

## **M. Karen Walker – bio for the Public Diplomacy Council**

M. Karen Walker, Ph.D., is a strategic communications specialist with near 30 years' experience in writing and editing, advocacy and reputation management, change communications, and stakeholder and employee engagement. She began her career as a public affairs officer with USIA. She returned to Foggy Bottom in 1997 as a subject matter expert and foreign affairs officer. During her tenure she supported global and regional environmental diplomacy programs and training, advocated for U.S. businesses investing in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, managed commercial diplomacy initiatives in developing countries, and co-led technical assistance and engagement programs in the Middle East and North Africa. While conducting her dissertation research, she was appointed a Franklin Fellow from 2009-2011, serving as grants manager for democracy and governance programs in Iraq.

Karen joined Booz Allen Hamilton in 2011, managing communications programs for the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's Research Directorate and GEOINT Enterprise Directorate and supporting the public affairs team at the National Counterterrorism Center. Karen's experience in the counterterrorism field includes government service in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate, where she managed public affairs for the Office of Research and Development, served in the secretariat of the National Science and Technology Council, and launched a nascent research program to understand and exploit terrorist motivation and intent. She has published on the topic of information warfare, authored book reviews for *Terrorism and Political Violence*, and taught rhetorical criticism applied to the terrorism studies domain.

Leveraging her experience as a foreign affairs officer, Karen earned her Ph.D. in May 2014, dissertating on the rhetorical dimension of soft power diplomacy. She has authored essays published in the *Hague Journal of Diplomacy and Policy*, and continues to conduct research relevant to diplomatic tradecraft alongside research projects that address the ethics of artificial intelligence and other disruptive technologies. She lives in Lynchburg, Virginia and is currently employed as a communications manager in the University of Virginia School of Engineering, supporting the Department of Materials Science and Engineering and Charles L. Brown Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

Karen is an adjunct faculty member of the Johns Hopkins University Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, Advanced Academic Programs, where she teaches / has taught speechwriting, CSR communication campaigns, and international PR and public diplomacy. She is a member of the National Communication Association, Southern States Communication Association and Kenneth Burke Society.