

# Michael Reza

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## Executive Summary

Dynamic and visionary executive with over two decades of experience driving strategic growth and operational excellence for prestigious educational institutions and organizations. Adept at leading multifaceted teams and fostering collaborative partnerships to achieve organizational goals. Proven track record of success in fundraising, alumni engagement, strategic planning, marketing, communications, and board/volunteer management. Recognized for visionary leadership, innovative problem-solving, and a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Committed leader to the advancement profession, with extensive experience working with and serving on boards, providing mentorship, and sharing expertise as a thought leader.

## Key Qualifications

- **Strategic Leadership:** Demonstrated ability to provide visionary leadership and set strategic direction for organizations, aligning goals with institutional mission and values. Proven track record of developing and implementing comprehensive strategic plans to drive organizational growth and enhance impact by fostering a culture of trust, transparency and accountability.
- **Fundraising Expertise:** Extensive experience in leading successful fundraising campaigns and initiatives, resulting in significant increases in philanthropic support. Skilled in cultivating relationships with major donors, alumni, corporate partners, and community stakeholders to secure major gifts, grants, and sponsorships.
- **Marketing and Communications:** Proficient in developing and implementing marketing and communications strategies to enhance brand visibility, engage stakeholders, and drive fundraising efforts. Skilled in crafting compelling messaging and storytelling to effectively communicate organizational mission, impact, and value proposition.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging:** Committed advocate for DEIB initiatives, with a proven ability to foster inclusive environments and advance diversity-related objectives within organizations. Experienced in developing and implementing initiatives to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion across all facets of organizational operations.
- **Board and Volunteer Management:** Experienced in managing and engaging boards of directors and volunteers to advance organizational goals and initiatives. Skilled in board recruitment, training, and governance, as well as volunteer recruitment, recognition, and retention.
- **Thought Leadership:** Recognized as a thought leader in the advancement profession through service on boards, mentorship, and speaking engagements. Experienced in sharing expertise and best practices through professional presentations, webinars, and panel discussions.
- **Crisis Management and Decision-Making:** Proficient in crisis management and decision-making, with a demonstrated ability to navigate complex challenges and uncertainty with resilience and adaptability. Experienced in developing and implementing contingency plans to mitigate risks and ensure organizational continuity.



## Professional Accomplishments

- Participated in three fundraising campaigns of a billion dollars or more and launched a \$25M comprehensive campaign at George Fox University. Developed \$170M capital campaign for UO Portland.
- Built and managed high-performing teams, fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation, and excellence. As VP for Advancement, led team of 15 at George Fox University and served on University Leadership Team.
- Significantly grew fundraising revenue and donor engagement by creating and implementing strategic plans to move units forward in every role that I have had, including leading George Fox University to nearly a 60% increase in total dollars raised in two years.
- Navigated complex challenges and crises with resilience and agility, demonstrating strong decision-making and crisis management skills while leading GFU through the pandemic and successfully launching the university's first giving day and a comprehensive campaign.
- Selected as one of three executive leaders at George Fox University by the Board of Trustees for consideration as the next University President upon the retirement of the acting president, participated in a year-long executive coaching program designed to cultivate the essential traits of a university president.
- Led George Fox University Board of Trustees and university senior leadership through policy changes and board recruitment; revised gift acceptance policy, revised endowment investment policy resulting in significant endowment growth, revised faculty contracts to include support of development efforts, and increased the number of Board of Trustee members from diverse and historically underrepresented communities by 500% in one year.
- Coordinate the advancement strategy to align ambitious efforts to create a new academic discipline, steward transformative philanthropy, and inspire new supporters at the Ballmer Institute for Children's Behavioral Health.

## Education

The University of Arizona, Eller College of Management

May 2007 Master of Public Administration: Concentration in Local Government and Nonprofit Management

California State University, Long Beach

May 2001 Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Minor in Marketing



## Experience

### University of Oregon | Portland, OR

Associate Vice President, Portland Development and Alumni Engagement | September 2021 – Present

- Lead the advancement and alumni engagement strategy for the university's largest region of alumni and donors. Personally raised approximately \$4M this fiscal year.
- Develop and manage all components of comprehensive campaign strategy for significant capital projects for the UO Portland campus and the Ballmer Institute for Children's Behavioral Health, currently a \$170M goal in quiet phase, as well as student success development efforts to support these programs. Includes building the case for support, marketing plan, evaluation of campaign readiness, stewardship plan, and developing the donor pipeline.
- Serve on UO Portland leadership team to coordinate move to a new campus home for UO Portland, a 19 acre campus that was purchased with a \$425M gift that serves as the home of the Ballmer Institute for Children's Behavioral Health and 13 graduate programs that will serve nearly 1,000 students when fully operational.
- Serve on the Advancement Senior Leadership team to set coordinated strategies for operations, community relations, marketing, communications, government relations, and talent management. Coordinate development efforts post a successful \$3.2B campaign and develop campaign strategy for next comprehensive campaign.
- Manage a portfolio of principal and major gift prospects, supporting cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship efforts.
- Represent the University of Oregon in the community at events and with civic leaders.
- Serve as staff lead for more than 30 advancement employees that work out of the UO Portland office and manage team of eight; including event manager, administrative support, development and engagement officers.

### George Fox University | Newberg, OR

Vice President for Advancement, Chief Advancement Officer | July 2018 – August 2021

- Responsible for all university Advancement efforts and management of 15 professionals: Major gifts, annual giving, planned giving, grants administration, operations and alumni relations.
- Served on University Executive Leadership Team with Provost, Chief Financial Officer, Vice President for Student Life and Vice President for Marketing and Communications, reporting to the President and Board of Trustees. Managed the operations of the university and met the institutional mission through planning and fiscal oversight.
- Developed and led high level, campus wide partnerships with academic and administrative leaders such as: Giving Day, alumni awards, campaign planning, community partnerships, financial reporting, alumni and donor communications, website redesign, student success and retentions efforts.
- Worked with lobbyist, community partners, civic leaders, and university leadership team in development of new health care initiatives, program development and issues of equity in our community.

Michael Reza



- Served as public representative of the university; including public speaking, presentations, hosting stakeholders and communicating institutional priorities to faculty, staff and the broader community.
- Participated and led crisis management/communication institutional strategy development: HR policies, student/alumni protest, budget cuts, layoffs, program changes/elimination, and COVID-19 related messaging.
- Orchestrated a 58.5% increase in total gifts and pledges from FY19 to FY21, raising a total of \$5,073,781 in the latter fiscal year.
- Elevated alumni giving by 68% in total dollars and 10% in total donors during FY21, achieving an average gift size increase of 73% to \$1,591 from FY19.
- Led the creation of a new faculty and staff giving campaign resulting in a 30% increase in total donors, reaching an all-time high of 146 donors.

**Oregon State University Foundation | Corvallis, OR**

Director of Development, Health Sciences | May 2018 – July 2018

- Spearheaded the development of funding priorities and strategies for health science projects for the university's next comprehensive fundraising campaign.

Associate Director of Development, Honors College and Scholarship Initiatives | October 2015 – May 2018

- Responsible for all development activities; including board recruitment and volunteer management (Board of Regents, Parent Leadership Circle and Alumni Leadership Circle), strategic fundraising strategy development, major gift solicitation, engagement activities and events, efforts to raise the profile of the college and leverage collaborative partnerships with other colleges/departments.
- Collaborated with university leadership in Financial Aid, Student Affairs, Undergraduate Programs, and International Programs to develop fundraising initiatives and identify donor bases for their respective fundraising activity as part of \$150M Student Success Initiative where I led effort to support high achieving students.
- Exceeded the \$700K unrestricted annual fund goal for FY18 and raised a total of \$3.2M, growth of more than 300% from FY15.

Assistant Director of Development, Regional Programs – California/Arizona | June 2013 – October 2015

- Collaborated with unit-based major gift officers, deans, faculty, and the alumni association to cultivate and solicit major gift donors, resulting in increased giving and engagement within the region in first of its kind position at OSU. Raised more than \$1M every year with increased revenue generated each year.
- Developed and cultivated new donor hosted events targeting major gift prospects and current major gift donors.
- Created new senior send-off events in California to engage incoming freshman and their parents, in partnership with OSUAA, Admissions and New Student Programs offices. Went from pilot of two sites in FY14 with 60 attendees to seven sites and more than 200 attendees in FY15.

Michael Reza



## **Oregon State University Alumni Association | Corvallis, OR**

Business Development Director | September 2010 – June 2013

- Led revamp of what is now OSU's largest alumni and community gathering, the OSU State of the University Address. Implemented new program, sponsorships, and campus partnerships that led to a 100% increase in attendance in two years with more than 400 attendees and continued to grow to more than 1,000 guests in five years.
- Developed sales and marketing strategies, policies, and necessary collateral; including development of new media kit and creation of new alumni survey that provided critical sociographic information on the OSU alumni base.
- Brought advertising sales program of OSUAA's magazine, the *Stater*, in-house resulting in a cost savings of 30% and increased advertising revenue by allowing for direct client relationships with advertisers and OSUAA.

Portland Regional Director | June 2011 – October 2012

- Managed all aspects of alumni programming; including budget, staff supervision, and strategic planning for OSUAA in the Portland Metro area, serving OSU's largest alumni base of more than 40,000 alumni.

## **University of California Irvine Alumni Association | Irvine, CA**

Director of Membership and Marketing | June 2007 – September 2010

- Developed and produced marketing and communications materials for diverse constituent groups in both print and electronic formats; including a monthly electronic newsletter, a quarterly print publication, web site content, promotional products and direct mail.
- Managed all aspects of membership program; including budget development, data analytics, acquisition campaigns, data management and stewardship strategies for more than 8,000 members.

## **Other Relevant Experience**

The University of Arizona Alumni Association – Graduate Assistant: Alumni Clubs, College Relations and Multicultural Programs | January 2006 – May 2007

The University of Arizona Eller College of Management – Teaching Assistant: Business in Modern Society | September 2005 – May 2007

California Community Foundation – Communications Intern | May 2006 – August 2006

Verizon – Business Sales Representative | November 2002 – August 2005



## Leadership and Service

### Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) | Washington D.C.

- CASE Laureate: Recognized senior volunteer leader supportive of the mission of advancing education to transform lives and society.
- Serve on faculty for national conferences; including Major Gift Strategies and Minority Advancement Institute.
- Served as chair of the CASE District VIII Cabinet from 2020 through 2022, where I led a volunteer board of senior advancement leaders in our district to engage institutions and advancement professionals, spanning Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska, Montana, and Western Canada.
- Longtime volunteer for CASE District VIII, where I have led efforts to support increased equity and diversity in our profession, served as a mentor, and presented on topics from campaign management to social justice.

### Survive and Thrive Education | Fort Worth, TX

- Currently in my third year of service as a board member at Survive and Thrive Education, a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization devoted to empowering and enabling young people ages (12-24), primarily from marginalized circumstances, to become productive citizens in society.

### City of Newberg | Newberg, OR | *Past Service*

- Represented George Fox University with other community members, the Mayor and City Manager of Newberg, OR to address issues of equity and create a more inclusive environment in the city for visitors and residents.

### Oregon Zoo Wild Life Board | Portland, OR | *Past Service*

- Developed strategies to engage new donors and members and assist in planning of fundraising events.

### Liberty Mutual Advisory Board | Boston, MA | *Past Service*

- Selected by Liberty Mutual to serve on advisory council that provided overview, insight and recommendations of Liberty Mutual's marketing and engagement efforts for the more than 500 universities.