

Three Year Strategic Plan Checklist: Nonprofit

So, you are thinking about working in Nonprofit? Here are some steps you can take at Wake Forest University School of Divinity to help prepare you for a non-profit job:

Year 1

Fall/Spring

- ☐ **Complete an Informational Interview.** Do you see someone who is doing the work you are interested in doing? Talking to people about their jobs and asking them for advice and insight is called an informational interview. The purpose of an informational interview is not to land or ask for a job, although you may and some students do make an important contact. Instead, the goal is to find out about careers you might like and to see if they fit your interests, values, strengths and personality and have conversation with a professional in your area of interest. For more information on informational interviews, please talk to the Director of Leadership Development.
- ☐ **Consider what type of nonprofit job you are interested in working at.** Nonprofits often have a very specific mission (i.e. community development, environmental justice, antiracism, hunger and poverty, etc.), so you will want to consider what type of work energizes you to determine your next steps.
- ☐ **Consider what kind of leadership role energizes you.** When you say that you want to work with people, do you mean counseling? Policy and social change? Education and programing? Administration? To do the work you are passionate about involves many moving parts within complex systems. Hence, knowing and naming what specific type of leadership role energizes you will help shape the experiences you need. If you are unsure of what leadership roles are available, research existing nonprofits and their leadership structure and conduct informational interviews.
- ☐ **Consider how important it is for you to be able to express your faith in your nonprofit work.** Even though nonprofits are working towards the greater good, not all nonprofits will use faith as part of their mission. Therefore, you will need to discern if your faith needs to be a vocal part of your work.
- ☐ **Do you want to start your own nonprofit?** The School of Law runs a Community Law and Business Clinic that helps people establish non-profits and learn how to navigate the 501(c)3 declaration. This is a great opportunity to learn the nuts and bolts of starting up a nonprofit. Contact Steve Virgil in the law school for more information.
- ☐ **Consider earning a joint degree.** Depending on what type of nonprofit you are interested in, you might want to get a joint degree. The School of Divinity partners with the School of Sustainability, School of Counseling, School of Law, and School of Education, and School of Management. These are great ways to expand your expertise and gain more knowledge and skills to make you all the more marketable.
- ☐ **Research nonprofits.** What opportunities exist? Idealist.org and workforgood.org are great websites to look for nonprofit jobs. Here you will also be able to see what nonprofits who are hiring are looking for. Check below for more nonprofit resources that can give you a better understanding of potential opportunities. Looking at what jobs are currently available also allows you to see what nonprofits are looking for in candidates, allowing you to do a self-assessment of your skills so that you understand what skills and experiences you need to work on.
- ☐ **Do a self-assessment of your skills and experiences.** What skills and qualifications do you have that match what nonprofits need? Often times nonprofits need people with finance, marketing, fundraising and grant writing, program coordination, event planning, and other administrative duties. How can you develop these skills?
- ☐ **Volunteer at a nonprofit.** Do you have an hour or two to volunteer throughout the week? Volunteering not only allows you to see how non-profits run and discern how you would like to be involved in a nonprofit, but volunteering can be a great way to expand your professional network. There are ways even on the Wake Forest University campus to get involved, including events hosted by The Pro Humanitate Institute.

Summer

- ☐ **Intern at a nonprofit.** There are many nonprofit organizations in the Greater Winston-Salem area. Find one you are interested in and see what opportunities exist there.
- ☐ **Intern at a Church.** If you are interested in Faith-Based non-profit work, you may want to consider completing an internship at a church. Many faith-based non-profits collaborate with churches and other religious communities. As such, having church experience may be necessary.
- ☐ **Consider completing a unit of CPE.** Do you want to work with individuals and families in crisis situations? If so, a summer unit of CPE would be give you experience working with people in crisis situations.
- ☐ **Volunteer at a nonprofit.** Volunteering can help give you a sense of the work that is done in the nonprofit world and it can help you to network and get your foot in the door! But, volunteering does not need to be just doing small, menial tasks. In what way can you execute projects for a nonprofit? What skills do you have that the nonprofit needs? Executing projects for a nonprofit is a great way to gain valuable experience. Read more about

designing projects for nonprofits here: <https://www.workforgood.org/article/four-steps-to-a-killer-skills-based-volunteer-project/?s=3>

Year 2

Fall/Spring

- **Research nonprofits.** What opportunities exist? Idealist.org and workforgood.org are great websites to look for nonprofit jobs. Here you will also be able to see what nonprofits who are hiring are looking for. Check below for more nonprofit resources that can give you a better understanding of potential opportunities. Looking at what jobs are currently available also allows you to see what nonprofits are looking for in candidates, allowing you to do a self-assessment of your skills so that you understand what skills and experiences you need to work on.
- **Gain experience in grant writing and fundraising.** Because many nonprofits have limited budgets, having the know how to bring in external funding is valuable. You can take a class on grant writing through the divinity school. But, practical grant writing experience is where you will learn the most.
- **Network, Network, Network.** Networking is extremely important for landing a nonprofit job. As such, you will want to make sure you have developed professional tools to help you. For instance, a LinkedIn account is a great way to expand your professional network. You will want to have a solid vocational elevator pitch and a program pitch for the divinity school. Don't know what these are? Ask you're the Director of Leadership Development.
- **Complete an Informational Interview.** Do you see someone who is doing the work you are interested in doing? Talking to people about their jobs and asking them for information/advice/insight is called an informational interview. The purpose of an informational interview is not to land or ask for a job, although you may (and some students do) make an important contact. Instead, the goal is to find out about careers you might like and to see if they fit your interests, values, strengths and personality.
- **Consider the Faith-Based Nonprofit Leadership Online Certificate program.** The School of Divinity in partnership with the School of Law offers a 12-week online course that leads to certification. This is a good opportunity to get an in-depth look at Faith-Based nonprofit leadership. <http://divinity.wfu.edu/continuing-education-and-programs/faith-based-nonprofit-leadership-online-certificate-program/>

Summer

- **Intern at a nonprofit.** There are many nonprofit organizations in the Greater Winston-Salem area. Find one you are interested in and see what opportunities exist there. As well, the School of Law runs a Community Law and Business Clinic that helps people establish non-profits and learn how to navigate the 501(c)3 declaration. This is a great opportunity to learn the nuts and bolts of non-profits, especially if you are interested in starting your own non-profit. You can talk to Dr. Senior about your internship options.
- **Intern at a Church.** If you are interested in Faith-Based nonprofit work, you may want to consider completing an internship at a church. Many faith-based nonprofits collaborate with churches and other religious communities and having church experience may be an important prerequisite.
- **Consider completing a unit of CPE.** Do you want to work with individuals and families in crisis situations at a nonprofit? If so, a summer unit of CPE would be give you experience working with diverse people in crisis situations. Applications are due usually by February. However, because the application process is competitive, you should consider applying to CPE programs by January.
- **Volunteer at a nonprofit.** Do you have an hour or two to volunteer throughout the week? Volunteering not only allows you to see how nonprofits run and discern how you would like to be involved in a nonprofit, but volunteering can be a great way to expand your professional network.

Year 3

Fall/Spring

- **Complete an Informational Interview:** Do you see someone who is doing the work you are interested in doing? Talking to people about their jobs and asking them for information/advice/insight is called an informational interview. The purpose of an informational interview is not to land or ask for a job, although you may (and some students do) make an important contact. Instead, the goal is to find out about careers you might like and to see if they fit your interests, values, strengths and personality.
- **Take classes that hone industry specific skills.** What skills do you need? Are there classes in the School of Business that you can take or audit? What classes can you take that give you special knowledge and experience on your area of interest (i.e. poverty and hunger).
- **Consider the context you want to work in.** Most non-profits have a strong sense of place and are grounded in very specific locations. For instance, there are many nonprofit organizations that only work with inner-city

populations in Western North Carolina. Therefore, you should start researching those contexts you would like to work in, the resources that are available there, and how you can best navigate them.

- **Why a Master of Divinity?** You are close to completing your Masters of Divinity and you will want to be able to articulate why such degree helps you in the work you want to do. There are many other degrees you could have chosen (i.e. Social Work, Counseling, Business Administration). How does a M.Div. uniquely prepare you for this line of work?

IMPORTANT SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

According to O*Net OnLine, a career exploration and job analysis website, these are some of the important skills and abilities for persons interested in working in community organizations:

- **Active Listening:** Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- **Speaking:** Talking to others to convey information effectively.
- **Time Management:** Managing one's own time and the time of others.
- **Coordination:** Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.
- **Critical Thinking:** Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
- **Judgment and Decision Making:** Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
- **Management of Personnel Resources:** Motivating, developing, and directing people as they work, identifying the best people for the job.
- **Social Perceptiveness:** Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
- **Making Decisions and Solving Problems:** Analyzing information and evaluating results to choose the best solution and solve problems.
- **Assisting and Caring for Others:** Providing personal assistance, medical attention, emotional support, or other personal care to others such as coworkers, customers, or patients.
- **Establishing and Maintaining Interpersonal Relationships:** Developing constructive and cooperative working relationships with others and maintaining them over time.

For a more detailed analysis of skills and qualifications needed for nonprofit work, please follow this link and search nonprofit: <https://www.onetonline.org>

NONPROFIT JOB OUTLOOK:

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that: "Employment of social and community service managers is projected to grow 18 percent from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations. Employment growth will be driven by increases in the elderly population and increases in demand for substance abuse treatment and mental health and health-related services."

JOB SEARCH RESOURCES:

Are you looking for a Non-Profit job? Explore these resources for potential job opportunities:

- **Idealist:** <https://www.idealist.org>
- **GuideStar:** <http://www.guidestar.org>
- **Noneprofit Jobs:** <http://www.nonprofit-jobs.org>
- **Opportunity Knocks:** <https://www.workforgood.org>
- **Young Nonprofit Professionals Network:** <http://www.ynpn.org>
- **Nonprofit Career Network:** <http://www.nonprofitcareer.com>
- **NC Center for Non-profits:** <https://www.ncnonprofits.org>

OTHER RESOURCES TO CONSULT:

Are you interesting in keeping up with the latest news for the nonprofit world? Consider keeping up with these Electronic Journals and News Sources:

- **Chronicle of Philanthropy:** <https://www.philanthropy.com>
- **Philanthropy Journal:** <https://philanthropyjournal.org>
- **Philanthropy News Digest:** <http://foundationcenter.org>
- **Society for Nonprofit Organizations:** <https://www.snpo.org>

- **Hands on Northwest North Carolina:** <http://www.handsonnwnnc.org>

PEOPLE TO TALK TO:

The people you should consult will largely depend on what type of work you are interested in pursuing. However, these are at least some people that you can contact to start the conversation.

Faculty Resources:

- **Professor Fred Bahnson:** Director of the Food, Health, and Ecological Well-Being Program and Assistant Professor of the Practice of Ecological Well-Being at the School of Divinity
- **Professor John Senior:** Director of the Art of Ministry and Assistant Professor of Practical Theology and Religious Leadership at the School of Divinity
- **Professor Steve Virgil:** Executive Director of Experiential Education and formerly served as founding Director of the Law School's Community Law Clinic and Clinical Professor at the School of Law.

Community Resources:

The Art of Ministry Program at WFUSD has built many community connections for students, including nonprofits all throughout the Greater Winston-Salem area. If you are interested in learning more about nonprofit work in the Winston-Salem community, please visit this google doc.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1BvSLRn3lwobojreDzFUUBePqfES_Kf425Pw_mFOKYTk/edit#gid=0

Alumni Resources:

Monica Banks:

Kenneth Pettigrew:

Bailey Smith:

Melissa Gutherie Loy:

Liam Hooper:

(Wake Undergrad Alumni—Killian Noe)