

KERRY ESSEX GRAVES

Strategic Nonprofit Leader | Mental Health Advocate | Growth Catalyst

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore

Baltimore, MD

November 2018 – Present

Executive Director

- Lead the strategic direction and day-to-day operations of NAMI Metro Baltimore, a leading organization focused on improving mental health awareness and providing support for individuals and families affected by mental illness
- Oversee program development, including educational workshops, support groups, and advocacy efforts aimed at reducing stigma and promoting mental health resources across the community
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, including government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and healthcare providers, to ensure collaborative efforts in mental health initiatives
- Manage a team of 13 staff members and 200 volunteers, fostering a supportive, mission-driven work environment that is equitable and safe
- Spearhead fundraising campaigns and grant writing efforts, securing 1 million in funding to support programs and services
- Expand outreach initiatives, resulting in increased awareness and program participation by 50% within the first 5 years
- Monitor and evaluate program outcomes, implementing improvements to ensure effectiveness and impact
- Advocate for policy change at local level and support the work at the State and National level, influencing mental health legislation and improving community resources
- Effectively represent the interests of NAMI Metro with the National and State NAMI organizations
- Ensure that the organization, its mission, messages, programs, products and services are consistently presented in a strong, positive image to relevant audiences

ALS Association – DC/MD/VA Chapter

Rockville, MD

September 2014 – November 2018

Vice President, Development (February 2017 – November 2018)

Senior Director of Development (September 2014 – February 2017)

- Managed a \$2.5M revenue budget, exceeding fundraising targets
- Led event fundraising, increasing revenue by 20% through strategic initiatives
- Served as a member of the senior leadership team, providing strategic direction to the organization
- Directed a team of eight staff members, enhancing talent and resource development
- Designed and executed comprehensive fundraising plans, including multiple large-scale events
- Implemented data-driven approaches to track fundraising effectiveness and improve donor engagement
- Created cross-functional strategic initiatives that established and developed leads in technology, healthcare, development, and other industries critical to the growth of the organization
- Oversaw major donor programs, enhancing annual giving capacity
- Transitioned the chapter from an 8-year deficit to financial surplus
- Oversaw major donor programs, enhancing annual giving capacity

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, CONT.

American Diabetes Association **Baltimore, MD** **February 2011 – August 2014**

Director of Development and Special Events, Maryland

- Managed a \$1.5M revenue budget, overseeing major fundraising events
- Expanded corporate sponsorships and strengthened volunteer engagement
- Worked closely with leadership boards to enhance revenue and donor relations
- Developed marketing strategies and represented the organization at public events
- Created an environment that enabled staff to contribute to their full potential
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Foundation Fighting Blindness **Columbia, MD** **August 2008 – February 2011**

Events Manager, Mid-Atlantic Region

- Managed a \$1.2M revenue budget, securing new funding sources through events
- Cultivated volunteers, major donors and corporate partners, strengthening community engagement
- Executed large-scale fundraising events, overseeing logistics and stakeholder relations

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Management of Recreation Facilities and Services 1998 – 2002
East Carolina University, Greenville, NC

AWARDS AND HONORS

2024 Maryland's Top 100 Women Honoree; The Daily Record
2024 Women Who Mean Business Honoree; Baltimore Business Journal

BOARD AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Baltimore County Workforce Development Board; 2019 – present
Baltimore City Workforce Development Board; 2024 – present
Baltimore Business Journal Mentoring Monday Mentor; 2025
NAMI Strengthening the Alliance Taskforce; 2025
Baltimore Leadership Program Graduate; 2023