

**Position Title :** Chief Advancement Officer

**Organization :** Buffalo Zoo

**Salary:** \$120,000-\$130,000

**AFP-WNY Post Date :** 11/14/2023

**DEADLINE TO APPLY: OPEN**

## **THE BUFFALO ZOO**

As one of the crown jewels of Western New York's cultural and recreational attractions, the Buffalo Zoo welcomes 400,000+ guests on an annual basis. The Zoo sits on 23.5 acres and is home to over 750+ animals, supports many conservation programs, and is a highly regarded educational facility. Being the third oldest zoo in the country, the Buffalo Zoo is proud to have several buildings of historic significance on its campus. The Zoo is operated by the Zoological Society of Buffalo, Inc., under a lease agreement with the City of Buffalo. Since 2000, more than \$50 million worth of capital improvements to habitats and infrastructure have been completed with an additional \$14+ million worth of projects currently under construction. Our mission of Building Community Creating Connections Saving Wildlife is guiding our master plan that was recently developed. This master plan will guide the growth and development of the Zoo for the next twenty years.

## **JOB SUMMARY**

The Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) has a key role in advancing the mission of the Buffalo Zoo. The CAO's primary focus is on developing and implementing strategies that enhance the organization's visibility, funding, and engagement. This role requires exceptional leadership, strategic thinking, and collaboration skills to ensure the organization's sustained growth and impact. This position reports to the President/CEO, and is a member of the executive leadership team. The CAO provides executive-level leadership to the following departments within their division: Marketing and Events (includes internal/ external communication and public relations), Development and Membership, and helps with Government Affairs. The CAO is also responsible for oversight of the Zoo during the absence of the Zoo's President/CEO. May be called upon to perform additional duties and/or other responsibilities as delegated by the President/CEO

## **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

### **Strategic Planning:**

- Develop and execute a comprehensive advancement strategy aligned with the organization's mission, values, and long-term goals.
- Provide visionary leadership to the Marketing and Events Department and the Development and Membership Department, fostering a collaborative and innovative work environment.
- Direct reports include the Director of Development and the Director of Marketing and Events. Oversight of these positions includes providing guidance, mentorship, and performance feedback, as well as hiring and training.

Development/Membership (Philanthropy): With/through the Director of Development and Department:

### **Capital Campaign:**

- Provide strategic direction for capital campaigns, including goal setting, donor cultivation, major gifts, and campaign communications.
- Collaborate closely with the development team to ensure successful fundraising initiatives and donor engagement.

Donor Development:

- Develop and implement strategies for identifying, cultivating, soliciting, and closing major gifts from potential and existing individual donors across the country. Must maintain donor prospect contact/meeting schedule (combination of virtual and in-person) visiting prospects with a focus on developing relationships, gift solicitation and closing (with CEO and other leadership staff), and managing and staffing leadership volunteers. Develop, oversee, and evaluate multiple strategies to raise funds from a broad base of individuals, institutions, corporations, foundations, government, and beyond.
- Enable success of executive leadership, departments/teams, and/or volunteers assisting on cultivation, solicitation, maintaining relationships, and/or stewardship visits to prospective donors, by providing expertise and support, including, but not limited to, scheduling and visit logistics, developing/writing prospect strategy briefings, and gift request proposals. Lead the development team in crafting and executing fundraising strategies, grants/grant writing, donor stewardship, and gift solicitation.

Marketing, Public Relations, and Communications: With/through the Director of Marketing and Events and Department::

- Lead the development of a consistent and compelling brand narrative that is the base of all media relations, public communications, and messaging to all constituencies and ensures both the broad-based public and targeted audience receive timely communication about the Zoo's impact, successes, and need for support. Oversee the creation of communication strategies that enhance the organization's reputation, stakeholder engagement, and public image.
- Proactively identify and manage crisis communication and reputation management strategies as needed. Develop and execute marketing strategies that promote the organization's programs, initiatives, and impact.
- Maintain effective communication with the CEO regarding proper preparedness for speaking engagements and presentations.

Events: With/through the Director of Marketing and Events:

- Lead the planning, organization, and execution of events that align with the organization's mission and objectives.
- Manage event logistics, budgets, and vendor relationships to ensure seamless event experiences.
- Leverage events as opportunities to enhance brand visibility, stakeholder engagement, and networking.

Government Affairs: With the CEO and other executive leadership::

- Cultivate deep and practical relationships with key governmental stakeholders (city, county, state, federal) on matters related to the Zoo.
- Monitor and advocate efforts for legislation, funding, and administrative changes to advance the mission. Participate in public policy discussions as directed by the CEO.

Financial Management: With the Chief Financial Officer and other leadership

- Develop and manage budgets for the Marketing/Events and Development/Membership departments as well as in the development of Capital Campaigns.
- Ensure responsible allocation of resources to maximize impact and achieve strategic objectives.
- Implement systems to measure the effectiveness of advancement initiatives, campaigns, events, and fundraising efforts.
- Analyze data to assess ROI, engagement metrics, donor participation, and other relevant KPIs.

- Use insights to refine strategies and drive continuous improvement.

## **POSITION QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Education/(minimum needed):**

- Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Communications, Marketing, Philanthropy, or a related field.
- Advanced degrees in marketing, development, and/or business are desired assets.
- Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE) designation and/or certificate in Fundraising Management are desired assets.

### **Experience (minimum needed):**

- Proven leadership/supervisory experience (5+ years).
- Experience overseeing multiple functions of an organization is preferred.
- Expertise in one or more of the following areas is preferred: including but not limited to Capital Campaign management, Philanthropy, Development, Communications, Public Relations, Marketing, or Events management.
- Previous experience working in a nonprofit, educational, or mission-driven organization is a plus.
- Knowledge and experience in fundraising techniques, understanding of budgeting principles, proficiency with MS Office Suite and donor database software.
- Ability to lead and create/foster an atmosphere of trust and respect amongst and between staff, volunteers, board members, and all zoo stakeholders.
- Display a positive attitude, show concern for people and the community, and demonstrate presence, self-confidence, common sense, and good listening ability.
- Excellent interpersonal skills with ability to communicate effectively and professionally, utilizing considerable tact and diplomacy, toward motivating and engaging a variety of constituents. Ability to foster a collaborative, inclusive, and results-oriented work environment.
- Self-starter with demonstrated ability to maintain accountability and work independently while functioning as part of a team.

### **OTHER:**

- May be required to frequently work evenings, weekends, and holidays.
- Required to be able to respond in a timely fashion as necessary to emergencies.
- Must possess or be able to obtain within 30-days of employment a valid New York State driver's license and have an average or better driving record based on the evaluation process of our insurance company. Retention of the position is contingent upon maintaining the required license.
- Successful completion of a post-offer pre-employment general medical screen and drug test.
- Successful completion of a post-offer pre-employment background check.
- Must support Buffalo Zoo's Vision, Mission, Core Values and DEAI values.
- Must provide proof of a negative TB test at hire. TB test conducted annually.

## **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to stand; walk; use hands; reach with hands and arms; stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl and talk or hear. Use computer hardware and software for extended periods of time (repetitive motion). Sitting for long periods of time. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and ability to adjust focus.

**BENEFITS**

This is a full-time, exempt position. Annual salary range is \$120,000-\$130,000 commensurate with experience. Some of the benefits available include health plan, HRA/HSA, life insurance, long term disability insurance, dental, vision, 403B retirement plan, annual leave, holiday, and sick time benefits. Benefits are available after the successful completion of a probationary period review at 60 days of work (sick time available upon hire).

**TO APPLY**

To apply, please send resume and cover letter in Word document or PDF by email, using subject line – Director of Marketing and Events to: [buffalozoojobs@buffalozoo.org](mailto:buffalozoojobs@buffalozoo.org)

No telephone calls please. Position open until filled. For more information about the Buffalo Zoo, please visit our website by the following link: <http://www.buffalozoo.org>

***Equal Opportunity Employer***

**300 Parkside Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14214-1999**