

This résumé provides only a partial view of my lived and professional experience. Like many who work at the intersections of culture, systems, and spirit, my contributions do not fit neatly into institutional categories.

If you are considering me for a role, I welcome more information about the need. I believe in mutual clarity and right fit — and I'm happy to share the deeper layers of my work, values, and capacity. Please send to joy@kintothemother.org a job description, scope of work, or engagement outline so I can tailor a more complete, contextual response.

Joy Ellsworth

Kansas City Metropolitan Area • joy@kintothemother.org • (913) 522-3529

Thought Collaborator | Session Facilitator | Strategist | Systems Guide

Speaker, consultant, and nonprofit leader with 15+ years of experience in culturally rooted strategy, public interest leadership, land-based healing programs, and values-aligned organizational growth. Known for building trust across difference, designing systems with integrity, and helping visionary changemakers move from concept to structure.

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Public Speaking & Facilitation

- Town Hall Host: Loving Our Lots Roundtable (2020)
- Guest: KKFI Climate Conversations Radio Hour (2021, 2022)
- Storytelling Circle Facilitator: As Deeply as I Feel My Roots (2023)
- Recognized for holding cross-cultural space with reverence and clarity

Organizational Development & Program Design

- Co-founded Clement Waters: land-based healing and natural food cultivation programs (2014)
- Board Conflict Resolution Facilitator (2022)
- Board Strategic Planning Facilitator (2024)

Writing & Media Contributions

- Author: Making Betrayal into Lemonade (in editing 2025)
- Contributor to grant narratives, program reports, and case studies for community-led work (2010-)
- Co-developer of messaging to fundraise for privately purchased tribal land return efforts (2021-)

Selected Collaborations

- **Lé Makǵóǵe Wakǵánj Land Project** – Strategy, funding, and cross-cultural framework design
- **Global Indigenous Futures Game** – Nonprofit structure and fiscal sponsorship guidance
- **MY REGION WINS!** – Strategic advisory, board presentation coaching, grantwriting
- **PeaceWorks Kansas City** – Proposal development for nuclear narrative change

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Director of Strategy & Services

Groundswell Growth Coaching and Community • U.S., Central America, Oceania • Oct 2024–Present
Led a consultancy focused on supporting community-rooted nonprofits with strategic development, organizational growth, and mission-aligned fundraising.

- Advised over two dozen emerging organizations through early-stage formation, including IRS recognition, case development, donor cultivation, and board structuring.

- Designed and implemented custom development strategies, combining donor research, institutional funding pipelines, and storytelling grounded in equity and cultural competence.
- Led executive coaching for founders navigating capacity constraints, complex partnership landscapes, and communication challenges.
- Developed participatory planning frameworks to strengthen internal alignment, stakeholder buy-in, and board engagement.
- Built donor communications systems emphasizing trauma-informed messaging, community resilience, and shared values.
- Partnered with national funders and movement leaders to align grassroots fundraising models with long-term mission sustainability.

Development Director

Metropolitan Energy Center • Plains, Midwest & Ozarks • Feb 2019–Dec 2024

Directed fund development and strategic communications at a regional nonprofit navigating polarized political landscapes to advance environmental equity and clean energy access.

- Raised \$18M through a federal Solar for All proposal by framing economic expansion and job creation opportunities in urban communities traditionally excluded from clean energy investment.
- Cultivated and sustained diverse funder relationships by aligning messaging with audience values—from local environmental justice advocates to national agencies prioritizing economic performance.
- Led full-cycle development strategy, managing a multimillion-dollar portfolio of foundation, government, and corporate grants with a consistent focus on bipartisan resonance and public accountability.
- Produced grant narratives, donor materials, and reports tailored to funder interests while maintaining fidelity to the organization's mission and community-identified priorities.
- Built internal systems for funder tracking, reporting, and renewal forecasting using Salesforce NPSP and Airtable, while training staff on narrative fidelity and compliance.
- Advanced strategic communications that unified policy, environmental, and economic frames to appeal to stakeholders across ideological and cultural lines.
- Supported program teams in translating complex clean energy work into accessible, compelling public-facing communications and funding appeals.
- Secured growth-stage funding to launch new programs in workforce development and electric vehicle infrastructure, helping the organization triple unrestricted revenue over five years.

President & Co-Founder

Clement Waters Retreat • Central United States • Nov 2014–Present

Co-created a nonprofit rooted in ecological well-being, civic healing, and community education—facilitating personal and collective transformation through relationship-building with land and one another.

- Designed and led public-facing programs that bridged environmental justice, intergenerational storytelling, and cultural restoration in historically excluded communities.
- Built trust with marginalized neighborhoods through deep listening, long-term partnership cultivation, and volunteer-led initiatives that promoted civic dialogue and mutual care.
- Directed grant writing and program reporting efforts, securing early-stage funds and aligning funder narratives with grassroots realities.
- Created accessible tools for reflection and group conversation, including wellness curricula, site-based nature therapy practices, and regenerative land use education.
- Represented the organization in cross-sector convenings and public forums, fostering collaborations across public health, urban planning, and community safety efforts.

- Mentored emerging leaders in neighborhood-based initiatives, equipping them with strategic guidance, fundraising approaches, and value-based communications.

Executive Director

37th Judicial CASA • West Plains, MO • Mar 2015–May 2016

Led a child advocacy organization serving foster youth in rural southern Missouri, transforming operations and fundraising systems while cultivating community trust and court relationships.

- Expanded program reach by strengthening relationships with judges, child welfare workers, and volunteers across three counties.
- Streamlined program reporting and case documentation systems to improve accountability and deepen impact stories shared with stakeholders.
- Secured new grants and increased unrestricted revenue by crafting trauma-informed appeals and donor communications grounded in systemic awareness.
- Partnered with the Board of Directors to conduct strategic planning, update policies, and establish long-range sustainability practices.
- Delivered public presentations and advocacy trainings that highlighted the intersection of poverty, neglect, and systems-level trauma in rural family courts.
- Recruited and supported a culturally responsive volunteer corps trained in non-adversarial advocacy methods.

EDUCATION

Master of Public Administration – Nonprofit Management

University of Missouri – Kansas City

- Certification: Fundraising Strategy (Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership)
- Emphases: Nonprofit management, fund development, and equity-centered systems strategy

Bachelor of Arts – Interdisciplinary Arts

University of Kentucky

- Emphases: Education, Composition, Visual Design & Performance