

A Chicago native, Valerie was born on the west side where she lived until she was 10, whereupon she moved to Oak Park. Valerie attended St. Giles and Trinity High School. She attended Triton College and received her BA and MA in English from Northeastern Illinois University, graduating with honors.

Valerie began her academic career as an Instructor at Sawyer Business School in Oak Park, where she was quickly promoted to Educational Director. Valerie moved on to teach at DeVry Institute of Technology where she worked in marketing as well and later developed a Writing Lab for ESL students. She also served as adjunct faculty at Triton College for over 12 years and as an Academic Specialist at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Valerie was awarded a fellowship from the US Department of Education to complete her doctorate at the University of Illinois at Chicago and received her Ph D in Public Policy Analysis, specializing in quantitative statistics and evaluation.

As a consultant since 1997, Valerie has worked with many not-for-profits, among them United Way of Suburban Chicago and United Way of Metropolitan Chicago, assisting them with their training materials for volunteers and Executive Directors. In addition, she has also conducted focus groups, strategic planning and outcomes evaluation for various not-for-profits and maintains a continuing relationship with the University of Illinois Literacy Center as their evaluation specialist.

Valerie has developed curriculum, training materials, and presentations for staff, volunteers and executives on a multitude of topics and is considered to be a riveting speaker and presenter.

She lives in Oak Park with her husband, twin daughters and her fox terrier, Sox.