

Mary E. Costello

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OBJECTIVE: To serve in a challenging leadership role within the human services field, utilizing my strengths as a change agent and team builder, while striving to offer the highest quality services for the community, program, or service recipient. To offer grant writing and program development assistance to non-profit organizations on a consulting basis.

EDUCATION: 1987- BA in Social Work, The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC
+2 years Drama Department curriculum (CUA does not offer AA degrees)

MOST SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Currently serve as an independent consultant offering a wide range of support services to non-profits throughout the United States – specializing in new organizational start-ups as well as the restructuring, improvement, sustainability, and expansion of more established agencies. Heavy emphasis on program/organizational development and operational efficacy. Funding pursuits include foundation, corporate, city, state, and federal grant applications, plus private donations and corporate sponsorships. Over 50 non-profits have been served since February of 2005, and I have been instrumental in the receipt of over 14.5 million dollars in funding among my collective customer roster.
- Wrote a grant/budget proposal in 1992 resulting in the negotiation and award of a 2.8 million dollar, 3-year contract with the State of Maryland to start-up and operate the residential human services agency I founded, Creative Options, Inc. Respected in the field for unique approaches to supporting dually diagnosed persons deemed "difficult to place" by the State of Maryland due to the presence of significant behavioral challenges and long-time histories of failure to successfully live in the community. Offered highly customized, viable alternatives to State institutionalization while providing these individuals with an opportunity for a higher "quality of life."
- Between 1990 and 1994, created two brand new residential programs from the ground up and completely revamped operational systems for two others. Positions required long-range strategic planning, as well as attention to the minute details of daily program operations.
- Within my first four months of employ, brought one troubled agency from the brink of program closure, due to what was cited by the State as "deplorable conditions," to experience their first full licensing renewal in the history of that organization. In fact, no deficiencies could be detected during this licensing review. This undertaking involved a complete overhaul of the program, clinically and operationally, as well as addressing the serious physical plant issues within each of the 15 residential homes—which included a disturbingly high degree of health & safety violations.
- Member of the team of professionals which developed and implemented a progressive, "State of the Art" project with the University of Maryland at Baltimore-Developmental Disabilities Community Support & Access Unit/ Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration. Introduced a new and exciting "person-centered" approach to supporting children and adults with disabilities in Maryland while substantially reducing the State costs per client, per year.
- Fostered environments where staff felt valued and respected, as well as an instilled sense of "ownership." As a result, morale was unusually high despite the day-to-day trials of human services work. Teams worked well outside the parameters of typical job descriptions and the outcomes proved, again and again, to be quite impressive. One example of this was mobilizing clinical staff to address the physical plant issues of 15 residential homes that included repairs, painting, cleaning, etc. They spent 3 months doing this each day, even though I would not require it of them. Still, they stepped up to the plate to work *alongside* me to resolve this program's crisis (see bullet statement #4). This is a good and fair indication of my management style and the type of work setting I've created for many organizations.
- Founded four successful businesses.

CAREER HISTORY (partial)

Independent Consultant --Creative Edge Consulting, Grant Writing & Program Development (2004-present)

Grant Writer/Fundraiser --Norbel School, Elkridge, MD (July 2004-February 2005)

Self-Employed/Owner of 3 business ventures --Acoustic Blue Productions-DJ & Karaoke Services, Creative Edge Consulting, INK, and Whistle While I Work –Owings Mills, MD (1994-2006)

Program Director --Center for Community Development, Capital Heights, MD (1993-1994)

Executive Director/CEO/ Founder --Creative Options, Inc., Ellicott City, MD (1992-1993)

Developmental Disabilities Specialist --Univ. of MD, Comm. Support & Access Unit/DDA, Baltimore, MD (1991-1992)

Interim Project Coordinator/Consultant --Careco, Inc., Washington, DC (1991-1991)

Director of Maryland Operations --English & Condray, Ltd., Silver Spring, MD (1990-1991)

Program Director --United Cerebral Palsy Association, Bowie, MD (1989-1990)

Services Coordinator --Disability Support Services, PG County Health Department, Landover, MD (1988-1989)

Manager, DD Employee Assistance Program --Melwood Training Center, Upper Marlboro, MD (1987-1988)

EXPERIENCE/ SKILLS SUMMARY

(reflects my history prior to my consulting work)

- **Administrative:** Grant writing/budget development, as well as drafting or revising personnel/program policies & procedures for multiple organizations. Created staff/consumer training materials and ensured that trainings took place in accordance with State regulations. Completion of plans of correction (as needed) and other reports, collection of statistical data, and provision of all documentation, as required. Public speaking, marketing, and community education. Team building. Strategic planning and establishment of short-term/long-term goals, measurable outcomes, and overall program vision. Fiscal oversight. Website development. Creation of brochures, flyers, business cards, as well as other promotional tools. Spearheaded successful marketing initiatives & sales. Fundraising. Prospect research.
- **Supervision/Management:** Staff recruitment, training, coaching, & supervision. Created two new programs and revamped two existing ones. Management of five programs. Daily operational oversight of residential, day, psycho-social recreational programs for dually diagnosed, MR/DD, DD/CMI, NR/DD, CMI, deaf, blind, persons with Cerebral Palsy, persons with physical disabilities, those deemed "difficult to place" due to severe behavioral challenges, and two congregate living facilities for the aged. Devised Quality Assurance protocols and targeted strategies to address problem areas while implementing initiatives to continually improve service delivery systems.
- **Clinical/Advocacy:** Wrote IHPs, ISPs, and Behavior Change Plans. Trained staff on implementation of client training programs and the collection of necessary data. Devised teaching methodologies. Performed client assessments and facilitated "Essential Lifestyle Plans"/"Personal Future Plans" process. Liaison between consumers, families, State governmental regulatory/oversight systems, political offices, and community service providers. Counseling, case management, advocacy, community outreach, new skills training acquisition, and crisis intervention.
- **Entertainment/The Arts:** A thespian, professional singer/songwriter, composer, illustrator, and literary writer. Have performed as a vocalist/entertainer in the Baltimore area for the past 20 years. Popular Karaoke Host/DJ in the region.
- **Personal Qualities:** Creative, tenacious, humorous, possession of a "can do" personality, dedicated, strong verbal and written communication skills, an eye for detail, solid organizational skills, enthusiastic, a proven leader, and passionate about social causes and policy. Equally as effective when working independently or as a team player. Known for thinking "outside the box" and the ability to take a concept and "hit the ground running."