

Professional Summary

Versatile nonprofit professional with staff and volunteer background in arts and education agencies, museums, libraries, private foundations, and the corporate technology sector. Formal education includes graduate studies at UNC and a Duke University Certificate in Nonprofit Management. Extensive experience in proposal writing, document editing event and meeting planning, project and financial management, fundraising, grants management, and media relations. Conscientious team-player with ability to manage and prioritize multiple projects and meet deadlines.

Professional Experience

North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, Raleigh.

Development Officer, March 2012-Present.

- Member of development team that completed final stages of \$56 million capital campaign and managed activities for Nature Research Center 2012 grand opening events. Wrote sponsorship proposals, major gifts acknowledgement letters, and corporate fundraising appeals; coordinated special events.
- Coordinated Brimley membership and donor society naming opportunities for Bridge Across Time.
- Manage portfolio of individual and corporate major gifts.
- Organized events including the Brimley Bash, Director's brunch, and campaign events.
- Conduct prospect research and wealth screening using Blackbaud Altru
- Develop materials for sponsorships and in-kind donations; manage benefits fulfillment.
- Organize special projects like corporate donor events and annual fundraising campaigns.
- Write newsletter and social media copy and content for development projects.
- Compose major gifts donation acknowledgments.
- Serve as active member of Museum's Greener Futures Initiatives Committee.

Artsposure and First Night Raleigh.

Volunteer accounting and artist market staff member, 1997 – Present

- Serve as principal liaison and coordinator of merit awards selection process at Artsposure/The Raleigh Arts Festival each May, which encompasses working with three visual art experts to choose six award winners from among 175 pre-juried arts and crafts exhibitors and to select another eight award winners from among K-12 student art competition entries.
- Support financial management of First Night Raleigh on New Year's Eve in various capacities, including organizing and managing on-site admission button sales activities, roving day-of-event button sales on the festival site, and night-of accounting functions. Promote VIP relations at sponsor events.
- Provide production and program assistance on an ad hoc basis.

Wade Edwards Foundation and Lucius Wade Edwards Private Foundation, Raleigh.

Executive Director, June 2000-March 2012.

- Managed administrative, financial, communication, and marketing functions of the organization, including fundraising, public relations, external marketing materials, and in-house newsletter.
- Led community engagement efforts by persuasively cultivating constituent relationships with parents, educators, students, businesses, print and broadcast media, and peer nonprofit organizations through outreach programs and communications and marketing initiatives. Launched successful teen projects including career forums, a youth-senior citizen technology program, and a student advisory board.
- Cultivated positive relationships with 14-member board of directors and other constituents, (parents, educators, and students), as well as donors, businesses, and peer nonprofit organizations.
- Facilitated collaborative funding and program efforts and alliances with other nonprofits, e.g., Raleigh Housing Authority and Durham's Shodor Foundation.
- Proactively sought opportunities for positive media coverage to strengthen support and awareness among key audiences, including students, parents, school administrators, teachers, elected officials, civic and community leaders, beneficiary organizations, other grant making agencies, and businesses.
- Created personnel policies; managed \$300,000 operating budget, financial audits, and tax returns.
- Wrote proposals for corporate and foundation grants and managed stewardship and grant reporting.

Kids Voting North Carolina/Wake County, Raleigh.***Executive Director, 1997-2000.***

- Directed all aspects of award-winning, nonprofit, nonpartisan civic education project.
- Organized student voting for five elections, overseeing and training 700-1,300 volunteers at up to 148 polling sites scattered across Wake County.
- Successfully managed communications and media relations, including TV appearances and print media interviews, presentations to community groups and prospective donors.
- Wrote copy for brochures, speeches, media releases, proposals, web site, newsletter, teacher handbook, and volunteer training materials; established student board.
- Worked with 40-member board of directors and eight volunteer committees to raise money for and achieve program objectives. Organized candidate forums, annual meetings, and other events.
- Raised cash and inking donations for and managed \$200,000 budget.

Wake Education Partnership, Raleigh.***Director of Initiatives and Partnerships, 1994-1997.***

- Managed grant programs and annual distribution of \$300,000 to teachers and nonprofit agencies. Directed work of numerous grant committees, including managing and presenting financial data.
- Increased application numbers and quality by aggressively marketing availability of teacher grants, teacher excellence awards, and student scholarships and through proposal writing workshops for educators.
- Facilitated work of a 25-member task force chaired by Dr. John Boling of SAS that studied technology implementation in Wake County public schools. Edited a comprehensive task force report that became a component of the school district's Instructional Technology Plan; worked with task force members to develop and market a symposium at SAS Institute to report results to community.
- Developed corporate and foundation grant proposals to support programs I managed.
- Created grant recipient events at Wake County venues (NCMA, Executive Mansion).
- Managed communications efforts for programs; participated in broadcast and print media interviews.

United Arts Council of Greensboro.***Office Manager, 1988-1994.***

- Introduced cost-saving automated billing system while implementing direct mail solicitation programs of \$600,000 annual united arts campaign and \$4.9 million capital fund drive.
- Organized direct mail solicitation programs, annual phonathon, and volunteer events for the annual and capital campaigns.
- Produced text and statistics for proposals; drafted fundraising letters for campaign leadership.
- Managed donor cultivation and recognition activities, including overseeing installation of "Name Your Brick" donor recognition wall.
- Supervised professional support staff and instituted volunteer support staff program, overseeing numerous volunteers, student interns, and event workers.
- Supported 48-member board of directors, including composing audited meeting minutes.

Related Administrative and Part-Time Positions.

- Circulation and acquisition positions with Greensboro Public Library, UNCG Jackson Library, and UNC-CH Greenlaw Hall English Department Library.
- Administrative assistant at UNC-CH Carolina Annual Giving.
- Greensboro Historical Museum docent.
- Corporate administrative/executive assistant positions with Data General and Bankers and Shippers Insurance that included responsibility for managing hardware and software contracts, writing correspondence, producing direct mail solicitations, managing computer services, and supervising interns.

Education and Professional Development

UNCG. Bachelor of Arts. English major, History minor, cum laude graduate.

UNC-Chapel Hill. Completed all coursework for Master of Arts in English.

Duke University Continuing Education. Nonprofit Management Certificate, 50 hours.

Numerous conferences, classes, and seminars in marketing, fundraising, proposal writing, volunteer management, group facilitation, event management, and public education.

Center for Creative Leadership Fundamentals certificate 2017.

NC State Social Media Management certificate 2017.

Selected Community Involvement

Salon Raleigh: Manage membership list of 450, recruit hosts and cohosts, design invitations, and juggle the details to ensure successful networking events for women's local professional organization. 2004-Present.

United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County grants selection panels. 1995-1997.

North Carolina Teaching Fellows Interview Selection Committee. 1995-2000.

Preservation NC: Member of Raleigh Advisory Board. 2008-2010.

Raleigh Community Advisory Committee active participant, including nominating and presenting awards at annual Raleigh Neighborhood Awards and Five Points CAC Leadership Team member.

Local, State, and National Political Campaigns: Campaign committee member; canvassing and GOTV activities.

Member of two campaign cabinets for winning city council. Campaign activities for Presidential and Congressional candidates in NC and SC. 1990-2010.

Technical Proficiencies

Microsoft Office Suite software, including Word, PowerPoint, Publisher, Outlook, Excel.

Blackbaud Raiser's Edge, Altru, and WealthPoint (wealth management) donor software.

Web-based social media and productivity tools such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter plus invitation and survey web sites like Evite, Punchbowl, and SurveyMonkey.

Google Drive.

Professional References

List available on request.

Sample recommendations at www.linkedin.com/in/sarahlowder

Writing Samples: <http://sarahlowder.writersresidence.com/samples>