LOYOLA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Jesse Hicks: *Executive Bio*

Jesse D. Hicks is an accomplished executive leader, advancement strategist, and mission-driven professional with nearly 20 years of experience leading growth, strengthening organizations, and securing transformational philanthropic support across healthcare, higher education, and Catholic education. Known for combining strategic vision with authentic relationship-building, Hicks has built a career helping purpose-driven institutions expand their impact, deepen community engagement, and achieve long-term sustainability.

A lifelong product of Loyola Catholic School, where he was educated from kindergarten through grade 12, Hicks credits Catholic education with shaping his values, faith, and leadership philosophy. He is also a graduate of Saint John's University, where he further developed his commitment to service, leadership, and community. His connection to Catholic education remains central to both his personal and professional life.

Hicks most recently served as Vice President of Advancement, Marketing & Communications for the Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation, where he was a member of the executive leadership team helping guide the 130-person organization. In this role, he led advancement and marketing functions, managed a team of 13 professionals, and worked closely with board members, physicians, donors, and community leaders to advance the organization's mission. During his tenure, annual philanthropic revenue increased from $4.3 million to more than $25 million. He also personally secured multiple principal gifts, including three commitments at the $5 million level.

In addition to fundraising success, Hicks has demonstrated a talent for innovation and audience growth. He led the transformation of the organization's signature gala into the Heart 360 Concert at The Armory, generating more than $1 million in new revenue while expanding brand reach to thousands of new supporters. Under his leadership, the foundation's digital donor community grew from 6,000 to 90,000 participants, significantly increasing awareness and engagement.

Previously, Hicks served as Senior Director of Development and Interim President of the Hennepin Healthcare Foundation. During a period of executive transition, he served as chief spokesperson, led a team of 20 professionals, strengthened donor confidence, and helped grow annual revenue from under $8 million to $24.5 million. He also played a key role in securing the largest individual gift in the organization's history—a $10 million commitment.

Earlier in his career, Hicks served as Major Gift Officer for Minnesota State University, Mankato, where he helped advance a $75 million campaign and increased support for Arts & Humanities initiatives by 150 percent. He also served as Director of Development for Loyola Catholic School, where he led all fundraising programs and events, raised more than $600,000 annually, established 19 new endowments totaling $1 million, and managed a $2 million capital campaign.

Throughout his career, Hicks has been recognized for building strong teams, leading through change, and aligning stakeholders around a shared mission. He brings expertise in fundraising, strategic planning, marketing, communications, board relations, and organizational leadership. Just as importantly, he is known as a values-based leader who believes successful institutions thrive when they remain grounded in service, excellence, and faith.

A member of Saint Joseph the Worker Parish, Hicks remains deeply connected to the Mankato community. He is passionate about strengthening organizations that serve families and communities, and he believes education plays a vital role in developing future leaders prepared to live lives of purpose, character, and service.