



SEARCH FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Position Profile

Grassroots Tennis & Education seeks a passionate and inspirational leader who is committed to the success of the organization and devoted to improving the outcomes of the young people, families, and communities it supports. This is a unique opportunity to capitalize on the organization's assets and successes to date and to further strengthen its programs, infrastructure, partnerships and commitment to racial equity and social justice.

Why Grassroot Tennis & Education

"We are relationship-focused, community-oriented, inclusive and fun!"

It is the right moment for this leadership transition. Grassroots has a solid and stable foundation, talented team, committed board, and respected track record. It has recently completed a strategic plan that lays out broad priority areas to focus on, and that also leaves room for new leadership to make their own imprint. This is an exciting time of growth, and we are looking for someone who has the right combination of qualifications listed below.

About Grassroots Tennis & Education

Grassroots is a youth development nonprofit organization that uses the sport of tennis to engage youth in holistic out-of-school time programming and licensed summer camps. Operating in Fairfield County, the organization's **mission is to help youth build strength of character and a foundation for success on the tennis court, in the classroom and in life.** Grassroots does this by offering free, year-round programs which combine tennis instruction with academic support and character development.

In November 2019, two organizations - Norwalk Grassroots Tennis & Education (founded in 1995) and Stamford Youth Tennis Academy (founded in 2014) - merged to be bolder, stronger, and more sustainable in achieving a collective mission. Today, Grassroots remains a vital chapter of the USTA National Junior Tennis and Learning network and serves over 250 children each year ages 5 to 18. Grassroots practices a relationship-first approach that brings together children and their families with dedicated volunteers and caring staff. The organization believes in the following core values:

- ***We center youth*** - Every child is seen, heard, and valued at Grassroots...
- ***We place youth in the driver's seat of their own success*** - We believe our youth are their own assets, that they have the strength and power within themselves to succeed. We are not here to fix, to solve, or to save anyone – we are here to listen, to encourage, to support, and to lift up...



- ***We create a nurturing and safe environment*** – We seek out and celebrate diversity in all forms and strongly advocate for racial equity and are prepared to actively dismantle personal, interpersonal, institutional, and systemic racism and oppression that show up in our organization so that everyone can thrive...
- ***We build a culture of continuous learning*** - We are not complacent. We do not assume that the ways we are used to doing things are the only correct ways and we challenge and support each other individually and collectively to learn, to grow, and to show up better each day.

“Everything I’ve learned in tennis has made me a better person on and off the court ... in school, becoming a better student, just being a better person overall.”

Grassroots Alumnus

For more information, please visit the [Grassroots Website](#).

About the Opportunity

The Executive Director provides the leadership of the organization and direction to promote positive youth development outcomes. The Executive Director leads the organization through programmatic, operational, and financial oversight in accordance with the goals and values of the Board of Directors and organizational stakeholders. The Executive Director is responsible for building relationships and strengthening the Grassroots’ mission within the communities of both Norwalk and Stamford, CT.

The Board is seeking a new Executive Director who will provide strategic leadership; ensure the development and delivery of tennis and educational enrichment programs, while bringing a fresh perspective; revisit, refine and implement the strategic plan and vision; leverage Grassroots’ assets, reputation, and talented staff; galvanize its community and alliance partnerships; implement a staff development program; drive fundraising efforts; be a strong communicator; and maintain and develop a strong relationship with the Board.

To support this important leadership transition, Grassroots has engaged consultant Roosevelt Smith to facilitate a thoughtful and inclusive transition process. Staff and Board members participated in the development of this position profile, which was also informed in part by a recent organizational assessment that included input from community partners and stakeholders. The staff and Board have continued related discussions and work to prepare the way for its next Executive Director. Results of these discussions will also inform the next leader through an on-boarding process supported by the consultant.

Candidate Profile

Ideal candidates will have a solid nonprofit sector management, youth development or sport background and/or experience i.e., as a champion and advocate for the mental, physical,



emotional, and social benefits of sports related youth development programs; a track record of leadership and meaningful staff development; exhibited strong board relations and financial acumen; and have had successful experiences building both collaborative and fund development relationships.

The new leader must be able to enact a lens of racial equity and advocacy, a connector on community engagement, and a strategic thinker.

Qualifications: The Board seeks candidates for the Executive Director role with many of the following experiences and abilities:

Advocacy and Educational Leadership

- Experience, commitment, and familiarity with corresponding practices to advance racial equity.
- An understanding of local collective impact imperatives around youth development outcomes – academic, health, resiliency, growth, and development.
- Ensure programs are of the highest quality and meet the needs of a variety of audiences.
- A commitment to stay informed of legislation and other political issues impacting Grassroots' mission.

Community Collaborations/Alliances and Strategic Communications

- Initiate, develop, and maintain productive and mutually beneficial collaborative relationships with individuals and organizations which effectively represent racially and ethnically diverse communities across the region, including as a liaison with community groups.
- Proven ability to develop and implement marketing/communications programs creating a clear and consistent identity that generates understanding and enthusiasm for the mission and goals; and clear understanding of accomplishments and impact generated by Grassroots.
- Accomplished public speaker serving as primary spokesperson.

Fundraising

- Capable of leading and participating in major gift solicitations, capital campaigns and other fundraising initiatives when appropriate.
- The ability to hire and work collaboratively with a Development Manager to create and execute fundraising strategies in partnership with the Board.
- Demonstrated experience cultivating and maintaining relationships with private and public funding sources; and supporting development of a culture of philanthropy with the Board.



Operations and Staff Development

- Experience coordinating and managing workflow processes, and general understanding of facility and operational needs.
- Senior management experience including leading, inspiring, and managing a diverse staff.
- Manage qualitative and quantitative data and analytics pertaining to general operations, budgets, surveys, and other relevant reports.
- Experience recruiting, hiring, supervising, mentoring, providing professional development opportunities and directing and evaluating senior staff in the performance of their duties.

Financial Management and Planning

- Oversee all financial reporting, contractual obligations and donor/funder restrictions, and appropriate internal policies and procedures ensuring such compliance.
- Prepare and administer annual operating and capital budgets, and understand and manage multiple projects,
- Manage communication with the Board to provide regular comprehensive reports on revenue, expenditures, and other key financial and non-financial metrics.

Strategic Leadership, Thinking and Planning

- Transformative ability to provide vision and leadership for accomplishing the mission and long-term development and growth, as well as remaining up to date on emerging trends.
- Strong track record of strategic thinking, planning, and aligning mission, the business model, internal systems and structures, staff and board, and programs to support that strategy.

Governance, Board Relations, and Management

- Experienced in board governance and working with a board of directors on strategic planning, policy development, financial management, and fundraising.
- The ability to manage and foster relationships and communications with the board of directors; participate actively in board meetings and present its members with the information necessary to support successful and informed governance, planning and action.

Other Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree preferred.
- Experience, active learning, and practice in advancing racial equity, anti-racism, DEI and related work.



- Excellent written and verbal communication skills. Ability to maintain/encourage open communications with staff, the Board, volunteers, and the community.
- Proficiency in commonly used systems such as Google docs, Microsoft office suite, excel, Zoom.

Personal Characteristics and Leadership Attributes

- Effective listener; high emotional intelligence; open-minded; inclusive; enthusiastic, collaborative
- Strongly committed to racial equity, anti-racism, DEI, and social justice.
- Relationship/coalition builder; approachable; fair; passionate; authentic; servant leader.
- Self-confident, resilient; integrity; believes in continuous learning/improvement; focused.
- Capacity to engage in difficult conversations around racism, white supremacy and more.
- Well-organized, results-driven, and inspiring; visionary; mature; judicious

Compensation

- **Salary:** A competitive base salary range of **\$100,000 - \$120,000** based on requisite work experience and performance during the interview process.
- **Time off:** 21 total days off per fiscal year plus additional paid days when Norwalk Public Schools (NPS) are closed for extended recess days. Days off are a combination of company-paid holidays and personal time off that will increase with tenure.
- **Medical benefits:** 70% employer-paid medical benefits for a full-time staff member.

Candidate Application Guidelines

This search is being conducted by Roosevelt Smith. All submissions are confidential. To express an interest, candidates should **include a resume and cover letter**, and apply via email to: EDSearch@ngtenniseducation.org with the following in subject heading: **Grassroots Executive Director**.

Please also indicate how you learned of the opportunity, along with salary expectations and attach any other relevant information (e.g., published articles, presentations, etc.). All applications will be acknowledged and kept strictly confidential. Applications will be accepted until the position has been filled.

Grassroots Tennis & Education is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We will seek, and welcome, a diverse pool of candidates.