

GABRIELLE H. LYON, PhD

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HIGHLIGHTS

Extensive nonprofit leadership experience including: vision-setting and strategic planning; data-driven organization development and evaluation; fundraising and board development; communications and branding; financial, annual planning and budget leadership of \$2m+; start-up, change and turn-around leadership.

Background in education design and civic engagement, specifically designing spaces and programs that enable participation by populations underserved by traditional design approaches; expertise regarding recruitment and retention of minority youth and girls to science, technology, engineering and math and access and equity issues affecting youth development and long-term educational outcomes.

Cofounder of nationally recognized nonprofit education organization dedicated to making science accessible to students of color and girls through personalized experiences with science and scientists. Built the organization from the ground up into a \$1.8 million dollar budget and 20+ employees.

Participant in nine international paleontology expeditions, specializing in logistics and field-based education outreach and social media communications.

Nationally sought educator and consultant on civic innovation and organizational capacity building.

EDUCATION

2011 Certificate in Nonprofit Management, Northwestern University

2010 PhD, Curriculum and Instruction, University of Illinois at Chicago.

Thesis: Project Exploration's Personalized Curriculum: Fostering Access and Equity in Science Out-Of-School.

1994 MA, History, University of Chicago

Thesis: Henry Field, the History of Anthropology, and Franklin D. Roosevelt's 'M' Project for Migration and Settlement.

BA with Honors, History, University of Chicago

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ILLINOIS HUMANITIES

JUNE 2019-PRESENT

A statewide nonprofit organization that activates the humanities through free public programs, grants, and educational opportunities that foster reflection, spark conversation, build community, and strengthen civic engagement, particularly for communities of color, individuals living on low incomes, counties and towns in rural areas, small arts and cultural organizations, and communities highly impacted by mass incarceration.

Executive Director

CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION

OCTOBER 2014-DECEMBER 2018

A non-profit cultural institution that inspires people to discover why design matters.

Vice President, Education and Experience

Goal: Reimagine the education department and position the Chicago Architecture Foundation as a relevant, innovative international leader in education.

- Reinvented the education department; built a team of 11
- Doubled our educational program reach from 15,000 to more than 30,000 youth annually through new programs such as Camps, GirlsBuild, the Teen Fellows program
- Established critical cross-sector partnerships with stakeholders including Northwestern University, Department of Family Support Services, Chicago Public Library, City Colleges and the Chicago Architecture Biennial.
- Created *No Small Plans*, a graphic novel, to anchor Meet Your City, a city-wide three-year initiative that works to close the city's civic education gap
- Served on the leadership team that steered the organization through a major transformation, including developing exhibits and media in the new Chicago Architecture Center.
- Shepherded two new, guest-centric volunteer arms: Education Guides, which support K-8 fieldtrips, family programs and festivals and Exhibit Hosts who personalize visits for guests to the Center.
- Identified new funding opportunities and led the development of successful proposals in grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (\$50K, \$164K), and IMLS (\$250K).
- Created proposals for private and public grants resulting in growth from \$290K in 2014 to \$760K in 2017.
- Increased educational program reach by 100% over a 4-year period through strategic program design, system building, and comprehensive, integrated volunteer management.

THIRTY MILLION WORDS INITIATIVE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

2013- 2014

An evidence-based intervention designed to narrow the language gap for children from lower-income families.

Director, Strategic Initiatives and National Partnerships

- Lead strategic planning, capacity building, budgeting; collaborate on cross-department fundraising strategy, cultivation and proposal development.
- Build a cross-sector coalition convening including: organizing a conference in Washington, DC in partnership with The White House office of Science and Technology Policy, the United States Department of Education and Health and Human Services agencies; drafting a national coalition campaign strategy.
- Design citywide Chicago campaign to close the early language gap.
- Shape key communications and public relations strategies.

PROJECT EXPLORATION

SEPTEMBER 2012-MAY 201

Interim Executive Director

- Lead crisis management and organization turnaround.
- Lead budgeting, operations, HR management including hiring and training new staff.
- Spearhead board development and fundraising.
- Overhaul communications, website and communications architecture.
- Design and lead program planning and implementation.

Senior Explorer

October 2011-September 2012

- Serve as advocate and lead fundraiser with select cultural, educational, government, and philanthropic leaders.
- Support board and senior leadership team as a strategist, educator, convener and communicator.
- Articulate and disseminate Project Exploration’s approach to teaching and learning and out-of-school-time education through strategic projects, technical assistance initiatives and writing and speaking engagements.

Founder and Executive Director

June 1999–October 2011

- Built and managed program, fundraising, and earned revenue strategies for \$1.8 million, 20-person, nonprofit science education organization from the ground up.
- Established nationally recognized model for recruiting and retaining minority youth and girls to science through out of school time programming.
- Created and managed programming reaching 300+ minority youth and girls annually with intensive youth programs, 30 teachers annually with professional development workshops, 40,000 visitors internationally via online expeditions and web initiatives, and more than one million people with traveling science exhibitions.
- Attracted more than \$7 million in philanthropic contributions for Project Exploration’s work, including organization’s first \$1+ million gift from a family foundation.
- Fostered dynamic board of directors representing Chicago’s cultural, scientific, philanthropic, and business communities.
- Led five-and-ten-year retrospective evaluation studies of the impact of Project Exploration’s model on participants’ educational aspirations and achievement.
- Project Exploration recognized with a Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring (2009), by the President Council of Advisors on Science and Technology as a national model (2010) and by the National Institute for Summer Learning as one of the best programs in the country (2011).

SMALL SCHOOLS WORKSHOP, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

1997-1999

Director, School Change Institute

- Developed and delivered statewide training programs to prepare education coaches for school improvement work based on a “whole school change” model.

Outreach Coordinator

1996- 1997

- Served as the external partner for a Chicago Public elementary school on probation. Succeeded in assisting school to eliminate probation within one year.
- Founded the Small Schools Expo, an annual conference of more than 100 small public schools showcasing school innovation and highlighting school choice opportunities for parents.

Teaching Tolerance. Southern Poverty Law Center, Montgomery, AL

June 1996-September 1996

Research Fellow

- Wrote and edited articles, conducted interviews for nationally recognized education magazine fostering interracial and intercultural understanding in the classroom.
- Developed story features and sidebar articles for *Starting Small*, an award-winning early-childhood curriculum.

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

1995

Substitute Teacher. K-8 all subjects, all grades.

SELECT TEACHING

Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University
 Adjunct Lecturer of Innovation and Entrepreneurship
Social Enterprise Lab: Designing for Change

Fall 2014 - 2016

University of Chicago Booth School of Business. **Spring 2014**
Instructional Coach.
Social New Venture Challenge.

Starter School. **Fall 2013**
Instructor.
Designing Civic Innovations for Social Impact. Co-taught with John Tolva.

University of Chicago Booth School of Business. **Spring 2013**
Instructional Coach
Social Entrepreneurship Lab.

University of Chicago Booth School of Business. **Winter 2013**

Instructional Coach.
Social New Venture Challenge.

University of Chicago Graham School. **Spring 2007**
Adjunct Professor.
Science Education and Social Change.

AWARDS & HONORS

2012

Childlink. *Annual Women's Luncheon to Benefit At-Risk Girls in the Foster Care System Honoree.*

After School Alliance. *National After School Champion.*

University of Illinois Chicago Gender and Women's Studies Program. *Community Service and Social Justice Award.*

2011

Chicago Magazine. *Chicagoan of the Year.*

Phi Beta Kappa. *Distinguished Service Award.*

National Summer Learning Association. *Excellence in Summer Learning Award to Project Exploration.*

2010

Office of the White House. *Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring awarded to Project Exploration.*

2009

University of Illinois at Chicago. *Dr. Ann Lynn Lopez Schubert Fellowship.*

Coalition for Essential Schools. *Theodore R. Sizer Dissertation Scholar.*

Chicago Community Trust. *Leadership Fellow.*

2007

Community Renewal Society. *"35 Under 35" Award.*

2004

Association of Fundraising Professionals. *Outstanding Community Leaders Award.*

2003

Chicago Flower and Garden Show. *Best Educational Exhibit, "The Mesozoic Garden."*

1999

Public Allies. *Tomorrow's Leaders Today*.

1997

Do Something. *Community Brick Award*.

1996

International Educators for World Peace. *Delegate to the United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland*.

1993

University of Chicago. *Howard Hughes Research Fellowship in the Biological Sciences*.

SELECT BOARDS & CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

Board Nominating Committee, Federation of State Humanities Councils	2020-Present
Great Cities Initiative, University of Illinois Chicago, Advisory Committee	2018 – 2019
Free Spirit Media, Board Member	2015 – 2021
Economic Club of Chicago, Member	2006 – Present
Project Exploration, Board Member	1996 – Present
Mayor's Technology Advisory Council, Co-Chair, Diversity Council	2013 – 2015
Garfield Park Conservatory, Advisory Board	2011 – 2015
National Girls Collaborative Project, National Committee Member	2011 – 2014
Clinton Global Initiative America; Senior Advisor STEM Education Working Group	2012 – 2013
National Coalition for Science After School, Executive Committee	2008 – 2011

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- 2013 *Bridging the Thirty-Million-Word Gap*. Conference organizer for the Thirty Million Words Initiative. Collaborated with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, Department of Education, Health and Human Services to develop the agenda for launching a national initiative to close the early language gap, invite and prepare speakers and manage all aspects of event implementation.
- 2012 *Clinton Global Initiative America, STEM Education Working Group*. Senior advisor. Developed program format, participated in participant recruitment and program strategy, as well as benchmarking, evaluation and goal setting.
- 2011 *Preconference Symposium: Building Effective Community Partnerships for Science After School, San Diego, California*. Co-organizer with the California After School Network. Led program development, recruited presenters and moderated sessions.
- 2010 *Second National Conference on Science and Technology in Out-of-School-Time. Los Angeles, CA*. Co-organizer with the Coalition for Science After School. Lead program committee, fundraising and marketing strategies for sell-out conference for 400+ individuals from 200+ organizations nationally. Recruited plenary presenters and session presenters, raised funds and corporate sponsorships.
- 2008 *First National Conference on Science and Technology in Out-of-School-Time. Chicago, IL*. Co-organizer with the Coalition for Science After School. Designed and organized sell-out conference for 300+ individuals from 200+ organizations nationally. Recruited plenary presenters and session presenters, raised funds and corporate sponsorships. Organized conference documentation and post-conference publication.

- 2006 *Digging Dinosaurs*. Multi-day scientist-in-residence program at the Portola Valley School District in Portola Valley, CA.
- 1998 *Junior Paleontologist Program*. Developed and taught a 10-day summer paleontology expedition to Big Bend, TX, for Chicago Public middle- and high-school students.
- 1997 *The Sahara Connection*. Designed and coordinated curriculum project which linked Chicago-area teachers with the team of the paleontology expedition to Niger.
- 1998 *Girl Talk*. Founded and co-led issues-oriented after-school program for girls grades 11-14 in a south side Chicago elementary school.
- 1995 *Stand for Children Day*. Co-organizer; fundraiser, public relations, logistics coordinator
Take Your Kids on an Expedition. Teacher workshops (with Paul Sereno)
Postcards from an Expedition. Wrote and designed interactive children's exhibit at Thomas Hughes Children's Library, Chicago, and Cook County Juvenile Detention center.
- 1994 *Adventures of the Dinosaur Hunters*. Live electronic field trip viewed by five million students nation-wide. Co-authored corresponding curriculum booklet sent free to 10,000 schools.

SELECT WRITINGS AND PUBLICATIONS

On Wisdom and Vision: Humanities Organizations in Illinois During COVID-19. March 2021. With M. Hallett, J. Yoo, P. Miner and A. Bhat.

Washington, By and By. A Community Planning Graphic Novel. 2019) With K. Bayer and D. Mawdsley. Download [here](#).

K-12 Architecture and Design Education in Out-of-School-Time: The Landscape in Chicago in the 2017-2018 School Year. May 2019. With C. Baker and J. Kalov.

No Small Plans. Chicago Architecture Center. July 2017.

Changing the Outcomes: School Design Principles for the Next Generation of Chicago's Learners. July 2015.

"School Is Not A Building." American Architecture Foundation. 2016.

"Project Exploration Environmental Adventurers: Amplifying Urban Youth Agency, Identity and Capacity with Mobile Technology." With Jameela Jafri. Article in: *Mobile Media Learning: Iterations and Innovations*. Ed. Chris Holden. Forthcoming, Purdue University Press. Spring 2013.

The State of STEM in Out-of-School Time in Chicago." *Project Exploration*. June 2013.

Beyond the Pipeline: A Pathways Framework for Engaging Youth in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math in Out-of-School Time. *After School Matters Journal*. Fall 2012.

Clinton Global Initiative and Small and Medium Sized Businesses: Hot Stuff or Hot Air?" April 23, 2012.
It's 3pm. Is Your Child Discovering the World? *Catalyst Chicago*. June 9, 2011.

Lessons Learned: 10 Years of Changing the Face of Science. *Project Exploration*. March 2011.

Project Exploration's Sisters4Science: A Blueprint for Involving Urban Girls of Color in Science Out of School. *Afterschool Matters*. Spring 2010.

Can You Tell Me How to Get to Science Street? *Huffington Post*. December 23, 2009.

The Onus Is On Us. Essay 1 in *A Watershed Moment: The First National Conference on Science and Technology in Out-of-School Time*. Chicago, IL: 2009.

Tragedy in Back of the Yards. With Maureen Kelleher. *Catalyst*. May/June 2008.

"Modern Schools Need Modern Methods." With Paul Sereno. *Montgomery Advertiser*, February 13, 2005.

Gabrielle Lyon and the Fossil Hunt. With Joyce Goldenstern. On Our Way to English series. Barrington, IL: Rigby, 2004.

A Simple Justice: the Challenge of Small Schools. Ed., with William Ayers and Michael Klonsky. Teaching for Social Justice series. New York: Teachers College Press, 2000.

"When *Jamas* is Enough: Creating a School for a Community (A Conversation with Tamara Witzl)." Chap. 11 in A Simple Justice: the Challenge of Small Schools. Ed. William Ayers and Michael Klonsky. Teaching for Social Justice series. New York: Teachers College Press, 2000.

"Desert Diary." *Medicine on the Midway*, April 1999.

"An Unconditional Embrace: An Interview with Bill Ayers." *Teaching Tolerance Magazine*, Spring 1998.
"Unite and Overcome! An Interview with Chicana Activist Elizabeth Martinez." *Teaching Tolerance Magazine*, Spring 1997.

"True Colors: An Interview with Jerry and Gloria Pinkney." *Teaching Tolerance Magazine*, Fall 1996.

"In Our Own Words: Exploring the Asian American Experience." With Ting-Yi Oei. *Teaching Tolerance Magazine*, Fall 1996.

"Public Can Take a Stand for Children Here at Home." *Montgomery Advertiser*, June 9, 1999.

"Let Light Be Shed: Pat Shipman's The Evolution of Racism." *Chicago Anthropology Exchange* (Spring 1995).

A Walk with an Expedition Teaching Guide. With Paul Sereno. Chicago, IL: Chicago Public Library Press, 1995.

"Circles in the Sand: The Sahara Comes to the South Side." *Chicago Maroon*, October 18, 1994.

"Sniffing Out Dinosaurs." *University of Chicago Magazine*, October 1994.

"Excerpts from the Dinosaur Journals." *Chicago Maroon*, October 14, 1994.

"New Dinosaur Found; Expedition a Success." *Chicago Maroon*, May 2, 1994.

"Travel Diary of a Saharan Adventure." *Chicago Maroon*, February 25, 1994.

SELECT TALKS & PRESENTATIONS

["5 Minutes with..."](#) Interview with Design Assembly. February 2019, New Zealand.

["Depth and Light"](#) Podcast interview with J.D. Pirtle. June 2019, Chicago.

[In a Rapidly Changing World, Who is a Designer?](#) DesignForAmerica. Design Week Panel. November 2018.

[Reimagining Wacker's Manual for Chicago Teens](#), Video Interview. Chicago Architecture Foundation. 2016.

[Wacker Manual: Reimagined](#). Ignite Talk. Digital Media Learning Conference, Los Angeles. June 2015.

No Small Plans
Association of Architecture Organizations
Miami, FL. November 4, 2016

Future of Cities
Archeworks
Chicago, IL October 28, 2016

Moderator, [Taking Planning into the Schools](#)
American Planning Association
Chicago, IL. May 26, 2016

Interview: ["New Tools for Involving Youth in Civic Engagement"](#)
WBEZ Morning Shift, Chicago, IL. Feb. 16, 2016

Civic Engagement and Urban Planning with Youth
American Planning Association National Conference
Phoenix, AZ. April 4, 2016

[Civic Chat: Networking Our Neighborhoods](#)
Microsoft Chicago. March 25, 2016

Keynote: [Hive Chicago Buzz](#)
Blue 1684. Chicago, IL. January 27, 2016.

[Building + Talking = Engineering + Design](#)
Opening Minds National Early Childhood Conference.
Chicago, IL. January 21, 2016.

Ignite Talk: [What the Heck is the Wacker Manual and Why Should I Care?](#)
Digital Media Learning Conference. Los Angeles, California. June 12, 2015

Think Chicago: Panelist, Civic Engagement.
1871, Merchandise Mart, Chicago IL. August 1, 2014.

Featured Presentation: [Going to Scale by Designing for the Long Haul](#).
Big Ideas Fest. Half Moon Bay, CA. December 4, 2013.

[What is Education Entrepreneurship?](#) NetImpact.

University of Chicago Booth School of Business. Chicago, IL. October 11, 2013.

Maximizing STEM Partnerships in Out of School Time.
National After School Association. Dallas, TX. April 2, 2012.

Students as Messengers of Science. ScienceOnline2012. Raleigh, NC. January 21, 2012.

Keynote Address. After School for All National Challenge. After School Alliance.
Washington, DC. April 16, 2011.

Mistress of Ceremonies. TedX Uchicago.
Chicago, IL. April 2011.

Numbers Tell a Story. Women in Science Symposium 2010.
Chicago, IL, April 17, 2010.

Community Organizing and Social Service: For the Benefit of All.
Taking the Next Step, University of Chicago. Chicago, IL. January 9, 2010.

Keynote: If Science is the Future. Who Will Take Us There? Midwest Science After School Conference.
Kansas City, MO. December 4, 2009.

Taking it Personally: Project Exploration's Sisters4Science. Motorola Innovation Generation Conference.
Schaumburg, IL. July 15, 2009.

Bringing it All Back Home: Summer Field Experiences that Get Students Interested in Science, Keep Students Interested in Science and Equip Students to Pursue Science. National Conference on Summer Learning.
Chicago, IL, April 16, 2009. Presented with Edna Angeles.

Lessons from the Field for K-16 Curriculum for 21st Century Science Education.
Pearson Strategic Advisory Board Annual Meeting.
Chicago, IL, April 2, 2009.

Plenary session moderator, "Big Ideas." First National Conference on Science and Technology in Out of School Time, Coalition for Science After School and Project Exploration.
Chicago, IL, September 19, 2008.

Beyond Breaking Barriers: Bringing 21st Century Science to Girls.
University of Chicago Women's Alliance. Chicago, IL, May 13, 2008.

Discoveries in the Sahara. Origins Center, Johannesburg, South Africa, November 28, 2007.
Keynote: Capacity Building at the Center. Annual Grantee Meeting.
Grand Victoria Foundation, Elgin, IL, 2006.

What are Funders Looking For? Association of Fundraising Professionals
Midwest Conference, Chicago, IL, 2006. Presented with Ann Goldman.

Unearthing the Hidden Curriculum. University of Chicago Physics Department, 2004.

Real-Life Board Development. Axelson Center for Non Profit Management,
Chicago, IL, 2003. Presented with Ann Goldman and Jamie Philippe.

Oral intervention: The Prevention of Racism and the Protection of Minorities.
48th Session of the United Nations Sub-commission on Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland, 1996.

Panelist: Impact of Youth on Racism.
United Nations Sub-commission on Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland, 1996.

RESEARCH AND FIELDWORK

- 2012 State of STEM in Out-of-School Time in Chicago. A yearlong community-based initiative to document the STEM landscape in Chicago in terms of access and equity for Chicago youth in grades K-12.
- 2011 Paleontology Expedition to Niger
- 2009 Paleontology Expedition to Niger
- 2008 Researcher, “Mud-trapped herd captures evidence of distinctive dinosaur sociality.” Varricchio, D. J., P. C. Sereno, L. Tan, X. Zhao, J. A. Wilson, and G. H. Lyon. *Acta Palaeontologica Polonica* 56.
- 2006 Paleontology Expedition to Niger
- 2005 Project Lead, *Project Exploration Youth Programs Evaluation*.
<http://www.projectexploration.org/youth-program-evaluation.htm>.
- 2003 Paleontology Expedition to Niger
- 2001 Paleontology Expedition to China
- 2000 Paleontology Expedition to Niger
- 1998 Researcher, “A Long-snouted Predatory Dinosaur from Africa and the Evolution of Spinosaurids.” With Paul Sereno, et al. *Science* 282.
- 1997 Researcher, *A History of the Kurds* by Susan Meiselas. Random House Press.
- 1996 Researcher, “Predatory Dinosaurs from the Sahara and Late Cretaceous Faunal Differentiation.” With Paul Sereno, et al. *Science* 272.
- 1996 Paleontology Expedition to Patagonia, Argentina
- 1995 Paleontology Expedition to Morocco
- 1994 Researcher, *After Tyler: British Social Anthropology 1885-1915* by George Stocking. University of Wisconsin Press.
- 1993 Paleontology Expedition to Niger
- 1991 Researcher, *Memories of the Southern Civil Rights Movement* by Danny Lyon. University of North Carolina Press.
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EXHIBITION PREMIERS AND HIGHLIGHTS

- 2013** **Thirty Million Words: The Three “Ts”** Bilingual exhibit in English and Spanish to educate parents about the power of their words to build babies’ brains. Pilot exhibit at Harold Washington Public Library November-December 2013.
- 2005** **GIANTS: African Dinosaurs, Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin, Illinois***
Reached more than 200,000 visitors, including more than 10,000 school children. Effectively served as a catalyst for engaging regional schools and community organizations.
- 2003** **GIANTS: African Dinosaurs, Garfield Park Conservatory, Chicago, Illinois***
Designed and developed new exhibition and associated education and training materials. Major 10,000 square foot exhibition premiering new dinosaur discoveries from Africa, including the premier of the first modern reconstruction of a new winged pterosaur. Attracted more than 100,000 visitors; included 24,000 school children, the most to visit the Conservatory since it opened in 1912.
- 2001** **The Science of SuperCroc, Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago, Illinois***
Designed and developed new exhibition and associated education and training materials. Designed free-access website. Successfully attracted an 11% increase in audience attendance during exhibit’s run.
- 2000** **African Giants, Navy Pier, Chicago, Illinois***
Attracted 600,000 visitors over three months to a free-access exhibition premiering the discovery of the most complete sauropod dinosaur and the first predatory dinosaur from the early Cretaceous period of Africa.
- 1997** **Dinosaur Expedition, Chicago Children’s Museum, Chicago, Illinois***
Developed and implemented successful proposal for the creation of the first permanent dinosaur exhibit in the country designed especially for young children. Designed, developed, and installed a permanent exhibit that recreated the site of the 1997 discovery of *Suchomimus*, a 110-million-year-old fish-eating dinosaur from the Sahara. Developed authentic, hands-on explorations based on real-life problems encountered during an expedition to the Sahara.
- 1995** **African Dinosaur Castaways, National Geographic Explorer’s Hall, Washington, DC***
- 1994** **A Walk with an Expedition, Harold Washington Public Library Center, Chicago, Illinois**
Proposed, designed, wrote, and installed free public exhibit showcasing the discovery of the first predatory dinosaur from the early Cretaceous of Africa.