

Ariel J. Luna

Fair Lawn, NJ

201-923-4003

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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/arieljacobluna>

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Accomplished Government Project Leader, Community Relations Professional, and Military Veteran with over two decades of professional experience in higher education and government entities. Accomplished measurable results in academic and social service environments which has supported local veterans in the community. Possess extensive knowledge in administering veterans' services. Recipient of multiple awards for outstanding performance and professionalism.

- Experience with at-risk populations
- Knowledge of municipal compliance requirements for city and state laws
- Program and event planning
- Project and process management
- Recruitment metrics analysis
- Strategic planning and management
- Training and development
- Private, public, and non-profit social policy
- Mediation and dispute resolution

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

New Jersey Department of Transportation – Ewing, NJ

2021 – Present

Deputy Director of the Office of Government and Community Relations

Lead the NJ DOT's Office of Community Relations team in planning, organizing, and maintaining a comprehensive liaison program with the US Congressional delegation, state legislators, elected officials, community stakeholders, and the public to inform of upcoming transportation projects and/or improvements and to respond to inquiries related to state transportation matters.

- Contribute to the development and implementation of the Office of Community Relations strategy.
- Accountable for oversight and optimization of internal and external meetings with local community boards and municipalities, related to transportation concerns, projects, including but not limited to maintenance activities and improvements to existing infrastructure.
- Assist with managing daily operations including staff oversight of the regional area coordinators, administrative assistants, and interns.
- Develop framework of expectations and provide performance reviews as needed. Assist with coaching, mentoring, and developing staff while fostering accountability.
- Maintain and build strong relationships with area residents, community leaders, and elected officials.
- Communicate clearly and consistently with stakeholders on major workstreams to ensure goal and strategy alignment.

County of Bergen – Hackensack, NJ

2015 – 2021

Director of Veteran Services

Led strategies and development of multiple community-based programs to engage veterans and their families throughout Bergen County. Programs developed focused on combating homelessness, access to comprehensive healthcare, acute or chronic mental health services, employment services and referrals, private sector veteran mentorship programs and reducing food insecurity.

- Developed and implemented community engagement activities such as local volunteerism, charitable giving, pro bono service coordination and awareness education. Employed and leveraged social networking opportunities to increase involvement and participation.
- Oversaw the division charitable contribution program, including screening requests for financial support, coordinating the approval process, and managing the disbursement of funds.
- Maintained financial oversight of division budget and determined proper accountability of assets and expenses.
- Provided consultation and reference to at-risk veterans for further assistance and guidance, leveraging local/federal resources and contacts.
- Advocated for veterans and their families' diverse and individual needs with local, state, and federal agencies.

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Fairleigh Dickinson University – Hackensack, NJ Director of Veteran Services and Engagement

2009 – 2015

Responsible for recruitment and retention of veterans and active military across New Jersey and tri-state area. Over a four-year period, increased veteran, and active military student population by 180%, generating over \$6.1 million in tuition revenue.

- Developed playbook for recruiting and related training to grow veterans and active military student population.
- Plan programs and liaise with university partners to plan on-campus and off-campus information sessions.
- Designed lectures, class materials and schedules suited for adult learners, veterans, and active military students.
- Provided individual and group mentoring to promote academic success, transition support, career readiness, problem solving and decision-making skills.
- Provided access and referrals to support services for supplemental education loans, mental health services, housing, and employment opportunities and corporate sponsorship programs.
- Maintained relationships with universities and community colleges, military installations, veteran organizations, community agencies, and government officials for greater collaboration on veteran related initiatives.
- Directly responsible for automating and streamlining daily processing of G.I. Bill educational benefits reducing administrative effort in half.

City University of New York - NYC College of Technology – Brooklyn, NY Veteran Services Manager

2007 – 2009

- Managed and trained staff on current policies and procedures for veteran student government benefits.
- Counseled students on educational benefits, mental health referrals, small business development, and academic tutoring.
- Conducted effective outreach programs within the community by organizing veteran appreciation events and fundraisers.

City University of New York - Brooklyn College – Brooklyn, NY Outreach Specialist

2002 – 2008

- Built awareness and generated enrollment in key markets including adult, continuing education, and professional studies.
- Trained community residents, program participants and staff on the transitional elements of veteran to civilian development, education, and outreach.
- Developed various outreach events to engage veteran student body.

U.S. Army and New York National Guard – Various Locations Communication Soldier & Military Police

2000 – 2006

Served on active duty in Camp Scania, Iraq, South Korea, Fort Bragg, NC, and New York State. Served in multiple positions as a Team Leader, Combat Vehicle Driver, Gunner, and Communications Specialist.

- Provided force protection, convoy operation, quick reactionary force as military police during Iraq deployment.
- Served as an instructor for pre-deployment at Fort Dix for the 9 Line Medevac, COMSEC load operations and educational briefings.
- Provided protective services as a National Guardsman with assignments in New York City's major transportation hubs.

EDUCATION

Fairleigh Dickinson University Teaneck, NJ	<i>Public Administration Certificate</i>	2011 – 2012
Fairleigh Dickinson University Teaneck, NJ	<i>Non-Profit Organizational Development Certificate</i>	
Fairleigh Dickinson University Teaneck, NJ	<i>Master of Administrative Science</i>	2010 – 2011
CUNY Brooklyn College Brooklyn, NY	<i>Cumulative GPA 3.5</i>	
	<i>Bachelor of Arts – Television & Radio Production</i>	2005 - 2007
	<i>Cumulative GPA 3.2</i>	

Community Related Projects, Awards, Military Commendations & Additional Information Available Upon Request