



# Niki Wanner

CEO

## Profile

Niki started writing grants in 1998 and hasn't stopped since. Today, she is the Principal Consultant at Niki Wanner Grant Solutions (NWGS), a company she founded in 2023 to help nonprofits get grant-ready, write winning proposals, and expand their grant funding. Over Niki's career, she has written over \$50 million in winning proposals from 12 federal agencies and hundreds of local, regional, national, and international foundations.

Niki most often works with nonprofits focused on health and human services -- especially affordable housing, homelessness services, mental health, and poverty relief. Throughout Niki's 25 years as a Grants Professional, she has been instrumental in expanding grant funding for nonprofits with cause areas as varied as international relief/development, child welfare, education, and the arts.

Niki has dual Bachelor degrees in Spanish and English, a Master's degree in nonprofit management and an extensive background in nonprofit fundraising. She is originally from Rockford, Illinois, and has lived in Ecuador, Syria, and Honduras.

## Employment History

### CEO, Niki Wanner Grant Solutions, Alexandria, Virginia

MAY 2023 – PRESENT

Niki Wanner Grant Solutions (NWGS) is a small, but growing consulting firm specializing in proposal development/submission and post-grant implementation. NWGS provides expert proposal planning and development, team building, strategic diversification of grant funding, and grants compliance. Additionally, NWGS offers a comprehensive consultation/review of government proposals. To help nonprofits make grants a recurring and integral part of their funding stream, Niki trains staff and Boards of Directors on how to secure grants of all types and sizes. Niki is a skilled administrator and gifted communicator with expertise juggling deadlines and people to submit winning proposals across various technical subject matter areas.

### Director of Grants, Affordable Homes & Communities (AHC), Arlington, Virginia

SEPTEMBER 2014 – APRIL 2023

- Built and diversified AHC's grant funding from \$500k to \$4M and from Resident Services to Community Building & Engagement, Real Estate Development, and Construction Management.
- Advised CEO and Senior Leadership on proposal strategy, grant funding, diversifying revenue, and recovering administrative costs.
- Vetted, suggested, onboarded, and oversaw fundraising contractors that generated \$15M in new funding in 18 months.
- Authored AHC's first successful proposal submission (after three previous unsuccessful attempts) to the CDFI Capital Magnet Fund, which is among the most complex federal awards to secure.
- Supervised two direct reports and multiple contractors.
- Built organizational capacity in grant writing, program development, and federal grants compliance.
- Directed post-award management, measured progress, evaluated program impact, and prepared/submitted funder reports.

### Director of Development and Communications, United Community, Alexandria, Virginia

JANUARY 2010 – SEPTEMBER 2013

- Increased fundraising revenue from \$500k to \$1.5M in three years.
- Worked directly with the CEO and Board of Directors to steer fundraising and communications strategies and committees.
- Managed a team of four.

## Details

Alexandria, Virginia

United States of America

[niki@wannergrantsolutions.com](mailto:niki@wannergrantsolutions.com)

## Links

[linkedin](#)

[website](#)

## Skills

Grant Writing

Proposal Coordination

Program Planning

Post-Award Management

Nonprofit Fundraising

Strategic Cost Recovery

Coaching

Nonprofit Operations

Relationship Building

MS in Nonprofit Management,  
Regis University, Denver

BA in Spanish, Augustana College,  
Rock Island, Illinois

BA in English, Augustana College,  
Rock Island, Illinois

## Languages

English

Arabic

Spanish

## Hobbies

Cooking, amateur mixology,  
watching sunrises and sunsets.

Mom to a 21-year-old daughter,  
a 17-year-old son, and two  
rambunctious rescue puppies.

- Stabilized department staff retention and funding streams to strengthen organizational culture and revenue.
- Expanded communications and media coverage through online media and e-newsletters.

### **Deputy Director of Development, Duke Ellington School of the Arts, Washington, D.C.**

JANUARY 2005 – DECEMBER 2009

- Doubled grant revenue in the first year and by 500% in three years.
- Created and implemented a direct mail program to increase awareness and broaden the individual giving base.
- Worked across cultural and ethnic boundaries to gain trust and secure funding.

### **Director of Federal & Foundation Giving, Child Welfare League of America, Washington, D.C.**

JANUARY 2001 – DECEMBER 2004

- Led annual development/management of up to \$6M in national and federal grants of \$8M operating budget.
- Coordinated teams of Subject Matter Experts from proposal planning to program inception and evaluation.
- Designed and implemented processes to better coordinate proposal development and grant management.
- Coordinated across departments and remote staff to improve project implementation, monitoring, and closeout.
- Secured grants from the Annie E Casey Foundation, DuPont Fund, MacArthur Foundation, Pew Charitable Trusts, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, DOJ/OJJDP, HHS/ACF/HRSA/SAMHSA, and Department of State.

### **Grant Writer and Information Coordinator, Mercy Corps, Tegucigalpa, Honduras**

NOVEMBER 1998 – DECEMBER 2000

- In the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch, wrote/coordinated proposals and monitored multi-year grant start-ups, implementation, and close-out.
- Grew budget from \$500k to over \$2M by securing grants from USAID, EU, World Relief, and other major donors.
- Engaged with donor agencies, tracked donor grants, and prepared/submitted reporting for compliance.
- Prepared annual reports, newsletters, and promotional materials in English and Spanish.
- Coordinated the negotiation of the agency's first NICRA (Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Recovery Agreement).

### **English Second Language Instructor, American Language Training Center, Damascus, Syria**

AUGUST 1996 – AUGUST 1998

- Taught beginning, intermediate, and advanced English courses to adults.
- Led test production and selection of classroom materials for 40+ teachers.
- Trained new teachers on curriculum use, classroom management, and student assessment.

### **Director, English Language Program, Centro de Estudios Interamericanos, Cuenca, Ecuador**

MAY 1993 – AUGUST 1995

- Recruited and supervised 12 English teachers, tutors, and administrative assistants.
- Created and taught intermediate and advanced English as a Second Language courses to adults.