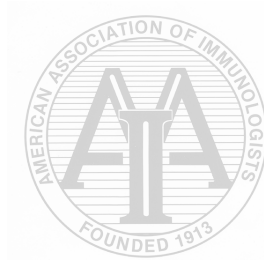


The American Association of Immunologists

Press Release



Gwen Fortune-Blakely Named Chief Membership and Engagement Officer of The American Association of Immunologists

Fortune-Blakely begins her tenure November 13

ROCKVILLE, MD (November 13, 2023) — The American Association of Immunologists (AAI) is pleased to announce the appointment of Gwen Fortune-Blakely, M.B.A, CAE, as its new chief membership and engagement officer. Her impressive career spans more than 20 years and is marked by a consistent record of transforming organizations with a demonstrated ability to define vision; develop winning strategies; and create structures that galvanize teams toward increasing awareness, enhancing engagement, and achieving sustainable growth.

In this pivotal role, which is crucial to AAI’s strategic organizational plan, Fortune-Blakely will lead the charge in enhancing AAI’s marketing, communications, and membership strategies. She will be instrumental in fostering greater cohesion in communicating the value of AAI’s work and mission, both internally and externally, to deepen engagement with AAI’s membership, extend the organization’s reach into adjacent and emerging fields, support revenue growth, and promote the essential role of immunologists in society.

Fortune-Blakely was most recently the vice president of external relations and marketing for the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC), where she served as a key member of the BPC executive team, entrusted with leading the development of enterprise strategies that played a pivotal role in building the BPC brand and expanding relationships with policy makers, industry leaders, and funders.

Other previous roles include serving as director of enterprise-wide marketing and sales at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, developing and driving the execution of enterprise strategy to strengthen engagement levels with members and increase awareness of the association’s value, products, and service offerings; as senior director of brand strategy and marketing integration for Marriott International, where she was responsible for the development of an integrated marketing communications plan for core Marriott brands; and as a senior brand manager at the Coca-Cola Company, where she was responsible for growing the Sprite brand in greater Europe.

Fortune-Blakely’s vast experience with spearheading the development of new products, plans, and programs, enabling both national associations and global corporations to evolve as industry leaders and valued partners, as well as her strategic thinking and data-driven approach, will be indispensable as AAI forges ahead with a reimagined mission that will effectively guide the organization into the next decade.

“I am thrilled to welcome Gwen Fortune-Blakely to AAI as our chief membership and engagement

officer," said AAI Chief Executive Officer Loretta L. Doan, Ph.D. "With her proven track record of enhancing brands and the member experience by building enterprise-wide marketing functions, inspiring and energizing teams through shared vision, and using a data-driven approach to improve outcomes, Gwen brings exactly the right mix of knowledge, experience, and expertise to integrate and synergize AAI's communications, marketing, and membership engagement efforts. We look forward to the positive impact her leadership will have on AAI and the field of immunology."

"I am excited to have been chosen as AAI's chief membership and engagement officer," said Fortune-Blakely. "I look forward to collaborating closely with AAI's dedicated team and members, enhancing our communication efforts to effectively convey AAI's value proposition to our key target audiences. By doing so, we aim to attract and engage a larger community of members while raising public awareness about the pivotal role of immunologists."

Fortune-Blakely holds a master's degree in business administration from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of California, Berkeley. She holds a CAE (Certified Association Executive) credential from the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), and she is an ASAE Diversity Executive Leadership Program Scholar.

About The American Association of Immunologists

Founded in 1913, The American Association of Immunologists (AAI) (www.aai.org) is an association of professionally trained scientists from all over the world dedicated to advancing the knowledge of immunology and its related disciplines. AAI members have been responsible for some of the most significant immunological discoveries of the past century, including the development of cancer immunotherapies, monoclonal antibodies, transplant technologies, and dozens of life-saving vaccines. The organization counts [27 Nobel Laureates](#) among its members. AAI owns and publishes [*The Journal of Immunology*](#), the oldest and most established journal in the field, as well as [*ImmunoHorizons*](#), an open-access, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to the science of immunology.

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