**Research Statement**

My industry experience in program-building and management, marketing, developing online content, social media, and grant writing, creates critical reflexivity in my approach to community engagement and working with marginalized groups. In addition to incorporating digital content management, service learning, and professional writing opportunities in the classroom, these broad experiences strengthen my pedagogical practices and administrative skills in academia.

In an effort to expand the field of rhetoric’s work on community engagement and public

rhetorics, my dissertation examines how the Hispanic/Latino non-profit sector creates and

sustains an ecology through an organizational identity. Organizational identity theory is a self reflective practice that centralizes, makes a distinction, and establishes multiple identities based on audience, context, and needs of the organization (Whetten, 2006). An organizational identity also serves as an identifying marker and is a key element, as both a rhetorical process and rhetorical statement, when defining, identifying, and transforming a public. My dissertation adds a new layer for emerging conversations about the relationship between cultural identity and public writing, technical communication, social justice, and activism in community engagement scholarship.

I do this by focusing on the relationship between cultural identities and public writing. In particular, how an organizational identity defines, identifies, and sustains an ecology within the Hispanic/Latinonon-profit sector. Interviews from three Hispanic/ non-profit organizations (Latinos in Tech and Social Media, Hispanics in Philanthropy, and Latinitas) and data collected from their respective websites and social media accounts are analyzed by using Actor-Network Theory and social media analysis. Using Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as a lens provides the opportunity to view the associations and transformations that occur when a network, or an ecology, is created. By collecting and coding 15,200 tweets containing #LATISM, I analyze how digital ecologies contribute to the shaping of Hispanic/Latino non-profit ecology. I use #LATISM as digital ecology to represent a vehicle of transformation used to sustain an organizational identity and how the hashtag relates to other Hispanic/Latino nonprofits.

In the Fall of 2017, a portion of my dissertation will be published in an online special issue of

*Reflections: A Journal of Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing, and Service Learning*. In “Youth

Activism and Community Writing by Latina Youth,” I co-authored the piece alongside Taylor

Figueroa, a high school senior and Contributing Writer for *Latinitas Magazine*. In the article we

analyze how Latinitas, a non-profit organization aimed towards empowering Latina youth

through multimedia and technology, is a site of resistance. We highlight the inventional practices of the organization and how Latinitas sustains social justice efforts by

providing an interplay of multimodal spaces (physical and digital) for Latina youth to use as a

platform for self-expression. By providing linguistic, cultural, and technological resources as means to promote empowerment in the Latina community, Latinitas creates and nurtures a space for Latina youth. Another portion of my dissertation is currently in consideration for a chapter contribution for *Community Action for Social Change: A Digital Archive,* an online book in the *Working and Writing for Change* book series through Parlor Press. In addition to my academic publications, a co-edited collection with Latinitas will be published by the organization in 2018. The book, *Soy Latina*, started as a service learning project and grew into a publication. *Soy Latina* represents the multiple identities and narratives of members, volunteers, and writers of Latinitas since 2004.  
  
My industry experience within the Hispanic/Latino non-profit sector adds to the trajectory of my research agenda. There is minimal research on the infrastructure and networks of the Hispanic/Latino nonprofit sector and the knowledge work they produce. Additionally, outside of the field of rhetoric there is minimal research on the Hispanic/Latino nonprofit sector’s organizational identity.Therefore, there is rich ethnographic and quantitative data that can be collected to further understand the infrastructure and user research of the Hispanic/Latino nonprofit sector.

In 2018, I will complete additional user research and analysis on Hispanic/Latino non-profits. Expanding the number and scope of Hispanic/Latino non-profit organizations will set the foundation for curating an edited collection on cultural identity, public writing, and digital literacies of practitioners within the Hispanic/Latino non-profit sector. As a practitioner-scholar, my dissertation and publications expand the conversation and research in technical communication, while also adding much needed Hispanic/Latino representation in academic and professional spaces.