

Insights

NICHQ Employee Spotlight: Joshua Licursi

In honor of our [20th anniversary](#), we're sharing insights, memories and goals from the



Full name and title:

Joshua Licursi, Communications Specialist

Years with NICHQ:

One Year

How has your background/experiences led you to join a national children's health organization?

Growing up, I developed a passion for creating content and showcasing my artistic side. I always found myself making art, writing stories, and filming silly videos of the stuff I was doing as a kid. I spent hours on YouTube learning how to edit videos, use photoshop, and tell engaging stories through the visual arts. As I grew older, I knew I wanted to integrate these interests into my career in a meaningful way. During my undergraduate career at Southern Connecticut State University, I took a course that allowed me to travel to Guatemala and study some of the world's most challenging issues facing children's health. It was this trip that solidified my dedication to the public health field. I then discovered that Boston University offered an MPH track that would allow me to combine my interest in public health with my communications interests. After receiving my MPH in Health Communication and Promotion, I became the Communications Specialist here at NICHQ, where I'm implementing innovative marketing strategies to support and advance the effectiveness of child and maternal health programs and initiatives.

Favorite memory from working at NICHQ:

Our culture committee here at NICHQ does a fantastic job of organizing events and gatherings throughout the year. Last October, there was a fall-themed gathering where we painted pumpkins, enjoyed Halloween treats, and competed in a doughnut eating contest. Apple cider doughnuts were hung from a string and me and other colleagues raced to eat it with our hands behind our backs. My love for doughnuts overshadowed any embarrassment or shame as sugary goodness was smooshed all over my face. While this story has nothing to do with improving children's health, I think moments like this are extremely valuable for any organization. Dedicated time throughout the year to have casual and fun moments with your colleagues creates a stronger, energetic bond within the group. Another favorite memory of mine was when the culture committee organized a historical tour for our staff at Fenway Park. Being a part-time tour guide at Fenway, I was able to give the tour to my colleagues and provide a memorable experience at America's most beloved ballpark.

Biggest lesson-learned from working in marketing and communications:

I've learned that marketing and communication is a field that is constantly evolving at a rapid pace and requires nimbleness and a drive to constantly improve digital strategy and dissemination processes. For example, we are constantly sharing new content on the NICHQ website and we make an effort to adapt our content to current events and related health issues. We then pay close attention to our analytics, such as traffic, engagement and super-users and set goals to measure our progress. If having a website is essential to your organization's digital strategy, then it should be a living resource that is continuously expanding. As a communications specialist, I'm always thinking about new ways to engage our audience and expose more people to the work that we do at NICHQ. And it's always encouraged to test out new strategies and try new things! That's what makes marketing fun and exciting.

Favorite communications project at NICHQ

I currently provide communications support for the [Disseminating Results: Missed Sickle Cell Disease Clinic Appointments and the Health Belief Model](#) project. One of my biggest roles thus far has been creating a video that shares the stories and experiences of patients, families, and providers and the barriers to attending routine sickle cell disease appointments and how missing appointments impacts health and well-being. To create this video, I conducted zoom interviews and compiled pieces of each recording into one cohesive clip. Not only was it exciting to do what I love and edit videos, I'm grateful for the opportunity to showcase the lived experiences of patients with sickle cell disease and care providers. Their stories are extremely powerful and illustrate an urgent need for change. You can view the video [here](#).

What are you most proud of from your time with NICHQ?

I value NICHQ's commitment to combating racial inequality and recognizing racism as the public health crisis that it is. The organization has taken many actions to integrate health equity into everything we do and dedicate the time and energy to create a safe space for conversations about injustice. I'm thankful for all that I've learned from the lived experiences of my colleagues and feel empowered every day to promote the urgent need for health equity in our health systems.