

# Colleen A. Mensel

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Dear Hiring Manager,

As an Executive Leader with 20+ years of experience creating policies that align with community needs, strengthening Boards of Directors, and developing strong donor and contributor relations, I am an ideal candidate for the Executive Director position available with the Bellevue Schools Foundation. Please accept my resume for your consideration. I am relocating to Washington State and am ready to tackle a challenging, professional position that makes excellent use of my multi-tasking, team development, organizational, and relationship management skills.

My positive attitude, world-class work ethic, and attention to detail have helped me succeed in a variety of fast-paced environments. I take my work seriously and approach every undertaking – supervising teams and monitoring staff activities for continuous improvement, ensuring financial reporting integrity by accurately monitoring fiscal activities, coaching personnel on best practices and protocol to optimize staff productivity, or communicating cross-functionally to ensure timely reporting, financial or revenue goal attainment – with enthusiasm, diligence, and positivity.

A few accomplishments include:

- Successfully grew income by 63% in three years by driving partner and donor relations with family foundations and individual funding.
- Spearheaded organization transition and growth from one school and one district to twelve schools and four districts with specific community outreach programs to serve vulnerable populations; assessed staff capabilities to identify where talents are to meet growing operational needs.
- Established a new social enterprise, new contracts and new contributors to maximize brand awareness.
- Received individual gifts of \$825K, \$200K, and \$100K individual gifts after building a partnership with three well-positioned contributors and secured four planned gifts with current values of \$2M+.
- Conceptualized, implemented and launched a new program to tie mission of guiding and inspiring vulnerable community youth for success in higher education.

My strong communication skills and years of experience working with diverse groups allow me to move with ease among clients and coworkers of varied backgrounds and different levels of responsibility. I have the utmost respect for confidentiality, and approach sensitive matters with discretion and tact. I am especially skilled at keeping operations running smoothly and efficiently during changes to technologies, procedures, or personnel.

My years of team leadership, fiscal reporting, regulatory compliance, staff coaching and training, client relationship management, budgeting/cost control, process improvements, project management, cross-functional communications, and operations management experience have prepared me well for a challenging role with the Bellevue Schools Foundation. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss how I can help your organization meet its objectives in 2020 and beyond. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Colleen A. Mensel

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## Profile

*Champion for Corporate Social Responsibility & Non-Profit Community Outreach and Staff Development  
Drive Funding and Revenue Growth by Managing Relationships with Major Donors and Clients*

Forward-thinking, enthusiastic, hands-on Executive who thrives on tough challenges and translates visions and strategies for fundraising, program development and Human Resources into actionable, value-added goals. Executive who is passionate about making a difference on social, community, accessibility issues, and improving employee engagement and performance. Well-versed in formulating strategic plans, policy development, and major donor management and stewardship, Human Resources and special event planning. Keen sense in identifying potential contributors and investors and pairing them with causes they hold dear. Provides clear, well-articulated options to assist in complex or high-stakes business development planning. Leverages operations background with business leadership acumen to identify gaps in program performance and develop winning strategies that optimize efficiency, workflow, and financial outcomes.

- Proven capacity to clearly and effectively communicate with diverse groups from a variety of cultural and educational backgrounds.
- Highly regarded as a leader in galvanizing teams to embrace a singular vision and oneness of purpose.
- Solid history in delivering complex projects on-time and within budget despite shifting priorities, demanding expectations, and stringent deadlines.

## Career Accomplishments

- Successfully grew income by 63% in three years by driving partner and donor relations with family foundations and individual funding.
- Established a new social enterprise, new contracts and new contributors to maximize brand awareness.
- Received individual gifts of \$825K, \$200K, and \$100K individual gifts after building a partnership with three well-positioned contributors and secured four planned gifts with current values of \$2M+.
- Conceptualized, implemented and launched a new program to tie mission of guiding and inspiring vulnerable community youth for success in higher education.
- Paved the path for a potentially sustainable revenue stream through comprehensive training on medical insurance, clinical education courses, and community training initiatives.

## Non-Profit Executive Experience

SCHOLARS' HOPE FOUNDATION, Huntington Beach, CA | 2011 to Present

*A college access program that is transforming lives of youth in low-income communities resulting in 100% of students reaching higher education.*

### President and Chief Executive Officer

Planned, executed, and analyzed programs to develop new processes and achieve community outreach, engagement, and brand awareness goals. Coordinated local non-profit programs with national partners to highlight partnership opportunities and success stories. Partner with executive leadership on project status. Oversee projects and events, corporate relationships from concept to completion.

- Spearheaded organization transition with specific community outreach programs that drove brand and program awareness for vulnerable populations and assessed staff capabilities to identify where talents are to meet growing operational needs;
- Partnered with Claremont Graduate University, Claremont Evaluation Center to establish a quasi-experimental longitudinal study for program effectiveness. All programming decisions are data driven and researched based.
- Joined UCLA, Academies for Social Entrepreneurship resulting in a fee-for-service model for revenue generation during school district's summer closure time.
- Drove completely new brand of organization, from name and logo change, to social media and community outreach with the result of seeing more at-risk children and instituted a tuition-based service to increase revenue.
- Implemented internal advancement path for staff resulting in staff leaders and sustainability for the organization with a succession plan.
- Grew outreach from one school to twelve, resulting in a more diverse population of at-risk children receiving services.
- Updated and or established employee onboarding, employee manual, safety training, and risk management policy and procedures.
- Developed performance objectives tied to organization annual operational directive and employee monthly measurements of objectives reporting.
- Attracted nationally known, NFL Hall of Fame Member, Tony Gonzalez as Ambassador of SHF.

HERITAGE MUSEUM OF ORANGE COUNTY, Santa Ana, CA | 2004 to 2011

*The Heritage Museum of Orange County is home to the H. Clay Kellogg House and John Magg Farmhouse. HMOC is dedicated to preserving, promoting and restoring the heritage of Orange County and the surrounding region through Hands-On, Minds-On interactive education.*

### Director

Created and adopted new programs to develop a strong social enterprise, and within three years the social enterprise initiative led to 50% revenue gain annually. Adopted State of California Department of Education standards to help grow the number of children served by 40% to 20K+ per year. Increased recognition of the museum in the community and regional territory by developing and implementing a new marketing strategy.

- Fostered organizational development by growing the Board of Directors from three to twenty members and established good governance practices to build a strong and active Board of Directors.
- Planned and managed community events as a part of community outreach initiatives by hosting the Annual City of Santa Ana History Day and a community-wide Volunteer Day which drew the business community and over 350 of their employees, and community volunteers that worked on projects; resulted in \$200K of in-kind value to the museum.
- Drove strategic partnerships, including with the Smithsonian to plan an annual museum day.

- Conceptualized, developed, and delivered a concept for an annual fundraising gala to raise awareness and add revenue for donations.
- Delivered organization new business, leading the museum out of significant debt due to separation from parent organization, Discovery Science Center, and depletion of reserves due to no management in place.
- Established HR policy and procedures, including employee manual, annual review and success measurements.
- Developed leadership path for staff to build professionalism and sustainability into the organization.
- Created a wedding and event business to utilize the 12-acre property and increase revenue by 50%

COMMUNITY LEADER, Huntington Beach, CA | 1996 to 2004

**Community Activist**

- Girl Scouts of Orange County, Leader-Volunteer
- Junior Achievement, 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Volunteer
- Best Foot Forward Reading Program, 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Volunteer
- Meet the Masters Art Program, 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Volunteer
- Parent Teacher Association, Event Coordinator Volunteer

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**Practice Management Experience**

DOCTORS OF CHIROPRACTIC, Tustin, CA | 1991 to 1996

*A full-service chiropractic office treating common spinal misalignments occurring from lifestyle or injuries causing pain, discomfort, and degenerative conditions. Treat back, neck, and shoulder pain, headaches, sports injuries and auto accident injuries.*

**Practice Manager**

Oversaw all office operations at three locations including accounting, IT, patient services, account management, transcription, and insurance billing, front and back office.

- Recognized duplicate work efforts and refined job duties to maximize productivity and staff morale.
- Created new policies and procedures for human resources, accounts receivable, accounts payable, Board governance, Board oversight and shareholder reporting; successfully reduced A/R over 90 days by 85%.
- Developed an annual budget with monthly financial package to facilitate growth and reduce expenses
- Updated and professionalized Patient In-take procedure resulting in better informed patients with less practice concerns
- Streamlined practice services by developing and producing patient materials for intake, payment processing and at home care services.
- Renegotiated vendor contracts to reduce employee health care costs by 15% while maximizing benefits.
- Partnered with CPA to produce all monthly financial statements.
- Led community outreach initiatives to increase practice visibility and new patients.

PROVIDENCE SPEECH AND HEARING CENTER, Orange, CA | 1987 to 1991

**Billing/ Front Office Manager**

Oversaw all A/R, insurance billing, transcription, medical records, front office, and department budgeting.

- Developed new patient intake, private and government sponsored insurance acceptance, and collections policy and procedures to reduce A/R.
- Managed and increased external contracts with private physicians, and hospitals.
- Successfully upgraded entire computer system resulting in the reduction of two FTE, shorter turnaround time for client reports, reduced clinician paperwork time, and increased billing accuracy resulting in increased revenue.

**Education**

Arizona State University, Microbiology

**Community Affiliations**

Clecak CEO Leadership - Founding Member  
 Fieldstone Foundation - Member, ED/CEO Coach and Mentor  
 OneOC - Advisory Board Member  
 Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) - Member and Speaker  
 Girl Scouts of Orange County - Past Leader  
 Junior Achievement of Orange County - Coach, Elementary Education  
 Rotary of Huntington Beach - Member, Board Member, Community Speaker  
 Assistance League of Huntington Beach - Member, Committee Chair, Event Chair

## **Bellevue Schools Foundation Executive Director Candidate Questionnaire**

1. My interest in becoming the Executive Director of the Bellevue Schools Foundation was immediate as I read the job description. Education of children is at my heart, and having the ability to take the Foundation to new heights, which results in helping more children is at my core.
2. I left the Heritage Museum of Orange County to further my quest to have an impact with at-risk youth. At HMOC, we saw children for the day, and then they were gone. The children loved the program and took away the piece of history they got to participate in. But, having that long term impact was not possible.

I met the founders of Scholars' Hope Foundation, which was named El Viento at that time, and listened to them describe their dream of following children from elementary school into and through college. I was hooked, and most fortunate to be chosen to be the new President and CEO.

3. Leadership is evident when people follow because of who you are and what you represent.
4. The most important quality I bring as a leader is my moral character. It is comprised of the qualities that I strive to display in all of my words and actions: integrity, pride, courage and a great deal of enthusiasm.
5. The keys to understanding philanthropy and fundraising are that they are two distinct things. One is a strategy and the other a tactic. Philanthropy, the strategy, is the desire to promote the welfare of others, expressed by the generous giving of money to good causes. Fundraising, the tactic, is the plan to generate financial support. Fundraising is the piece that takes educating and planning for the staff and board, with the understanding everyone has a part.
6. Diversity and inclusion cannot be separated into personal and professional. You must strive to promote diversity and be inclusive as part of your core. Working with children from a very poor neighborhood surrounded by million dollar homes was a very eye opening experience for me. It takes being a voice, even when it is uncomfortable. One of the many interesting interactions I had was with a group of PTA moms that I knew, many quite well. I was explaining what Scholars' Hope does and one of the benefits for the children is scholarships, when one mom said " don't they just send your money to Mexico or just buy drugs?" These were people in the community and people I knew. But, I had to take a stand. After confronting this question with more information I believe this

mom and others walked away better informed and not as judgemental of our kids.

7. A. I am well rounded in the oversight of all financial, general business, human resources and budgeting. One very large success I had early on at Scholars' Hope was reducing the out of proportion expense spent on outsourcing all HR to a management company. The company's fees were 16% of annual payroll. I was able to reduce that amount by 14% and bring in better HR service.

B. BSF and SHF have a basic parallel of mission; provide the resources necessary to give children a top notch education, but as important, give them the skills to be happy, productive adults. What it takes to see this come to fruition is an agreed upon mission, organizational values, a common definition of success, a set of priority directives, a roadmap of strategies, and performance objectives. In taking SHF to where we are today, we started with the above process. The mission of taking children through their primary education and onto higher education didn't align with the processes in place. I led the Board and staff, through a step by step process where we didn't look outside the box, we dumped the box out and started over. It took a lot of courage on everyone's part, but we now have a highly effective model that is replicable, and based on solid research and data.

C. This is directly related to question 7. B. Without new ideas organizations become stagnant, and SHF would more than likely not exist today. At HMOC, the programs they provided were the exact same programs delivered twenty plus years ago. Did we need all new programs, not all together, but they need to be relevant for today's teacher. We interviewed teachers and asked what they wanted. We aligned the material to California Content Standards and as a result grew the number of children served annually from 14,000 to 20,000.

I am recognized as a highly organized and effective leader. I have continually led SHF and HMOC through key matters including the planning, organizing and implementation of the strategic plan and its correlation to proven educational inputs, outputs and outcomes. All of these require focus, an understanding of how people respond to change and the ability to get things done in a timely and efficient manner.

D. As a director, I am highly regarded as a team builder and motivator, a decisive leader, and a problem-solver. My strong interpersonal and collaborative skills have allowed me to develop and foster relationships at all levels. By including all existing staff and educating new employees in the above outlined process, everyone has a clear set of performance objectives, and more importantly, why. An example of this is my current Director of Education and Operations. When this employee began with us, she had come from the local school district as classified employee. I could see her potential to grow and take on more responsibility, even though she couldn't. As in all things, knowing where we were headed made my job easier. This employee had

many small successes, and developed over time as a strong leader. I now have a leader in place that I am confident can take my place when I leave.

E. Leaders are people who acquire and use influence fairly and effectively. Leaders not only want to make a significant difference, they actually have. I firmly believe that I have made a difference in the lives of those with whom I have worked due to my leadership style. I am inclusive when it comes to leading a board, staff and community and know that people accomplish more together than in isolation, and that regular, collaborative dialogue about clear, measurable goals sustains commitment and feeds purpose. However, when collaboration is not possible or perhaps not appropriate, I am not afraid to make a decision. Leading people confidently toward a common goal is a responsibility and skill I relish. I am a successful team builder who uses motivation, enthusiasm and the highest level of integrity to inspire my teams to continue to move forward with confidence and purpose.

This is put into action every day at SHF. Over the past six years, we have moved from being a program that takes children on field trips and provides some tutoring to a program based on social emotional learning and academics while being involved in a five year quasi-experimental longitudinal study. This was a huge shift, and taking staff through this process and keeping them focused can be a challenge. It's done by what I have outlined in the questions above. It does not matter if you are a board member, staff member, or community member, you must be informed and I am the messenger.

F. Marketing, PR and public awareness starts with a clear message. The most important is why. People respond to organizations that understand why they do what they do. Putting this into action is best started with the people that know you best. When we started a full marketing campaign, including social media, bringing in board, staff, students, parents, teachers, district employees that know and believe in us was the first step. We have grown in reach to over 10,000 followers, and have increased our online contributions over 60% in the past two years.

G. Major gifts and planned giving are part of stewardship of current contributors. It's also educating contributors on the various ways they can give. I have found that very financially savvy people are not always aware of the advantages of a planned gift, or the ability to give a gift other than cash. I worked with a financial planner with nonprofit knowledge and we put together a gift guide. I have secured planned gifts and have opened the opportunity for our contributors to give non-cash gifts.

H. Grant research is key. I use an outside grant writer that continually researches opportunities for us. The national average for fulfilled grant proposals is under 30%, we have a 51% success rate year over year. My program staff and I meet with our grant writer quarterly to keep her up to date on our program.

8. I am not an IT person, but understand the need to be current in a constantly changing environment. I have an outside company that handles IT issues. I find it the most cost effective way to keep technology running smoothly and at the most affordable cost. We have a webmaster, and social media specialists on staff part-time. This investment relates back to question 7. F. Having someone that takes our message and can clearly articulate it on social media has been key. It is due to this that we have had the success we have in this arena.

9. The key to success working with a board of directors is communication. Board members must know what success looks like for BSF and have an understanding of their place in moving the needle. The process I outlined in question 7. B. is the basis. There has to be a process in place, and they have buy-in to it. They also must have a full understanding of good governance and that their place is to govern not manage. Most boards are not clear on governance, fundraising, and their role. It usually is a lack of having the knowledge and skills. At SHF and HMOC I started with a board of passionate people, but thought their role was to manage. Both organizations were stagnant and the boards were frustrated. First was a board retreat where we came together on the plan (buy-in). Then the training, with the full understanding that all board members are not at the same level. This is an important concept. Not everyone is going to be comfortable making a big or even small ask, but everyone must be an ambassador. Giving board members the opportunity to have small successes builds confidence. Acknowledging their success, big and small builds respect amongst the board as a whole.

10. Working with partners and collaborating with other agencies is standard business. Both build community and both build and share knowledge. We partner with multiple school districts. Without these partnerships, we would not be able to serve the children we currently do. Collaborating with other organizations often opens opportunities that I may not know about. I currently work with a workforce development nonprofit. We now provide college students with the skills needed to navigate through their four years, and we open career and entrepreneurship training to our students and families.

11. I stand for my values. I believe all children deserve a quality education and a bright and happy future. How this happens is my work, which is my passion. In today's uncertain world, having our future in the hands of intelligent, passionate and compassionate people that can make decisions based upon what is best for all not a few is imperative. I hope my small piece makes a difference.

12. In five years I want to see myself at the helm of an organization that makes a difference in the lives of all it serves, and through my strengths, I have guided this organization to and through the goals it has set for itself.

13. I can begin this position in a timely manner, but have been asked if I will attend as CEO SHF's annual fundraiser, *Make A Play For Hope 2020* on May 2, 2020. I would need to have the week of April 27th off.