

PETER LEWIS GABAK

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SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

An engaging, seasoned non-profit leader, teacher, and mentor; a passionate commitment to expertly understand the vital role that cultural institutions play in the non-profit continuum and tourism ecosystem; a creative thinker and problem-solver who forges dynamic community-centric partnerships as well as a life-long commitment to advancing a robust culture of constituent relations

CORE COMPETENCIES

30+ years of non-profit experience with 10+ years of experience at the senior leadership level managing high impact, nimble teams in the arts, higher ed, and museum sectors with annual operating budgets up to \$5MM

13 years in higher education at the 11th largest private technological university in the U.S. and the ability to expertly navigate the field of higher education, fostering inter-college/program collaborations in the arts, archives and special collections, and sustainable architecture programs

Robust expertise in feasibility study planning and direct fundraising experience with lead roles in multiple comprehensive campaigns that total \$943MM in combined goals

Public presenter, ally, and champion for diversity and inclusion initiatives

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY: NON-PROFIT LEADERSHIP

Executive Director
518ElevatED
Albany, NY
2024 to present

518ElevatED (formerly Capital Region Sponsor-A-Scholar) is an educational and youth services nonprofit that has supported under-served and under-resourced high school students in the Capital Region for the past 29 years; through in-school, afterschool programming, 518ElevatED provides pre-college and pre-employment exposure and exploration in Albany, Schenectady,

and Troy high schools. 518ElevatED boast 75 high school age participants, 130 college student scholars studying in 92 institutions of higher education in 17 states across the US; in addition, we have over 500 program alumni in the Greater Capital Region; each year, we provide \$180,000 in financial aid to college bound high school seniors.

**Vice President for Institutional Advancement &
External Relations
Museum of Innovation and Science/miSci
Schenectady, NY
2022 to 2024**

miSci is the Greater Capital Region’s only science museum and provides informal STEM and STEAM learning opportunities for visitors of all ages – the visitor demographic is “cradle to gray.” In addition to curated exhibits from the Museum’s permanent collection, miSci also hosts traveling exhibits, such as *Artificial Intelligence: Your Mind and The Machine* (summer 2023). I was hired in December 2022 as a long-term consultant to perform a comprehensive development audit of the Museum’s fundraising and membership programs as well as to facilitate a strategic planning SWOT analysis with the miSci Board of Trustees. My contract concluded in early March of 2024. Highlights of my tenure included:

Lead and coordinate the following positions: Membership Coordinator, Grant Writer, Development Associate, and part-time Special Events Coordinator

In addition to leading philanthropic initiatives, I also coordinate all press releases and media alerts for print and digital press placements

Staff liaison for the miSci Board of Trustees and all standing committees to include: Governance, Finance, and Executive committees

Conducted a comprehensive Development Audit of the Museum’s fundraising program as well as strategic planning SWOT session with miSci Trustees and staff

Restructured and redesigned the Annual Appeal 2022 and successfully raised \$14,446 from 63 donors – a 400% increase over the prior year’s appeal; the Annual Appeal 2023 has raised \$23,155

Brought in \$45,000 in brand-new or increased corporate sponsorships for exhibits, and special programming:

KeyBank (\$15,000 *miMembership* program)

University at Albany, SUNY (\$10,000 exhibit sponsorship)

M&T Bank (\$5,000 2 free federal holidays)

Fenimore Asset Management (\$5,000 Autism Spectrum Disorder low-sensory programming)

**Senior Major Gifts Officer &
Associate Director of Gift Planning
Union College
Schenectady, NY
2019 to 2022**

Historic Union College, located in Schenectady, NY is one of the oldest Liberal Arts institutions of higher education in NYS that later add Engineering and in 1845. In February 2020, Union College publicly announced its \$300MM capital campaign, *Powering Union: The Campaign for Multiple Tomorrows* under the leadership of 19th president, David R. Harris. My duties include:

Stewarding alumni donors in Upstate New York (Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo), Western PA, CT, the Mid-West (Chicago) & the Capital District

Highlight of Recent Gift Activity (\$6.575MM in 25 months):

- \$5MM Hainebach-Curtis Endowed Scholarship Fund (planned gift)
- \$900,000 LGBTQ Residential Experience (planned gift)
- \$170,000 Anonymous (planned gift)
- \$150,000 Endowed Scholarship for Engineering
- \$100,000 in support of the Union Fund & *Making U Possible* from a Union Trustee
- \$100,000 Hillig Music Technology Suite Fund
- \$100,000 Meier Family Endowed Fund (Schuler Access Initiative)
- \$30,000 for Gardow Family scholarship for the Engineering program
- \$25,000 to establish the Tallering Family Pre-Orientation Fund

Promoted to *Associate Director of Gift Planning* in June 2020, and serve as lead architect of the comprehensive rebranding of Union's Ramée Circle Society (planned giving society)

Member of the Presidential Initiative on *Race, Power & Privilege* (summer 2020), and Member, *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Initiative* (winter & spring 2021)

**Director of Development
The Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences
Buffalo, NY
2018 to 2019**

The Society operates the Buffalo Museum of Science and Tiff Nature Preserve. The Museum preserves, exhibits and interprets a collection of over 700,000 objects and artifacts. The Museum provides informal science learning and STEM educational outreach in WNY. The

Museum's building is an historic 1929 building and is comprised of 100,000 square feet over four floors. Annual visitation to the facility is 200,000 guests each year – over 40,000 of these are school-age children. The Museum's annual operating budget is \$4.3MM. The Director of Development, functioning more like a vice president, oversees a nimble team: gift officer, membership manager, special events coordinator, database coordinator and development associate.

Secured a \$2.6MM grant from NYS Empire State Development/East Side Corridor for the historic north façade and stairway restoration project (awarded March 2019)

Secured \$86,728 in sponsorship support for *The Art of the Brick* (LEGO exhibition) including a \$45,000 presenting sponsorship from M&T Bank Foundation; also includes a \$25,000 gift-in-kind ad in AAA of Western & Central New York magazine, *Member Connection* (900,000 household circulation in Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse)

The Director of Development works closely with the Society's Board of Managers and the Development Committee; additionally, this position oversaw the roll-out of three Society task forces to strategically address: special events, major & planned gifts and membership best practices (task forces launched in December 2018 and concluded their duties in April 2019)

**Director of Major Gifts
Institutional Advancement
Buffalo State College
Buffalo, NY
2017 to 2018**

Hired to create a comprehensive major gifts program for pre-capital campaign preparedness to include both friend raising and fundraising for major gift prospects (friends and alumni) while supervising a core team of major gift officers as well as a prospect researcher. In a relatively short time (13 months), I gained the confidence and trust of campus partners to fundraise for the following academic initiatives:

Secured a \$30,000 gift for the Samuel Saia, Jr. Endowed International Travel Award Fund within a month of hire

Secured a \$30,000 gift from Robert Christmann for the School of Education

Secured a \$114,000 gift for the Donn M. Youngstrom Endowed International Travel Award Fund for the Anne Frank Project Rwanda

Sat on the President's Council for Equity and Campus Diversity (Fall 2017)

[Note: My position was retrenched due to the College's deficit and budget re-balancing efforts.]

President & Principal
MUSE Consulting, Rochester, NY
2016 to present

A full service fundraising consulting firm that provides: Leadership Coaching, Leadership Succession Planning, Board Development, Comprehensive Strategic Planning, Fundraising Counsel, Grant Writing, Prospect Research, Major Gift Pipeline Development, Feasibility/External Market Studies and Capital Campaign Services with particular focus on the arts and cultural resources non-profits: Canal Society of New York State's Erie Canal Heritage Park & Museum, Cheshire Meeting Hall & Theater Restoration (with Wind and Water Consulting), St. Luke's Mission of Mercy/Build Promise, The Dove Block Project, Stitch Buffalo, and the Tech Valley Center of Gravity.

Al Sigl Community of Agencies/Al Sigl Foundation
Rochester, NY
2010 – 2015

I began my career at Al Sigl Community of Agencies/Al Sigl Foundation as the **Director for Major Gifts** for the Collaborative Fundraising Initiative (a partnership between three Al Sigl Member Agencies: Rochester Rehabilitation, Rochester Hearing and Speech Center and CP Rochester). In July 2012, I was promoted to **Senior Director for Major Gifts**. In January 2013, when Al Sigl's Vice President went out on long-term, extended medical leave, I was promoted to **Interim Vice President**, taking over all management duties for the Foundation's staff in addition to concluding the three-year partnership agreement with the Collaborative Fundraising Initiative's founding members. In September 2013, I was promoted a third time to **Capital Campaign Director** for Al Sigl's \$25MM "Celebrating Abilities" campaign with priority areas: Endowment, Technology and Building Infrastructure.

As Interim Vice President, I serve as lead fundraising professional and counsel to all six (6) non-profit human service Member Agencies: CP Rochester, Epilepsy-PRALID, Inc., Medical Motor Service, National MS Society, Rochester Hearing and Speech Center and Rochester Rehabilitation. Member Agencies serve 55,000 individuals with disabilities and special needs each year. Al Sigl Foundation is a \$23MM private foundation with 15-member staff.

Administrative Oversight: Feasibility study work, capital campaign preparedness, launch of Family Division efforts, case Statement writing, major Gift-donor strategies and planned giving promotion for a \$25MM comprehensive. "Silent Phase" campaign efforts raised \$23.8MM at the end of May 2015.

Strategic Planning: Staff liaison for three standing sub-committees of AI Sigl Board of Governors: Special Events Task Force, Major Gifts Task Force, and Direct Mail Task Force

**Director of Development,
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
The Wallace Center and
Master of Architecture Program
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rochester, NY
2004 to 2010**

Served as the sole major gift officer for the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences (CIAS) with five schools: School of Photographic Arts & Sciences, School of Film & Animation, School of Print Media, School of Design and School for American Crafts (woodworking & furniture design, jewelry & metalsmithing, glass, and ceramics) from 2004 to 2010. In addition to CIAS fundraising duties, I was the lead fundraiser for the Wallace Center (RIT Library) its Archives & Special Collections and its University Press. In 2010, I was part of a fundraising taskforce to raise programmatic support to launch a new Master of Architecture program in Sustainable Architecture as a cross-campus initiative between CIAS and the Golisano Institute for Sustainability. Fundraising goals averaged between \$2.6MM and \$3MM per year.

Highlight of Important Gifts:

- Co-lead team member to secure a \$1.5 million gift for the Massimo and Lella Vignelli Endowed Professorship in Design from the Hamlyn Trust in the UK
- Secured a \$442,000 planned gift of Frans Wildenhain Ceramics Collection to the RIT Museum/RIT Libraries
- Secured a \$200,000 gift for the School for American Crafts Metals Program from Tiffany & Co. Foundation, NYC
- Secured a \$180,000 planned gift for the RIT Museum/RIT Libraries
- Secured a \$100,000 planned gift for the RIT Center for Disability Services
- Organized and secured funding for major exhibitions/catalogues at RIT:
 - “*American Image*” A Survey of American Posters 1890-1980 from the Mark Resnick Collection” (Bevier Gallery, October 2006) and “*Bernie Boston: American Photojournalist*” (SPAS Gallery, October 2006)
- Worked with team-based centralized fund raising model; 2 prospect researchers (FT), 1 Assistant Director of Alumni Relations (FT), 5 staff assistants (FT), 8 Academic Program Chairs, 1 College Dean, and 1 Library Director/Assistant Provost
- Regional Travel; NYC, Chicago, Los Angeles, Boston and Washington, D.C.
- Drafted fund development correspondence for President’s Office for gifts at the leadership gift level
- Served on the *Commission for Promoting Pluralism*; Chair of the

ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT: ADJUNCT TEACHING

**Art & Architectural Historian/Adjunct Lecturer,
Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY
Full-time: Fall semester 2015 – Spring semester 2016
Part-time: 2008 to present**

College of Art and Design (CAD), Foundations Department/Art History

Courses: History of Western Art and Architecture I and II, Architectural History I and II, History of Architecture, Interiors and Furniture I and II, History of Digital Graphics, Renaissance Painting in Flanders, Baroque Painting in Flanders, Renaissance in Italy (Quattrocento) as well as Fundraising, Grant Writing and Marketing for Non-profit Institutions (Museum Studies), and Introduction to Historic Preservation (Museum Studies)

Teaching Faculty, Global Education: Lead four CIAS Honors Program study-abroad experiences to United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Spain

PUBLIC SPEAKING:

**Co-Presenter: “AI in the Classroom: Fun Over Fear” for Questar BOCES Professional Development Day hosted by Tessa Bentulan, TV13 anchor (webinar)
March 2024**

**Academic Presentation: Popular Culture Association Conference 2022: “Peril, Privilege, and the Prophet of Modernism: A New Perspective on Arthur G. Dove”
Spring 2022**

**Presentation: “How Effective Stewardship Leads to Your Next [Big] Gift”
Association of Fundraising Professionals of Western New York
Buffalo, NY
January 2019**

**Presentation: “Explore You: What is your Fundraising Personality Type?”
Association of Fundraising Professionals of Western New York
Buffalo, NY (webinar)
April 2020**

Panel Presentation: “Diversity in Fundraising: Now or Never?”
Association of Fundraising Professionals: Genesee Valley & Western New York Chapters
Rochester & Buffalo, NY (webinar)
August 2020

VOLUNTEERISM:

ILLUMINOCITY 2021 (downtown seasonal lighting experience)
City of Schenectady
Schenectady, NY
Fall 2021

[Secured a \$25,000 presenting sponsorship from National Grid (November 2021)]

Gallery 5 Schenectady (pop-up art exhibition and sale June & October 2023)
Founding Member
Schenectady, NY
Spring 2023 to present

EDUCATION

Master of Arts Degree in Art History [36 hours of graduate coursework completed]
Syracuse University, Syracuse NY

Bachelor of Arts Degree, Art History/Minor in French/Museum Studies
State University of New York, College at Oswego, NY