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Until the fall of 2010, Powell served as USC's Vice Provost for Globalization, working with faculty and deans to advance the university's global initiatives, expand USC's international presence, increase USC's leadership role in the Association of Pacific Rim Universities, and promoting the university throughout the world.

Powell previously served as Director of the USC Integrated Media Systems Center, the U.S. National Science Foundation's Engineering Research Center for multimedia, and before that spent several years as Vice President for Technology Programs at the Freedom Forum and Newseum, creating training programs and forums on digital media in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the United States for journalists, media managers, educators and policy makers.

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