

# DENISE L. SEARS

1265 Bassett Avenue, Louisville, KY 40204 • [REDACTED]

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**An Innovative and Strategic Executive** with two decades of demonstrated success driving revenue growth and operational optimization for corporate and nonprofit organizations. Impressive results include development of sustainable new business, innovative strategies to build community/market endorsement, and profitability streamlining of business segments. Possesses excellent problem-solving skills and the capacity to formulate unique business solutions for large key-to-the mission projects and the tenacity to attract, recruit, and manage the teams that execute them. Strong relationship management skills and expertise in building consensus among diverse stakeholders. Dedicated to her community as demonstrated by a robust schedule of volunteerism and civic engagement to improve quality of life for underserved and under-represented families and children.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### SOS INTERNATIONAL - LOUISVILLE, KY

#### *President & CEO*

2016-present

Provide visionary leadership to a multi-million-dollar nonprofit focused on improving global health and the environment.

- Led organizational transformation from a local international logistics nonprofit to a regional global health organization delivering community impact locally and worldwide.
- Implemented and developed best practices leading to SOS being the 6<sup>th</sup> organization nationally to be awarded accreditation by the MedSurplus Alliance of the Task Force for Global Health.
- Built a robust collaborative nonprofit network to incorporate other health related resources into the SOS response to create a more comprehensive and sustainable change in community health.
- Doubled revenue within 4 years and delivered annual operational budget surpluses.
- Drove a 144% increase in community impact from 2017-2020 through improved processes, roll-out of local health initiative and expansion of partner network.
- Developed the SOS Local Health Program that deploys medical supplies to support education, job skills training, access to healthcare in low-income communities and care of marginalized populations, i.e. homeless, domestic abuse victims.
- Improved velocity of workflow through staff realignment and team led assessment and modification of processes.
- Expanded hospital partner network, previously 100% based in Kentucky and southern Indiana, to Nashville, Cincinnati, Birmingham and Mobile.
- Led rebranding to create agency public image reflective of the expanded mission to "global health which includes local health".

### NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE - LOUISVILLE, KY

#### *Director of Development and Communications*

2015-2016

#### *Director of Development*

2014-2015

#### *Interim Supervisor of Youth Development Program*

2015-2016

Responsible for all development functions including fundraising, grants, marketing, public relations and communications. Worked across administrative and program departments to ensure agency needs and funder expectations were met. Had leadership role in development of programming, budgets, targeted outcomes and agency strategy.

- Reversed declining fundraising trends and increased annual fund by 50% in two years through implementation of donor retention and new donor acquisition strategies. Decreased donor attrition from 30% to 15%, increased new donor revenue by 75%, and increased average gifts 25%.
- Redeveloped signature event to increase attendance and revenue. Increased attendance by 95% (282 attendees) grew net revenue by 200% (\$82K).
- Led efforts to implement a new innovative educational program for teens that was featured in Federal Reserve of St. Louis quarterly magazine (winter 2015-2016).
- Reversed declining trends in largest program by building new team and improving quality of program activities. Program attendance increased 30% and educational outcomes improved by 20%.

### USPIRITUS - LOUISVILLE, KY

#### *Director of Advancement and Marketing*

2013-2014

Developed fundraising strategy with VP and CEO. Managed grants, annual appeal, and signature event among significant responsibilities.

- Implemented new procedures to drive improvement in all phases of gift cycle. Reversed trend of donor attrition. 10% of donors increased giving level and re-engagement of lapsed donors increased 22%.
- Led initiative to improve management of grants and proposals and coordination with other departments. Number of grants completed on a monthly basis increased 31% and funding of submitted proposals increased to 95%.

**CHATHAM PROPERTIES - CHATHAM, NY**

1991-2012

**Chief Executive Officer**

Founded and served as CEO of sales and marketing company with gross annual revenues of \$8 million.

- Developed and executed a new advertising/marketing strategy that became the industry standard and led to an industry award for “Outstanding Service”.
- Developed new business segment that added 23% to annual revenue. Led research and industry/marketplace analysis project to identify new business opportunities. Analyzed market trends, and consistently delivered positive ROI.
- Developed and delivered staff training targeting new key competency requirements.
- Led a progressive initiative that changed traditional business practices to increase sales conversions. Developed collaborative teams that drove new processes and policies. Conversion rate increased from 41% to 72%.

**ALBANY MEDICAL CENTER - ALBANY, NY****COLUMBIA PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL - NEW YORK, NY****MAYO CLINIC - ROCHESTER, MN****Independent Patient Advocate & Patient Experience Expert**

2000 – 2012

Served patients and families at three major hospitals.

- Drove policy change at Albany Medical Center that gave patients the right to request change in attending physician and hire a dedicated medically trained patient advocate.

**EDUCATION & TRAINING**

**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY/BARNARD COLLEGE** - NEW YORK, NY *Bachelor of Arts; Economics & Psychology. Graduated cum laude.*

**ASHFORD UNIVERSITY** – CLINTON, IOWA *Master of Arts in Healthcare Administration (2011) 4.0 GPA*

**CENTER FOR NON PROFIT EXCELLENCE** – LOUISVILLE, KY *Destination: Excellence Leadership Program (2016)*

**HEALTHCARE ESSENTIALS NETWORK** – LOUISVILLE, KY *Healthcare Fellows Program (2018)*

**CIVIC & VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

**PRESIDENT’S COUNCIL UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE** –(2020 – 2022)

**ROTARY CLUB OF LOUISVILLE**

- BOARD OF DIRECTORS – DIRECTOR ELECT (2021)
- CHAIR OF JUSTICE AND POLICIES SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNITY IMPACT COMMITTEE (2020-2021)
- CO-VICE CHAIR INTERNATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE (2020-2021)
- MEMBER OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEES (2020-2021)

**GREATER LOUISVILLE, INC** MEMBER OF BUSINESS COUNCIL TO END RACISM: PARTICIPANT ON WORKSTREAMS FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT, ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT. (2020)

**GREATER LOUISVILLE, INC** INNOVATION ALIGNMENT TEAM (2020)

**LOUISVILLE METRO BUILD BACK BETTER TOGETHER** HEALTH & SAFETY AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND IMPACT COMMITTEES (2020-2021)

**CENTER FOR NON PROFIT EXCELLENCE** COMMUNITY ACTIVATION NETWORK (2020)

**ANTI-RACISM KY** MEMBER OF WORKING GROUPS FOR HEALTHCARE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (2020)

**LAUREN’S KISEBERE CHILDREN’S FOUNDATION (LKCF)** BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2018-CURRENT)

**UNITED STATES GLOBAL LEADERSHIP COALITION (USGLC)** FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE KENTUCKY CHAPTER. (2018-CURRENT)

**MEDSURPLUS ALLIANCE OF THE TASK FORCE FOR GLOBAL HEALTH** LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (2018-CURRENT)

**NEW BEGINNINGS NON-DENOMINATIONAL CHURCH** BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2013-2017)

**CHATHAM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION** ELECTED MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL BOARD (2010-2012)

**CHATHAM EDUCATION FOUNDATION, CHATHAM, NY** FOUNDING MEMBER OF FOUNDATION THAT SUPPORTED EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES (2006-2010)

**COLUMBIA COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE** MEMBER OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2002-2006)

**AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS**

**BUSINESS FIRST HEALTHCARE HERO 2020**

**BUSINESS FIRST BUSINESS IMPACT AWARD 2020**

**GREATER LOUISVILLE INC. CREDIBLE LEADER OF THE YEAR FINALIST 2020**

**GREATER LOUISVILLE INC. CREDIBLE NONPROFIT OF THE YEAR FINALIST 2020**

**DERBY DIVERSITY & BUSINESS SUMMIT PIVOT CHAMP FINALIST 2020**

**CENTER FOR NONPROFIT EXCELLENCE ART OF COLLABORATION AWARD 2019**

**BUSINESS FIRST 20 PEOPLE TO KNOW: NONPROFITS 2019**