

Johnny Garvilla

Advancement Consultant · Friendraiser · Fundraising · Mission-Driven Leadership

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EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Mission-driven advancement leader, consultant, author, and former collegiate athletics executive with more than 30 years of experience building fundraising programs, developing donor relationships, leading teams, creating corporate partnerships, and helping schools, universities, athletic departments, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations strengthen their advancement culture. Known for a relationship-first approach to fundraising: learning the culture, honoring the story, rebuilding trust, and earning the ask.

\$100M+

Philanthropic support, sponsorships, gifts-in-kind, capital investments, and planned giving commitments

\$25M+

Contracts, sponsorships, naming-rights agreements, and strategic partnerships

\$100M+

Cumulative economic impact generated through major events

\$60M+

Managed in operations and scholarship budgets

CORE EXPERTISE

Major Gifts & Donor Cultivation

Corporate Partnerships & Sponsorships

Strategic Planning & Brand Positioning

Capital Campaign Planning

Athletics Advancement

Enrollment & Retention Support

Alumni & Community Engagement

Naming Rights & Facility Development

Leadership Coaching & Team Development

SELECTED CAREER IMPACT

- Generated more than \$100 million in philanthropic support, sponsorships, gifts-in-kind, capital investments, and planned giving commitments across colleges, universities, foundations, and youth sports.
- Negotiated more than \$25 million in contracts, sponsorships, naming-rights agreements, and strategic partnerships supporting athletics, advancement, and institutional growth.
- Drove more than \$100 million in cumulative economic impact through championship events, tournaments, and major celebrity and athletics-related programming.
- Managed more than \$60 million in operations and scholarship budgets across multiple institutions and organizations.
- Tripled corporate giving at the University of Missouri-St. Louis through a comprehensive corporate sponsorship and naming-rights initiative.
- Led or supported facility development spanning fieldhouses, halls of fame, locker rooms, football stadium enhancements, press boxes, synthetic turf fields, performance training centers, and athletics healthcare facilities.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Vice President of Philanthropy

Greenville University | Greenville, Illinois

2026 - Present

- Lead institutional philanthropy strategy, major gifts, capital campaigns, donor relations, and advancement operations in support of the university's mission and long-term growth.
- Partner with the President, Board, and senior leadership to align fundraising priorities with strategic plan, enrollment, and student experience goals.

Associate Director of Athletics, External Affairs

Greenville University | Greenville, Illinois

2021 - 2026

- Led two transformative capital campaigns for athletics facilities expansion.
- Helped secure support for fieldhouse, athletics museum and hall of fame, locker rooms, football stadium enhancements, press box, concession facilities, baseball press box, synthetic turf baseball field, performance training center, and athletics healthcare facility.
- Established the Orange & Black Athletics Annual Fund.
- Mentored Major Gift Officers in cultivation, solicitation strategy, portfolio management, and stewardship.

Principal Consultant

ProServe Consulting / John Garvilla LLC | Greater St. Louis

2007 - Present

- Advise colleges, universities, nonprofits, and mission-driven organizations on advancement strategy, donor relations, capital campaign planning, athletics annual funds, corporate partnerships, alumni engagement, event strategy, and long-term philanthropic development.
- Created comprehensive development and athletics advancement plans for institutions including Maryville University and Mid-Continent University.
- Directed major celebrity, alumni, and sports-related events, including Hall of Fame and institutional advancement events.
- Support leaders and teams in building sustainable advancement operations rooted in relationship, trust, mission clarity, and strategic follow-through.

Regional Sales Manager

Battery Outfitters | St. Charles, Missouri

2020 - 2021

- Oversee product sales across Eastern Missouri, Southeastern Iowa, and Western Illinois.
- Ranked #1 in new accounts among twelve regional sales managers during first month.

Director of Development, Alumni & Community Relations

Lassen College & Lassen College Foundation | Susanville, California

2019 - 2020

- Created an Annual Fund and Corporate Partnership program generating significant commitments.
- Secured a corporate partnership with Banner Health.
- Instituted facility and landmark naming-rights program to strengthen foundation development opportunities.

Director of Athletics / Foundation Leadership

Central Christian College of Kansas & Foundation | McPherson, Kansas

2018 - 2019

- Developed comprehensive strategic plan for the athletics program and created an Athletics Annual Fund.
- Directed the 75th Anniversary celebration for intercollegiate athletics and helped reinstitute the Hall of Fame.
- Negotiated a ten-year renewable Coca-Cola contract and launched facility/landmark naming-rights opportunities.

Director of Athletics

Truett McConnell University | Cleveland, Georgia

2017 - 2018

- Developed comprehensive strategic plan for athletics and created trustee- and administration-accepted proposals and budgets for five new athletics programs.
- Founded Student Athlete Advisory program and advanced academic monitoring, special projects, and student-athlete development initiatives.

Regional Sales Manager

MH Equipment | Greater St. Louis

2014 - 2017

- Ranked #2 in sales during second year with the company.

Executive Director

St. Louis Youth Soccer League | St. Louis, Missouri

2011 - 2014

- Led one of the Midwest's largest youth sports organizations.
- Served more than 15,000 participants and 1,000 teams annually.
- Increased enrollment by 25%.
- Secured tournaments generating more than \$50 million in cumulative economic impact.
- Oversaw a 104-acre sports complex with 17 fields.

Director of Athletics

University of Missouri-St. Louis | St. Louis, Missouri

2007 - 2009

- Instituted corporate sponsorship program that more than tripled corporate giving over the previous forty-two years.
- Implemented naming-rights initiative for corporate partners and developed the first Athletics Department policy and procedure manual.
- Co-hosted the NCAA Division II National Baseball Championship and coordinated the Tritons Celebrity Weekend honoring the St. Louis Hawks NBA Championship team.

Director of Athletics

Belhaven College | Jackson, Mississippi

2004 - 2007

- Led a turnaround from zero winning seasons to seventeen winning campaigns within three years.
- Increased athletics-related enrollment by 25%.
- Secured support for synthetic turf football and baseball fields.
- Helped develop athletics performance and training center.
- Negotiated partnership with the University of Mississippi Medical Center adding two full-time athletic trainers.
- Created the Blazers Built For Others service leadership program.
- Supported SACS accreditation documentation.
- Created the Blazer Club and instituted a comprehensive fundraising and sponsorship program.

Director of Athletics Promotions

Troy University | Troy, Alabama

2002 - 2004

- Coordinated the ESPN March Madness Selection Show featuring Dan Patrick.
- Helped lead activation for the final Blue-Gray Bowl.
- Built and managed a U.S. Army Recruiting Command partnership.
- Developed a 64,000-constituent athletics communications platform.

Head Men's & Women's Soccer Coach / Director of Athletics Annual Fund

Milligan College | Milligan, Tennessee

1997 - 2002

- Won five conference championships and earned national rankings of 10th and 11th.
- Recruited and developed three future FIFA World Cup participants, two Olympians, and twelve All-Americans.
- Two-time Regional Coach of the Year; three-time Conference Coach of the Year.
- Resurrected the Buffalo Club annual fund and led fundraising for the new two-field lighted soccer complex.

LEADERSHIP THEMES

- **Friendraising Before Fundraising** - Builds trust, honors history, and cultivates donor relationships before making the ask.
- **Institutional Culture Builder** - Creates systems, annual funds, sponsorship models, and team structures that continue beyond a single campaign.
- **Coach & Team Developer** - Known for mentoring staff, hiring strong leaders, and helping coaches see the larger mission of their work.
- **Mission-First Strategist** - Connects fundraising, athletics, enrollment, branding, and community engagement around a clear institutional purpose.

COMMUNITY & BOARD SERVICE

- Fellowship of Christian Athletes - Founding Board Member
- Christian Business Men's Connection
- Legacy Builders
- First Baptist Church Academy - Board Member
- Founder, The Seven Donor Journey Model

WHAT LEADERS SAY

"John is a transformational leader. He is a visionary and knows how to motivate staff and activate the plans of the programs he leads."

- Marty Shirley, former associate coach and athletics administrator

"John Garvilla was a great AD at Belhaven. He can be classified as a go-getter. We got more done during his tenure than any other time during my eighteen years here."

- Hill Denson, retired baseball coach, Belhaven University

"An instrumental ability that John possesses is his adeptness as a fiscal manager and his ability as a fundraiser."

- Dr. Joseph Cole, former athletic director and faculty athletics representative

"He has the gift of leadership, and his dedication to the moving pieces of fund-raising, mentorship, and holistic athlete development is evident in all that he does."

- Dr. Holly A. Haynes, Truett McConnell University

"For nine years John and Kim have answered every email, every phone call, listening and providing wisdom with the continual reminder to put God first."

- Autumn Letendre, Gold Star spouse and nonprofit leader