

Justin D. Maxson

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Professional Summary

Senior executive manager with over 25 years of leadership in producing cross-sector social change outcomes across community economic development, philanthropy, and the federal government. Proven ability to design and implement equity-driven strategies, secure and deploy major funding, and build coalitions that advance climate resilience, sustainable economic development and civic engagement. Trusted advisor to philanthropic, nonprofit, and public sector stakeholders across the country.

Professional Experience**Executive Director**

BuildUS (fiscally sponsored by Amalgamated Charitable Foundation), Remote, Dec 2023 – Present

- Lead a \$50M start-up philanthropic pooled fund to help workers and disadvantaged communities' access federal resources under BIL, CHIPS, and IRA to advance economic, climate and democracy outcomes.
- Developed grant-making and learning strategies; raised an additional \$10M.
- Manage senior staff leadership, liaise with key stakeholders including the White House, and drive fund growth.
- Staff funder board.

Senior Fellow

Amalgamated Foundation, Remote, Sep 2022 – Dec 2023

- Developed a \$15M technical assistance and communications initiative for underserved rural and tribal communities.
- Produced research and strategic insights on accessing federal climate and economic development funding.

Deputy Under Secretary, Rural Development

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC, Jan 2021 – Aug 2022

- Collaboratively managed a \$240B portfolio and supported rural investments exceeding \$40B in one year.
- Co-led agency efforts on equity, played key role in developing of an all of government technical assistance collaboration.
- Played a key role in USDA's clean energy financing and climate strategy; represented USDA on White House Interagency Working Group for Coal Communities.
- Managed diverse senior team of 15 as Acting Under Secretary (10 months), led key segments of team as Deputy Under Secretary.

Chief Executive Officer

Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, Winston-Salem, NC, Mar 2015 – Jan 2021

- Directed \$200M values-aligned investment portfolio and \$12–15M in annual grants.
- Integrated racial equity into foundation strategy and expanded community economic development and civic engagement-focused programming.
- Co-created Uplift America Fund, leveraging \$400M in USDA capital and \$22M in grants.
- Recruited multiple new board members, developed approach to onboarding next generation of family.
- Managed diverse senior team of 4, staffed board.

President / Vice-President

Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED), Berea, KY, Feb 2002 – Feb 2015

- Scaled CDFI assets from \$4M to \$30M; increased staff from 8 to 30.
- Led new clean energy, sustainable forestry, small business and state economic policy initiatives.
- Developed regional Just Transition strategy that drove multi-partner policy, program demonstration and fundraising outcomes.
- Raised \$70M and expanded federal partnerships.
- Supervised senior team of 6, staffed board.

Executive Director

Progressive Technology Project, Washington, DC, Apr 1999 – Feb 2002

- Founded nonprofit focused on technology capacity for grassroots organizing.
- Managed \$3–4M in annual grants; built national partnerships.
- Staffed funder and practitioner board.

Various Early Roles in Community Development

MACED, Letcher County Action Team, and San Francisco Community Recyclers
1991 – 1999

- Designed local economic initiatives, managed nonprofit operations, and facilitated rural development networks.

Education

M.A., Anthropology

Boston University, Boston, MA | 1996

B.A., Anthropology (Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa)

University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY | 1994

Additional Study

Intensive Arabic, Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt | 1993

International Relations, Antioch College, Yellow Springs, OH | 1989–1990

Board & Advisory Leadership

- **Truist Bank**, Community Development Advisory Board (2020–2021)
- **Coastal Enterprises**, Board Member (2017–2021)
- **Appalshop Trust**, Trustee (2013–2015)
- **Blue Moon Fund**, Strategic Advisor & Fellow (2011–2015)
- **FAHE**, Board Member & Vice-Chair (2011–2018)
- **MDC, Inc.**, Board Member (2011–2015)
- **Center for Rural Strategies**, Vice-Chair (2000–2012)
- **Rural LISC**, Advisory Council Member (2004–2015)

Awards & Honors

- East Kentucky Leadership Award-Public Citizen
- Boston University Presidential Graduate Fellowship
- Zolondek Non-Western Study Scholarship
- Gaines Fellowship in the Humanities
- Academic Excellence Merit Scholarship
- Undergraduate Research Fellowship

Skills & Interests

Skills: Strategic planning, grant-making, nonprofit management, clean energy finance, policy analysis and development, philanthropic advising, communications, Arabic (basic), French (basic)

Interests: Reading, running, hiking, racial equity, climate justice, social change, painting