

Influential Women Showcases Sarah A. Velez, SHRM-SCP: Director of Learning and Career Pathways at Peckham, Inc.

LANSING, MI, UNITED STATES, June 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Advancing Inclusive Workforce Development Through Strategic Learning Design, Leadership Development, and People-Centered Organizational Transformation

Lansing, Michigan — Sarah A. Velez, SHRM-SCP, is a people-centered human resources and learning leader recognized for combining strategic vision with grounded, real-world leadership. She currently serves as Director of Learning and Career Pathways at Peckham, Inc., where she leads the development of inclusive, high-impact talent and training programs designed to support both organizational effectiveness and individual career mobility. As an Executive MBA candidate for the Class of 2027, she brings a forward-looking leadership perspective rooted in practical execution, workforce equity, and community impact.



Sarah's career spans human resources, organizational development, labor relations, and learning and development across higher education, nonprofit, and financial services environments. Before joining Peckham, she spent eight years at Lansing Community College as Human Resources Manager for Organizational Development and Labor Relations, where she supported more than 1,200 employees. In that role, she led major initiatives in performance management, diversity, equity and inclusion training, collective bargaining, leadership development, and Title IX compliance processes.

Earlier in her professional journey, Sarah held progressive learning and development roles at CASE Credit Union, where she designed award-recognized training programs and leadership pipelines. Her work in that environment focused on building structured development pathways

that strengthened employee engagement, performance, and long-term leadership capacity. Across all roles, she has consistently blended instructional design expertise with a deep understanding of organizational behavior and employee experience.

In her current role at Peckham, Sarah focuses on building systems that empower individuals to grow within their careers while aligning workforce development with organizational strategy. She is known for her ability to build trust across teams, challenge assumptions constructively, and help leaders communicate with clarity, confidence, and accountability. Her leadership style emphasizes transparency, courage, and connection—qualities she believes are essential to effective organizational culture.

Beyond her professional responsibilities, Sarah remains actively engaged in the human resources field. She serves as President-Elect of the Greater Lansing Society for Human Resource Management, where she contributes to advancing professional development and elevating HR practices across the region. She is also deeply committed to fostering workplaces where employees feel supported, empowered, and encouraged to reach their full potential.

Sarah attributes her success to never giving up. She reflects on early experiences in her career, including her time in the military, where she interviewed for opportunities alongside candidates who were often physically larger and stronger. Despite those challenges, she consistently focused on demonstrating perseverance, reliability, and advocacy for the people she led. She believes this commitment to persistence and service helped her earn opportunities she never initially expected and ultimately shaped the direction of her career.

For young women entering the human resources and leadership fields, Sarah emphasizes that there is no need to have a fully defined path early in life. She encourages embracing career development as a journey rather than a fixed destination. She highlights the importance of learning from failure, noting that setbacks—while difficult—offer valuable lessons that shape long-term growth and resilience.

Sarah also stresses the importance of gaining hands-on experience and being willing to step into opportunities even when they fall outside of one's comfort zone or formal preparation. In her view, volunteering for unfamiliar roles is a critical step in professional development because it builds adaptability, confidence, and real-world problem-solving skills.

Sarah identifies one of the most pressing challenges in today's broader professional landscape as economic instability and its impact on workforce planning, including layoffs and restructuring across major industries. She notes that financial uncertainty has made responsible resource management more important than ever, requiring leaders to be intentional, strategic, and proactive in their decision-making.

At the same time, she sees meaningful opportunity in times of change. Sarah believes disruption creates space for upskilling, leadership development, and organizational innovation. A key part

of her work involves serving as a bridge between employees and executive leadership by sharing frontline insights with the C-suite. She views this responsibility as essential to ensuring that decision-makers understand operational realities and can make informed, people-centered choices.

Sarah places strong emphasis on honesty and integrity as foundational values in both her professional and personal life. She believes trust is built through consistency, transparency, and clear communication, and she prioritizes ensuring that others can rely on her word. She also values humor as an important tool for connection, noting that maintaining perspective helps foster stronger relationships and healthier work environments.

Respect is another core principle in her leadership philosophy. Having worked in male-dominated environments, including early experiences in the technology sector, Sarah has witnessed firsthand the impact of dismissive attitudes toward women in the workplace. She strongly believes that respect must be non-negotiable in any professional setting and rejects the normalization of behavior that undermines dignity or inclusion.

Through her work at Peckham and her broader leadership in human resources, Sarah A. Velez continues to champion inclusive leadership, workforce development, and organizational cultures rooted in trust, growth, and accountability. Her career reflects a sustained commitment to empowering people, strengthening leaders, and building systems where individuals and organizations can thrive together.

Learn More about Sarah A. Velez:

Through her Influential Women profile: <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/Sarah-Velez>

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