



ABOUT ME

Equity-driven leader, bridge-builder, and community strategist rooted in lived experience—dedicated to empowering Denver's diverse communities through inclusive engagement, strategic innovation, and authentic connection.

ABOUT ME

I am a values-driven leader, lifelong advocate for equity, and community builder who believes that inclusive governance is not just about representation—it's about transformation. My journey began in Denver, shaped by the lived experience of being the daughter of Vietnamese refugees and growing up navigating economic instability and housing insecurity. These experiences weren't obstacles—they became the foundation for a lifelong commitment to social justice, cultural humility, and community-led change.

With over two decades of experience across public, private, and nonprofit sectors, I've led initiatives that amplify historically excluded voices, build lasting partnerships, and drive equitable outcomes. From owning and operating small businesses rooted in community care to organizing public health and mutual aid efforts, I've cultivated a leadership style that is empathetic, strategic, and equity-centered.

Currently, I serve as the *Deputy Director of Outreach* in the *Office of Mayor Mike Johnston*, where I lead citywide strategies to deepen civic engagement, improve service access, and build trust between historically marginalized communities and government. My work includes designing outreach models that scale across departments, advising cross-functional teams, and ensuring community input directly shapes policy and program delivery.

Core Focus Areas:

Equity-Centered Leadership

I lead with a lens of cultural competency and systems awareness, championing inclusivity and building environments where every voice—especially those from communities most impacted by systemic inequities—is seen, heard, and valued. Whether working with immigrant families, small business owners, or residents in underserved neighborhoods, I create authentic spaces for dialogue, healing, and collaborative action.

Strategic Planning & Systems Building

I specialize in building scalable, sustainable frameworks for engagement and community empowerment. I've facilitated community-led initiatives, supported interagency collaborations, and guided nonprofits and grassroots coalitions to expand capacity and increase impact.

Cross-Sector Collaboration

I bring together stakeholders across nonprofits, government, neighborhood organizations, and private sectors to align efforts, share resources, and co-create solutions. I believe deeply in the power of collective action and have consistently led partnerships that break down silos and center shared purpose.

Impact-Driven Team Leadership

I've led high-performing teams focused on operational excellence, community impact, and accountability. My leadership is rooted in clarity, transparency, and a people-first approach that empowers staff, nurtures collaboration, and fosters innovation.

From organizing vaccine clinics during the pandemic to facilitating civic education workshops and mutual aid drives, my work has always centered on this belief: that when communities are empowered to lead, the results are more just, more sustainable, and more transformative.

As I continue my journey in public service, I remain committed to building systems that reflect the dignity, resilience, and brilliance of Denver's people.



WORK EXPERIENCE

Deputy Outreach Director – Mayoral Appointee
Office of Mayor Mike Johnston, City and County of Denver
July 2023 – Present

Appointed by Mayor Mike Johnston, I serve as Deputy Outreach Director for the City and County of Denver, where I lead strategic, equity-driven community engagement initiatives that bridge city government with the people it serves. In this senior leadership role, I play a central part in advancing the Mayor's vision of an inclusive, vibrant, and responsive city by fostering authentic relationships, amplifying community voices, and designing high-impact outreach strategies that prioritize transparency, cultural competency, and accessibility.

I oversee a dynamic portfolio encompassing stakeholder engagement, neighborhood outreach, cross-departmental collaboration, event production, digital communications, and creative direction. My work ensures that every Denverite—regardless of background, zip code, or language—has a seat at the table and a voice in shaping our city's future.

Key Achievements & Leadership Areas

Community Engagement & Relationship Building

- Developed and implemented innovative, place-based outreach strategies tailored to Denver's diverse neighborhoods, significantly increasing public participation in municipal initiatives.
- Organized and facilitated citywide forums, roundtables, and listening sessions that created safe, inclusive spaces for dialogue—ensuring community input is centered in policy and program development.
- Built lasting relationships with registered neighborhood organizations, community leaders, faith and cultural organizations, nonprofits, and grassroots coalitions to drive collective impact aligned with the Mayor's policy agenda.
- Championed outreach strategies that not only inform but empower residents—cultivating civic trust and democratic participation.

Stakeholder Collaboration & Neighborhood Advocacy

- Acted as a strategic liaison between communities and city agencies, identifying gaps, surfacing community needs, and facilitating resource deployment—particularly in underserved and historically marginalized areas.
- Partnered with executive directors, council members, and interagency teams to address urgent issues, coordinate rapid response efforts, and align outreach goals across departments.
- Advocated for cultural districts and heritage neighborhoods—such as Denver's Little Saigon—by uplifting their contributions and securing place-keeping resources to combat displacement and gentrification.

Leadership in Major Citywide Events

- Directed planning and production of flagship city events, including State of the City, Denver Days, and House1000, overseeing all aspects of these initiatives, from concept to execution.
- Spearheaded sponsorship development and community partnerships, securing over \$140,000 in financial and in-kind contributions to support inclusive and mission-aligned programming.
- Designed events that honored Denver's cultural richness, reinforced the city's values of equity and unity, and brought together residents, city staff, and civic leadership in meaningful ways.

Brand Strategy & Creative Direction

- Led the creative vision, branding, and communications strategy for major initiatives such as House1000, All In Mile High, Vibrant Denver Bond, and Give5 Mile High.
- Oversaw visual identity, messaging, and content development through an omni-channel approach, ensuring alignment with the Mayor's voice and public values of accessibility, transparency, and inclusion.
- Collaborated with design and marketing teams to produce high-impact materials that resonate with diverse audiences and reflect Denver's evolving identity.

Digital Engagement & Public Communications

- Built and executed a comprehensive digital outreach strategy across social media, email marketing, newsletters, and web content—expanding reach and engagement citywide.
- Worked in close partnership with the Mayor's Communications team to create inclusive, multilingual narratives that clearly communicate policies, programs, and opportunities for involvement.
- Led UX and content improvements for the Mayor's Office website, improving navigability, clarity, and ADA compliance to better serve a broad spectrum of users.

Equity-Centered Outreach & Cultural Competency

- Embedded equity, anti-displacement, and cultural humility into all outreach efforts, ensuring meaningful representation and participation from BIPOC, immigrant, refugee, and low-income communities.
- Prioritized language justice, ADA accessibility, and cultural responsiveness in both digital and in-person engagement efforts.
- Elevated resident dignity and agency through intentional design of initiatives that foster trust, repair harm, and advance long-term systemic change.

Strategic Leadership & Interagency Collaboration

- Partnered with all departments across the City and County of Denver, providing strategic guidance to ensure cohesive, community-first engagement across the administration.
- Developed internal systems and workflows to streamline project planning, event execution, and stakeholder management—enhancing the overall agility and responsiveness of the outreach team.
- Played a key role in shaping the tone, content, and strategy behind the Mayor's public-facing initiatives, communications, and community engagement roadmap.

EXPERTISE

- Community Engagement and Strategic Planning
- Building Strategic Community Partnerships and Managing Relationships
- Promoting Equity and Cultural Competency
- Leadership and Operations Management
- Digital Marketing and Social Media Strategy
- Event Coordination and Fundraising
- Branding and Design
- Team Development



WORK EXPERIENCE

Political Creative Director, Community Outreach
Mike Johnston for Mayor – Denver, CO
May 2023 – July 2023

Brought on during the final months of the campaign and transition period, I played a dual leadership role—guiding the campaign’s creative direction while leading strategic community outreach efforts that helped shape a people-centered narrative and bridge grassroots connections with the Mayor-elect’s vision. My work helped cultivate broad public support, particularly among underrepresented communities, and brought visibility to campaign priorities through culturally resonant storytelling and innovative public engagement.

Key Contributions & Impact

Creative Direction & Campaign Communications

- Led the creative strategy and execution for all public-facing campaign materials—from print to digital—ensuring visual consistency, clarity, and alignment with Mike Johnston’s platform of equity, safety, and opportunity for all.
- Oversaw the design and development of printed collateral, digital advertisements, social media campaigns, and branded merchandise.
- Created rapid-response graphics and messaging during key campaign moments, driving strong engagement and community resonance across platforms.
- Translated complex policy ideas into compelling, accessible messaging that connected emotionally with diverse voter bases.

Inclusive Community Outreach Strategy

- Designed and implemented outreach initiatives specifically tailored to engage **women, LGBTQ+ individuals, BIPOC communities, immigrants, and youth voters**, expanding the campaign’s reach and deepening trust with key constituencies.
- Partnered with grassroots organizers, neighborhood associations, advocacy groups, and cultural leaders to co-create events and outreach strategies that reflected the values and concerns of Denver’s diverse communities.
- Facilitated community listening sessions and informal meetups, serving as a conduit between voters and the campaign to ensure authentic representation in messaging and action.

Inauguration Leadership & Event Creative

- Spearheaded the planning, design, and execution of **Mayor Mike Johnston’s Inauguration Ceremony and Community Celebration**, creating an experience rooted in inclusivity, joy, and civic pride.
- Conceptualized the visual and thematic identity for both events, aligning with the campaign’s values of accessibility, transparency, and hope.
- Directed all event logistics—including venue coordination, timeline development, budget oversight, and artist/vendor selection—resulting in a seamless and uplifting inaugural experience for both VIP and public attendees.
- Produced digital media campaigns and event collateral, elevating visibility and engagement in the weeks leading up to the inaugural events.

Vendor & Community Partner Management

- Built and maintained relationships with over 50 local vendors, artists, and cultural partners to deliver high-quality, community-driven experiences.
- Ensured diverse, local businesses were prioritized in contracts and event participation, reinforcing the campaign’s commitment to economic equity and small business support.
- Oversaw deliverables, timelines, and collaboration touch points to maintain creative cohesion and ensure event and campaign initiatives met the highest standards.



COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP & VOLUNTEER WORK

Planned Parenthood C4 Board Member (present)

Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs Commissioner (present)

CU Boulder ATLAS Institute Guest Mentor (present)

Harvey Park RNO Member

California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative Mentorship Program

Clayton Hotel CCF Board Member

Girls Inc. Metro Denver Mentorship Program

RiNo Arts District Diversity and Equity Board Member

Denver Community Fridge Volunteer

WORK EXPERIENCE

Political Creative Director, AANHPI and Community Engagement

Leslie for Mayor – Denver, CO

September 2022 – April 2023

As a key strategist and creative lead on the Leslie for Mayor campaign, I brought a community-first approach to political engagement—centering diverse voices, uplifting AANHPI culture, and amplifying the campaign's mission through impactful events, culturally resonant media, and strategic grassroots organizing. My role blended creative direction with operational execution, helping position Leslie as a visible, viable candidate in a competitive mayoral race.

Key Contributions & Achievements

Event Strategy, Planning & Fundraising

- Conceptualized and executed a series of **high-impact campaign fundraisers and community events**, designed to activate support at the neighborhood level while maximizing the impact of Denver's **Fair Election Fund matching program**.
- Raised over **\$50,000 in direct and matched donations**, significantly bolstering the campaign's capacity to reach voters citywide.
- Oversaw every aspect of event execution—from venue scouting and artist booking to volunteer coordination and program scripting—ensuring all experiences were aligned with campaign values and accessible to diverse communities.

Creative Strategy & Brand Visibility

- Directed the **design, production, and distribution** of all campaign collateral, including yard signs, branded apparel, stickers, printed materials, and digital assets.
- Managed a multi-vendor production pipeline to ensure timely, budget-conscious delivery of branded materials that enhanced the campaign's visibility across Denver's neighborhoods.
- Maintained visual brand integrity across platforms and physical materials, ensuring cohesion in campaign messaging and aesthetics.

Cultural Engagement & Media Amplification

- Produced the **only Lunar New Year event** hosted by a Denver mayoral candidate during the 2023 election cycle, showcasing a deep commitment to AAPI visibility and cultural celebration.
- Built and nurtured connections with Denver's AAPI leaders, business owners, and cultural institutions to co-create the event, drawing significant community attendance and media coverage.
- Generated **earned media** attention from local outlets and cultural publications, amplifying campaign visibility and reinforcing its inclusive platform.

Field Strategy & Community Mobilization

- Coordinated with community leaders and canvassing teams to organize **targeted door-to-door field efforts**, focused on high-impact neighborhoods in North and Northwest Denver.
- Successfully launched over **10,000 door-knocking attempts**, significantly increasing voter awareness and campaign engagement in underserved areas.
- Leveraged trusted messengers within each neighborhood to foster authentic connections and increase voter confidence in the campaign.

Operational Infrastructure & Team Collaboration

- Led the implementation of a new **CRM and data management system**, streamlining how the campaign tracked donors, volunteers, and voter interactions.
- Supported internal team functions through cross-department collaboration, ensuring field operations, communications, and fundraising efforts remained aligned and efficient.
- Played a behind-the-scenes leadership role, supporting rapid pivots, creative brainstorming, and campaign continuity in a dynamic electoral environment.



WORK EXPERIENCE

Base Coat Nail Salon *Founder | Creative Director* *January 2011 – March 2022*

Founded and scaled Base Coat into one of the nation's pioneering non-toxic nail salons, launching in 2013 as Denver's first clean beauty destination and helping catalyze a broader wellness shift within the beauty industry. Rooted in the belief that "everyone deserves to feel healthy, safe, and good as hell, from the tips of their fingers to the tips of their toes," Base Coat grew into a nationally respected brand known for its ethical values, community care, and creative innovation.

Key Contributions & Impact

Advocacy, Ethics & Industry Change

- Led systemic change in the nail salon industry by prioritizing health, sustainability, and labor rights.
- Designed and implemented rigorous non-toxic protocols to protect both staff and clients—setting a new standard for salon safety and transparency.
- Advocated for the fair treatment of nail technicians, promoting dignity and equitable working conditions across all locations.
- Used the brand's platform to educate the public on the often-overlooked risks of traditional beauty products and salon practices.

Community Impact & Public Health Leadership

- Reimagined the salon as a space of care and community connection—beyond just beauty.
- **Spearheaded a COVID-19 vaccine clinic** in partnership with the State of Colorado, vaccinating over **2,500 frontline and marginalized individuals**, including beauty professionals, grocery workers, gig workers, immigrants, and refugees. Managed site coordination at Stanley Marketplace, translation support, and hospitality for attendees.
- [CBS News Coverage →](#)
- **Launched community fridges** at two Denver locations with the Denver Community Fridge Project, addressing food insecurity during the pandemic and creating dignified access to nourishment in underserved neighborhoods.
- [Denverite Feature →](#)
- **Founded and hosted "Bad News Babes,"** a cultural event series celebrating women creatives, entrepreneurs, and change-makers in Denver—offering space for storytelling, solidarity, and visibility.
- [303 Magazine Feature →](#)

Product Innovation & Brand Expansion

- Conceptualized and launched Base Coat's proprietary line of non-toxic nail polishes and beauty products.
- Partnered with chemists to develop clean, cruelty-free formulas, then led creative direction for sustainable, mission-aligned packaging and design.
- Oversaw product launch strategy across DTC, retail, and wholesale channels, achieving wide market adoption and a loyal customer base.

Marketing, Partnerships & Visibility

- Built a strong digital presence and authentic brand voice focused on health, self-care, and ethical beauty—driving engagement and trust.
- Formed a major retail partnership with **Whole Foods Rocky Mountain Region and Nordstrom nationwide**, resulting in **20 shop-in-shop Base Coat salons** across **9 states**.
- Represented the brand at key industry events and trade shows, strengthening relationships across wellness, fashion, and media spaces.

Operations, Growth & Real Estate

- Scaled the business to **four flagship locations** in Colorado and California.
- Directed real estate selection, salon design, permitting, contractor oversight, and interior build-outs—ensuring every location embodied Base Coat's values and aesthetic.
- Engaged local artists and makers to activate each salon as a creative hub and cultural gathering space.

Team Leadership & Culture Building

- Built and led a team of over **150 employees**, including nail techs, managers, and support staff.
- Developed inclusive hiring practices, mentorship systems, and continuing education programs that fostered career growth and high retention.
- Cultivated a collaborative and supportive workplace culture grounded in care, accountability, and innovation.

Legacy

Through visionary leadership, relentless advocacy, and a deep commitment to community, grew Base Coat from a bold idea into a trailblazing force in clean beauty—shaping a more ethical, inclusive, and health-conscious future for the nail salon industry.

CHARACTER REFERENCES

Annie Guo VanDan
Executive Director of Colorado Asian
Culture and Education Network

Brenda Burgos
VP Partnership and Development

Marie Logsdon
Politics & Entrepreneurship

Neal K. Walia
Director of Policy and Government
Relations

Bobby LeFebre
Community Leader and Colorado Poet
Laureate

Max Haynes
Political Consultant

Leslie Herod
Elected Official

Deborah Yim
Attorney



WORK EXPERIENCE

Co-Founder / Curator / Retail Director
Syper Ordinary – Denver, CO
September 2013 – February 2019

As a co-founder of Syper Ordinary, I helped shape a pioneering concept that merged a contemporary art gallery with an expertly curated retail space—housed in **The Source**, one of Denver's most vibrant marketplaces. Our mission was simple but bold: to **redefine how people experience art and design in everyday life**. By blurring the lines between fine art, retail, and lifestyle, Syper Ordinary became a cultural destination and creative incubator for artists, designers, and collectors from around the world.

Key Contributions & Achievements

Concept Development & Strategic Vision

- Co-created and launched the **original concept** for Syper Ordinary, envisioning a space where art, design, and retail seamlessly intersected to elevate everyday living.
- Developed the **business plan, brand identity, and operational strategy** from the ground up, positioning the venture as a unique hybrid in the local and national creative economy.
- Designed and maintained a scalable model that adapted to Denver's fast-changing creative landscape while staying true to our mission of accessible, elevated design.

Curation & Artist Collaboration

- Curated **dozens of rotating exhibitions** that celebrated emerging and established voices in contemporary art, always with an eye for innovation, inclusivity, and visual harmony.
- Established long-term partnerships with **local, national, and international artists, makers, and design brands**, fostering collaboration and co-creation.
- Balanced creative vision with commercial sensibility, ensuring exhibitions complemented the retail side while honoring artistic integrity.

Global Sourcing & Retail Leadership

- Built a curated retail program that combined **art objects, design goods, lifestyle products, and handmade pieces**, creating a layered and immersive customer experience.
- Sourced items from a **global network of independent artists and designers**, ensuring diversity, originality, and alignment with Syper Ordinary's ethos.
- Oversaw **all aspects of retail operations**, including vendor relations, product merchandising, inventory management, visual storytelling, and customer engagement.

Community Building & Collector Engagement

- Cultivated a loyal community of collectors, creatives, and patrons through **personalized engagement and a welcoming environment** that invited curiosity and conversation.
- Hosted **artist talks, exhibition openings, pop-ups, and creative workshops**, turning the space into a living, breathing cultural platform and storytelling environment.
- Served as an **art liaison and creative matchmaker**, connecting collectors with artists and helping to facilitate meaningful acquisitions and commissions.

Brand Growth & Cultural Impact

- Elevated Syper Ordinary into a **cultural touchstone within Denver's creative scene**, frequently featured in local press and recognized as a leader in design-forward retail.
- Influenced how art was perceived, valued, and incorporated into daily environments—helping redefine the gallery experience to feel more **inclusive, experiential, and intimate**.
- Left a lasting imprint on Denver's creative ecosystem by championing the idea that **everyday spaces deserve extraordinary art**.

EDUCATION

Thornton, Colorado
SKYVIEW HIGH SCHOOL
1996–1999

LANGUAGES

Bilingual
English
Conversational Vietnamese



WORK EXPERIENCE

Social Media | Brand Director
eBags – Denver, CO
November 2011 – May 2013

In my role as Social Media and Brand Director at eBags, I played a pivotal role in shaping the digital narrative of one of the leading e-commerce brands in the travel and fashion accessories space. I led the creative strategy, content production, and execution of eBags' social media and branding initiatives, crafting a distinct and cohesive online identity that resonated with a wide customer base. My focus was on elevating eBags as a go-to brand for stylish, functional travel gear while fostering deep engagement with our digital community and driving measurable business growth.

Key Contributions & Achievements

Brand Development & Social Media Strategy

- **Established eBags' digital voice** by defining the brand's personality, tone, and core values across social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram), ensuring consistency and engagement with diverse audiences.
- Developed **innovative social media campaigns** that aligned with eBags' values of convenience, quality, and style, which led to increased interaction, brand loyalty, and audience growth.
- Conceptualized, created, and managed **high-quality content**—collaborating with photographers, designers, and influencers to produce on-brand visuals that drove the story of eBags as the leader in travel and fashion accessories.

Creative Direction & Campaign Management

- Directed **creative initiatives** for various eBags campaigns, producing **event marketing materials, promotional videos, and cross-platform digital campaigns** that helped to reinforce the brand's presence.
- Spearheaded **content ideation and execution**, ensuring all marketing assets reflected a cohesive visual identity and narrative, from social media ads to website banners, that connected with the customer journey and the brand's aspirational image.
- Managed **end-to-end project management**, overseeing campaigns from initial concept to execution, ensuring timely delivery while staying aligned with eBags' overall brand goals and strategy.

Digital Marketing Campaigns & Performance Optimization

- **Led digital marketing efforts** for both eBags.com and Handbags.com, strategically driving traffic and sales through **data-driven campaigns**.
- Analyzed user behavior, leveraged insights from analytics tools, and implemented **A/B testing** to optimize digital campaigns, driving **increased sales conversion rates**, and improving **ROI** on paid advertising.
- Utilized **SEO, SEM, and email marketing** strategies to enhance visibility, engagement, and customer retention, building a comprehensive digital marketing ecosystem across various channels.

Trend Analysis & Market Research

- Continuously **monitored digital trends**, evolving social media platforms, and consumer behavior to keep eBags ahead of competitors in digital marketing innovation.
- Conducted **extensive market research** and competitor analysis, participating in **trade shows and key account meetings**, gathering insights that informed creative and branding strategies and led to market-leading campaigns.
- Implemented findings to develop new engagement strategies and identify growth opportunities for the brand across digital and retail channels.

Collaborative Leadership & Cross-Functional Partnerships

- Built strong relationships with **internal teams**, including **marketing, design, and e-commerce**, to ensure seamless integration of brand messaging across all consumer touch points and digital channels.
- Led **collaborations with external influencers, industry leaders, and key stakeholders**, enhancing eBags' credibility and extending its reach within the travel and fashion accessories market.
- Managed **influencer partnerships**, negotiating and executing campaigns that amplified the brand's message, fostering trust and driving traffic to both the website and social platforms.

AWARDS & ACCOLADES

Cherry Creek Lifestyle Magazine
Women's Issue
(October 2023)

Asian Avenue Magazine
Asian American Hero of Colorado Award
(May 2023)

Not So Pretty
Episode 2 - Nails
HBO Docuseries
(April 2022)

City of Denver
Denver Mayor's Diversity & Inclusion Award (2020)

5280 Magazine
Disruptors: 15 People Who Are Changing Denver
(2019)