

MICHAEL LARA

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Summary

Versatile and impact-driven professional with cross-sector leadership experience in nonprofit development, higher education, IT, marketing, operations, grants, and strategic outreach. Proven success in leading recruitment, retention, and revenue-generating initiatives across multiple departments. Recognized for community engagement, interdepartmental collaboration, and leveraging data-driven systems to optimize organizational performance.

Core Proficiencies

- Strategic Planning
- Talent Development
- Outreach/Recruitment
- Fund Development
- Cross-Functional Leadership
- Compliance Auditing
- CRM & Workflow Automation
- Community Engagement
- Brand Strategy
- Public Speaking
- Grants Project Management
- Client Retention
- Change Management
- Vendor Management
- Workflow Automation
- Stakeholder Alignment
- Bilingual Communication

Professional Experience

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange, Riverside & San Bernardino Counties **10/2022 – 05/2025**
Brand Ambassador – Cross-Departmental Leadership **Orange County & Inland Empire**

Progressed through Marketing, Executive Operations, Fund Development, and Community Recruitment & Enrollment. I lead outreach and enrollment efforts to increase brand visibility and drive program participation.

Community Recruitment & Enrollment – Brand Ambassador (*Oct 2024 – Present*)

- Played a key role in the department's restructuring, growing from a single recruiter to an eight-member team focused on mentor and child enrollment.
- Led public outreach and developed culturally responsive recruitment strategies in partnership with schools and nonprofits.
- Strengthened cross-sector relationships to expand organizational reach and support service demand.
- Streamlined onboarding workflows to ensure compliance, match readiness, and continuity of service.
- Coordinated with internal teams to enhance match quality and improve long-term engagement.

Fund Development – Strategic Partnerships & Event Activation (*Jan 2024 – Oct 2024*)

- Helped coordinate four flagship fundraising events—**Cornhole Tournament, BigGive, Birthday Bash, TopGolf Invitational, and Annual Golf Tournament**—each generating over **\$100,000**.
- Fostered donor and sponsor relationships to increase revenue and strengthen brand impact.
- Represented the organization at community events and donor meetings, reinforcing public trust and visibility.

Office of the COO – Cross-Functional Operations Liaison (*Oct 2023 – Jan 2024*)

- Oversaw the **Big Recruitment Committee Board**, a 20-member advisory group of donors, mentors, and volunteers focused on community outreach and recruitment.
- Facilitated strategic planning and aligned departmental operations with board-led initiatives.
- Acted as a conduit between executive leadership and program teams to support streamlined communication and execution

Marketing – Brand Strategy, Outreach & Lead Automation (*Jul 2023 – Oct 2023*)

- Served as the **primary public contact and brand representative**, responding to all inbound inquiries and managing public-facing messaging.

- Managed **70+ leads daily**, categorizing prospects into **Hot, Warm, and Cold** to optimize recruitment workflow.
- Implemented **AI-powered automation tools** to improve lead follow-up, email campaigns, and CRM accuracy.
- Elevated public engagement through targeted marketing efforts, digital outreach, and event representation.

Grants Administrator - Grants Project Manager (*Oct 2022 – Oct 2023*)

Ensured compliance, accurate reporting, and effective fund management throughout the grant lifecycle.

- Oversaw the grant lifecycle, including deliverables, reporting, and compliance with funding requirements for over 67 grants federal, state, private, foundation, and other donors.
- Improved cross-functional collaboration to streamline submissions and post-award tracking.
- Maintained accurate Salesforce data, increasing transparency and operational efficiency.

California California Early Care & Education Workforce Registry (CCALA)
Registry Operations Manager

06/2021 to 10/2022
Los Angeles, CA

As a Registry Operations Manager at California Early Care & Education Workforce Registry (CCALA), I managed operations to ensure data accuracy, efficiency, and compliance.

- Led 30+ staff, delivering training and management that ensured timely, cost-effective operations and high service quality.
- Developed and enforced data policies, improving data integrity and regulatory compliance.
- Cultivated partnerships with funders and agencies, securing sustained support and collaboration.

American Heart Association, Orange County, and Inland Empire
Director of Operations (COO)

09/2019 to 01/2021
Orange County & Inland Empire

Spearheaded operations, strategy, and teams to enhance organizational performance and mission impact.

- Led executive team and Board, exceeding division development goals and driving strategic growth.
- Prepared weekly financial reports, ensuring accurate budgeting and optimized cash flow.
- Ensured legal compliance through effective recruitment, onboarding, and staff development.
- Directed Intern and Volunteer Program, increasing engagement and managing 200+ participants.
- Boosted team performance 80% by implementing strategic schedules and educational opportunities.
- Managed office operations, remote support, enabling smooth daily functions, and successful outreach.

University of California, Irvine

07/2013 to 09/2019

Progressive Leadership Roles (AP-Fiscal Officer, Buyer, Tech, Manager, Advisory Director) **Irvine CA**

Effectively leveraged and expanded my skill sets to meet evolving organizational needs, advancing through leadership roles that strengthened operational efficiency, enhanced student engagement, and deepened service to the campus community.

Advisory Director – Student Life & Leadership

- Mentored student leaders, advised campus organizations, and supported leadership development programming.
- Helped improve student engagement, retention, and program performance through targeted advising.

Operations Manager – Division of Student Affairs

- Oversaw daily operations, budget tracking, and staff coordination for campus retail and service units.
- Directed hiring, onboarding, and cross-training for student and professional staff.

Fiscal Officer – AP Analyst

- Managed over \$13 million in institutional and retail accounts.
- Ensured timely vendor payments, reconciliations, and financial compliance.

Buyer – Licensing & Branding

- Coordinated with licensing and legal departments on branded merchandise and procurement.
- Trained in retail trend forecasting and contract negotiation with major vendors.

Technology Manager – UCI TechHub

- Directed all tech sales and technical service support across campus retail locations.

- Integrated system upgrades to improve transaction speed and service analytics.

Marketing Manager – Campus Mascot & Corporate Marketing Partnership Campaigns

- Led promotional campaigns and event branding through the university’s mascot program. Elevated brand recognition and student participation at university-wide events.

IT Administrator – Division of Student Affairs

- Provided frontline tech support and infrastructure oversight for multiple campus programs.
- Implemented system enhancements and trained staff on best practices.

Customer Service Manager - UCI Store

- Managed frontline teams and designed customer service training protocols.
- Recognized for elevating satisfaction metrics and student service standards.

MyGoal Solutions

07/2004 to 01/2021

Technical Business Consultant

Remote

As a Technical Business Consultant, I delivered data-driven solutions to improve operational workflows, system performance, and strategic decision-making.

- Executed digital campaigns and business plans, boosting client engagement, brand visibility, and conversion rates across platforms.
- Built SEO-optimized websites and databases, streamlining client operations and improving customer acquisition.
- Provided technical support and repairs, reducing system downtime and increasing team productivity.
- Delivered tailored solutions for healthcare, real estate, and retail clients, improving performance across online and physical locations.
- Managed multiple client projects in high-pressure settings, consistently meeting deadlines and exceeding expectations.

Education

New Southern Hampshire University
MBA, Master of Business Administration (Paused)

University of California, Irvine - Winter 2015
B.S., International Studies Major with Management Minor

Victor Valley College, Victorville, CA - Spring 2013
AA, Double Major in Mathematics and Business Administration

Key milestones

- Orange County Hispanic Chamber Of Commerce
Disneyland Hotel, The Estrella Awardee - Richard Porras, Youth Chamber Alumni Award 2023
- Rancho Cucamonga Chamber of Commerce & City of Claremont
Project Boon 2024 Volunteer of The Year
- President & Founding Member of the Inland Empire (IE) Alumni Chapter
University of California, Irvine - Alumni Association

Volunteer leadership

Girls Inc., Pasadena Tournament of Roses, Hispanic 100 Foundation, Ambassadors of Compassion (AOC), Mind Research Institute and the Orange County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Languages

- English & Spanish

Thank you for your consideration! Let’s work together!