

LaShawndra Vernon

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Professional Summary

Highly accomplished and results-driven Social Impact Leader with a proven ability to define and implement strategic direction for complex organizations. Over a decade of experience in providing disciplined oversight, achieving measurable organizational growth, and navigating significant cultural, social, and environmental justice challenges. Strategic communication and conflict transformation skills enable effective collaboration with boards, stakeholders, and government agencies to secure resources and drive policy change.

Skills & Expertise: Systemic and Collaborative

Strategic Leadership & Vision

- Proven ability to define vision, set goals, and drive disciplined execution.
- Expertise in leading organizational change and improving fiscal health and compliance.
- Grant writing, diversified fundraising, and securing collaborative funding.
- Developing legislative agendas and serving as a chief spokesperson and advisor to government leaders.

Operational Excellence & Analysis

- Oversight of large program portfolios.
- Managed proposal review processes, recruited/trained reviewers, and conducted programmatic and financial reviews.
- Ability to create data visualization tools and communicate effectively with technical and non-technical audiences.

Collaborative Diplomacy & Public Service

- Cultivated robust relationships with donors, clients, government agencies, and community partners.
- Experienced member and chairwoman of public policy committees, leading standardized rating practices to ensure neutral decisions and community benefit.
- Ability to lead and motivate others, fostering a positive and productive work environment.

Professional Experience: Disciplined Execution and Measurable Results

CEO/Founder

Pryme Solutions LLC.
Milwaukee, WI
2016 - Present

As CEO/Founder of Pryme Solutions LLC, successfully directed project management and research for strategic planning, leading to organizational growth for clients like the Creative States Coalition, and securing implementation grant funding for the Black Child Development Institute. Leveraged FEMA certification as a Crisis Analysis & Mitigation Coach for the National Coalition for Arts Preparedness and Emergency Response (NCAPER) and facilitated community readiness workshops. A highlight of the work included cultivating and assessing arts and cultural grant proposals and overseeing the grant cycle for the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. Co-authored the comprehensive Harambee Quality of Life Plan for neighborhood revitalization and equity for the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)-Milwaukee.

Adjunct Professor

Helen Bader School of Social Welfare
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee
2023 - 2025

Designed and delivered an advanced curriculum for Advocacy & Empowerment and Social Work and Social Policy, emphasizing advocacy, empowerment, and strategic systems change for social justice. This instruction integrated policy and systems analysis, uniquely incorporating the impact of arts and cultural policy and the creative economy, successfully preparing students to apply strategic, real-world solutions to interconnected societal issues.

CEO/Executive Director

Artists Working in Education, Inc.

Lead organizational strategy and execution in collaboration with the Board, assuming ultimate responsibility for fiscal health, regulatory compliance, and all operational and human resource management. Key achievements include successfully crowdfunding \$150,000 during the 2020 pandemic, driving a 40% increase in the customer base, and forging strategic partnerships with government agencies as the chief spokesperson and advocate.

CEO/Executive Director

Walnut Way Conservation Corporation
Milwaukee, WI
2016 - 2017

Spearheaded the organization's strategic direction, collaborating with the board to define its mission and goals while managing organizational change, programmatic excellence, and navigating significant environmental and social justice challenges. Furthermore, they assumed full responsibility for fiscal health and proactively monitored the organizational landscape to respond to emerging trends.

Program Director

United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County
Milwaukee, WI
2012 - 2016

Provided strategic and programmatic leadership to multi-sectoral collaborations focused on eliminating racial disparities in birth outcomes, managing a Public Health portfolio across four counties, and developing a legislative agenda for policy and systems change. Successfully secured collaborative funding from hospital networks, foundations, and academic research institutions, and established a backbone team to facilitate a collective impact initiative.

Education & Certification

- **Crisis Analysis & Mitigation Coach**
FEMA ICS Certification
2021
- **Master of Arts in Public Service/Dispute Resolution**
Marquette University
Milwaukee, WI
- **Bachelor of Science in Human Services/Criminal Justice**
Springfield College
Springfield, MA
2004
- **2006**

Awards and Recognition

- **Notable Entrepreneur**
BizTimes
2025
- **PNC Navigator Award**
MANDI's LISC Milwaukee
2022
- **Connecting Milwaukee Award**
Bubl'r Bikes
2021
- **Creator of Change Award**
Milwaukee Joint Human Trafficking Task Force
2021
- **Change Maker Award**
Public Allies Milwaukee
2011

Public Service

- **Public Sector & Cultural Policy Committee**
2025-present
Grantmakers in the Arts (GIA)
Member of the Public Sector & Cultural Policy Committee, focusing on advancing racial equity through arts and culture and public policy. Responsibilities include advising on GIA's thought leadership and programming, proposing and curating annual conference sessions, participating in bi-monthly committee meetings and quarterly Learning Labs, and supporting content development, including webinars, podcasts, and publications. Also involved in establishing ad-hoc working groups for resource development.
- **Wisconsin Arts Board**
2024-present
The Wisconsin Arts Board is driven by the belief that the arts are basic to human life and essential to the human spirit, embracing a vision for the "reality of democracy in the arts" to ensure art can exist and flourish everywhere. This vision guides their core values, which include promoting imagination, creativity, freedom of expression, artistic quality, and respect and appreciation for all cultures and people.
- **Bronzeville Advisory Committee, Chairwoman**
City of Milwaukee (Mayoral/Alderwoman Appointment)
2017-present
As Chairwoman of the Bronzeville Advisory Committee, a standardized practice was established with the Department of City Development to rate development proposals using specific measurement standards shared within each RFP. These criteria, which include local community representation, incorporation of Bronzeville's arts and cultural elements, stakeholder engagement, and SBE/RPP requirements, are used as benchmarks to ensure neutral, community-focused decisions.
- **Cultural Artistic & Musical Programming Advisory Council (CAMPAC), Member**
Milwaukee County
2022-present
The purpose of the County Arts Program, established by the County Board resolution for CAMPAC, is to act as a public sector funding source for diverse cultural, artistic, and musical organizations and individuals. This support is intended to reach a broad range of county residents, encompassing people of different economic, social, ethnic, racial, age, and neighborhood backgrounds.

References available upon request.