

# 2025 Annual Newsletter

## Message from the President

March 5, 2025

Greetings from your GPA Nebraska Chapter Board!

My name is Kevin Mahler and I am a proud Grant Professional, GPA National Member, GPA Nebraska Chapter Member, and now (starting in January 2025) the President of the GPA Nebraska Chapter. I thank my predecessor, **Jane Howard**, Board President Emerita, for her past service and for helping me understand the chapter and board leadership.

In this two-year term, I look forward to helping this chapter function as a network of Nebraska Grant Professionals helping and supporting one another during this exciting time for grantwriting in the Cornhusker State—and Southwest Iowa.



Our Board is made up of 9 awesome Nebraska Grant Professionals — and me, lol — who are here to help foster community among those in our profession. Members are: myself (**Kevin Mahler**), **Ben Johnson**, **Noelle Thornburg Hoeft**, **Claudette Breaux**, **Michael P. Brown, Jr.**, **Jane Howard**, **Maya Mocarski**, **Andrea Stolpe**, **Kellen Summers**, and **Glenda Wood**. You can read more about them in the pages that follow — or on the [About page](#).

Like most of you, I serve nonprofits by helping organizations find, apply for, receive, and manage grants. I live in Omaha and I own/operate Contributed Line Fundraising Consultancy. I love this work, and I am proud to do it every day! Since 2021, I have served on the GPA Board of Directors. I have worked with my fellow Board Members to create a website, refine communications, and help the Chapter adjust to the fluid communication and event promotion realities of the 2020s.

### Vision for GPA Nebraska Chapter in 2025 and 2026

We can be doing more! ... But that does not mean we have to spend more time doing it. As your Board President, I aim to enhance your Chapter Membership's return on investment with more responsive and inclusive content and service offerings. Without sacrificial time commitments, We, the Members, can be doing more to advance our profession in this state.

**An annual schedule of helpful events:** In the next month, we will be sharing a 2025-26 schedule of events. There is a lot happening in the world of grants in Nebraska, and we need to be connecting regularly in different formats to make sure we are protecting our interests as Grant Professionals in ways that our collective and individual benefits. Our schedule will feature several events in both virtual and in-person settings to foster productive, local discourse about the most pressing issues in our field.

**Timely and clear public communication:** Continuing the lessons of my work as communications chair, I will uphold customs established by preceding Board Members with timely, clear public communication about chapter events and other business. This shall be done through my direct work as well as clear and delegation to other Board Members.

**Increased public dialogue about the essence of grantwriting in Nebraska in the 2020s:** I really do believe we are living through an exciting era as Nebraska Grant Professionals. We are here to support and learn from each other, share knowledge, and build up the profile of this rewarding, ever-evolving profession. Heck, we might even inspire greater academic study of this work, greater value and understanding in the marketplace, and greater awareness among young people as they intentionally pursue grant work as a first, chosen career - not just something one “falls into.”

**Statewide engagement:** I will work to ensure that this Chapter serves the entire state— and Southwest Iowa. While our Board Leadership is composed of Omaha-based professionals, our friends in Lincoln, Grand Island, Southwest Iowa, and Greater Nebraska need more invitations to join the conversations. Our chapter covers a large territory and we need to hear from everyone.

## **Calls to Action for Members**

- ***Re-activate your membership!*** To be a GPA Nebraska official member, you must join the national association and then select the “+Nebraska Chapter Member Also” option. Join/register [here](#).
- ***Join our email update list*** (scroll to bottom of [this page](#) and enter email address) and connect with us on [Linkedin](#) and [Facebook](#).
- ***Send questions and feedback*** to [gpanebraska@gmail.com](mailto:gpanebraska@gmail.com)! We want to hear from you. What else should this Chapter be doing? How else can we be serving the Grant Professionals of Nebraska?
- ***Consider Board Service.*** New members are nominated and elected every December. Please attend some meetings and inquire if you would like to serve on the Board.

I look forward to continuing my service to this profession that I love in the state that I call home. Some of my favorite people are Grant Professionals, and I am honored to serve you all in this capacity.

Sincerely,

**Kevin Mahler**

President, Board of Directors  
GPA Nebraska Chapter

## 2025-26 Board Member Profiles



Kevin Mahler, Board President, Contributed Line Fundraising Consultancy

Kevin Mahler has been a member of GPA since 2018 and joined the Nebraska Chapter board in 2021. Kevin has nearly two decades of experience in nonprofit fundraising and grant writing. Kevin is the owner and president of the Omaha-based fundraising consultancy, Contributed Line, LLC, which serves nonprofit organizations in Nebraska and beyond.



Ben Johnson, Board Vice President, Women's Center for Advancement

Ben Johnson is the Grants and Communications Officer for the Women's Center for Advancement (WCA) and a Grant Professional Certified (GPC) through the Grant Professionals Certification Institute. With over a decade of experience in fundraising, he specializes in arts, recreation, placemaking, and human services projects. In addition to his role at the WCA, Ben runs a private fundraising consulting business, helping organizations develop effective grant strategies. He holds a Master's degree in Information Sciences, bringing a data-driven approach to grant writing and nonprofit communications.



Noelle Thornburg Hoeft, Board Treasurer, NCHS

Noelle Thornburg Hoeft (she/her) currently serves as Treasurer of GPA Nebraska Chapter, which she joined in 2018 and has served on the Board since 2019. Noelle works as the Grants Manager at NCHS (Nebraska Children's Home Society, Inc.) and is currently pursuing her MBA in Nonprofit Administration and Data Strategy & Leadership at Rockhurst University in Kansas City, MO. Her community involvement also includes serving on the Board of Directors of the Omaha Jitterbugs. Having worked in nonprofit fundraising since 2017, she brings 11 years of expertise in content creation and strategy to her work as a Grant Professional.



Claudette Breaux, Board Secretary, Heartland Family Service

Claudette Breaux (she/her) has been a GPA member since 2023 and joined the Nebraska Chapter's board as secretary in 2025. She currently works as a Grants and Contracts Specialist at Heartland Family Service. She uses her previous experience in direct service, education, and behavioral health to inform her grant writing and management.



Michael Brown, Board Member, Independent Consultant

Michael P. Brown, Jr. began his career working in the City of Philadelphia's Office of Arts, Culture, and Creative Economy while earning his MA from Drexel University. After moving to Cincinnati, he became Grants Manager for the Contemporary Arts Center and then Foundations and Grants Manager for Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. He is currently working as a freelance grant writer and living in Omaha, NE. Michael joined the Nebraska Chapter Board in 2020.



Maya Mocarski, Board Member, CIRA

Maya Mocarski has been a member of GPA since 2023 and joined the Nebraska Chapter board in 2024. She is currently a Grant Writer at CIRA (Center for Immigrant & Refugee Advancement), which offers high-quality, no cost legal, resettlement, and social work services to immigrants and refugees across the state of Nebraska and southwest Iowa. In her role at CIRA, Maya utilizes her skills in writing for specifically vulnerable populations with unique, multi-service needs.



Andrea Stolpe, Board Member, Boys Town

Andrea Stolpe, GPC has been a GPA member since 2015 and in 2023 joined the Nebraska GPA Chapter Board. Andrea earned her Grant Professional Certified (GPC) credential in 2020 and recertification in 2024. She serves as a GPC Ambassador, promoting and supporting her peers who are working towards earning their GPC credential. She has 10 years of grant writing experience. She also has 11 years of nonprofit experience providing direct services and program coordination with a variety of vulnerable populations. To support nonprofits nationwide, Andrea serves as a volunteer Peer Reviewer for the Council on Accreditation.



Kellen Summers, Board Member, Heartland Family Service

Kellen Summers (he/him) is a Contract and Grant Specialist for Heartland Family Service (HFS) and serves on the HFS Family First Employee Resource Group. He joined HFS in 2024, previously having worked in the service industry. Kellen joined the Nebraska Chapter of the GPA in 2024 and was elected to serve as a Board Member in 2025.





Glenda Wood, Board Member, Heartland Family Service

Glenda Wood became involved with the GPA in 2024, and recently joined the board of the Nebraska Chapter. She is the Contract and Grant Coordinator for Heartland Family Service, having joined the Agency in 2023. Glenda has over 10 years of grant management experience through various positions within non-profit and government sectors.



Jane Howard, President Emerita, Heartland Family Service

Jane Howard, MA, GPC, (she/her) is the Director of Grants and Contracts for Heartland Family Service (HFS), and serves on the HFS HeartWorks Council, supporting Culture of Inclusion, Trauma-Informed Care, Mentoring, and Mindfulness initiatives. She joined HFS in 2005 after spending time in the financial services industry and academia. Jane is currently the Nebraska Chapter Past President and serves on the GPA Governance Committee. She is also a past Chair of the Ethics Committee. She has been a Nebraska Chapter and Board member since 2007. Jane is also a member of the American Midwest Ballet Advisory Board.

## 2025-26 Schedule of Events Forthcoming

[www.gpanebraska.blog](http://www.gpanebraska.blog)