



Title: Director of Advancement

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

The mission of The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk is to ignite a connection to Long Island Sound and the ocean to enrich the lives of all people and inspire action to protect our blue planet. For more than 35 years, the Aquarium has played a significant role in shaping the landscape of Norwalk and the region. The second largest family attraction in Connecticut, and 50 miles from New York City, the Aquarium historically hosts nearly 500,000 guests annually. Its primary exhibits take guests on a voyage from the shallow salt marshes and estuaries to the depths of the Long Island Sound and the ocean beyond, culminating with habitats for sharks and harbor seals. Altogether, the Aquarium is home to nearly 7,500 animals and over 300 species in 75 exhibits. A new 4D Theater offers a unique sensory film experience for guests. Its education programs introduce approximately 65,000 students, campers and scouts to marine and STEM education. The Aquarium is recognized as a top aquarium in the nation, and is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. It is an active participant in the local and regional community. The strength of the Aquarium is its 60 full-time staff, and part-time and seasonal staff, in addition to volunteers who contribute nearly 20,000 hours annually.

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Director of Advancement plays a central role in the overall success of The Maritime Aquarium, with the responsibility of raising funds to successfully meet the Aquarium's ambitious mission, conduct the full breadth of activities and programs, and fulfill plans for future growth and expansion. The Director of Advancement manages a comprehensive development program including membership, major gifts, individual annual giving, partnership on events, corporate and foundation giving, planned giving and government support. The Director of Advancement is responsible for developing and implementing all fundraising strategies and activities, and cultivating and stewarding donor relationships, to support unrestricted operating, restricted program, capital and endowment needs.

The Director of Advancement reports to the Chief Strategy and Growth Officer and works closely with the Board of Trustees and the Philanthropy and Engagement Committee, and is part of the institution's senior management team. This position has three direct reports: an Associate Director of Advancement, a Membership Manager, and a Grants Manager.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Work closely with the Chief Strategy and Growth Officer to aggressively plan, lead and direct the organization through the development and implementation of comprehensive fundraising efforts to meet the operating, exhibition, education, conservation, capital, and endowment needs of The Maritime Aquarium for the present and the long-term future.
- Work with the Chief Strategy and Growth Officer and President to motivate and strengthen the Board of Trustees in its role related to development; expand, manage and coordinate the Board and other volunteers' involvement in fundraising activities; and take an active role in serving and supporting the Board and several Board committees.
- Work with the Chief Strategy and Growth Officer, President and the Board to cultivate, solicit, and steward a portfolio of high net worth individuals, with a focus on major gifts, and further create and manage a large-scale cultivation effort to develop a pipeline of new donors for the fulfillment of funding goals, while ensuring appropriate recognition of donors of all levels.
- Work closely with staff (particularly the Senior Manager of Events and Community Engagement), trustees, and other volunteers to maximize the effectiveness of the organization's special events and other activities to help attract, develop and retain donors. Create new events for this purpose.
- Oversee the Aquarium's membership portfolio of nearly 8,000 households; increasing retention rate, acquisition rate, and engagement with non-member activities and initiatives.
- Supervise and oversee the research and preparation of foundation, corporate and government grant proposals, and oversee grant administration and reporting.
- Creatively develop and implement strategies for constituency development and new markets for fundraising initiatives in order to increase donor participation with Maritime Aquarium programs, including through corporate gift giving, cause marketing, membership, online giving, capital campaigns, planned giving, annual giving, major gifts, grant acquisitions and special events.
- Work to foster ongoing, collegial relations among the advancement department and other departments of the organization. Serve as a member of the senior management team that guides strategic decision-making.
- Build, train, and supervise an effective development team and support staff.
- Team with other senior leaders within the Strategy and Growth Department to enhance the Maritime Aquarium's public image and positioning, foster positive external relations, build long-term strategic alliances, and play an active, public role as a spokesperson and representative of the organization.
- In conjunction with the Chief Strategy and Growth Officer and the senior management team, prepare and manage the department's financial reports and budget; monitor the development budget and control expenses, as well as oversee the administration of the development department, its procedures and policies.

- Working with senior management, create and implement an operational plan for future Maritime Aquarium Capital Campaigns, including cultivation events, printed materials, gift announcements and correspondence.
- Other duties as assigned. This job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities required of the employee for this job. Occasionally, duties, responsibilities and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

QUALIFICATIONS

Work experience

- At least 7-10 years of progressively responsible development experience.
- Evidence of comprehensive understanding of fundraising strategies and methods, including pros and cons of each.
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent; Master's degree preferred.
- A proven track record in the management of successful development programs and fundraising initiatives, including capital campaigns.
- Seasoned experience in the solicitation, cultivation and stewardship of individual, corporate and foundation, donors, with an emphasis on high net-worth individuals, and public funding.
- Familiarity with USG processes, including proposal and budget development
- Experience and comfort using relevant donor management software as well as MS Office 365.

Knowledge and Skills

- Commitment to the Aquarium's mission, with an appreciation for the important role that the Aquarium plays in conservation, education and the life of a vibrant community.
- Commitment to equity and social justice, and strong alignment with our organizational values.
- An attitude of creativity, innovation, confidence and entrepreneurship, with an ability to inspire and motivate both audiences and staff.
- Strong leadership ability with proven management skills in leading and developing a staff, and working within a highly motivated team.
- Strong interpersonal skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Continuous improvement / problem solving mindset and way of working
- Strong attention to detail
- Willingness to work evenings, weekends and holidays as needed.

The Maritime Aquarium is an equal opportunity employer with a commitment to diversity.

Salary range: \$115,000 - \$120,000

Benefits: Comprehensive and generous benefits package, including medical, dental, vision, life and disability insurance, paid time off, 401k with employer contribution and other benefits.

TO APPLY:

Please send a cover letter and resume to Jodi Trice at applications@maritimeaquarium.org and put Director of Advancement in the subject line of your e-mail.