



# GOODMAN NONPROFIT FELLOWSHIP

## 2025-2026

### Overview

This year-long program focuses on professional leadership development for a cohort of nonprofit leaders who gather monthly, enhance their skills in nonprofit management, grow as leaders and build relationships with each other. Monthly educational modules are led by experts on each topic area and include substantial time for facilitated reflection and discussion about how to pragmatically implement lessons learned. Content is intended to be relevant for new executive directors as well as more veteran executive directors looking to strengthen their skills.

The inaugural cohort is designed for current executive directors who:

- Lead 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations in the Greater Madison area (Dane, Columbia, Green, Iowa and Sauk counties),
- Have organizations with more than one paid employee, and
- Are committed to growing their skills and capacity and helping create a supportive community with other leaders.

**Sessions will run from September 2025 to June 2026 and will be held at various locations in and around Madison. Tuition for the program is \$1,000. Scholarships are available.**

The Goodman Nonprofit Center is committed to providing a high-quality educational experience that delivers practical knowledge nonprofit leaders can implement in their work. We are also committed to creating a safe, creative and positive learning environment that allows participants to connect meaningfully with other leaders and have access to resources that will be valuable during the fellowship and beyond. Program alumni also will have opportunities to engage after completing the Fellowship.

**We expect participants to commit an average of 12 hours a month – nine hours of formal in-person coursework and three hours of work outside – for a total of 120 hours over the course of the fellowship program.** We also expect that participants will actively contribute to building a

positive learning community for themselves and fellow cohort members by committing to the following:

- Being present and prepared for all scheduled sessions.
- Approaching the experience with curiosity, openness, respect and generosity for each other's expertise, wisdom, lived experience and humanity.
- Making space and taking space by being mindful of how much they speak and the role power and privilege play in our interactions.
- Being open to growth and discomfort and allowing each other to make mistakes without judgement or defensiveness.
- Honor confidentiality by ensuring what is said stays within the group but what's learned leaves.

## **Session Descriptions and Schedule**

### **1. PROGRAM ORIENTATION AND BEING A LEADER – September 2025**

**Facilitators: Andy Davey, Goodman Nonprofit Center Director, and Abha Thakkar, Mosaic Consulting**

***Wednesday 9/17, noon to 5:00 p.m. (lunch provided)***

***Thursday 9/18, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.***

Orientation will focus on explaining what to expect in the coming year, discussing your hopes for the program and building relationships with your fellow cohort members.

A key element of this discussion will be identifying a practical issue or project you would like to make progress on through coaching and workshops throughout the course of the fellowship.

We will take time to reflect on your journey thus far as a leader, guide you in a self-assessment of skills, and discuss various forms of effective leadership. This session will set the stage for exploring how each subsequent session and skill set is integrated into your role as a leader. We will discuss dynamics and challenges that the cohort will continue to explore throughout the fellowship, such as managing stress, avoiding burnout and navigating power dynamics.

### **2. CRAFTING A POWERFUL VALUE PROPOSITION FOR YOUR NONPROFIT PROGRAMS TO MATCH – October 2025**

**Instructor: Roxie Hentz, Hentz Solutions**

***Wednesday 10/29, noon to 5:00 p.m. (lunch provided)***

***Thursday 10/30, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.***

In Session 2, you will learn how to define and communicate a compelling value proposition for your organization. We will explore key elements of an effective value proposition, including identifying target audiences, articulating impact and differentiating yourself from other organizations. You will work to develop a clear, actionable statement that conveys your nonprofit's unique value to beneficiaries, funders, partners and the community. The instructor will then guide you in a process to evaluate how well existing programs align with that value proposition and ways you could modify programming to better align.

### **3. GOVERNANCE AND BOARD MANAGEMENT – November 2025**

**Instructor: Frank Martinelli, Center for Public Skills**

***Wednesday 11/19, noon to 5:00 p.m. (lunch provided)***

***Thursday 11/20, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.***

Session 3 will examine the roles and responsibilities of boards and their relationship to staff. Gain tools for strengthening relationships with board members and increasing board effectiveness. The instructor will cover:

- The role and critical responsibilities of the board, including the fiduciary, strategic and generative roles for broader mission impact, including the fiduciary duty of care, the duty of loyalty and the duty of obedience.
- Structure of the board, including officers and committees.
- Establishing a clear and balanced division of responsibilities and decision-making between you and the board.
- Proven practices for board recruitment, development and member engagement, including needed technical/professional skills, lived experience and passion for the mission.
- Board member fundraising.
- Board self-assessment.
- The role of the organization's bylaws.

### **4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT – December 2025**

**Instructor: Steve Zimmerman, Spectrum Nonprofit Services**

***Wednesday 12/3, noon to 5:00 p.m. (lunch provided)***

***Thursday 12/4, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.***

In Session 4, we will analyze the principles of financial management for nonprofits. Learn to apply the fundamentals of accounting, cash flow analysis, expenditure control and audits. Study budgeting and planning, tax issues and internal/external reporting requirements for solid fiscal management.

The instructor will cover:

- The importance of the executive director having a deep understanding of their organization's financial position and workflow.
- Basic accounting terms that executive directors should be familiar with to understand their organization's financial transactions.
- A typical weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual schedule of financial and reporting tasks.
- Revenue-based budgeting and using the budget as a tool to make data-driven decisions.
- Structuring and reading nonprofit financial statements to better assess the organization's short- and long-term financial health and to identify financial vulnerabilities.
- The difference between cash, accrual and modified-cash basis of accounting and how to evaluate which is right for an organization.
- The importance of internal controls for nonprofits to ensure transparent and ethical financial management.
- Best practices for audit preparedness.
- 990s and other filings and the story these reports tell about an organization's use of resources.

## **5. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS – January 2026**

**Instructors: Ben Becker, Hoan Marketing; Jeff Burkhart, Mission Forward**

***Wednesday 1/21, noon to 5:00 p.m. (lunch provided)***

***Thursday 1/22, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.***

In Session 5, we will explore how to develop a comprehensive marketing and communications plan, whatever your organization's size. We will identify the most effective approaches for communicating with your donors, volunteers and the community.

During the session, we will work through:

- Brand development and implementation practices that best communicate and amplify your organization's mission, vision, value proposition and results.
- Defining your various audiences, the purpose of outreach and communication with those audiences and creating compelling messages with clear calls to action for those audiences.
- Identifying the best modes of communication to expand and deepen your network of supporters, including considerations for social media usage.
- Ethical storytelling best practices to balance your organization's marketing needs of with the dignity of clients and the communities you serve.
- Fostering consistent voice, values and messaging, including how to identify and support the organization's public-facing messengers. For example, this could look like developing a communications work plan, with or without a designated communications staff person.

## 6. FUNDRAISING AND RESOURCING THE MISSION – February 2026

Instructor: Amanda White, Amanda White Consulting

*Wednesday 2/18, noon to 5:00 p.m. (lunch provided)*

*Thursday 2/19, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.*

In Session 6, we will examine the fundamental forms of nonprofit revenue and how to fundraise in ways that are rooted in your organization's mission, including the features of ethical fundraising and how to create successful fundraising strategies that involve both staff and volunteers.

Specifically, we will look at:

- Models of an effective fundraising and development team, whatever your organization's size.
- Adopting the right donor database.
- Setting fundraising goals, policies and accountability practices.
- Building a thriving culture of philanthropy rooted in authentic relationships.
- Creating a feasible and strategic annual development plan for appropriately diverse range of funding sources.
- Effectively engaging staff, donors, board and volunteers in the fundraising process.
- Stewarding and engaging your donors for retention and enhanced giving.

## 7. HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE – March 2026

Instructors: Tricia Perkins and Jane Clark, Lake Effect HR & Law; Abha Thakkar, Mosaic Consulting

*Wednesday 3/18, noon to 5:00 p.m. (lunch provided)*

*Thursday 3/19, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.*

In Session 7, we will examine fundamental aspects of building a thriving organizational culture and effectively managing a team of staff and volunteers. The module will be split into two parts.

- **Part 1: Essential Human Resources Practices.** Topics include recruitment and onboarding, performance management, employee development and retention, legal compliance, and policies and procedures in a nonprofit context.
- **Part 2: Cultivating a Healthy, Inclusive and Productive Organizational Culture.** Topics include effective communication and collaboration, leadership's role in shaping culture, balancing productivity with employee well-being, and creating an inclusive and equitable workplace where everyone feels valued. You will learn practical strategies to create an

environment and align staff activities with your organization's mission, values and goals, ensuring long-term success and engagement.

## **8. ADVOCACY AND COLLECTIVE IMPACT – April 2026**

**Instructor: TR Williams, TRWConsult414**

***Wednesday 4/29, noon to 5:00 p.m. (lunch provided)***

***Thursday 4/30, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.***

Explore why advocacy is so important to nonprofit work, the role of public funding in the nonprofit sector, and how public policies support or limit your ability to achieve your mission. This session will dispel myths about nonprofits and advocacy, and demonstrate practical and achievable ways for nonprofits to engage in advocacy and organizing for collective impact.

The instructor will cover:

- The basic rules for nonprofit advocacy and the difference between advocacy and lobbying.
- Effective strategies of advocacy for any 501(c)3 organization.
- The connections between general nonprofit communications and advocacy work.
- How to engage your board, volunteers, donors and other supporters in advocacy.
- Opportunities to join, strengthen or form coalitions for broader and deeper mission impact work.

## **9. STRATEGY AND EVALUATION – May 2026**

**Instructor: Amy Washbush, UW-Madison Center for Community and Nonprofit Studies**

***Wednesday 5/27, noon to 5:00 p.m. (lunch provided)***

***Thursday 5/28, 8:30 a.m. 12:30 p.m.***

In Session 9, we will explore effective practices in strategic and evaluative thinking and how to better align specific program activities with longer-term strategies. We will learn how to develop feasible processes for evaluating progress and reporting to constituents and funders.

Specifically, we will learn:

- The difference between strategy and tactics.
- How to develop goals aligned with a long-term vision and create actionable plans to maximize impact.
- How to use tools such as logic models or theories of change that incorporate both strategy and evaluation, and how to do so in a way that is feasible within an organization's resources.
- How to create a culture of learning and continuous improvement.

## **10. CELEBRATION AND REFLECTION – June 2026**

**Facilitators: Andy Davey, Goodman Nonprofit Center Director and Abha Thakkar, Mosaic Consulting**

***Wednesday 6/24, noon to 5:00 p.m. (lunch provided)***

***Thursday 6/25, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.***

Time to celebrate all your hard work, learning and relationship building over the previous year! We will facilitate an in-depth conversation about the program, what worked well, what could be improved and ways to stay connected with each other and the Nonprofit Center.

There will also be more of a public celebration where fellows can connect with program supporters and funders.