Good morning, everyone! My name is Janicia Moore and I am an account executive at Hager Sharp, a mission-driven marketing and communications firm right here in Washington, DC, where I have been working for almost 2 years. I’m excited and honored to have this opportunity to be before you this morning along with my fellow panelists.

I was first introduced to social marketing as a graduate student at American University in 2014. I enrolled in a course called “Marketing for Social Change” under Dr. Sonya Grier, who is also a presenter at this conference. Taking this course was an awakening for me, leading me on a career path that I love and feel so fulfilled by. I want to say a hearty thank you to the planning committee for the opportunity to share my experiences and opinions with you all this afternoon.
My presentation this afternoon will focus on the importance of messenger strategy in social marketing and health communications campaigns. I'll briefly remind you what messenger strategy is, but more importantly, its significance. My presentation will then focus on how Hager Sharp has employed messenger strategy in innovative and successful ways for our health-related clients. I'll conclude my presentation with my thoughts on how to employ messenger strategy.
I used the fourth edition of Nancy R. Lee and Phillip Kotler’s Social Marketing textbook to set the proper foundation for this discussion. It offers this simple but powerful definition for messengers: a **credible** source for the message. This credibility hinges on three different aspects: expertise, trustworthiness, and likability. There are 6 types of messengers as you see listed.
For this presentation, I’ll be focusing on the following: partners, spokespersons, and midstream audiences.

The first sentence of the Messenger Strategy section says: “Who your target audience perceives to be delivering your message and what they think of this particular messenger can make or break the deal.”

This simple sentence captures why I believe messenger strategy is one of the most exciting parts of social marketing. Although nestled in promotional strategy, messenger strategy can elevate a campaign when developed thoughtfully with regard to its implications across the 4Ps. The right messenger can make a product like the HPV vaccine more valuable, a place like an HIV testing center seemingly more accessible, and the psychological cost of talking to friends about domestic violence more affordable.
I’ll start off with partners.

Hager Sharp started working for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office on Women’s Health in 2004. We help OWH develop and implement a number of health communications campaigns and initiatives across diverse health topics. My work specifically focuses on violence against women and HIV/AIDS prevention.

For Domestic Violence Awareness Month 2016, the Office on Women’s Health focused their efforts on educating the friends, family, and co-workers of domestic violence victims to: 1) recognize the signs of abuse and 2) start the conversation to offer them help. We also wanted to reach abusers or potential abusers by encouraging men to challenge the culture of violence as acceptable. We were encouraging bystander intervention; if and when they see something, say something.

To reach African-American men, we partnered with two prominent figures: Omari Hardwick, star of the hit show Power on STARZ, and Ron LeGrand, former vice president of public policy at the National Network to End Domestic Violence. These two men served as great messengers together: Ron brought his expertise in domestic violence prevention and Omari brought his likability as a well-known celebrity and his trustworthiness as an advocate for domestic violence victims through his own nonprofit.

To take advantage of this, we wrote and placed an op-ed bylined by both men and Omari’s wife on Ebony.com, one of the top news websites for the African-American community. The op-ed encouraged men to not only stand up to the culture of violence but to also support victims. The article was shared over 3,000 times from Ebony.com alone. At the end of the campaign, page views to the “Signs of abuse” and “How to help a friend who is being abused” pages on womenshealth.gov, the Office on Women’s Health website, both increased by 8% during the month of October.
And now onto spokespersons.

In 2005, OWH debuted National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (one of its signature observances) to shed light on the impact of HIV and AIDS on women and girls. Every year on March 10, and throughout the month of March, national and community organizations come together to show support for women and girls impacted by HIV and AIDS. For the past 2 years, OWH has focused on HIV prevention through safe sex, particularly among young women ages 18-24. The messaging centered around 5 simple steps: 1) use condoms, 2) get an HIV test, 3) be monogamous, 4) avoid alcohol and drug abuse, 5) and talk to a doctor about PrEP and PEP.

People who live with HIV and AIDS have long been stigmatized, making it difficult for those at risk for contracting HIV and AIDS to seek help or take preventative measures to protect themselves. Given that women face unique risks and challenges that can prevent them from getting needed care and treatment, we employ a number of spokespersons (or as well call them, ambassadors) for National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. These ambassadors range in their levels of celebrity and expertise on HIV/AIDS. Ambassadors are involved in every aspect of the campaign, from media appearances and interviews to social media promotion to recording hold messages for the OWH Helpline. The goal is to give every woman a face or a voice they can relate to.

This is just a snapshot of the ambassadors we have used past and present to encourage women to love themselves first and protect themselves from HIV and AIDS. María and Mina are both living with HIV, with large followings in their respective communities. María is internationally known among those living with HIV and the LGBT communities. Mina is our youngest ambassador, serving as a role model for other teenagers. Shannon is one of our newest ambassadors — a sexologist and Millennium YouTuber who makes talking about HIV prevention fun and sexy instead of scary. Danni is a DC radio personality and the mother of 2 daughters who reminds us that it’s also important to talk to girls about safe sex.

These ambassadors go above and beyond to reduce the stigma of HIV infection and testing in their communities and circles of influence. Together, they represent an office with a strong understanding of the challenges of living with HIV and AIDS and the simple things we can do year-round to stop their spread, especially among young women and women of color. NWGHAAD 2017 generated 236 million impressions, due in large part to the passion and commitment of our ambassadors.
Finally, we have midstream audiences.

In the fall of 2014, CDC and Hager Sharp began working together to increase effective health care provider recommendation and parental acceptance of the HPV vaccine, with the ultimate goal of increasing HPV vaccination rates among 11- and 12-year-olds.

Research showed that health care provider recommendation is the single biggest predictor of vaccination. These clinicians—pediatricians, family physicians, nurses, and nurse practitioners—hold a trusted relationship of expertise with parents and could be empowered to make stronger, more confident recommendations for HPV vaccination. They could also be the catalyst to shift the conversation from sexual education to cancer prevention, to ease the concerns of parents who fear the vaccine’s connection to a STI and publicized adverse effects. These doctors could bring forth and affect the message right where the behavior happens—in their offices.

Hager Sharp reached clinicians with this messaging through partner and peer-to-peer clinician engagement, conferences, and a robust paid media campaign. By targeting health care providers, we were better able to reach and influence parents.

For a more in-depth look into the research-driven development and innovative implementation of this campaign, I highly recommend attending my colleagues’ presentation tomorrow at 12:20pm. You don’t want to miss it!
Through these examples, I hope to demonstrate the following...
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE RISKS?

- Start early and anticipate.
- Know your client.
- Know your audience.
- Know your messenger(s).
- Decide what “flaws” you’re willing to overlook and which are deal breakers.
- Think outside the box.
I'd like to end my presentation with my favorite messengers. Both of these women are actresses on my favorite TV shows. On the left is Kerry Washington, who stars as Olivia Pope, a powerful political fixer on *Scandal*. On the right is Mariska Hargitay, who stars as Olivia Benson, a fierce yet compassionate detective on *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*.

I admire these women for using their celebrity to bring awareness and promote behavior change to end violence against women. Kerry Washington is a spokesperson for the Purple Purse campaign, to help women leave abusive relationships by removing financial dependence as a barrier. Mariska Hargitay is a frequent spokesperson and advocate for sexual assault survivors, and even started her own foundation to support them. On and off screen these powerful women work to make sure women who feel powerless are given their power back.

The significance of these women, and all messengers, cannot be overstated. They help our audiences to see that if their favorite celebrities, or even trusted friends, can speak up about HIV prevention, speak out against domestic violence, and talk about cancer prevention, so can we.

As I continue to progress in my social marketing career, I want to create and work on the kinds of social marketing campaigns that inspire men and women, celebrity and common, to be messengers, to courageously and passionately combine their voices with our messages toward a world where we are all happy, healthy, and safe.

Thank you for your time and attention.
THANK YOU!