

Center Nominations

Your Name

Donna Creason

Your bio – 250 words max (education, profession, plain language experience)

Donna M. Creason is President/CEO of Summit Publication Design, LLC, a tech-creative design and development company. She is a quality-driven communication and management professional with 20+ years' experience in computer information systems, content creation and management, document design, and technical communication. She is an active member of the Center and recently assumed the role of Executive Editor to collaborate, develop, and produce the Center's first eBook, Clear Communication with Clear Results.

Why do you want to serve on the Center's board?

Because of my recent experience collaborating with board and organization members to produce the Clear Communication with Clear Results eBook, I am excited about the opportunity to continue helping the Center claim its position as the primary resource for plain language and clear communication.

What do you hope to accomplish?

Developing the eBook as a reputation builder for the Center was just the start. There is great potential for spin-offs from the eBook in the form of resource publications. Much of this can be accomplished with existing content. It would simply need to be repackaged and repurposed to be sold as quality products. Building a resource and publications area on the Center website would promote an additional revenue stream at minimal production and development costs (especially since the Center already has e-commerce functionality). Most of the time and effort would be focused on content develop and document design. These tasks could be handled by various Center members who might be willing to volunteer their time, services, and expertise.

How will you help the Center achieve its mission?

My approach to helping the Center achieve its mission would be to recommend establishing a Publications Committee and function as chair of that committee. The responsibilities of this committee would be to create and manage structure, process, and procedures around the Center's operation, function, and publications. For example, the committee would establish clear, simple procedures and documentation for topics such as:

- Onboarding board members
- Getting new members acclimated
- Describing board committees
- Outlining board member requirements
- Documenting Board member election procedures
- And more!

Center Nominations

Your Name

Chip Crane

Your bio – 250 words max (education, profession, plain language experience)

Chip Crane is a writing and public speaking trainer and communication consultant. Chip provides writing workshops and one-on-one coaching, and he writes and revises documents for clients. He has worked as a contractor since 2011 with the Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate (DHS S&T). He gives workshops for DHS on topics such as plain language, writing for impact, effective email, performance goals, and responding to Congress. Chip also consults with other agencies and organizations as the CEO of CPoint Consulting. He teaches for the FDIC, training bank examiners to write their reports of examination more clearly; other clients have included the Department of Labor, the National Institutes of Health, MedFlight of Ohio, Englewood Labs, and the National Governors Association. Chip is also a Senior Lecturer at the University of Maryland at College Park, where he has taught Writing for the Health Professions, Technical Writing, and literature. During a 20-year Navy career, Chip directed the Writing Center at the United States Naval Academy for eight years, coaching writers and training students as writing tutors. He served on the board of the Mid-Atlantic Writing Centers Association from 2006 – 2013. As a writing consultant, Chip aims to strengthen writers themselves, not just their writing. Chip holds a Ph.D in English from the Catholic University of America and an M.A. in Teaching Writing and Literature from George Mason University. He lives in Annapolis with his wife, four children, and many books.

Why do you want to serve on the Center's board?

My involvement with the Center for the last few years has broadened my own understanding of plain language—both its scope and vitality. I see the Center for Plain Language as a forum for people committed to helping other professionals write better, and serving on the Board offers the chance to shape that process. I like collaborative work, and I am attracted to the opportunity to work with others in the larger movement to promote clear writing in the public and private sectors. I also see service on the Board as a way to network with colleagues who, like me, have a deep interest in promoting clear, effective use of language in the workplace.

What do you hope to accomplish?

I would like to see a transformation of government writing culture, and I see my work with the Center part of pursuing this vision. In leading the Federal Report Card for the last two years, I have enjoyed representing the Center to the agency plain language representatives. I believe we can continue to serve government agencies and their writers through the Report Card, and I would like to explore additional ways the Center can serve as a valuable resource to government writers.

How will you help the Center achieve its mission?

I would also like to see the Center expand the report card to include more parts and levels of government and even to offer assessments like the report card beyond the public sector as part of the mission. Continuing on the Board for another term offers the opportunity to work in these direction.

I especially enjoy teaching and coaching others—especially in writing. I am also comfortable in roles providing oversight and leadership as a result of my 20 years as a Naval Officer. I think my professional and academic background and my current combination of work in academia and the federal government facilitate my work with the Center and create a good fit for the Center's mission.

Center Nominations

Your Name

Alissa Gavrilesco

Your bio – 250 words max (education, profession, plain language experience)

Alissa Gavrilesco has over 15 years of diversified marketing experience across a variety of industries, in both Fortune 500 and startup environments. Gavrilesco's role as Director of Marketing and Communications at Solstice Benefits is to develop and maintain brand visibility, create customer value, and achieve client top-of-mind awareness in new and emerging markets. She utilizes communications, event planning, public relations, social media, online marketing, and lead-generation marketing strategies to achieve these goals. Solstice, under the leadership of Alissa, was the proud recipient of the 2016 Clear Mark Award of Distinction. She founded an award-winning health literacy and plain language program at Solstice as well as the National Association of Dental Plans (NADP) where she serves as the Vice Chair of Communications. In 2017, she was selected for NADP's Advocacy in Action where she met with members of Congress to discuss the importance of consumer health literacy and the dental industry. She is a Star Award winner from NADP for her work in health care transparency, health literacy, and partnering with the American Heart Association to create awareness of the oral health / heart health connection. She has won national and international awards for creating consumer communications without confusing insurance jargon: (Hermes Awards, Communicator Awards, WebHealth Awards, MarCom Awards and the Institute for Health Care Consumerism).

Alissa has a Bachelor's of Science in Advertising, as well as a minor in Classical Studies from the University of Florida.

Why do you want to serve on the Center's board?

I have a passion for health literacy and consumer transparency and that passion aligns with that of the Center for Plain Language. I have pioneered a shift to health care transparency and health literacy at Solstice Benefits as well as within the dental insurance industry. I am extremely passionate about creating communications that are free of complex insurance jargon. I am passionate about health literacy and encouraging organizations to create content that resonates with consumers. I believe that an empowered consumer is a happy consumer and the Center for Plain language rewards companies doing this through the power of communications. Clear communication is far more than succinct content. It's about creating content that resonates with consumers, that speaks to them in a way that is authentic, that's helpful, and is presented in a way that is easily understood. Simply put: I believe in what you do, I value what the Center values, and I and would be honored to be a part of furthering your mission to champion clear communication.

What do you hope to accomplish?

I am honored and excited to Co-Chair the Clear Mark Awards event in 2018 and look forward to bringing my event planning and marketing skills to the Center to create a memorable, successful, and profitable event. My goal is to build upon the past successes of this event while increasing attendance, awareness, and publicity for the event. Additionally, I want to create heightened visibility for the awards to accelerate participation for future years, while also creating a fun, celebratory, engaging, and memorable event this coming year. I look forward to raising funds for the Center by co-chairing a successful flagship event, the ClearMark Awards, and blending my passion for plain language and marketing to further the Center's mission.

How will you help the Center achieve its mission?

Tapping into my marketing and event planning experience, I will work to increase revenue channels through fundraising. As the new Co-Chair of the ClearMark Awards, I am eager and excited to leverage my event planning experience to deliver a successful, engaging, ClearMarks Award event. I have experience identifying creative avenues to fundraise through my work chairing Solstice's signature community outreach event, the American Heart Association's Heart Walk. Solstice earned "Top Small Company Fundraiser" for 5 consecutive years and similarly, I look forward to working hard to increase revenues for the Center and its flagship event, the ClearMark Awards.

Center Nominations

Your Name

Julie Clement

Your bio – 250 words max (education, profession, plain language experience)

I have a B.S. (psychology/math) and a J.D. My legal experience has been primarily as a law professor and research attorney. I've been a plain-language geek since Joe Kimble was my legal-writing professor in 1996. Since retiring from teaching in 2014, I've had my own consulting firm, focusing on plain-language training and editing, as well as legal research and writing services for busy attorneys. I've served as editor in chief of The Clarity Journal since 2005 and have been a Center for Plain Language board member (treasurer) since 2011. I've also served on the PLAIN board (Plain Language Association International).

Why do you want to serve on the Center's board?

I love my work on the board, and I believe a healthy board needs both new blood and institutional memory. I'd also like to continue to try to find ways that the role of treasurer (no matter who holds it) can better support the Center's overall efforts.

What do you hope to accomplish?

I hope to empower the board by helping its members understand how all committees and efforts work together to make or break the whole, financially. If re-elected, I hope to work with the board to build our treasury, which will better enable us to carry out our mission.

How will you help the Center achieve its mission?

I'll continue to help the Center achieve its mission by performing my own role as well as possible and by using my personal connections to expand the Center's reach. Whether on the board or not, I'll help the Center achieve its mission as my own firm grows and expands the reach of plain language.

Center Nominations

Your Name

Shelly Davies

Your bio – 250 words max (education, profession, plain language experience)

I run a leading plain language consultancy in New Zealand: www.shellydavies.com

While I'm relatively young in the industry, I'm making waves and getting noticed. I'm recognized as the main competitor for Write Ltd, who have been running their business for 26 years and have 50 staff.

I have an out-of-the-box brand that's aimed to get attention - for myself first but only as a vehicle to then raise the profile of plain language. It's getting me in doors - in local and national government, the oil and gas industry, the finance sector, and cultural and political spaces. I'm pushing the boundaries of the way we've usually packaged and branded plain language - and the response is overwhelmingly positive.

I'm a member of the Center, PLAIN, and Clarity. I've recently become a major sponsor of the New Zealand Writemark Plain English Awards.

I have a master's degree in creative writing. I'm a trained secondary school English teacher. I'm a published author. I'm also an indigenous Maori of New Zealand and as such I bring another element of cultural diversity to the board.

I'm a sought after speaker on business communications, brand, women in business, and plain language. I'm speaking at an upcoming TedX event in October.

Overall I just find so much joy in giving people the confidence to write clearly, concisely, and authentically - and let go of the conventions and misconceptions around what's "good writing" and actually just get the job done well and with grace!

Why do you want to serve on the Center's board?

I love the work this board is doing. I'm passionate about plain language and clear communications - because it's what we need! Plain language fixes so many things. It's good for people. It's good for business. It saves time, money, and avoids so many issues! But you know all this.

I want to serve on the board because it will be great for my profile and because I want to make consequential contributions to the work you do. I'm the kind of leader who has an impact. And I'd like to do that for plain language through the established reputation and track-record of the Center.

What do you hope to accomplish?

I want to continue learning and develop my networks. I want to support the mission and vision of the Center. And I have great leadership and organizational skills you can put to good use. I'm very service and people-oriented, and that makes my contributions generous, valuable, and influential. I have a team behind me, amongst whom I can spread the workload of this directorship.

How will you help the Center achieve its mission?

I'm a doer and an influencer of people. An achiever. I make things happen. I'll take on whatever tasks are required and carry them out with efficiency, reliability, and exceptionally high expectations of self and others. I will conduct myself as a shining example of our industry, gaining attention and recognition for my brand, the Center, and the plain language cause.

I'm one of those energetic, enthusiastic, irresistible people. Use me!