

# Nonprofit Management Institute

*Best practices in nonprofit management,  
leadership, and development*



## **Instructor Biographies:**

### **Amy Nisenson**

Amy's consulting expertise includes strategic planning, board development/governance work, board, and staff meeting facilitation, organizational development, and resource development. Her over 35 years as a senior philanthropy professional includes work on both sides of philanthropy- as a nonprofit executive and development professional and as a corporate and foundation grant maker. Amy brings her unique experiences in both asking and giving along with strategic thinking, sensible fiscal management, effective communication and facilitation to her consulting work. Amy is also a Certified Governance Trainer with Board Source and is trained in nonprofit Board education. Along with her work as a consultant, Amy serves as the Executive Director of the Mary Morton Parsons Foundation, which is a private-independent foundation that grants more than \$5-7 million annually to nonprofits in the Commonwealth of Virginia for capital projects. Amy also teaches classes in nonprofit management including grant writing, navigating support from corporations and foundations, and board development at many universities and programs throughout the State. Prior to her current work, Amy served as Vice President and Community Affairs Manager for Wachovia Corporation from 2005-2008, covering the three-state Mid-Atlantic Region of Virginia—Virginia, Maryland, and D.C. Amy's consulting practice is rooted in a strong passion for the nonprofit community. All work is geared to helping a nonprofit build its organizational capacity working within a team approach of strong partnerships between board and staff. Amy combines her professional and personal experiences with best practices to help nonprofits make informed decisions and build internal processes to become stronger, more stable organizations.

### **Kathy Kruschwitz**

Kathryn W. Kruschwitz, formerly Kathryn W. Johnson, served as the Executive Director of Alternatives, Inc. for 17 years utilizing a collaborative leadership model to form strategic community partnerships to achieve the organizational mission. She has received the following recognitions for leadership: 2015 Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce Chair's Award in Recognition of Outstanding Collaborative Leadership; 2015/16 White-Riley-Petersen Policy Fellow, Furman University. Having retired in 2017, she is now the owner of Meraki Consulting, a company specializing in the utilization of creative competencies and effective facilitation to foster professional development and organizational effectiveness. Meraki Consulting currently

provides training, facilitation, and technical assistance to nonprofit faith and community-based organizations that focus on the well-being of children and youth. Current clients include the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, Baptist General Association of Virginia, and Smart Beginnings Virginia Peninsula. Kathryn has received training from the Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro, NC and has been certified as a professional facilitator by the International Association of Facilitators.

### **Linda Hansen**

Linda Hansen served as the Director of Creativity at Alternatives, Inc for over 18 years. During that time, as a member of the collaborative Executive Leadership Team, she was responsible for strategic direction and oversight to achieve a vision of developing the social and emotional health of children PreK-21. Using a collaborative leadership model, duties included building the creative competencies of staff to deliver quality early childhood and youth development programs; leadership regarding organizational culture and human resources; and establishing policies and procedures to support organizational effectiveness. Since her retirement in July 2019, she provides executive coaching, training and facilitation to individuals and organizations seeking a breakthrough in innovative thinking. She has studied extensively with the Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro, NC and presently serves as a guest instructor at Point Wellness in Newport News. She is the principal author of "Imagine the Possibilities: A Handbook for Fostering Creativity."

### **Trina Willard**

Trina Willard provides organizations with measurement, research, and evaluation services that inform business planning and future organizational development. Trina's methods examine the implementation and effectiveness of initiatives, programs, policies, and procedures, thereby helping clients guide decisions with the power of meaningful information. She also has extensive survey experience, tackling topics that range from training needs assessments to client satisfaction. Trina has successfully applied these concepts and techniques in nonprofit, government, and business settings. A partial list of her recent clients includes the Supreme Court of Virginia; Cumberland Mountain Community Services Board; CARITAS; Commonwealth Autism; the American Red Cross; the Virginia Department of Education; the Virginia Association of Free Clinics; Hanover County, Virginia; Loudoun County, Virginia; the Community Foundation Serving Central Virginia; St. Joseph's Villa; Meals on Wheels; DARE America; the United States Marine Corps; a national health insurance organization; a multi-state natural resources firm, and a Fortune 500 financial services firm. Her measurement expertise has benefited clients in a variety of content areas, such as human services, health care, public education, software enhancement, employee development, and marketing. As a strong advocate of knowledge transfer, Trina shares her perspectives in a variety of venues, including reports, articles, professional briefings, and training events. She has acted as an instructor for courses in evaluation research methods and social psychology at the university level. She frequently serves as a guest speaker for professional meetings and conferences, sharing perspectives on the importance of measurement and evaluation in overall organizational health. Prior to forming

the Knowledge Advisory Group in 2010, Trina served for seven years as Vice President and Director of Measurement for Transformation Systems Inc, a small management consulting firm. In this capacity, she provided a variety of measurement services to state, local, and federal government entities, nonprofit organizations, and private businesses. Before joining TSI, Trina served for nearly a decade as Chief of the Evaluation Unit of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, Criminal Justice Research Center. She served both the Governor's cabinet and the legislature, ensuring that decision-makers and program managers were provided with accurate and timely information on the effectiveness and efficiency of criminal justice policies and programs in Virginia. Trina received her M.S. in Applied-Experimental Psychology from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia, and is an active member of the American Evaluation Association, the Southeast Evaluation Association, and the Eastern Evaluation Research Society. She is also a licensed consultant for the Standards for Excellence Institute and a founding member of the Consult Corps for the Center for Nonprofit Excellence.

### **Stephanie Cory**

Stephanie Cory is committed to strengthening the nonprofit sector through education. She has dedicated her career to the sector for more than 15 years. Stephanie has served as an executive director for a health advocacy organization as well as held development and program management roles for organizations serving seniors and people with disabilities. In these roles, she expanded programming, strengthened infrastructure, and grew fundraising revenue. She has also consulted for a variety of educational and arts organizations helping them strengthen governance and fundraising. Stephanie currently splits her time as the inaugural director of philanthropy for Kendal-Crosslands Communities, adjunct faculty member for Villanova University's College of Professional Studies, and a consultant. Stephanie is a Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE) and earned her designation as a Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy (CAP®) from the American College. Recognized for her excellence in teaching and facilitation, she was named a Master Trainer by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP). Demonstrating her commitment to helping organizations strengthen their governance and employ best practices, Stephanie is a Certified Governance Trainer through BoardSource and a licensed consultant through the Standards for Excellence® Institute. She earned a BS in Accounting and MS in Gerontology from the University of Southern California and is pursuing her MEd in Adult and Organizational Development from Temple University. Stephanie understands nonprofit management through the lens of a manager and consultant as well as a volunteer herself. She has more than 25 years' experience as a board member for organizations ranging from grassroots with no staff to a multi-million dollar international association. Her positions as a board member have included officer roles for AFP - Greater Philadelphia Chapter; district representative on AFP's international board of directors; an officer role for AFP - Brandywine Chapter; board member for Old Brandywine Village, Inc.; an officer role for the Forum of Executive Women - Delaware; treasurer of the Christmas Shop Foundation; and president of the Junior League of Wilmington. Stephanie shares her governance expertise with the Association of Junior Leagues International where she consults with Junior Leagues across the world helping them implement best practices in their nominating process. Stephanie also

donates time to Canine Partners for Life and the Wilmington Senior Center helping with their fundraising. Stephanie is a popular speaker and author on a variety of fundraising and governance topics. She has been a featured author in Advancing Philanthropy and Fundraising Success magazines as well as published online through BoardSource and Charity Channel. Stephanie speaks regularly to local AFP chapters and at regional conferences for fundraising and nonprofit professionals throughout the Mid-Atlantic. She has presented at AFP's International Fundraising Conference and Leading Age's national conference. Stephanie is a frequent voice on the web through the variety of webinars she has facilitated for Board Source and AFP among others.

### **Lindsey O-Pries**

Lindsey is a creative, and thoughtful consultant, facilitator, and trainer with experience dedicated to achieving economic, racial, and social justice. Lindsey brings a tremendous amount of experience to the team with her years of work with a national social justice nonprofit where she worked to increase the capacity of small organizations across the country. Lindsey offers a wealth of knowledge and the unique ability to transform organizations into high functioning units.

### **Sarah Milston**

Whether a guide, instigator or knowledge base Sarah is passionate about connecting the dots and giving people the right plan and tools to make stuff happen. Over the last thirteen years as a consultant, Sarah has worked with over 100 associations, nonprofits, and businesses to help at the intersection of creativity, strategy, and action. Sarah is an active speaker and trainer around the Mid-Atlantic region on all aspects of strategic planning, nonprofit sustainability, and brand strategy and was named Instructor of the Year in 2015 at Nonprofit Learning Point. She counts Mary Baldwin University and VCU as her alma maters. When she isn't at work she wrangles two very different young girls with the hope of raising good humans.

### **Chris Bennett**

Chris is passionate about big ideas that create lasting positive impact. His 10+ years of experience as a pastor working with small, medium, and large congregations have equipped him to engage organizational challenges at a variety of levels. Chris' energy and passion combined with big-picture thinking have helped teams create and deliver innovative and exciting solutions to organizational problems. In 2016, he adapted "start-up" principles for nonprofits and faith communities and developed a capacity- building pre-accelerator for nonprofits and faith-based organizations. Since then, over 29 organizations have moved their mission and impact forward through this accelerator model. Chris is a graduate of Virginia Tech, from which he holds a BA in Communication Studies, and Union Presbyterian Seminary (Richmond), from which he holds a Masters of Divinity.

## **Debbie DiVirgilio**

Debbie DiVirgilio is a Certified Governance Trainer through BoardSource and a Licensed Standards for Excellence Consultant. She has more than 25 years of experience serving in the nonprofit sector in a variety of roles including Board Member, Executive Director, Program Director, and Grant writer. Debbie is a nonprofit coach, consultant, teacher, facilitator and grant professional. Above all, Debbie is committed to helping organizations thrive. Debbie holds a Bachelor's Degree in Behavioral Sciences from Wilmington University and a Master's Degree in Non-Profit Management from Regis University. She is a Grant Professional Certified as conferred by the Grant Professional Institute and served on the Board of Directors of the Grant Professionals Association for eight years. She is also a Credentialed Christian Nonprofit Leader and is currently pursuing a Master's of Divinity through Liberty University. In addition to managing her consulting firm, Debbie is an active volunteer for several community-based organizations.

## **Jeanne Allen**

Jeanne Allen is an expert in board and leadership development, strategic planning, change management, and volunteer engagement. She works at the intersection of Strategy, Innovation, and Leadership in the nonprofit sector. Jeanne is passionate about effective nonprofit management and leadership, and building relationships with and between all the stakeholders: volunteers, members, staff and board leadership. Additionally, Jeanne is an Instructor in the Duke University Nonprofit Management Certificate Program (NC) where she teaches Board Development and Governance, Strategic Planning, Social Media Strategy and Policy for Nonprofits, and Volunteer Engagement. The students are professionals in the nonprofit sector. For several years, she has been an occasional Newswire Contributor for Nonprofit Quarterly (NPQ). Jeanne is an instructor in the initial year of the Nonprofit Management Institute, sponsored by NetworkPeninsula (VA). Jeanne is a BoardSource Certified Governance Trainer with expert knowledge of effective governance principles. Additionally, she is a Certified Instructor in the Service Enterprise Program, sponsored by Points of Light Foundation. As a volunteer, she is the local organizer for NC Tech4Good, planning monthly meetings on technology hot topics for nonprofits. Her career has been across the spectrum of nonprofits: national (Girl Scouts USA National Headquarters) state and regional nonprofits as a staff member, local nonprofits as a board member and management staff, and as a volunteer with local organizations.

## **Susan Johnson O'Neil**

Susan is as an organizational strategy and development consultant and leader coach who established her consulting practice, Points Ahead, to partner with leaders who are passionate about strengthening their organization and individual performance. In her work Susan uses evidence-based approaches to help build healthy, engaging cultures, data-directed strategy, and strong leaders.

Susan has held several leadership roles, including Chief Development Officer for United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg where she oversaw fundraising, marketing and communications, volunteer and advocacy programs, and as Associate Dean of Program and Resource Development in the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Richmond.

Susan holds a PhD in Literature, a certificate in change management and has training in non-violent communication, mindfulness and somatic practices.