

Blake Larsen

Program & Strategy Leader | Youth Development | Workforce Readiness | Postsecondary Access

Springfield, MO

Blake.J.Larsen@gmail.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Strategic nonprofit and education leader with extensive experience designing, managing, and evaluating youth development, workforce readiness, and postsecondary access initiatives. Proven ability to translate mission into measurable outcomes, lead cross-functional teams, manage complex programs, and leverage data to inform decision-making. Recognized for building sustainable systems, strengthening partnerships, and scaling impact across multiple sites. Well-suited for leadership, program management, strategy, and evaluation roles in nonprofit, education, and public-sector organizations.

KEY QUALIFICATIONS

- Program Design, Management & Evaluation
- Workforce Readiness & Career Pathways
- Postsecondary Access & Scholarship Administration
- Youth & Community Engagement
- Data Analysis & Outcome Reporting
- Compliance & Policy Alignment
- Staff Training, Coaching & Supervision
- Strategic Planning & Continuous Improvement
- Public Speaking & Stakeholder Communication

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Boys And Girls Clubs of Springfield

August 2025- February 2026

Future Ready Director

- Led organization-wide strategy for teen services, workforce readiness, and postsecondary programming across multiple sites serving diverse student populations.
- Designed, implemented, and continuously improved workforce readiness initiatives, including career exploration, employer partnerships, job training, and paid work experiences.
- Oversaw postsecondary scholarship programs, including application redesign, allocation processes, compliance review, and advising students on financial aid and college readiness.
- Directed the Youth of the Year program, managing selection processes, workshops, judging panels, and large-scale events aligned with national standards.
- Analyzed program data (attendance, participation, outcomes) to assess effectiveness, inform strategic decisions, and support reporting to leadership and external partners.
- Collaborated with schools, higher education institutions, employers, and community partners to expand access to career and postsecondary opportunities.
- Supervised and trained professional staff, supported leadership development, and created systems to improve consistency and quality across programs.
- Played a key role in organization-wide teen recruitment, retention, and engagement strategies.

Director of Teen Services

August 2020- August 2025

- Managed large-scale youth programs serving diverse and underserved populations, prioritizing equitable access to education, enrichment, and career pathways.
- Administered scholarships, stipends, and grant-funded initiatives in compliance with organizational and funder requirements.

- Partnered with schools, nonprofits, and community organizations to deliver inclusive programming aligned with donor and grant priorities.
- Supported youth beyond graduation, assisting with transitions to college, trade programs, and employment.

Teen Director - Stalnaker Unit

April 2017- August 2020

- Coordinated and implemented national education programs for middle and high schoolers
- Implemented lesson plans for homework help and tutoring services for BGCA National Power Hour Program and Project Learn
- Planned and implemented College Bound program for middle schoolers college prep
- Researched, tested, and modeled a variety of innovative, exciting new programs in a specific core area that meet the needs of the members, their parents and the community.

OZARKS REGIONAL YMCA

April 2015- March 2017

Program Director

Springfield, MO

- Maintained accurate and current statistics, records, and reports in compliance with state licensing and program requirements.
- Performed administrative activities to support the program, including record and file maintenance, registration, release forms, and emergency forms
- Promoted partnership with families by communication regularly to build mutual understanding and greater consistency for children

Boys And Girls Clubs of Springfield

July 2006- April 2015

Youth Development Professional

Springfield, MO

- Planned activities specific to learning areas within organization
- Organized, officiated, and facilitated sporting teams and events for club athletic programs for BGCA Triple Play National Program. Learning Center Director, September 2012- August 2013
- Implemented lesson plans for homework help and tutoring services for BGCA National Power Hour Program and Project Learn
- Advisor for BGCA Torch Club Charter and Keystone Charter
- Plan and implement fundraisers, social recreation activities, community service projects and community block parties for Torch Club sponsored events. 2012 Survey of Springfield's High Risk & Homeless Youth (Student lead development of Research Survey, June-July 2011, Missouri State University)

EDUCATION

MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

Springfield, Missouri

Bachelor of Science, Sociology

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- Systems thinker with strong attention to detail and follow-through
- Comfortable navigating compliance-driven environments and policy frameworks
- Effective communicator across youth, staff, leadership, and external stakeholders
- Adept at translating complex data into clear, actionable insights
- Mission-driven leader with a pragmatic, outcomes-focused approach