

JOSHUA KNUDSON

NON-PROFIT EXECUTIVE | ARTS AND ACADEMIA

Leads strategy for external relations, creates and executes multi-million-dollar fundraising campaigns, strengthens brand, secures significant government support, and forges deep, mutually beneficial community partnerships. With a life-long connection to the performing arts, professional acting and directing credits, publication of primary research on the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's advancement model. Adept in conflict management, leading with candor, kindness, curiosity, creativity and caring to unlock potential in others. Key strengths include:

- Executive leadership in complex non-profit and higher education organizations
- Strategic planning and enterprise-level change management
- Multi-million-dollar fundraising and comprehensive campaign leadership
- Board governance, relations, and volunteer leadership development
- Government relations and public funding strategy
- Financial stewardship, budget restructuring, and revenue diversification
- Community partnership building and external stakeholder engagement
- Brand strategy, organizational positioning, and reputation management
- Integrated advancement across development, marketing, and communications
- Team leadership grounded in coaching, empathy, and accountability
- Conflict management, mediation, and values-based leadership
- Arts and cultural leadership informed by lived creative practice

EXPERIENCE

Tacoma Arts Live | Tacoma, WA

May 2023 – Dec 2025

Largest and longest standing arts organization between Seattle and Portland, producing and presenting 200 amazing events annually for audiences in the South Puget Sound. Owner of the historic Tacoma Armory, fueling the regional creative economy through a \$2.1M federal grant, and delivering arts education programs to 9 school districts and 30,000 students.

CEO, Management & Operations

Nov 2024 – Dec 2025

- **Management & Leadership:** co-Led executive team and 13 FT and 13 PT staff through a period of significant change and financial challenge.
- **Board Management:** Coordinated all board activities, and managed significant cultural changes in board responsibility and engagement.
- **Facilities & Operations:** Transitioned operations and programming to a non-traditional performing arts venue in the Tacoma Armory, resulting in expansion of programming, new audiences, and creative innovation; managed ownership of a \$7M historic asset, its tenants, and contractors.
- **Budget:** Oversaw \$4.5M organizational budget; reduced staff and operations costs by 50% in response to shifting mission and business environment.
- **Change Management:** Triaged organization under challenging financial circumstances; restructured budget, system, and related staffing, extending services for an additional year.
- **Revenue Generation:** Improved fundraising outcomes for 2025 annual gala, increasing net revenue 250%, identified and closed \$300K low interest working capital from City of Tacoma.
- **Partnership Creation:** Identified and engaged in new fiscally beneficial partnerships, resulting in over \$100K in additional net revenue.
- **Creative Production:** Developed new programming, suited to the Tacoma Armory; launched and provided direction for *Undervover*, a new works series in partnership with the Northwest Playwrights Alliance, funded entirely through a new grant.

Chief Advancement Officer

May 2023 – November 2024

- **Management & Leadership** Served as member of CEO's Executive Team, during a time of unprecedented financial strain; converted the budget from 30% of budget being gift and grant supported to 70% of budget.
- **Reorganization:** Integrated all development, marketing, PR, and frontline sales functions on the team, a collaborative

advancement umbrella; restructured and onboarded an entirely new development team.

- **Development:** Revamped annual fundraising gala, reducing costs by half while increasing net revenue by 10%; published case for support leading to increased revenue from individuals, organizations, and government; adopted and launched new CRM.
- **Marketing:** Launched new staffing strategy for Marketing, leveraging outside contractors and emphasizing digital marketing and social platforms; refreshed creative strategy for Tacoma Arts Live brand assets and platforms; reduced direct staffing costs while increasing audience and visibility.
- **Creative Production:** Directed 2 plays for TAL's professional theater program, Theater Northwest, inaugurating each of the performance spaces with their first live theater productions; served as member of advisory council on Theater Northwest play selection and season development.

Advancement Enterprises | Tacoma, WA

Feb 2022 – Present

Executive consultancy with expertise in strategically integrating development, marketing, communications, and external relations.

Consultant and Owner

- **Launch:** Started up consulting practice, focusing on brand transition and stakeholder communications, evaluating partnership effectiveness, and managing major organizational shifts and underperforming revenues.
- **Client Development:** Cultivated new clients including: The Foundation for Tacoma Students, Tacoma Public Schools, and Tacoma Arts Live.

University of Washington | Seattle, WA

Jan 2009 – Jan 2022

Public research university ranked #2 in the country and #8 in the world.

Office of the VP Advancement & President, UW Foundation | Seattle, WA

Raised \$6.3B for the UW system of campuses in the Boundless Campaign.

Senior Philanthropic Counsel

Sep 2021 – Jan 2022

- **Campaign Planning:** Provided counsel to the VP/Foundation President on development of inclusive philanthropic models and culture.

University of Washington Tacoma | Tacoma, WA

Urban-serving campus of the University of Washington, founded in 1990 and ranked #1 for value and social mobility in the State of Washington, serving a majority first-generation student body.

Vice Chancellor for Advancement

Jan 2009 – Sep 2021

- **Leadership:** Served as Chief Advancement Officer for UW Tacoma campus-wide advancement efforts, which include development, public relations, strategic communications, alumni relations, special events, and community relations.
- **Planned and Executed Campaign:** Led campus portion of \$6.2B comprehensive UW *Be Boundless Campaign*; Highlights (2010-2020):
 - Raised \$55.78M, 124% of goal.
 - Secured largest campaign gift of \$8M by a family.
 - Increased the number of \$1M donors from the prior campaign, 9→21.
 - Closed real estate gifts valued at over \$11M.
 - Increased donors by 105% over prior UW Tacoma capital campaign
- **Volunteer Management:** collaborated and partnered with campaign leadership team of 12 volunteers creating strategies and soliciting gifts.
- **Managed Staff:** Advancement team of 21; created management strategies, systems and metrics better serving campus priorities and driving outcomes; created professional development opportunities for advancement staff and campus that enhanced capacity in conflict management, empathetic listening, and cultural curiosity.
- **Budget:** Oversaw and approved Advancement budget
- **Advisory:** Served the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, and academic leadership in all matters related to external communication, public relations goals, and strategies.
- **Spearhead Communication:** Created shared messaging and crisis communications response; engineered and evaluated all external communication functions strategies, increasing visibility and enhancing reputation.
- **Partnership Development:** Engaged directly in critical community partnerships geared towards mutual capacity building, including the YMCA, Tacoma Children's Museum, Art Museums, and the City of Tacoma.
- **Service:** Represented UW Tacoma on key non-profit boards in the community, on campus, and the UW Public Art Commission.
- **Board Management and Consultation:** Advised Chancellor and campus leadership on best practices for managing their respective boards and volunteers.
- **Capital Projects:** Represented Chancellor on real estate development strategies for campus; raised critical capital for the creation of Milgard Hall; served on related committees.

- **Events:** Managed centralized events unit producing high-quality campus events.

College of Santa Fe | Santa Fe, NM

May 2008 – Jan 2009

Private arts college in the heart of Santa Fe, the oldest institution of higher education in the State, founded by the Christian Brothers and transferred during the 2009 recession to Laureate Education, Inc.

Vice President, Development & Alumni Relations

- **Leadership:** Served as Chief Development Officer for College of Santa Fe; member of President's Cabinet and Leadership Team.
- **Change Management and Communication:** Assisted in strategic transition of college and acquisition by Laureate Education Inc.; Lead alumni communications; managed staff restructuring and downsizing; consulted with State Department of Higher Education regarding College/community programs.
- **Management:** Supervised development team of 6 staff, helping navigate the transformation of the college into a for-profit institution and its impact on staff.
- **Development:** Cultivated and solicited \$100K and above prospects; executed more aggressive annual appeal.
- **Board Management:** Provided leadership for Board Committees (Development Committee, Leadership Gifts Committee, Events Committee); created Board of Trustee appeal and coordinated face-to-face solicitations with the Chair of the Board.
- **Budget:** Oversaw and approved Development and Alumni budget.

Washington State University, College of Liberal Arts | Pullman, WA

Jun 2004 – Apr 2008

Washington State's public land grant university, and their liberal arts college known for pre-eminent sociology research and home to the Edward R. Murrow School of Communications.

Senior Director of Development & Alumni Relations

- **Leadership and Management:** Served as Chief Development Officer for the College of Liberal Arts; member of Dean's leadership team. Supervised Development Office team of 4.
- **Campaign Development** Planned/Implemented \$40M Campaign Plan.
- **External Relations** Coordinated Dean/Associate Dean trips to Washington D.C. and related contacts.
- **Budget:** Managed development budget.
- **Development:** Cultivated relationships with top prospects/designed strategies; managed Dean's development activities; engaged CLA volunteer leadership in development activities and strategic planning.
- **Gift Highlights:**
 - \$3M Endowed Chair, first in CLA, and largest in University's history
 - \$2M bequest for communication endowments
 - \$1.5M charitable remainder trust for music scholarships
 - \$5M bequest for a communication endowment
 - \$1M Social Entrepreneurship Fund
 - \$150K & \$6M trust beneficiary for a dean's office unrestricted endowment
- **Events:** Tested and established development events in key markets at opportune moments.

Oregon State University Foundation College of Liberal Arts | Corvallis, OR

Jul 2000 – Jun 2004

Director of Development, College of Liberal Arts

Arizona State University | Tempe, AZ

Jul 1996 – Jul 2000

Director of Annual Programs, College of Business

Assistant Development Officer, Foundation Campaign

Program Coordinator to the COO & Campaign Director

U.S. Concepts Marketing Firm | NYC, NY

Sep 1996-Jun 1997

Marketing Manager, Phoenix Rep

Waters & Nicolosi Agency | NYC, NY

Jan 1993 – Sept 1996

AEA Actor, Theater and Voice Over

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Arizona State University | Tempe, AZ
Master of Arts, Theater
Bachelor of Fine Arts, Theater

American Leadership Forum, Senior Fellow
Pierce County Chapter

Birankai North America, Aikido Shodan Rank
Tacoma Aikikai | Tacoma, WA

Basic Mediation Certificate
Pierce County Center for Dialog and Resolution | Tacoma, WA

PUBLICATION

The Oregon Shakespeare Festival: A History and an Analysis of a Growth Oriented Model for Institutional Advancement

LAP: Lambert Academic Publishing—2010

PAST BOARD SERVICE

Foundation for Tacoma Students | Board Executive Committee

South Sound Together

Tacoma Pierce County Chamber

Tacoma Urban League