

JENNA S. WARD

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Arts administrator with 15+ years of leadership experience in nonprofit and municipal cultural organizations, specializing in access-centered program development, organizational transitions, and financial management.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Program Manager, Cultural Resources Department

City of Savannah, GA | 2020–Present

Lead instructional program development and accessibility initiatives for a 29,000 square-foot municipal arts center that serves more than 25,000 patrons annually.

- Initiate and implement 275+ instructional art classes, workshops and camps that serve 2800 patrons, hire and supervise 20+ contract faculty, supervise 5 staff teachers
 - Doubled visual arts classes and increased performing arts offerings by 150%; tripled registrations, and raised the number of classes at maximum capacity from 7% to 36%
 - Founded and direct an accessibility initiative supported by Georgia Council for the Arts grants; identified and implemented affordable modifications to increase accessibility
 - Led staff collaboration for creation of a sensory calming room
 - Launched sustainable accessibility enhancements to gallery exhibitions
 - Created classes and arts camps for youth who are blind or have low vision
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Managing Director

BalletNova Center for Dance | Falls Church, VA | 2018–2020

Oversaw operations, finance, HR, and strategic planning for a \$1.7M dance organization in a 20,000 square-foot facility that served 1,200 students.

- Restructured the operating budget to stabilize finances and reduce costs by 25% while providing long overdue raises to faculty and staff
 - Increased tuition revenue 5.5% and grew the scholarship fund 35%
 - Exceeded grant projections by more than 200%
 - Guided organizational transition deploying the Appreciative Inquiry model and provided ongoing advisement to the board during the 2-year period of change in artistic leadership
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Assistant Managing Director

Publick Playhouse, M-NCPPC | Cheverly, MD | 2013–2018

Managed front-of-house operations and finances for a 500-seat presenting theatre, provided continuity of leadership to staff during multiple changes of Managing Directors

- Turned a projected budget overrun into a 5% surplus
- Administered \$30,000 annual youth arts grant program for Title I schools
- Launched early-childhood programs that consistently sold out

Executive Director

Miami Children's Chorus | Coral Gables, FL | 2008–2010

Directed operations, marketing, and fundraising for a \$340K choral organization.

- Reduced marketing costs by 46% while increasing audiences by 10%
 - Increased auditions by 47% through targeted recruitment
 - Initiated and implemented grant-supported accessibility initiatives including Braille & large print programs, transportation support, and ASL interpretation
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Additional Experience

Grant Writer, Miami-area nonprofits | 2006–2012: Consistently increased grant scores

Program & Events Manager, City of Hollywood, FL | 2006–2008: Generated a 68% average increase in event attendance

Event Director, Miami Beach Festival of the Arts | 2005–2006: Increased cash revenue 11% in-kind support went up 51%, attained record-breaking attendance of 50,000

PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

2026 Conference Content Committee, Leadership Exchange in Arts & Disability (LEAD)

Session Facilitator & Scholarship Recipient, Leadership Exchange in Arts & Disability (LEAD) 2025 National Conference (attendee 2022, 2024)

Grant Adjudicator, National Endowment for the Arts, 2021

Design Facilitator, Cleveland Rising Regional Summit, 2019

Conference Presenter, Maryland Recreation & Parks Association, 2017

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Foundations of Coaching Certificate, Case Western Reserve University, 2020

Appreciative Inquiry Certificate, Case Western Reserve University, 2018

Supervisors' Management School Certificate, NC State & NRPA, 2016

M.A., San Diego State University (GPA 4.0)

B.F.A., New York University (Honors)