

Crystal Houston

Greater Phoenix Area | writehouston@gmail.com | 602.573.4640 | [linkedin.com/in/CHmba](https://www.linkedin.com/in/CHmba)

EDUCATION

Syracuse University, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse, NY
M.A., TV, Radio & Film – Digital Media Entrepreneurship & Innovation

Keller Graduate School of Management, Phoenix, AZ
M.B.A., Marketing

University of New Hampshire, Franklin Pierce School of Law, Manchester, NH
Certificate, Blockchain and the Law

Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI
B.S., Written Communication & Graphic Design

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Mapping the "Aha!": The Cognitive Cartography of Metaphor in Neurodivergent Innovation
- Anchoring the Chaos: Neurodivergent Strategy, Communication, and the Psychology of Trust
- Decoding the Blueprint: Pattern Recognition, Symbolism, and the Neurodivergent Strategist

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Visiting Professor | 2024 – Present
Arizona State University, Cronkite School of Journalism & Mass Communication, Phoenix, AZ

- Teach graduate-level coursework in Strategic Leadership Communications & Ethics.
- Craft engaging, multifaceted, strategic communications curriculum.
- Provide career advising and mentorship to graduate and undergraduate students.

Adjunct Professor | 2021 – Present
Syracuse University, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse, NY

- Teach graduate-level coursework in Advanced Media Management & Entrepreneurship.
- Develop best-practice, data-driven curriculum focused on emerging media, disruptive technologies, and new business models.

Adjunct Professor | 2025 – Present
Campus (Junior College)

- Teach coursework in Business, from Introduction to Business to Entrepreneurship.
- Adapt and deliver curriculum to meet the diverse educational needs of bright non-traditional junior college students.

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RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP & PUBLICATIONS

Current Research

- Houston, C. (PI). "Fragile Information Systems: Trust, Verification, and News Circulation in Constrained Environments." A collaborative research study conducted with a Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow examining information ecosystems and trust. (Data preparation and analysis phase; Social Science Seed Grant application in progress).

Industry Reports & Publications

- Media Technology Adviser. MEDIA-NXT: The Future of Media Report. (2018–2020).
- Houston, C. "Napalm Charm: How Crisis of Trust Will Hasten Adoption of Blockchain." (2018).
- Houston, C. "Around the Block: AI and dApps." Medium. (2018).

Academic & Institutional Presentations

- "Media Disruption: Blockchain 101." Invited presentation to Syracuse University Newhouse School of Public Communication's Dean and Faculty. (2018).

GRANTS & AWARDS

- News Integrity Grant (\$40,000), Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at City University of New York (2020)
- Top 5 Global Pitch Finalist (Entertainment & Content), SXSW Digital (2020)
- Leadership Academy for Women in Media, Poynter Institute (Class of 2020)
- Virtual Entrepreneur Scholarship, SOCAP Global (2020)

ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL COACHING

Advisor & Business Coach | 2020 – Present

Local First Arizona, "We Rise" Black Entrepreneur Incubator

- Curate and deliver curriculum for a six-month certificate program.
- Develop sales and marketing content for biweekly cohorts; recognized as a top mentor for founders.

Coach, Mentor & Pitch Doctor | 2021 – Present

SEED SPOT Impact Accelerator

- Provide feedback, coaching, and resource allocation to early-stage social impact founders.
- Assist mentees with Business Model Canvas development and funding strategies.

ACADEMIC & INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

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Committee Member, Curriculum Revision Team

Arizona State University, Walter Cronkite School | 2025

- Assigned to a select committee to evaluate and modernize strategic communications curricula.
- Co-developed the academic framework for new course: Media Relations & Executive Communication.

MEDIA LEADERSHIP & INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Chief Strategy Officer & Brand Strategist | Advantage Evans Academy | 2020 – Present

- Coach students on Web 3.0 and practical DeFi applications across various verticals.
- Developed brand identity and content marketing strategy for a Forbes 50 leader.

Executive Director | MEDIA-O (Media Equity Ownership Project) | 2019 – 2023

- Built capacity and offered place-based training for underestimated founders in film, gaming, and entertainment.
- Managed staff, reviewed finances, and collaborated with donors and community partners.

Co-founder & Chief Strategy Officer | Citeful LLC | 2019 – 2021

- Launched a verified news app providing businesses with "trusted" journalism to activate audiences.
- Secured major grant funding and achieved global recognition at SXSW.

Founder & Lead Communications Strategist | Crys & Tell Consulting | 2016 – 2019

- Guided brand development for an Indigenous women's digital media platform.
- Developed engagement strategy for blockchain in a global health organization.

Director, Digital & Content Marketing | United Way | 2011 – 2016

- Conceived B2B campaign driving a 500% increase in engagement for the nation's second-largest United Way chapter.
- Co-designed a tracking app logging 7M volunteer minutes for the Million Minutes reading initiative.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS & BOARD SERVICE

- **Board Member**, Women's Audio Mission (WAM) (2021 – 2025)
- **Summit Facilitator & Member**, News Product Alliance (NPA) (2024)
- **Speaker Candidate**, National Speaker Association (NSA) (2021 – Present)
- **Arts Commissioner**, City of Phoenix Office of Arts & Culture (2007 – 2014)