



Norman Bird Sanctuary Executive Director

Overview

Norman Bird Sanctuary is a wildlife sanctuary and environmental education center located in Middletown, Rhode Island. Our mission remains true to the vision of Mabel Norman Cerio, who created NBS in 1949 through her will: to preserve and protect the diverse habitats of her historic farm, and the wildlife that depends on them, while welcoming community members from all walks of life to visit, learn from and enjoy the largest contiguous open space on Aquidneck Island.

In the 70 years since our founding, the property in our care has expanded to more than 325 acres of thriving wildlife habitats from grasslands, forests, rocky ridges, salt marsh, and dunes to sandy beach. Visitors can explore 7 miles of hiking trails. NBS created the Coastal Education Center in 2009 and restored Paradise Farmhouse for overnight guests in 2013. Our facilities include the artist's studio of founder, Mabel Norman Cerio, several classrooms, an upgraded historic barn with exhibits, and a raptor aviary.

As a core mission priority, NBS seeks not only to retain open space and protect the property from development, but to ensure science-driven stewardship of the highest standards with the goal of maximizing the biodiversity required for native wildlife to thrive.

The rich landscapes of Paradise Valley combined with experiential education programs presented by our team of gifted naturalists, provides visitors of all ages and backgrounds with access to the natural world and opportunities to learn about the environment and our cultural heritage. More than 20,000 community members visit and learn at NBS each year, and thousands of school children participate in nature-based school programs and Summer Camp.

Position Summary

Norman Bird Sanctuary is seeking an experienced and dynamic leader with a strong background in non-profit management, education, and fundraising to serve as our next Executive Director. The Executive Director will lead Norman Bird Sanctuary to the next level, while continuing the legacy of our founder, Mabel Norman Cerio, in protecting birds and other wildlife and the habitats that support them.

The role of the Executive Director is to lead innovation and creativity and inspire staff, donors, and Board members to work collaboratively to achieve the Sanctuary's mission and strategic goals. The Executive Director leads our conservation, education, and advocacy efforts and serves as spokesperson for Norman Bird Sanctuary.

The Executive Director provides a dynamic and welcoming presence and serves as primary representative in the Aquidneck Island communities surrounding the Sanctuary. S/he actively partners with other community and environmental organizations and government agencies to promote area conservation and education objectives.

A key role is to preserve and protect our stunning 325-acre wildlife refuge with the highest standards of stewardship without the use of chemicals. S/he assumes overall responsibility for fundraising, including successful completion of our capital campaign. The Executive Director leads a staff of 12 and oversees the Director of Development, the Director of Education, and the Director of Properties.

Responsibilities and Scope

- Provides dynamic, collaborative leadership for Norman Bird Sanctuary's mission, strategy, educational programs, and property stewardship, consistent with our strategic plan
- Recruits, retains, manages, and inspires a high quality, effective staff
- Maintains an excellent, collaborative and transparent relationship with the Board of Directors
- Ensures that programmatic commitments, financial standards, and legal requirements are met
- Assumes overall responsibility for fundraising activities and goals of the Sanctuary
- Represents the Sanctuary's vision in a compelling, engaging manner to internal and external audiences as lead spokesperson
- Delivers effective and persuasive presentations to board members, staff, supporters and outside organizations
- Ensures development and execution of a strategic multi-year plan
- Oversees annual operations plans that are on time and on budget
- Careful and intentional stewardship of the property, including habitat restoration without use of chemicals
- Operational responsibilities will include but are not limited to fundraising, strategic planning, overseeing all events, staff management, annual staff evaluations, facilitating board meetings, oversight of property management, networking with state and federal agencies, etc.

Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree and minimum of 7 years of experience preferred as a leader in the educational and environmental arena, non-profit sector, advocacy, or for-profit area
- Experience leading and working with a diverse group of stakeholders, including donors, board members, employees, outside partners and volunteers
- Strong communication and presentation skills required

- Demonstrated fundraising success
- Proven experience developing and monitoring annual plans and budgets
- Experience developing and implementing long-range strategic plans
- Strong understanding of how to leverage technology; using, maintaining and evaluating systems in place such as QuickBooks, Microsoft Office, and DonorPerfect

Desired Qualifications

Leadership:

- High energy, forward thinking, creative individual with high ethical standards
- Well organized and self-directed
- Outstanding leadership and visionary qualities and ability to work effectively with others
- Demonstrated success as an inspirational leader who has successfully motivated staff, donors and volunteers to achieve and sustain excellence
- Strong background in government relations, working with elected officials, as well as state, local and federal agencies and area schools
- A team player with the ability to successfully engage with the volunteer Board of Directors in developing strategic and financial plans, policies and procedures, and carrying out development programs

Communications and Development:

- Ability to work with development staff in creating and implementing a financially sustainable fundraising plan that cultivates and maintains relationships with current donors while identifying and expanding new, innovative funding sources
- Strong communication and presentation skills with the ability to persuasively convey the mission and vision of Norman Bird Sanctuary to diverse groups including major donors, foundations, public agencies, corporate executives, board members, partners and others who are critical to the organization's overall success
- The ability to direct, prepare, present and/or participate in negotiations of project proposals with local, state and federal governmental agencies and other partners

Operational Performance:

- Extensive management experience including the ability to motivate, lead, set objectives, manage performance and develop a multi-disciplinary team
- A track record in budgeting, staffing, performance management and staff development
- Strong business acumen, with the ability to think strategically and creatively juggle multiple tasks, meet deadlines, work in a dynamic environment and effectively manage change
- Demonstrated project management experience, including managing budgets, grants, completing reports, contracts, and other projects with evolving priorities and timelines
- Comfortable working under pressure

- Has the flexibility to work beyond the normal workday, on weekends, and at other times as required, especially during deadline periods

Position Details

This is a full-time exempt position, 40 hours per week, Monday through Friday. The position is at-will, salaried with full benefits. Reports to the Board of Directors. Occasionally requires evening and weekend work.

Norman Bird Sanctuary is an equal opportunity employer and encourages applicants of all genders, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and persons with disabilities to apply.

Deadline for Application Submission: May 15, 2019. Open until filled.

To Apply

E-mail your résumé and cover letter to edsearch@normanbirdsantuary.org