

GREG VANSELOW

Nonprofit Operations Executive | Systems-Building COO | Operational Craft & Durable Infrastructure

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Greg Vanselow builds the operational systems that let mission-driven organizations scale without breaking. Over 29 years of progressive leadership at Special Olympics Minnesota (“SOMN”) — culminating in the Chief Operating Officer role — he developed a rare combination of operational depth, governance partnership, and disciplined execution across functions most executives treat as separate domains. As COO, he held cross-functional accountability for mission programs, volunteer management, business intelligence, facilities, and technology for a \$12M statewide organization.

Greg's leadership signature is operational craft — the conviction that the system, the dashboard, the chart of accounts, the office build-out, and the governance cycle are each worth designing well, because their quality determines whether the mission delivers. The systems he built at SOMN include transforming a \$60K merchandise program into a \$160K revenue stream and \$30K profit center, a post-pandemic strategic plan that exceeded pre-COVID mission reach by 28%, an HR function holding 65%+ engagement scores, a redesigned chart of accounts that sharpened Board decision-making, and a Microsoft 365 environment that carried the organization through COVID and a 2019 cybersecurity incident.

He partners closely with finance, Boards, and CEOs; develops direct reports through structure, clarity, and coaching; and is equally comfortable negotiating a lease, redesigning Board financial statements, architecting a compensation system, or leading an enterprise cyber incident response.

Greg holds a BA cum laude from Hamline University and SHRM-CP/SCP training and brings a parallel discipline as a professional scenic designer and technical director — work that reinforces his operational hallmarks of precision, documentation, and durable execution. He is now pursuing his next executive chapter — with particular interest in COO, VP of Operations, and interim leadership roles in small-to-mid-sized mission-driven organizations where strong operational stewardship drives measurable impact.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Nonprofit Operations Leadership	Systems Design & Integration	Board Governance & Strategy
HR Infrastructure & Compensation Design	IT Infrastructure & Digital Transformation	Financial Stewardship & Reporting
Facilities & Lease Negotiation	Strategic Planning & Execution	Risk, Compliance & Cybersecurity
Mission Measurement & Analytics	Equity-Centered Leadership	Operational Craft & Quality

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Special Olympics Minnesota | Minneapolis, MN

1996 – 2025

Chief Operating Officer (2023–2025) · Vice President of Operations (2015–2023) · Director of Operations (2007–2015) · HR & Office Manager (2001–2007) · Administrative Assistant (1996–2001)

Joined as an administrative assistant and advanced through five progressive roles over 29 years to Chief Operating Officer of this \$12M statewide nonprofit serving 25,000+ participants annually and delivering 1M+ mission experiences per year. Final role held direct executive accountability for sports, health, and schools programming, volunteer management, branded merchandise, business intelligence, facilities, and IT — with direct or indirect responsibility for 30+ staff and oversight of a \$4M+ operational budget.

- **Led post-pandemic mission recovery:** Built and executed a three-year strategic plan (2022–2024) in partnership with the Board, resulting in mission experiences exceeding pre-pandemic levels by 28% and establishing the framework for the next phase of organizational growth.
- **Generated sustainable commerce revenue:** Converted a cost center into a \$30K annual profit by growing branded merchandise from \$60K to \$160K through rapid capacity building across operations, marketing, pricing, and customer-aligned inventory and merchandising—justifying transition to dedicated staff ownership.
- **Led three major facility relocations (2005, 2016, 2025):** Partnered with real estate, design, and project management firms and aligned staff and Board stakeholders to deliver site selection, leasing, and buildouts; notably negotiated relocation to Forum 900 — consolidating office and warehouse, reducing annual operating costs, and achieving a 6-year breakeven vs. prior leases.
- **Built HR function from the ground up:** Established core infrastructure (HRIS, policies, compliant records, and benefits) that evolved through organizational growth and leadership transitions—enabling development of advanced position leveling, compensation, and manager capability frameworks that sustained 65%+ engagement and were recognized for staff support well beyond the norm for organizations of similar size. Infrastructure continued operating effectively after HR oversight transitioned out of the role.
- **Redesigned chart of accounts and Board financial statements:** Reduced accounts from 3,000+ to ~500 and consolidated financial statements from 10 pages to 4 pages, resulting in sharper Board decision-making, more strategic financial questions, and a durable strengthening of the organization's financial culture.
- **Built COVID-era cash flow forecasting and financial planning:** Partnered with finance staff to reverse-engineer the general ledger into a scenario-based cash position model, enabling leadership and the Board to make informed decisions during extreme uncertainty. Led a rolling 12–24-month financial plan that preserved services, maintained stability, and emerged with stronger reserves and elevated Board confidence in staff financial leadership.
- **Led the organization through COVID-19:** Identified pandemic risk ahead of peers and drove early staff preparation for remote work, enabling a near-immediate (~1 day) transition and accelerating development of alternative programming for athletes.
- **Modernized technology infrastructure:** Migrated IT operations to Microsoft 365 and cloud-based SaaS, rolling out Teams, SharePoint, Lists, Planner, and Loop with targeted training. Deployed Autopilot and Intune for enterprise hardware security. The resulting infrastructure was the foundation that made the COVID remote-work transition possible.
- **Owned cybersecurity and incident response:** Following a 2019 IT security incident, led a multi-year security posture strengthening effort — built an incident response plan, implemented staff training programs, leveraged Microsoft 365 threat-monitoring tools, and

shifted culture from reactive to proactive. The 2019 response was later validated by U.S. Bank's global head of cybersecurity as "everything he would have done."

- **Strengthened Board-staff partnership:** Redesigned financial statements, narrative reporting, Board dashboards, and agenda planning — producing Board member feedback that service at SOMN was notably easier and more productive than at peer organizations. Built succession planning and composition matrix tools to support effective Board recruitment.
- **Created the organization's first mission measurement system:** Developed the "statement of mission activity" quantifying program impact across a complex portfolio, resulting in the first organization-wide shared view of outcomes and a framework used to set goals, recalibrate in-year, and communicate impact to donors.
- **Built a centralized volunteer management function:** Hired and coached a director of volunteer management who built a three-person team, resulting in record-setting shift fulfillment rates and broader participation at historically difficult-to-staff events — engaging 5,000+ volunteers annually across a statewide footprint.
- **Owned enterprise risk and compliance:** Served as internal subject matter expert for insurance, risk, IT security, and legal matters across statewide operations, resulting in zero material risk incidents and prevention of attempted cyber breaches through staff training and security protocols.
- **Advanced DEI as organizational priority:** Chaired the DEI Committee, integrated equity into strategic planning, and built manager training and coaching structures that supported inclusive leadership across the organization.
- **Embedded athlete voice in leadership:** Moved staff and Board members with intellectual disabilities out of token roles into embedded contributors. Partnered with athletes to create employment opportunities aligned with their knowledge, skills, and interests resulting in authentic athlete voices in organizational decision-making and measurable increases in athlete productivity and engagement.

Sample Night Live! | Saint Paul, MN

2008 – 2014

Managing Director & Graphic Designer

Mission-driven performing arts organization promoting local artists. Recruited by the founding executive to build financial, administrative, and operational infrastructure from scratch during the organization's formative years.

- **Built administrative infrastructure:** Led accounting, data, strategic planning, branding, marketing, and compliance, positioning the organization to secure grants, attract partners, and sustain programming through volunteer leadership transitions.
- **Managed front-of-house teams:** Supervised front-of-house and box office staff in a fast-paced event environment, producing smooth event operations and a positive guest experience that drove ticket sales and revenue.
- **Developed organizational brand:** Designed brand identity and marketing collateral from scratch, building a recognizable public presence that supported ticket sales, donor cultivation, and successful grant applications.

Freelance Scenic Designer & Technical Director | Twin Cities Theatre Community, MN

2000 – Present

Parallel Professional Practice

Sustained 25+ year professional practice as a scenic designer and technical director — a discipline that reinforces executive strengths in precision, documentation, budget management, and durable execution under deadline pressure. Theatrical work demands the same core capabilities as operations leadership: project planning, cross-functional coordination, vendor

management, timeline discipline, budget stewardship, and quality control under non-negotiable deadlines.

- **Designed and executed productions:** Delivered scenic designs and technical direction for professional and educational theatre productions, managing concept development, technical drawings (Vectorworks), budgeting, procurement, build schedules, and installation.

EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bachelor of Arts, Cum Laude, Theatre Arts | Hamline University | Saint Paul, MN | 2001

SHRM-CP/SCP Training | Society for Human Resource Management | 2019–2020

Leadership & Engagement Practices | Koliso (Dr. David Farrar & Genevieve Farrar) | 2015–2025

Ongoing professional development in bookkeeping, accounting, people management, project management, IT systems, data security, AI, and equity-centered leadership.

BOARD & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- **Treasurer & Board Member, Anoka Pride Day** (2025–Present)
- **Kettlebell Instructor, Hardshell Fitness** — equity-centered coaching across ages and abilities
- **Strategic Planning Committee, Thrive Mighty** (2019)
- **Graphic Designer & Brand Strategist, Theatre Unbound** (2010-2019)