

William D. Nicholson II

President

Connie Maxwell Children's Home

Danny Nicholson was born alone on February, 26, 1962.

He was adopted by Billy and Mary Nicholson, a maintenance worker and school teacher, who took him home to [401 West Richardson Circle](#) in Hartsville, South Carolina. He grew up in a Christian elementary school and developed a love for the game of basketball. While training for basketball in high school, he found his God-given talent for running and joined the high school Track and Field team in the spring of 1978. He ran 4:28 in the mile during the State Championship meet in 1979 which earned him an athletic scholarship at Charleston Southern University. He graduated from CSU in 1984 with a major in Communications and minor in Religion.

While attending CSU, he met his wife Debra, developed a love for music and songwriting, and began his fundraising career two weeks before graduation. From 1984 until 2017 (33 years), Danny served in University Advancement for eight different institutions of Higher Education, including, Medical University of South Carolina, Coker College, and Carson Newman University, to name a few. In these roles, he was responsible for leading fundraising campaigns that raised over 100 million dollars. Danny completed his Masters and Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of South Carolina in 2006 and was awarded the "Grenzebach Award" by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), which earned him the designation of writing the top dissertation for fundraising in the nation. He also graduated from the prestigious Harvard Leadership Institute in 2007.

Through the years, Danny honed his skills as a songwriter and completed four original albums that he used to minister to young people across the Southeast for over 10 years. All proceeds from album sales were used to minister to children and support mission work. In 2009, "*Legacy Road*" was produced by singer/songwriter Gene Cotton and recorded in Nashville, Tennessee. "*Legacy Road*" featured original songs written and performed by his family and friends. The financial support received from the album was donated to the "Nicaragua Project" and was used to paint a school in Managua, install ten computers in their school, and construct a roof on the home of Roger and Sonia Gonzalez. Danny has always been convicted to tie his work to the needs of the "least of these."

Danny has been recognized for his athletic accomplishments and service to others. He was presented the "Wynn Christian Athlete Award" and named "Alumni of the Year" at Charleston Southern University. His participation in Rotary International garnered him *Rotarian of the Year* and named a *Paul Harris Fellow* for his service above self. He completed the Boston Marathon in 2000 and 2007.

Often called a "meaning maker," Danny has been a sought after speaker across the nation for nonprofit organizations, conferences, and churches on topics ranging from legacy, leadership, fundraising, and faith.

A proud son, husband, father, singer/songwriter, fundraising leader, and speaker, Danny now adds author to his long list of adventures. His debut memoirs, *My Own Backyard*, is a compilation of all the stories, poems, and songs that defined the first 55 years of his life.

Danny assumed the presidency of Connie Maxwell Children's Home on September 1, 2017 and currently lives on campus with his wife of 33 years Debra and their two dogs, Marley and Summer in Greenwood, South Carolina. They have two sons, Taylor and Bryson, who are accomplished musicians and reside in Charleston and Nashville.

After a lifetime of running, singing, fundraising, speaking and serving, Danny and Debra can be found on Sunday mornings sitting in Connie Maxwell Baptist Church holding precious children in their arms. God called Danny and Debra to this special place to use all that they have learned and everyone they know to give broken, abandoned, and lost children and families a home just like God gave to him on that February morning in 1962. Danny often says, "The face of God is a child without a home."