

# Nikki Thomas

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## Executive Bio/Profile

Nikki Thomas is an award winning non-profit executive who has taken several non-profits with little or no exposure to a solid brand recognition that generates significant revenue through donors, special events, grants and projects. Through public relations campaigns she has used all aspects of the media to successfully generate donations and name recognition, and effectively communicates to large crowds of people to bring the "mission" of the non-profit to the forefront and has often been chosen to be the keynote speaker for organizations such as The Combined Federal Campaign.

She has the ability to pull large organizations together, such as Toyota Manufacturing to accomplish projects and successfully network with other large corporations. She is just as successful at networking and partnering with small businesses, and individuals to use their gifts and abilities for the best interest of the organization while enabling them to have a rewarding and everlasting experience.

For over 15 years she has brought in well known national talent for shows that generate substantial amounts of revenues along with new donors. Nikki is a proven leader and has led several initiatives such as Colonel Powell's Five Promises "Each 1 Reach 1" camp that helps at risk and emotionally disabled teens successfully finish school.

## Skills Set Highlights

### Core Accomplishments

#### Non-Profit Formation:

- Started a successful non-profit 15 years ago, still in operation, that consists of a large festival which benefits at risk youth; Created successful partnerships with the city and many other entities to be involved; Secured national talent to headline the event in order to accomplish the goals of the organization. Thousands of people attend each year.

#### Non-Profit Brand Development:

- Brought an organization from zero donors to 5,000 donors.
- Successfully brought non-profits on board with organizations such as United Way.
- Has formed valuable relationships with large media companies such as Clear Channel Communications to bring the message of the non-profit to millions of people.
- Developed logos that fit the non-profits and solidified brand recognition.
- Networks with the right businesses and organizations to further the message of the non-profit

## Leadership Skills & Project Management

- Served as Director Manager for Business Network International and other large networking agencies.
- Selected as Leader and Manager of Colonel Powell's Five Promises Each 1 Reach 1 camp for at risk teens and emotionally disabled children.
- Raised money for and successfully managed a \$250,000 building project.

- Successfully raised money for and managed construction for large projects with Toyota Manufacturing and other publically traded companies.
- Has been chosen to lead workshops on the topic of victims of abuse and neglect in universities.
- Successfully organized and led hundreds of volunteers for events such as concerts, galas, 5k runs, and projects within the non-profit world.

## **Grant Writing Skills & Successes**

Written and achieved status within the Combined Federal Campaign.

Wrote and received hundreds of thousands of dollars from these and other foundations: Alpha Natural Resources; Alcon Industries; Appalachian Project; Appalachian Electric Power (AEP); Braskem; Big Sandy Corporate Foundation; Charlotte Schmidlapp; Chad Pennington's First and Ten Foundation; Foundation for the Tri-State Community; Home Depot; McJunkin; Neighborhood Investment Tax Credit Program; Pritchard Foundation; Rotary International; Toyota; Rudd Equipment and West Virginia Development Fund.

## **Awards & Recognition:**

- Recognized by Congressman Nick Rahall (D-WV) for the numerous achievements within a non-profit organization.
- Won West Virginia Child Care Association "Staff of the Year" award for fundraising and grant writing efforts.
- Golden Girls Group Home, Business of the Month, West Virginia Chamber of Commerce. Awarded for it's substantial growth.

## **Professional Experience**

Youthfest (February 1996 to Present)  
 Founder & President of Youthfest  
 Ashland, Kentucky

### Tasks:

Manage large festival for at risk youth that brings in thousands of dollars to fight for the prevention of abuse and neglect among teens. The effort has enabled many teens to realize they can accomplish great things in spite of their circumstances.

The Children's Center of Ohio (March 2004 to March 2007)  
 Director of Development  
 Gallipolis, Ohio

### Tasks & Responsibilities:

#### Administrative:

Directly communicated with CEO of The Children's Center of Ohio on all aspects of strategic planning and fundraising efforts.  
 Communicated the needs of the organization concerning various development opportunities and key elements necessary to take the organization to the next level.  
 Solved problems and developed creative solutions to effectively increase public image and implement multiple streams of income to benefit the organization.  
 Spent significant time with the children living at the center in order to get insight for their needs and to help gain an understanding of their individual cases.

#### Resource Development:

Developed revenue streams and goals.

Kept concise, up to date donor records.  
Directed mass mailing efforts.  
Supervised all forms of grant writing.  
Event planner of special events.

#### Communications:

Worked closely with media in order to maintain a positive public image and to increase donor base.  
Wrote press releases and covered every media outlet with appropriate information concerning events and announcements.  
Secured the news and other agencies to come to the agency to film special interest stories.

#### Special Events:

Led and managed all events which included an annual dinner; a large raffle event; a concert that featured national artist Joan Jett; collaborative efforts with the local hospital which hosted an annual dinner and a concert featuring a national award winning Elvis Presley impersonator.

#### Miscellaneous:

Directed all communications related print and website updates.  
Developed all print, video, and audio materials related to the organization.  
Conducted educational workshops to a variety of organizations.

Golden Girl Group Home (March 2007 to Current)  
Advancement Director  
Ceredo, WV

Under my supervision this organization has been taken from almost closing to a very lucrative and recognized non-profit. Duties and accomplishments include:

#### Grant Writing

Responsible for securing and writing all grant proposals  
Wrote grants totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars from foundations and corporations  
Developed and nurtured key relationships within grant making organizations in order to secure future funding.  
Responsible for researching and finding new funding opportunities through grants.

#### Fund Developing Events; took responsibility for developing and managing all events

Developed and implemented an annual Christmas Campaign  
Developed and managed several annual events including Hearts of Gold Benefit Gala; annual Crabb Family Dinner and Concert  
An annual 5k run and several other concerts throughout the year.

#### Public Relations Activities

Responsible for all speaking engagements involving the organization.  
Oversee all public relation events and media.  
Responsible for forming all relationships with media entities.  
Responsible for all public appearances from celebrities such as Chad Pennington from the 1st and 10 Foundation and other dignitaries.

#### Staff Training

Trained all staff concerning donor relations and all other aspects of fundraising that directly involved staff members.  
Trained staff to work at various events throughout the year.

#### Graphic Design/Print Communications

Responsible for the formulation of all print materials including: brochures; mailers; quarterly newsletter, and solicitation letters. Developed and maintain the organization's website and logo.

## **Education**

Johnson and Wales University (1994)  
Business and Marketing, Associate Degree  
Providence, Rhode Island

Ohio University 1996  
Business/Secondary Education, Bachelors Degree  
Athens, Ohio

Kentucky Christian University (2006)  
Counseling/Theology, Masters Degree  
Grayson, Kentucky

Professional Fund Raising School/Indiana University  
Indianapolis, Indiana  
Attended courses on Developmental Strategies for Non-Profits

Professional Fund Raising School/Indiana University  
Indianapolis, Indiana  
Attended courses on Principles and Techniques of Fundraising

Grantsmanship Center (2010)  
Los Angeles, California  
Attended Federal Grant Writing Training