

CHERIE PAUST SWENSON

Contact Information

[REDACTED] Milwaukee,
[REDACTED]
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Profile

Highly capable non-profit leader experienced in executive-level oversight, fundraising, board development, leadership, strategic planning and execution, campaign management, marketing and advocacy.

Skills

Stakeholder Engagement
Grants Development and Management
Relationship Building
Partnership Alignment
Major, Planned and Annual Giving
Case Articulation

Staff Management
Storytelling
Writing
Leadership
Project Management
Operational Planning

Experience

Director of Donor and Advocacy Engagement
Luther Manor

January 2016 - Present

Luther Manor is one of the largest life plan communities in Wisconsin, serving seniors across a continuum of care in a challenging, changing and regulated industry.

- Serve as member of a six-person Executive Leadership Team with responsibility for census growth, organizational culture balanced with accountability and mission, communication management, community building, quality of care, resident and family satisfaction, and industry and organization advocacy.
- Identify annual Key Results Areas to focus operational planning, working with leadership and management teams to improve organizational performance.
- Develop and monitor Luther Manor Foundation performance benchmarks and dashboard indicators for ongoing analysis and recommend enhancements.
- Drive annual fundraising growth, concluding 2019 with a three-year increase of 38% in revenue and two-year increases of 13% in the number of donors and in average gift size.

- Lead process for the development of an effective Board of Directors, including structure, roles and responsibilities, member profile, nominations, recruitment and on-boarding.
- Changed longstanding premise for fundraising, marketing and advocacy initiatives to celebrate aging.
- Lead advocacy initiatives to reduce ageism and position Luther Manor and senior care industry for greater public and private resources.
- Established successful grants program, securing the first Fast Forward workforce development grant awarded to a senior community from the State of Wisconsin.

**Senior Director of Development
Carroll University**

October 2009 - December 2015

Carroll University is a private liberal arts university. The first institution of higher education in Wisconsin, Carroll effectively combines the passion of its students with preparedness for vocational success, lifelong learning and service through coursework and external experiences.

- Led development operation during the largest campaign at that time in university history.
- Acquired leadership role early in campaign, assisting the Vice President of Institutional Advancement with all matters relating to campaign planning and execution including determination of data sets, organization of feasibility study, development of case statement, preparation of campaign materials, building of prospect portfolios, development of prospect strategies and implementation of all quiet and public phase activities.
- Staffed Campaign Steering Committee with President and Vice President of Institutional Advancement.
- Built development team by hiring, training and coaching staff in annual, major and planned giving and helped guide work of stewardship and advancement services.
- Developed metrics to measure fund raising progress; utilized metrics to motivate staff, analyze activity and adjust strategies.
- Prepared prospect management system integrating prospect readiness staging, capacity ratings and likeliness scorings to organize and optimize prospect outreach and interactions.
- With Senior Director of Alumni Engagement, developed and implemented alumni engagement programming.
- Effectively managed portfolio of major gift prospects.

**Various Roles
Carroll University**

September 2003 - October 2009

Over six-year period, served as Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, Director of Corporate and Special Gifts and Director of Stewardship and Donor Relations.

- Retained corporate and foundation support following previous comprehensive campaign.
- Led fund raising and outreach for a new 3+2 engineering program.
- Oversaw initial development of stewardship and donor relations program.
- Developed, implemented and managed President's Advisory Council, a group of community and corporate leaders, alumni, parents and friends with interest in the growth and success of Carroll.
- Elected by colleagues campus-wide to serve on Staff Executive Committee, a council of leaders who developed programs for professional development and enhance staff engagement with and service to Carroll.

Independent Fundraising Counsel**September 2000 - June 2006**

For clients including the Village of Menomonee Falls Public Library, the Wisconsin Donor Network, the National Kidney Foundation of Wisconsin and the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee, services included:

- Campaign development and oversight.
- Database development and administrative services.
- Grant planning and writing.
- Special event planning and execution.

Director of Annual Giving**March 1997 - February 1999****Medical College of Wisconsin**

The Medical College of Wisconsin is a private medical school recognized as a leader in the preparation of physicians and medical scientists, research and patient care.

- Directed broad-based, multi-faceted and ambitious annual giving program.
- Recruited and trained committees of alumni, staff, faculty and students to assist with implementation of new fundraising programs.
- Enlisted academic leadership to introduce faculty and staff campaign.
- Incorporated technology to develop reports to regularly evaluate results.
- Effectively utilized donor-based segmentation to improve results.
- Initiated Grateful Patients program.

Alumni Relations and Development**October 1993 - March 1997****Milwaukee School of Engineering**

Milwaukee School of Engineering is a private university in Milwaukee known for its engineering and business programs, strong network of corporate partners, high job placement rates and alumni pride and engagement.

- Managed alumni relations and development program.
- Initiated and implemented direct mail and telemarketing programs, student phone-a-thons and fundraising programs for special projects.
- Strengthened alumni engagement through on-campus and national events.
- Managed national network of alumni chapters.
- Provided staff support to Alumni Board.

Education

Master of Business Administration, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, December 1999

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism, University of Wisconsin-Madison, August 1989

Awards and Recognition

Non-Profit of the Year Finalist 2018 (BizTimes)

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2012: Silver Award in Best practices in fund raising and development” for utilizing donor challenge to build leadership giving society. Increased membership by 62%.

2010: Gold Award in “Best practices in fund raising and development” for faculty and staff gift drive resulting in 70% campus giving, up from 5%.

Volunteer Activities

Board Member: Education Foundation of Wauwatosa, JOMM Food Rescue, and Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC)

Volunteer Advisor: Bouncing Back – The Vin Baker Foundation