

MICHELLE AKAPNITIS

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EXPERIENCE

Fundraising Consultant, Grapevine Giving Foundation

New York City | Present

- Leading fundraising initiative and infrastructure build for early-stage foundation and social impact start-up to reach \$5M goal.

Vice President of Development, Partnership Schools

Director of Advancement – Strategy and Operations (October 2021– November 2022)

New York City | (October 2021 – February 2023)

Partnership Schools (PS) is a network of eleven urban Catholic schools serving over 3,300 students in New York and Cleveland. PS's mission is to develop outstanding elementary schools that provide students from underserved communities with the academic preparation, values, and skills they need to break the cycle of poverty and lead productive lives. As the VP of Development, I built the team systems and infrastructure needed to exceed our FY22 goal, hired the team to execute our fundraising strategy and led the team to success.

- Developed and implemented new systems and operations for Advancement team that led to exceeding \$12.5M goal (*exceeded goal by \$250,000 – most raised in PS history*)
 - New systems include: *CEO meeting preparation, Tracking and managing a pipeline 1000+ donors with capacity to give 5 to 8-figure gifts, Donor research, Gift entry, Special project-Project management, Special event creation and RSVP tracking*
- Integrated **CCS Fundraising's Moves Management** system into team's daily operations
- Hired and lead a development team of 6 team members (*created roles for (2) Development associates, Special Assistant to the CEO, institutional giving manager, Special Events Coordinator, Development Intern.*) *Manager of:*
 - *Institutional giving manager – \$5M Institutional goal*
 - *Development Associate – \$3M New and Lapsed donors' goal, donor research and all development communication projects*
 - *Special Events Coordinator – 20+ yearly cultivation/fundraising events*
- Serve as special advisor to the CEO, ensuring she is prepared for 5-8 weekly donor meetings, manage pipeline, and hosts 4 weekly fundraising meetings for C-level executives.
- Provided leadership support and training for the new incoming Chief Development Officer
- Manage the entire donor pipeline (1000+ constituents) through *Moves Management*, totaling \$30M+
- Serve as Board Liaison by conducting monthly meetings with Trustees, creating, and encouraging strategic fundraising support, and cultivating for increased gifts in the 5-7 figure range
- Led the Governance and Development Committee (*made up of 9 Trustees*)

Director of Development, Dancers' Workshop

Jackson Hole, WY | November 2020 – October 2021

Dancers' Workshop (DW) is Jackson Hole's premiere dance organization that presents world-renown dance companies (*New York City Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Batsheva*, etc.) and educates Jackson Hole's youth through a robust dance school with pre-K to pre-professional dance and movement classes.

- Created and implemented a strategic plan to lead the Executive Director, Artistic Director, and Development team to reach the organizational fundraising goal of \$1.5MM. This includes managing the organization's pipeline of 200+ donors capable of giving \$5,000-\$100,000.
- Exceeded 2021 fundraising goal by 40% (an increase of \$400,000 since 2020 and 2019)
- Developed a new fundraising strategy for the 2021 presenting season after COVID prevented the selling of performance tickets at full capacity.
 - *Resulted in: 16% increase in lapsed donors, 19% increase in new donors*
- Pioneered a new corporate sponsorship program that resulted in 13 new corporate sponsorship partners (\$91,500 in new gifts for FY21)

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Fine Art

Columbia College Chicago
Chicago, IL
2007 – 2011

SKILLS

Professional

- CRM Management (*Salesforce and Blackbaud*)
- Team development and management
- Fundraising strategy development
- Strategic planning
- Major gift fundraising
- Grant writing
- Event planning
- Individual and Institutional research
- Organization, project, and time management

ABOUT

Hobbies

- Mountain biking
- Road Cycling
- Camping
- Mentoring underserved youth
- Hiking
- International travel
- Meditation
- Cross-country Skiing

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EXPERIENCE

Director of Development, Dancers' Workshop (*continued*)

- Oversee, collaborate, and often create development related marketing materials including eblasts (4,000 constituents), social media, external mailings (letters, invitations, etc.).
- Successfully conceptualized, planned, and executed all fundraising special events including: 200+ person gala, pre and post-performance receptions (4), Major donor cultivation dinners (3), Pop-up performance events (2), cocktail receptions, and other ad hoc events.

Manager of Advancement, Partnership Schools (*continued*)

New York City | March 2019 – January 2021

- Created the roles of the Advancement Associate, Special Events Coordinator, and Development Assistant to later recruit, train and manage those employees.
- Provided team management to help increase team annual fundraising goal by 9% in FY20 (\$10MM to \$10.98MM) -- 5%+ YOY (received \$1.3MM in new gifts from 220 donors—a 30% increase from FY19).
- Navigated fundraising initiatives toward our national expansion to Cleveland, including Cleveland donor research and cultivation, local event planning, and the fundraising of our initial launch goal of \$3MM (raised in 3 months) – *Our national expansion included taking over the management of two Cleveland K-8 Schools increasing the organization from 7 to 9 schools.*
- Oversaw logistics for special fundraising events, including two fundraising events, cultivation dinners and breakfasts, school tours (monthly), and other ad hoc dinners, meetings, and cocktail parties. Worked on four virtual campaigns from March 2020 through October 2020 instead of formal events that totaled \$2MM+ toward GOS in new cash gifts.
- Oversaw donor and prospect research, managed data entry, and implemented donor cultivation strategy, which led to a pipeline of over \$30MM in potential new gifts.
- Develop and implement Salesforce and data entry systems (including *building/exporting reports, donor data entry, campaign and RSVP tracking, dashboard building and management, creating custom fields and data points, gift entry, and logging all donor correspondence*).

Coordinator, Fundraising and Special Events, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts

New York City | March 2018 – March 2019

Key team member in various special fundraising events that exceeded a team-wide annual goal of \$14M, including six yearly galas, ten cultivation dinners, pre/post performance dinners, private in-home performances, and cocktail events.

- Successfully managed quarterly cultivation donor dinners at budget while managing vendors that included Front of House, caterer, décor/designer, and security, as well as the solicitation of donors, honoree research, development of budgets, venue selection, and design, and RSVP tracking.
- Collaborated with Individual Giving, Corporate Sponsorship, and Institutional Giving teams within the Development Department to create prospect lists for fundraising events and donor memberships.

Assistant to the Chief Advancement Officer, American Ballet Theatre

New York City | October 2016 – March 2018

Assisted the Chief Advancement Officer in reaching the \$23MM annual fundraising goal.

- Served as department liaison for ABT Board of Trustees and established strong personal relationships for donor cultivation and major gifts.
- Responsible for hiring, training, and mentoring development department interns.
- Coordinated and hosted cultivation events such as private rehearsal viewings, dinners, cocktail parties, and backstage tours for Trustees, Honorary Trustees, prospects, and other VIP guests.