


Clay Mercer CFRE

1000 North Tyler Street, Little Rock, AR 72205 • (501) 831-0688 • cmercer@gothinkbigger.com

 facebook.com/clay.mercer

 linkedin.com/in/claymercer

 twitter.com/cmercer

 gplus.to/cmercer

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Think Bigger Group **Founder and Chief Idea Officer**

March 2011 – current

Think Bigger Group provides strategic planning and implementation services to create efficient and effective systems and produce sustainable results/revenue. We listen then customize our programs based on the discoveries our clients need to make. Our practitioners produce a unique mixture of innovation AND activation in 3 areas:

- 1) **Idea** Generation - *think outside the box with emotion and intellect to realize breakthrough strategic solutions*
- 2) **Collaboration** - *connect the dots and develop partnerships that deliver results*
- 3) **Solutions** - *complete each project with tangible, concrete solutions, including a road map with a clear and easy-to-navigate path to transformative outcomes . . . sustainability is critical*

Accomplishments - projects by client:

- Relationship Architecture: Expand Constituent Relationship Management program to gather consistent client and prospect data in a single repository to better understand audience needs and enhance and cultivate profitable relationships
- Sustainability: Develop and implement a multi-level strategic action plan for the identification, cultivation and solicitation of investor, donor and/or sales revenue; Maximize brand loyalty by increasing revenue from key opinion/thought leaders (customers, employees and/or volunteers) and enhance events to maximize potential and create opportunities for brand awareness and increased revenue
- Brand: Evaluate and advise on the organizational “Brand” and its impact on all communication vehicles including talking points, customer service, case statements, impact statements, website, social media, newsletters and letters
- Coaching/Training/Featured Presenter - Arkansas Arts Council, CASA, Association of Fundraising Professionals, Arkansans Coalition for Excellence, Delta Sigma Phi Regional Leadership Academy, Arkansas DHS Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support 2012 Summit Conference

Arkansas Arts Center **Deputy Director/Director of Development**

February 2008 – March 2011

The Arkansas Arts Center (AAC) is an art museum with a children's theatre and a studio school which attracts an annual attendance of over 650K people throughout the southern United States. With an annual operating budget of \$6M, a staff of 60, a membership of 5,111, a volunteer corps of 550 and two Boards – Foundation and Trustees, the AAC ensures that learning, inspiration and creative expression in the arts flourish throughout Arkansas, for people of all ages and backgrounds.

The Director of Development (DOD) serves as a Deputy Director and on the Executive Management Team, manages a \$2M annual budget, provides direct supervision to five professional staff and is outcome focused on business and revenue development, strategic and annual planning, membership and volunteer recruitment and development, legislative and policy initiatives and operational infrastructure.

Accomplishments:

- Record breaking FY09 annual development revenue of \$2.2M, which represents a 14% increase over previous year and an 8% surplus over budgeted goal
- Secured a 38% increase, \$645K, in FY08 annual development revenue over FY07
- Led a multi-department reorganization of staff and volunteers focused on developing relationships, engagement and stewardship while resulting in more efficient, effective and productive outcomes.
- Developed the value proposition, methodology and pricing structure, proposal and presentation, and deliverables tracking for the 50 year old Center's first ever and largest marketing sponsorship (non philanthropic) of \$250K.

March of Dimes
State Director, Arkansas

March 2005 – February 2008

The mission is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth, and infant mortality. With an annual operating budget of \$2M, a professional staff of 12, grassroots volunteers of over 3,000, the Arkansas Chapter was successful in generating support for research, community services, education and advocacy to save babies' lives.

The State Director is the executive leader, manager, trainer, recruiter, and motivator of volunteers and staff and outcome focused on financial management, revenue development, strategic and annual planning, communications, programs, public affairs and operational infrastructure.

Accomplishments:

- Initiated and secured state policy change to increase the newborn screening from 3 to 29 core conditions
- Secured 25% increase in FY06 revenue over previous year
- Featured presenter "Making the Ask" for the March of Dimes National Staff Training Conference, June 2005

Easter Seals Arkansas
Vice President of Development

November 2000 – March 2005

The mission is to provide exceptional services to ensure that all people with disabilities or special needs have equal opportunities to live, learn, work and play in their communities. With an annual operating budget of \$14M, over 150 staff and 400 volunteers, the state affiliate provides direct services, training, screening, technical assistance and referral services to children and adults with disabilities across Arkansas.

The Vice President of Development serves on the Executive Team, manages a \$1.5M annual budget and the direct supervision of six professional staff focused on comprehensive development and marketing/communications, including individual, foundation and corporate cultivation and solicitation, mission-based special events, grassroots volunteer recruitment and retention, and direct mail.

Accomplishments:

- Established and implemented effective, nationally recognized donor stewardship plan
- Secured 44% increase in development revenue over previous year in FY02
- Secured 15% increase in development revenue over previous year in FY03
- Recognized by the Easter Seals National Headquarters as one of the three leading affiliates, of 93 total, in Comprehensive Development

American Cancer Society

January 1996 - April 2000

Marketing Communications Director, Arkansas (September 1997 – April 2000)

Executive Director, Northwest & Central Louisiana Region (January 1996 – September 1997)

The American Cancer Society (ACS) is a nationwide, community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem. ACS saves lives and creates a world with less cancer and more birthdays by helping people stay well, helping people get well, by finding cures, and by fighting back.

Hollis and Company Jewelers

June 1993 – January 1996

Corporate Director of Marketing and Public Relations

Store Manager, Mall St. Vincent, Shreveport, Louisiana

EDUCATION

University of Louisiana at Monroe (Northeast Louisiana University)

Bachelor of Arts, Public Relations – May 1992

CERTIFICATION

Certified Fundraising Professional (CFRE)

CFRE International

PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Bronze Quill Award of Excellence, IABC Arkansas
- Comprehensive Development Award, Easter Seals National
- *Forty Under Forty*, Arkansas Business Journal
- Leadership Greater Little Rock, Little Rock Chamber of Commerce
- President, Arkansas Chapter, Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP)
- Subject Matter Expert, CFRE International
- Judge, National Education Startup Challenge

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Board of Directors, Executive Committee – AFP Arkansas Chapter
- Social Media Team – Arkansas Committee on Obesity Prevention (ARCOP)
- Partner – Central Arkansas Sustainable Communities Consortium
- Chairman – Delta Sigma Phi Alumni Vision 2015 Task Force
- Alumni Association – Founding Member, Delta Sigma Phi, Zeta Pi Chapter
- Alumni Association – Leadership Greater Little Rock, Little Rock Chamber of Commerce
- *Dinner on the Grounds* Founding Committee – Our House
- *Eggsibition* Patron – Youth Home