

THE SARASOTA BALLET

Director of Development

The Sarasota Ballet seeks a fundraising strategist and relationship-builder to directly solicit donor support, and orchestrate solicitations through events, scholarships, grants and partnerships with Board and senior staff members, for one of the southeast region's most important professional ballet companies.

Founded in 1987 by Jean Weidner Goldstein, The Sarasota Ballet, under the direction of Iain Webb, has achieved national and international recognition for innovative programming, dance excellence and its interpretation of classic and new repertoire. The company has performed over 150 ballets and divertissements through the current season, including 36 world premieres and 7 American premieres, and has performed at the Kennedy Center, New York City Center, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and Joyce Theater. The company has 37 dancers drawn from the USA and the world of dance.

In 2016, former Metropolitan Opera General Manager Joseph Volpe exited retirement to become the organization's Executive Director charged with managing and financially strengthening the organization. The current annual operating budget is about \$7.5M, with over half of the budget allocated to Performance & Company, roughly a third to Administration & Infrastructure, and the balance to the Ballet Conservatory and Education & Public Programs. In terms of revenue, roughly half of the budget is funded through individual solicitations and giving, and 9% through a combination of events, galas, foundation grants and business sponsorships. Earned income consists of about \$1.7m in subscription and single ticket sales, and a total of about \$1.2m in education fees, facility rentals and retail operation. The organization has no endowment income. Modest capital improvement and other fundraising projects include renovation of dance studios, the development of a Production Fund, and development of a Dance Scholarship Fund.

Reporting to the Director Iain Webb, the Director of Development will work closely across the organization, with other members of the staff, and with Board and community members. Upon joining The Sarasota Ballet, the Director of Development's first task will be to evaluate and recommend any additional staffing needs for his or her team. This is a collaborative, roll-up-your-sleeves, direct solicitation environment that requires a commitment to the art and cultivation of strong, long-lasting and friendly relationships in the community.

PRIMARY FUNCTION

The Director of Development is a member of the Senior Management team and provides the leadership, management and coordination for the Ballet's individual and institutional fundraising efforts. She or he will drive acquisition and retention for all contributed revenue through both innovative and traditional methods. The Director of Development will work closely with the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Chair of the Development Committee.

The Director of Development will be a hands-on and deeply involved fundraiser and relationship builder who will lead the department responsible for achieving specific fundraising targets. This is a practical, hands-on environment that values results achieved through targeted action, consistent process, open communication, and collaboration.

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The Director of Development will review the current fundraising support infrastructure to ensure that the organization can respond quickly, effectively, creatively and contextually to long-term financial requirements and short-term operating needs. She or he will oversee the delivery of a high-touch stewardship and donor recognition program and will interact regularly with major donors. The Director of Development will represent the Ballet at most social functions and other non-Ballet activities in the community. It is important that the Director of Development view this role as one of direct solicitation. Planning is fine; asking is better.

She or he will collaborate closely with the Chair of the Development Committee to evolve the fundraising capabilities of the Board of Trustees, and will work closely with individual Board members to secure contributed revenue.

Additionally, the Director of Development will execute the following responsibilities on an ongoing basis:

- In collaboration with the Management Team, develop a fundraising plan that includes donor segmentation, objectives for individual and institutional fundraising and success metrics, identification of staff and trustees who will be actively involved in fundraising and definition of roles, targets and fundraising goals;
- Manage and personally engage in solicitation and stewardship activities in collaboration with the Management Team, other staff, and members of the Board.
- Orchestrate special events that boost institutional and individual fundraising efforts, including galas, openings, corporate and private gatherings, and events celebrating contributions of various donor groups and marking special milestones for the Ballet;
- Establish institutional giving programs for corporate and foundation gifts; ensure successful adherence to grant and restricted giving agreements; establish clear standards for institutional sponsorship, with particular emphasis on the proper use of logos, brands, naming and other recognition opportunities;
- In partnership with the marketing and communications function, ensure that data on subscribers, single ticket buyers and donors is shared; and work collaboratively to optimize and maximize total revenue for the Ballet;
- With the Management Team identify potential Trustee candidates who can help the Board reach its fundraising objectives; collaborate with the Management Team in the preparation of annual operating plans and budgets, incorporating fundraising projections into the budget of the organization;

For the first (3) three months, the Director of Development's immediate priorities are to:

- Thoroughly understand The Sarasota Ballet – its history, culture, traditions, programs, personalities, constituencies and governance structure; understand its base of financial support and the short and long-term funding requirements of all segments of the organization;
- Develop strong relationships with, and secure the trust and confidence of, the Management Team, other administrative and artistic team members, key funders, trustees, influencers, and others critical to individual and institutional fundraising efforts;

- Immediately assess the “state of play” of in-process fundraising efforts and provide support for those efforts as needed; assume a hands-on leadership role in the identification, cultivation and solicitation of major gifts.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE and QUALIFICATIONS

- Substantial fundraising experience that includes annual, capital, endowment, event and membership fundraising; successful experience raising principal or major gifts from individuals and institutional sources or equivalent experience as a Board member with an arts organization that has a reputation for strategic thinking, operational excellence, aggressive action; fearlessness in solicitations.
- An exceptional communicator, both in writing and orally; an extrovert who gets energy from connecting with individuals, aligning the case for support and creating opportunities for engagement; one with social grace who can build enthusiasm for the Ballet;
- Demonstrated skills in motivating, directing and influencing the actions of others; m; the ability to coordinate and support the fundraising activities of others; a good listener and strategist; comfortable receiving input from many sources, and able to analyze and formulate disparate information into a sound, well-organized plan;
- Broad-based knowledge of various development activities including: web, social media, direct mail, membership, proposal and grant development, planned giving, capital campaigns, event planning and management, direct solicitations, leveraging fundraising databases and support systems for donor segmentation, research and volunteer management;
- Experience in structuring sponsorships; demonstrated success with establishing stewardship and donor recognition programs that sustain long-term relationships;
- An understanding of fundraising systems and how data can be used to manage the fundraising process, enhance donor cultivation and drive fundraising priorities;
- Emotionally mature with a very good sense of humor and the flexibility and sensitivity to work with diverse personalities and situations.

For further information, please contact:

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