

The Brooklyn Way

An Interview with Marissa Shorenstein, Chief External Affairs Officer, BSE Global

EDITORS' NOTE Marissa Shorenstein is the Chief External Affairs Officer at BSE where she oversees communications, community relations, and government relations. Previously, Shorenstein served as Principal, SKDK, where she advised global clients on strategic and crisis communications issues as well as legislative and regulatory oversight challenges and traditional, social, and digital media strategy. In 2021, Shorenstein served as Director of the Executive Transition for New York State's first female governor, Kathy Hochul.



Marissa Shorenstein

Shorenstein served as Global Chief Communications Officer for WeWork after spending more than eight years at AT&T where she served as President – Northern Region, overseeing the company's external affairs for 17 states from Maine to Illinois, as well as Washington, DC. She previously served as AT&T's Regional President for the Northeast and New York State President. Shorenstein was one of just a handful of female officers of the company, and the youngest in company history. Prior to joining AT&T, Shorenstein ran Marissa Shorenstein LLC, where she offered strategic communications consulting services to a wide range of clients including private sector institutions facing PR crises, tech start-ups looking for guidance on product launches, hedge funds and private equity firms requiring investor relations and sales and marketing assistance, and nonprofit organizations desiring speechwriting, media training and story placement expertise. Shorenstein was Director of Communications for Andrew Cuomo's successful 2010 campaign for Governor of New York State. Before joining the Cuomo campaign, she was Press Secretary and Deputy Director of Communications for Governor David A. Paterson where she also oversaw communications for the dozens of state agencies across the state. From 2004-2007, Shorenstein served as Senior Manager for Strategic Planning and Corporate Communications for the New York Jets while earning her JD from Fordham Law School's Evening Division. In her capacity at the Jets, she was the chief spokesperson for the controversial stadium development project on Manhattan's West Side. While an undergraduate student at Harvard University, from which she became the first female to graduate with honors in three years, Shorenstein traveled as one of five members of the National Press

Advance staff for the Gore Presidential campaign where she planned press events and coordinated logistics for the traveling press corps. She has also worked in the New York City Mayor's Office, on the 1992 and 1996 Clinton campaigns, and on the 2004 Wesley Clark campaign. Shorenstein was also New York Director of Communications for Cover the Uninsured Week, a public awareness campaign funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and co-sponsored by dozens of nonprofit, labor and business organizations around the country to highlight and create awareness about the tens of millions of Americans without health insurance. Shorenstein is currently a Commissioner of the New York State Gaming Commission, Chair of the Citizens Budget Commission (CBC), member of the Board of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC), and Mom's First. She is the former Chair of the Board of Girls Who Code. In becoming Chair of the CBC, Shorenstein broke the glass ceiling as the first female chair in CBC's venerable 90-year history.

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ORGANIZATION BRIEF BSE (bseglobal.net) is an entertainment platform committed to creating elevated, innovative and unforgettable experiences inspired by Brooklyn. Through its state-of-the-art venues, professional sports franchises and emerging businesses, BSE delivers dynamic content and memories for its fans and audiences.

Will you provide an overview of your role and areas of focus?

As the Chief External Affairs Officer of BSE, I oversee communications, community relations, government relations, and our youth basketball program, Brooklyn Basketball. We have a team of very talented professionals who evaluate community partners and programs to ensure that we make the most impact across Brooklyn and throughout New York City.

How is BSE Global committed to giving back and bettering the lives of those in the communities it serves?

BSE Global takes seriously our commitment to giving back to our community and we strive to positively impact the Brooklyn



BSE Global youth basketball program (above and opposite page)



population through various initiatives and programs focused on the health, education, and well-being of our neighbors in the borough and beyond. We recognize the unique and diverse makeup of the community we serve and have taken a hyperlocal approach to equity, sustainability, and community development to create meaningful relationships with local residents, businesses, and organizations. We partner with dozens of local organizations each year to host education events, youth basketball clinics, Season of Giving activations, local art installations and more including our signature programs, NETSTEM and Read Across Brooklyn. We also donate thousands of tickets to community groups each year, giving those in underserved communities the opportunity to enjoy arena events that they may otherwise not be able to attend.

In addition to our dozens of programs, Brooklyn Basketball, BSE's flagship youth basketball program, is undoubtedly the one with the biggest reach. Brooklyn Basketball is a partnership between the Brooklyn Nets and New York Liberty, establishing a community-first basketball experience dedicated to nurturing young basketball players and enthusiasts to unlock their full potential both on and off the court. Grounded in BSE's pillars of education, health and wellness, and social equity, Brooklyn Basketball caters to children ages 6-14, providing players of all skill levels an opportunity to learn the game while experiencing basketball the "Brooklyn Way." Brooklyn Basketball strives to motivate children to get active and off screens while developing a love for the sport and is intended to grow the game through professionally led clinics and camps, community-focused events, instructional videos, unique basketball content, and much more. In addition to our own Brooklyn Basketball program, we also support existing basketball programs with

local organizations including New Heights, Power Play, YMCA, Madison Square Boys + Girls Club, and many more.

Will you highlight BSE Global's youth basketball programming in partnership with the Department of Education?

In 2023, we expanded our community-based youth basketball clinics through a new partnership with New York City Public Schools. Through a first-of-its-kind partnership, we now provide Brooklyn Basketball clinics free-of-charge to more than 200 NYC public elementary and middle schools in Brooklyn during gym periods where students learn basketball fundamentals, along with critical off-the-court life and leadership skills.

In addition to our daily school clinics, Brooklyn Basketball hosts dozens of additional clinics with local partner organizations, coach and referee clinics, 3x3 tournaments, skills challenges, combines, 3-Point contests, camps, and more. Throughout the year, we host nearly 1,000 free youth basketball clinics as part of the broader Brooklyn Basketball program – in the last year alone, Brooklyn Basketball reached more than 60,000 students, and this year we expect to reach 80,000 local students across 1,650 events.

How is BSE Global working to expand its youth basketball programming in the future?

Brooklyn Basketball is dedicated to nurturing young basketball players and enthusiasts by providing high-quality, comprehensive training that enables them to develop their talents to their fullest potential. We are committed to fostering a supportive and dynamic environment where every student is inspired to unlock their full potential as a basketball player, cultivate a deep love for the game, and grow both on and off the court.

In the future, we will open a dedicated Brooklyn Basketball facility located directly

across from Barclays Center. We believe that a physical, full-time space will offer us the ability to positively impact even more children and their families across New York and also help Brooklyn Basketball further expand by reaching schools and programs that may not have access to a basketball court. The space will be programmed seven days a week with after school and weekend training, camps, coaching clinics and tournaments, and we will also provide a place in the facility for parents to convene and for students to have a safe space for homework or other needs before and after training.

We are excited to continue to improve the area surrounding Barclays Center through a youth basketball program available to all right in the heart of Brooklyn as we continue to help grow the game of basketball across the borough.

How does BSE Global engage its players and workforce in its basketball programming efforts?

Brooklyn Basketball engages players and staff in our programming in a variety of ways. Oftentimes current players, coaches and legends from the Brooklyn Nets, New York Liberty and Long Island Nets will surprise youth participants at our clinics or camps. Most recently, Brooklyn Basketball held a clinic for National Girls and Women in Sports Day, including a panel of staff members from the New York Liberty, with the goal of inspiring young women to pursue participation in sports on all levels.

When Brooklyn Basketball first announced its partnership with the New York City Department of Education in 2023, Nets coaches and players attended the launch event and jumped in to engage with the students during the clinic, showing their continuing support for Brooklyn Basketball and its initiatives.

It is incredibly important we have players, coaches, staff members and even team front office members represented at Brooklyn Basketball events because we want youth of all ages, genders, and backgrounds to be able to see the possibilities that exist through hard work and passion.

Will you discuss the importance of athletics in transforming both the body and spirit, building camaraderie, character and positive habits that can last a lifetime?

Sports play a pivotal role in shaping both the body and the spirit, offering profound benefits that extend beyond physical fitness. The importance of young people playing sports cannot be overstated, as it provides a foundation for both physical and emotional well-being, while helping shape future leaders and responsible citizens. Basketball is much more than just a sport for children. The fast-paced, team-oriented nature of the game is an incredible platform for teaching valuable life skills like collaboration, decision-making, perseverance, confidence, self-esteem, and more. These attributes not only enhance athletic performance, but also contribute to the development of well-rounded individuals who are prepared to succeed in various aspects of life. ●