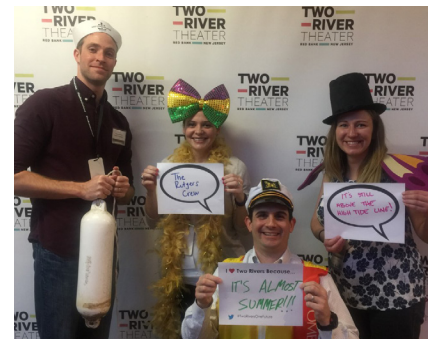
TNJ Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement

POET coordinated and managed outreach for the Together North Jersey regional plan – both stakeholder engagement and public engagement. Engagement activities included management of Steering, Executive and Standing Committees (with over 300 members in total); planning and execution of 15 regional workshops; 20 “pop-up” kiosk events at malls, colleges and museums; online engagement via NJ.com (see Summer Engagement Series); three major conferences; and multiple working group meetings.



NJ-FRAMES Public Engagement Plan and Open House

POET has developed an innovative outreach and engagement plan for NJ FRAMES, a regional resiliency project in Monmouth County, NJ, executing events over the course of the two-year planning process. POET worked with the NJ-FRAMES team to host a successful open house event at the Two River Theater in downtown Red Bank, NJ, which included a beach-themed photo booth, activities for kids, keypad polling survey, and mapping station. The POET team also developed the “Two Rivers, One Future” branding campaign for the NJ-FRAMES project, including hashtag, tag line, brochures and other project collateral.



Route 9 Corridor Study

Working with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), POET developed customized Spanish-language outreach activities for the LEP populations in Lakewood and Toms River, NJ. Activities includes planning and executing a public workshop entirely in Spanish and deploying “on-the-street” outreach in downtown Lakewood to chat with the Spanish-speaking community about their needs and challenges. In addition, POET planned and executed a focus group for the Route 9 Corridor Study specifically designed for Orthodox Jewish Women in Lakewood, NJ in order to better understand the specific needs of the women in their community.



Public Engagement Research

POET conducted eight diverse focus groups throughout North Jersey to understand residents’ reactions to marketing messages, motivations for attending public meetings, and awareness of NJTPA’s outreach efforts. In addition, POET created a searchable database detailing over 250 unique public engagement techniques and best practices that other public agencies have used to reach a variety of audiences. Planning agencies can identify strategies that fit their projects by budget, scale, purpose, etc. The focus group feedback and the database content have both since inspired outreach projects such as Set the Table!

