

Kelly Kamp, B.A. English Professional Writing, 2009

By Sarah Miller & Max Chambers

Graphic Design and Communications Specialist, National Association for State Procurement Officials



“Keep learning and trying new career paths. I didn’t know I would end up as a graphic designer when I graduated with a degree in English. Be open to new possibilities, even when they are completely unexpected.”

Kelly Kamp graduated from Western Kentucky University in 2009 with a BA in Professional Writing. She also earned an MA in Publishing and Writing in 2012 from Emerson College and an AAS in Graphic Design in 2015 from The Art Institute of Ohio-Cincinnati. She is currently the Graphic Design and Communications Specialist at the [National Association for State Procurement Officials](#) (NASPO).

Kamp says the Professional Writing major at WKU provided a solid foundation for entering the publishing industry. “I know that my English degree helped me with verbal communication skills. Most importantly, though, it was my time at WKU in the English department that allowed me to find my passion for pursuing a career in English/publishing.” This passion led her to Emerson College’s MA in Publishing and Writing program in 2010.

Kamp participated in several internships at publishing houses such as [Da Capo Press](#) and [Nicholas Brealey Publishing](#) while pursuing her MA. These internships and her education at Emerson College showed her the endless possibilities of publication jobs. “The great thing about Emerson is that students could focus on one aspect of publishing or get more of an overview of every aspect of publishing, including marketing, editorial, sales, publicity, and design.”

After graduating, Kamp pursued a career in publishing children’s books through [Candlewick Press](#) before making a career change to graphic design in 2014. “Working at Candlewick solidified my love for design and the desire to be a designer. So, I made the decision to return to school in Cincinnati to build my portfolio and skill set in the

field.” Her AAS degree led her through several graphic design positions before she joined NASPO in 2018.

As the Graphic Design and Communications Specialist for NASPO, Kamp handles graphic design and consistent branding. “Typically, I am handling any graphic design needs, including designing collateral, web banners, pieces for events, and logos. I am also the keeper of our style guide, ensuring brand awareness happens across all departments and events.” Kamp’s English degree gave her excellent written and verbal communication skills, which are essential when communicating her design decisions to her coworkers.

Kamp recommends that current English students seek out opportunities for experience. “I think the best advice is to do internships or participate in real-world English experiences, even if it is just editing a friend’s papers throughout a semester or writing a blog. It’s good to gain real experience that will make possible employers take notice.” She also reminds English majors to be open to new, atypical career paths. “I think communicating in all forms—writing, editing, and design—are all my passions. I kept following them to get where I am today.”

