

Influential Women Profiles: Dana Goodrum, Senior Consultant for Public Sector Strategy at Illuminative Strategies

SPRINGFIELD, IL, UNITED STATES, June 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Helping Government Agencies Modernize Systems, Improve Compliance, and Unlock Measurable Operational and Financial Impact

Springfield, Illinois — Dana Goodrum is a Senior Consultant specializing in public sector strategy and operational performance at Illuminative Strategies Inc., where she helps government agencies modernize complex systems, improve compliance, and drive measurable operational and financial outcomes.

With more than two decades of experience across local, state, nonprofit, and higher education sectors, she specializes in identifying inefficiencies, reducing administrative burden, and improving program performance and outcomes through data-driven strategy and practical implementation. Her work focuses on helping public agencies not only operate more efficiently, but deliver more effective and accountable services to the communities they serve.

A Different Kind of Public Sector Consultant

Dana Goodrum is not a traditional consultant. Her work is grounded in more than two decades of frontline government experience, giving her a practical understanding of how public systems actually function: where they stall, where they break down, and where the greatest opportunities for improvement are often overlooked.

Combined with a deeply analytical, data-driven approach, that experience allows her to deliver



more than recommendations. She develops frameworks, models, and process improvement strategies that translate into measurable gains in efficiency, accountability, and financial performance.

Dana's work has produced transformational outcomes, including projects with return on investment exceeding 500 percent, significantly accelerating multi-year program timelines, unlocking high-value savings opportunities through original analytical frameworks and models, and developing strategies that restore significant time and capacity to public-sector staff. These results reflect a consulting approach built on insight, execution, and an uncommon ability to connect data to operational reality.

What makes Dana different is not simply that she can diagnose complex problems—it is that she can design strategy-based solutions that work in real government environments. She brings the credibility of lived public-sector experience, the discipline of rigorous analysis, and a commitment to implementation that ensures her work delivers real and lasting value.

A Career Built at the Intersection of Strategy, Service, and Systems Change

Throughout her career, Dana has held leadership roles supporting economic development initiatives, rural broadband expansion, and statewide transportation programs. Her work has included contributions to Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) initiatives designed to expand opportunities for women- and minority-owned businesses, as well as policy development, compliance oversight, grants administration, and strategic program design.

This experience has provided her with a comprehensive understanding of how public systems operate and where inefficiencies, barriers, and compliance challenges impact outcomes.

In her current consulting role, Dana leverages this institutional knowledge alongside modern process improvement methodologies and emerging technologies to help agencies improve performance, strengthen compliance, and achieve measurable results. Her approach emphasizes practical, implementation-focused solutions that translate strategy into sustained operational impact. Her work often focuses on helping agencies identify opportunities to reduce administrative burden, improve program utilization, and strengthen alignment between policy intent and operational execution.

She is guided by a clear philosophy: government can be both efficient and deeply human when systems are intentionally designed with accountability, performance, and community impact in mind.

She holds both a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science with Capital Scholar Honors and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Illinois Springfield, along with a graduate certificate in nonprofit management. In addition to her consulting work, Dana is the author of the internationally distributed book *Open with Your Broken* and is widely recognized for her

leadership, youth advocacy, and commitment to community-centered service and empowerment.

A Mission Grounded in Purpose and Faith

For Dana, a life of impact was never a question of “if,” but “how.”

Her career has always been guided by the belief that good government can become great government when people are willing to challenge outdated processes and pursue meaningful change. Her values are deeply rooted in her faith, which continues to ground her in ethics, integrity, and accountability across every role she holds.

From supporting economic development initiatives and higher education programs to expanding broadband access across Illinois communities, Dana has worked within the public sector to strengthen it from the inside out. Her focus has remained consistent: improving systems in ways that directly benefit citizens while ensuring responsible stewardship of public resources.

Today, through her work with Illuminative Strategies, Dana partners with state agencies to re-engineer processes, reduce unnecessary administrative burden, improve operational efficiency, strengthen compliance, and enhance service delivery outcomes at scale. Her work reflects a core belief that operational excellence in government is not simply about reducing cost, but about increasing access, opportunity, and public trust.

Beyond the Office: Author, Advocate, and Mother

While Dana’s professional accomplishments are significant, she often describes her most important role as being a mother.

As a single mother of four, including a son she fostered from just three days old before finalizing his adoption, Dana’s life reflects a deep commitment to stability, care, and family. She is also a devoted mentor to her two Godchildren and a strong advocate for youth in foster care systems. These experiences shape her perspective, reinforcing her belief that effective public service is driven by well-designed processes that deliver meaningful outcomes for the people who depend on them.

In 2018, Dana published her first Christian book, *Open with Your Broken*, sharing a deeply personal message of faith that has since reached readers in more than 27 countries. Through writing and speaking, she has expanded her impact beyond government, connecting with audiences through themes of resilience, faith, and transformation.

Whether presenting at conferences, mentoring professionals, or collaborating with public agencies, Dana remains focused on one goal: making a measurable difference in people’s lives.

Outside of her professional and advocacy work, she prioritizes balance and restoration. She can often be found fishing or enjoying time with family, reflecting her belief that sustaining impact requires intentional space for renewal.

She is a lifelong champion for women and families and continues to demonstrate that it is possible to build a purpose-driven career while maintaining a grounded, values-centered life.

The Leadership Philosophy That Guides Her Work

One of the most defining moments in Dana's leadership development occurred early in her academic journey at the University of Illinois Springfield.

It was there that she discovered her passion for public service in an environment intentionally designed to provide meaningful opportunities while offering the support and stability to explore them without the risk of derailing future paths. That experience shaped not only her career trajectory, but her understanding of how strong systems and supportive structures enable individuals to grow, lead, and contribute with confidence.

In 2002, during her time at UIS, Dana attended a networking event where she met Karen Hasara, then serving her second term as Springfield's first female mayor after a career in the Illinois House and Senate. Dana asked what advice she would give to a young woman pursuing a career in public service.

Her response left a lasting impression:

"You have to have thick skin. People will criticize you more than your male counterparts simply because you're a woman. Be prepared for that, and know that their opinions do not define you—but your response to them certainly does. Choose your battles strategically. Maintain integrity, protect your character, and keep going. There are generations of women behind you who need your perseverance today."

That advice has shaped Dana's leadership philosophy throughout her career. She approaches challenges with intentionality rather than reaction, placing a strong emphasis on discernment, integrity, and strategic decision-making.

Today, Dana remains actively engaged with the University of Illinois Springfield as Vice Chair of the Alumni Professionals Networking Group, where she works to strengthen connections between the university and the Springfield community. In recognition of her continued service and leadership, she will be honored with the Loyalty Award for Exceptional Alumni Service at this year's Annual Alumni Gala in the Fall.

She encourages professionals entering public service, especially women, to build resilience as intentionally as they build technical skill. She emphasizes that not every challenge requires a

response, but every situation requires integrity. Long-term credibility, she believes, is established through consistent performance, sound judgment, and alignment with core values.

Advice for Women Entering Public Service

Dana's advice to women entering government and public-sector fields is grounded in experience: build resilience as intentionally as you build technical skill.

She acknowledges that women often face heightened scrutiny and criticism, at times disproportionate, and not always rooted in fairness. Her guidance is to prepare for that reality without allowing it to diminish purpose or undermine confidence.

In her view, professional opinions do not define capability; rather, how one responds to challenges ultimately shapes credibility and long-term impact. She emphasizes the importance of discernment: understanding when to engage, when to step back, and how to navigate conflict with integrity.

Most importantly, she encourages women to recognize the broader significance of their presence in the field. Leadership is not only about individual success, but it also influences culture, expectations, and opportunities for those women who follow.

Core Values: Impact, Faith, and Empowerment

At the foundation of Dana Goodrum's work is a singular guiding principle: meaningful impact.

Her leadership is deeply rooted in her faith in Jesus Christ, which serves as the foundation for her commitment to integrity, ethical decision-making, and servant leadership. This perspective shapes how she approaches her work, ensuring that accountability, humility, and service remain central to how she leads, advises, and delivers results.

Dana is deeply committed to helping government systems operate in ways that are structured, accountable, and effective in practice. Through her work with public agencies, she focuses on ensuring that policies, programs, and processes translate into measurable, sustainable outcomes that directly benefit the communities they are intended to serve.

Her approach is grounded in a strong sense of responsibility—both to the agencies she supports and to the public resources entrusted to them. This commitment to accountability and stewardship continues to shape how she engages with complex challenges and supports agencies in achieving meaningful results.

Equally important is her commitment to empowering others, particularly women. As a leader and a mother, Dana is intentional about demonstrating what is possible through consistency, integrity, and purpose-driven work. She believes that visibility matters—not only in what is

achieved, but in how it is achieved.

As long as her work continues to drive meaningful, measurable impact, Dana remains confident that she is aligned with her values and contributing to something greater than herself.

A Continuing Legacy in Public Service Innovation

Recognized for her influence in the public sector, Dana Goodrum continues to leverage her platform as a strategist, author, and speaker to drive innovation, strengthen organizational effectiveness, and promote sustainable systems change.

Her work reflects a lifelong commitment to reimagining how government can function—not only more efficiently, but more effectively and accountably in service to the public.

Through her consulting, writing, and advocacy, Dana remains focused on one central mission: helping public institutions strengthen performance, improve outcomes, and better serve the communities that depend on them.

Learn More about Dana Goodrum:

Through her Influential Women profile: <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/Dana-Goodrum>

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