

Gemma McFarland, MPH

Public health and wellness consultant with master's degrees in Public Health and Sociology and over a decade of cross-sector experience spanning community engagement, program design and evaluation, violence prevention, and social impact. Working alongside communities and organizations to expand access to well-being.

Contact

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Education

Northeastern University

- Master of Arts, Sociology
- Master of Public Health

Quinnipiac University

- Bachelor of Arts, Communications

Skills & Expertise

Psychological First Aid & Crisis Intervention;
Victim Advocacy & Case Management;
Community Engagement & Facilitation;
Strategic Partnership Development; Public
Health Program Design & Evaluation; Workshop
Design; Grant Writing; Yoga Instruction

Professional Experience

GEMMA C. MCFARLAND CONSULTING

PRINCIPAL; PUBLIC HEALTH & WELLNESS CONSULTANT

2024 – Present

- Set strategy and lead the design and delivery of evidence-based, customized wellness and public health programs
- Advise and partner with community-based organizations and private sector stakeholders to strengthen coordinated responses to gender-based violence
- Direct community health assessments, translating data and community input into actionable strategies that advance health, well-being, and equity
- Lead cross-sector community engagement and evaluation initiatives to strengthen impact-driven programs
- Build, manage, and sustain strategic partnerships to expand services and respond to evolving organizational needs
- Provide senior-level grant strategy, writing, and consultation to support program growth and funding success
- Oversee implementation and iteration to ensure programs are feasible and sustainable

ACBC CONSULTING*COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST (CONTRACT)*

2025 – Present

- Design and facilitate inclusive community engagement processes bringing together residents, community-based organizations, and municipal staff to inform public health, equity, and community well-being strategies
- Synthesize community input into clear, actionable goals and recommendations to support cross-sector planning and collaboration
- Develop accessible materials and strategy tools that translate complex planning processes into health-, safety-, and resilience-focused outcomes

ROXBURY COMMUNITY COLLEGE*DIRECTOR OF WELLNESS*

2023 – 2024

- Established and led the college's first Wellness Center, with a focus on mental health support and gender-based violence prevention
- Designed and facilitated campus-wide workshops and programs for students, faculty, and staff
- Provided crisis intervention and support for students experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, and related trauma
- Built and managed partnerships with campus departments and external agencies to advance public health initiatives
- Served as a member of the Behavioral Intervention Team, providing subject matter expertise on violence prevention and trauma-informed response
- Oversaw campus-wide sexual violence focus groups and assessments through external partnerships, resulting in a white paper and a 2024 national conference presentation

SENIOR SPECIAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR – PROJECT ACCESS

2022 – 2023

- Designed and launched a behavioral health pilot program that provided direct services and improved retention among students facing basic needs insecurity
- Supported the development and launch of the institution's first on-campus food pantry serving students experiencing food insecurity
- Partnered with community organizations to deliver training and resources on mental health and violence prevention, strengthening student engagement and retention
- Developed and administered campus-wide mental health and well-being surveys for students, faculty, and staff; findings informed programming and policy revisions
- Contributed to program development and expansion, including grant writing and reporting

ATHENAHEALTH

SENIOR ASSOCIATE - ATHENAGIVES (Corporate Social Responsibility)

2016 – 2018

- Co-led national corporate social responsibility initiatives, integrating health-focused programming and employee engagement to advance community well-being
- Managed corporate volunteer programs across all athenahealth offices, maintaining strategic partnerships with health-focused community organizations
- Developed educational materials and co-authored the annual Corporate Responsibility Report, highlighting program outcomes and impact
- Managed a national grantmaking program, overseeing application review, awards, and grantee relationships

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION RESEARCH AND SERVICE, INC. - COMMUNITY ADVOCACY PROGRAM

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCATE & PROGRAM COORDINATOR

2014 – 2016

- Provided trauma-informed crisis intervention and advocacy for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault
- Managed the launch and coordination of domestic violence support services at Mattapan Community Health Center, including training medical providers on screening and response to gender-based violence
- Secured federal and private funding through grant writing and ensured program sustainability through reporting, compliance, and data tracking
- Developed and facilitated educational workshops on gender-based violence, healthy relationships, and bystander intervention
- Collaborated with community-based organizations, law enforcement, and court systems to support survivor safety and coordinated response efforts

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

YOGA INSTRUCTOR & PERSONAL TRAINER

2011 – 2022

- Taught group fitness and yoga classes across Greater Boston, promoting wellness and self-care through accessible fitness programming

Teaching

NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Teaching Assistant, Dept. of Sociology: SOCL 1101 Introduction to Sociology – 2019

Teaching Assistant, Dept. of Health Sciences: PHTH2350 Community and Public Health – 2013

CODMAN SQUARE ACADEMY – Dorchester, MA

Guest Educator, Preventing Teen Dating Violence Workshop – 2016

Academic Research & Evaluation

Evaluation of Public Health Infrastructure in MetroWest, MA

Northeastern University Public Evaluation Lab (NU-PEL) | 2021

- Evaluated public health infrastructure across 25 MetroWest communities, assessing capacity, challenges, and opportunities; contributed to mixed-methods evaluation and qualitative analysis

Domestic Violence Institute (DVI)

Northeastern University School of Law | 2020 – 2021

- Developed data collection frameworks within a case-management system; conducted research on technology-facilitated abuse during COVID-19 and supported grant writing

Massachusetts Adult Suicide Prevention Project

Northeastern University Public Evaluation Lab (NU-PEL) | 2020

- Conducted qualitative evaluation research on Zero Suicide programming in Cape Cod & the Islands; coded data and contributed to final reports

MPH Capstone Project

Northeastern University | 2016

- Dating Violence Among Undergraduate Students: led survey research on emotional abuse prevalence and help-seeking behaviors

Publications, Media, and Conference Presentations

McFarland, G. & Corcoran, C. (2024, August 14-16). Centering community colleges in campus prevention work. National Sexual Assault Conference, Washington, DC, United States.

Scoglio, AAJ, **McFarland, G.**, Marquez, CI, Matsumoto, A., Lincoln, AK. (2023). Social Support and Associated Factors Among Men and Women in Pre-COVID Substance Use Treatment, *Community Mental Health Journal*.

McFarland, G. (2018, November 21). Something needs to be done, and soon - a rape culture at Winthrop High School [letter to the editor]. *Winthrop Sun Transcript*, pp. 4–6.

McFarland, G. (2016). Dating violence among undergraduate students at a large research university in Boston: Prevalence on campus and perceptions of emotional abuse (Unpublished master's thesis). Northeastern University.

Professional Service

Reviewer, *Journal of International Criminology* – 2019