



Building on Success Program

Consultant Biographies

Cathy Cohen, C.J. Cohen Associates. In more than 25 years as a consultant to for-profit and nonprofit clients, Cathy Cohen has worked with organizations to maintain stability and shepherd growth. Cathy's areas of expertise include strategic planning, marketing, capacity building, organizational transitions and assessments, executive search, board development and communications. In her work with nonprofit Boards and staff, she identifies opportunities for organizational transformation. She works especially closely to help organizations experience growth in the areas of community impact, social justice and diversity. Cathy has served as a transition consultant and interim executive director in a variety of fields including healthcare, education, homelessness, supportive housing, news media and community development. She addresses many critical needs of a nonprofit organization: staff relationships, contract oversight, community engagement, board communications, and financial issues—including fund raising and development. Cathy is from Northampton, Massachusetts and holds an MBA from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Janna Pedersen, Ampersand Consulting. Janna has 40 years of experience as a nonprofit leader and has facilitated capacity building projects, including strategic planning and board development, for small and large nonprofits. She began her career as a direct service staff member, developing and evaluating programs. Janna subsequently held executive, interim executive, and board positions in a variety of nonprofits. In addition to directing one of the first hospices in Connecticut, Janna is the former CEO of the Hartford Region YWCA. Thirty years ago, Janna developed a simple, effective strategic planning process that she has conducted with numerous organizations and communities. Janna has also directed several fundraising programs. She was the lead fundraiser at North Central Hospice, led a successful capital campaign at the YWCA, and has developed grant-seeking strategy and written grants that have raised millions of dollars for a variety of organizations. The diversity of her experience – staff member, executive director, board member, and consultant - means that she is able to help people at all organization levels achieve results. Janna has worked with numerous nonprofits, municipalities, and state agencies since she began Ampersand Consulting in 1998. Janna has a Master's degree in Adult Learning from the University of Connecticut and is a certified facilitator and trainer.

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Shari Pinsky Adams, Shari Pinsky Adams Consulting. Shari Pinsky Adams provides consultation services to a variety of nonprofit organizations in the areas of organizational assessment, strategic planning, development planning, transition management, organizational restructuring, and board development. During her twenty years as a nonprofit consultant, Shari has demonstrated a keen ability to service the needs of her clients. She is quickly able to assess a situation and facilitate a customized process that helps an organization identify challenges and develop achievable strategies for the future. Shari has also developed a reputation as a valuable interim executive director and development director successfully serving in interim roles at The Institute of Living Foundation, Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury, Riverfront Recapture, and the Wadsworth Atheneum. Her consulting practice is informed by her professional experience as well as her involvement as a volunteer and board member. She currently serves as the Treasurer for the Durham Public Library Board of Trustees. Shari has a Master's of Nonprofit Organizations from Case Western Reserve University and a Bachelor of Arts from Clark University.

Roosevelt Smith, Roosevelt Smith Consulting. Inspiring – breathing life – into individuals, organizations and movements to be the change they want to see in the world! Roosevelt Smith is a seasoned consultant, facilitator, coach and administrator with proven success in supporting start-up, transition, and capacity building phases for nonprofit organizations. He has twenty-five years of rich and extensive experience leading organizations and providing consulting services and training to nonprofits in the areas of strategic planning, organizational assessment/development, board governance, retreat facilitation, executive transitions and leadership development. Roosevelt's work has included large, small and volunteer-run nonprofit organizations in a wide array of mission areas such as youth development, housing, human services, human rights/social justice, environmental justice, food justice and arts. Prior to starting his independent consultant practice Roosevelt served for fifteen years as the Executive Director of two nonprofit youth development organizations in Boston, MA. Combined these organizations were responsible for assisting hundreds of Boston youth to graduate high school, attend college, and with becoming productive citizens. As a consultant, Roosevelt believes in partnership, meeting people and organizations where they are and facilitating processes that surface possibilities while leveraging existing strengths. He utilizes a dynamic, interactive facilitation tool-bag that promotes energizing experiences, respects existing wisdom within organizations, promotes consensus and concrete, breakthrough results being achieved. Roosevelt attended New York University as a Martin Luther King Jr. Scholar. He earned Certificates from the Harvard University Executive Education Program, the Association for Fundraising Professionals (Boston Chapter) and the Boston University, Institute for Nonprofit Management and Leadership.