

KAREN GAHL-MILLS

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EDUCATION

University of Chicago Booth School of Business

Master of Business Administration, 2003

DePaul University

Bachelor of Music with Elective Studies in Business, 1999

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Indiana University, Master of Arts Administration Program, O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs

Visiting Clinical Associate Professor, August 2019 to present

Graduate Courses taught:

Capstone Seminar in Arts Administration, Fall 2019 to present

Public Policy and the Arts, Fall 2019 to present

Fund Development for Nonprofits, Fall 2014 to present

Governance and Leadership Seminar, Spring 2018

Financial Management for Nonprofits, Fall 2016

University of Chicago, Master of Public Policy Program, Harris Public Policy

Lecturer: *Arts, Culture & Policy*, Fall 2016 to present

Lecturer: *Nonprofit Policy Lab*, Spring 2019 to present

Northwestern University, Master of Science: Leadership in Creative Enterprises Program, School of Communications

Lecturer: *Revenue Strategies for Creative Enterprises*, Winter 2019

Case Western Reserve University, Mandel School for Applied Social Sciences

Co-Instructor: *Nonprofit Revenue Planning and Development*, in person and online, summer 2016

PRESENTATIONS

Stanford University Nonprofit Management Institute , "Boards and Uncertainty"	2019
University of Chicago , "Leading Change in the Social Sector: The Art of Persuasion" Harris Public Policy	2019
University of Chicago , "US & China: A Symposium on Communities, Cultural Participation and Policy", Beijing	2018
Chicago Booth Education Management Conference "Creating Cultural Capital Through Arts Education"	2018
The Boston Foundation "The Arts as a Public Good"	2017
The Foundation Center / Danish Ministry of Culture "The Future of Arts Funding"	2017
Grantmakers in the Arts national conference "Obtaining and Maintaining Dedicated Public Support"	2016
ArtsSpeak, Republican National Convention (http://www.artsactionfund.org/videos/entry/artsspeak_at_the_rnc_2016)	2016
Indiana University Symposium : "A Funder's Perspective on Arts and Community Development"	2015
Indiana Arts Commission keynote address: "Arts, Culture and Community Engagement"	2014
Americans for the Arts national conference: "Reaching Past Traditional Arts Nonprofits to Increase Impact"	2014
CEOs for Cities national conference: "Arts, Culture & Community Development – A Story from Cleveland"	2013
University of Chicago Cultural Policy Center: "Arts, Culture & Civic Engagement – A Dialog"	2013
League of American Orchestras national conference: "Arts, Culture and Public Value"	2013
The City Club of Cleveland : "The State of Our Arts" (www.youtube.com/watch?v=8M90WovdVx0)	2011
PBS : "Artistic Choice" (www.ideastream.org/programs/artistic)	2011

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & HONORS

Indiana University, Excellence in Teaching Award, 2018
Crain's "Who's Who in Northeast Ohio," 2017
Crain's "Women of Note," 2016
Leadership Cleveland Class of 2011
Executive Leadership Program, League of American Orchestras, 2007-2008
"40 Under 40", Business Council of Westchester, 2005

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, Cleveland, OH
CEO & Executive Director, 2010-2018

Led one of the largest local grantmakers for arts and culture in the nation, which has invested \$170 million in 350+ arts and cultural organizations since its creation in 2007. As its second chief executive, provided the vision for reimagining this local arts agency's mission and purpose, positioning it at the intersection of arts, culture, and community and leveraging \$15 million in annual grants to create demonstrable public benefits. Built the administrative team and established strong relationships with political, civic, and business leaders to ensure the organization's long-term success.

Adaptive Leadership

- ▶ **Led a comprehensive organizational planning process** that evaluated CAC's past 10 years of grantmaking, operations, and outcomes, conducted extensive field research to bring community perspectives to the agency, and identified future opportunities to fuel cultural advancement and to improve equity. The resulting roadmap set a course for the organization's next ten years of work. www.cacgrants.org/future
- ▶ **Collaborated with key stakeholders to clarify the mission and articulate a vision** that put communities and residents at the epicenter of every grant made through the organization and positioned CAC as a leader for prioritizing the public value of grants made with public funds.

Program Innovation and Change Management

- ▶ **Led the refinement and expansion of grant programs** to ensure alignment with mission, vision, and values. Expanded the number of funded organizations—by more than 200%—with geographic reach to nearly every community in the county.
- ▶ **Launched innovative new programs and services**, including a crowdsourced grant program funding community-generated ideas, a community partnership model for including arts and culture organizations in key community events, such as the 2016 Republican National Convention, and a partnership with the Nonprofit Finance Fund designed to help build the financial literacy and strength of partner organizations.
- ▶ **Drove the organization's response to issues of equity.** Ensured that a public agency operated with an awareness of the legacies of privilege and power that have effects on opportunity, access, and resources.

Relationship Cultivation and Management

- ▶ **Fostered collaborative, cohesive partnerships and mutually beneficial alliances** by nurturing relationships with board members, staff, community leaders, nonprofit managers, funders, and area residents. Leveraged community relationships to ensure success in the Issue 8 levy campaign.

Leading and Nurturing Teams

- ▶ **Intentionally crafted and led CAC's administrative team**, ensuring alignment with core priorities, attention to equity, diversity and inclusion, and creating learning and growth opportunities for all team members.

Fiscal Management

- ▶ **Improved investment returns by more than 50%**, adjusting strategies advantageously as chief fiscal officer of the agency, overseeing budget allocation process, and overseeing the annual audit. CAC has received the highest rating possible from the Auditor of State, its auditor of record, since 2007.

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Syracuse Symphony Orchestra, Syracuse, NY
President & Executive Director, 2006-2010

Stepped into an organization realizing significant environmental and operational challenges, including a 5%+ deficit on a \$7 million budget, continued erosion of the donor pool, dwindling audiences, and a lack of alignment and communication across the enterprise. Assumed role as Chief Executive Officer of this professional, regional symphony orchestra and championed a process of organizational renewal by building a collaborative culture across an administrative staff of 25, a board of 60, and an artistic team of 80, including 65 members of a collective bargaining unit.

Mission, Vision & Values

- ▶ **Secured organization-wide adoption of a set of guiding principles**—for the first time in the organization’s history—aligning the mission and vision of all stakeholders, rearticulating key values, and establishing short- and long-term objectives.

Fundraising & Development

- ▶ **Formulated strategies to achieve \$4.5 million annual fundraising goal**, identifying and cultivating relationships with community leaders, government funders, and donor prospects to secure major gifts (\$100,000 to \$1 million). Identified and crafted special purpose fundraising campaigns, resulting in \$2 million of new and increased gifts to the organization.

Revenue Generation

- ▶ **Leveraged opportunities to position the orchestra as the community’s premier arts institution**, fueling a 40% audience increase and more importantly, the achievement of the \$2.5 million annual earned income target.

Strategic Partnerships

- ▶ **Created an advocacy partnership with other regional orchestras** to join together in support of key state-level issues, identifying, approaching, and onboarding alliances to lobby at the local, state, and national levels.

Board Governance

- ▶ **Served as President of the 60-member Board of Directors**; developed potential candidates for board service; implemented consent agendas and issue-based board discussions; and assisted in accomplishing generative, policy-based work.

Westchester Philharmonic, White Plains, NY
Executive Director, 2003-2006

Onboarded as the Director of Development and Strategic Planning but, within 30 days—as a result of a major organizational crisis—assumed the key leadership role and provided mission-critical financial, operational, and cultural leadership. Directed a team of 6, and managed an annual operating budget of \$1.3M, for this per-service professional symphony orchestra serving the suburbs of New York City.

Turnaround Leadership

- ▶ **Provided the transformational leadership critical to turning around the organization**, addressing significant budget deficits, thwarting audience shrinkage, and overcoming liquidity crisis caused, in part, through damaged donor relations.

Donor Cultivation

- ▶ **Reengaged and rekindled relationships with inactive donors**, driving significant annual revenue increases, positioning the organization for sustainability, and cultivating the donor base key to audience and community engagement.

Artistic Innovation

- ▶ **Supervised the commissioning of *The Yellow Wind***, a new work for orchestra by composer Tamar Muskal which provided a musical response to the ongoing Israeli / Palestinian conflict; the work met with critical and community acclaim.

The Rhythm Café, Chicago, IL
Managing Director, 1999-2002

Directed daily operations of an award-winning music production company.

Ravinia Festival Association, Highland Park, IL
Development Manager, Corporate Sponsorships, 1998-1999

Created and implemented a plan to attract and secure \$2 million+ in corporate gifts and sponsorships, surpassing goals by 11%.

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Early Career, Chicago and Los Angeles

From 1990-1998, I worked as a production coordinator, production manager and business manager in film and television production. I worked with award-winning cinematographer Peter Smillie and editor Roger Harrison on advertising projects for leading global brands, including McDonald's, Philip Morris, United Airlines, General Motors, Nike, and Proctor & Gamble through advertising agencies Leo Burnett Worldwide, Chiat/Day, Wieden & Kennedy, DMB&B, and Euro RSCG / Havas.