



## FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AUGUST 2020

The Foundation for Geauga Parks (the “Foundation”) is a grass roots, independent, non-profit organization founded in 1990. Our philanthropic mission is to raise money to fund community engagement with nature through education, preservation, conservation, and appreciation of the unique natural character of Geauga County. We help preserve and conserve green spaces. We help enhance parks for passive recreation and enjoyment. We help educate youth to care for and appreciate the environment. We are the Foundation for all parks in Geauga County.

Our efforts represent the primary source of private funding for a variety of Geauga County's signature parks and initiatives: The West Woods, The Rookery, and Observatory Park. We collaborate with multiple organizations to create the Geauga Skywatchers Club targeted for children grades 6-12 with an interest in astronomy. We are also the primary source of funding for Nature Scopes, in which all of Geauga County's 5th grade public and parochial school students participate. In recent years we have expanded the scope of our mission to also support Geauga County's township parks. Our core belief is that park visitors experience the natural environment on nature's terms, which is not only good for us as individuals, but also helps build and maintain a strong community.

For years through 2018, the Foundation's significant fundraising activities were accomplished by our volunteer board, with only a part-time administrative/bookkeeping staff. In 2019 the Board decided that to make an even greater impact to the county's parks, we hired our first full-time Executive Director and part-time Associate Marketing and Operations Director (Associate Director). Together, these individuals have built our infrastructure and positioned us as a professional organization that is truly prepared to meet the needs of our parks, welcome a new era and new Executive Director.

Please see our website for more information about us. <http://foundationforgeaugaparks.org/>

### **Summary Position Description**

The full-time Director leads the Foundation to advance its mission through development, programming, management, marketing, public relations, and planning. Responsibilities include development as well as initiating and strengthening strategic relationships and networks with Northeast Ohio organizations and individuals to support the Foundation's philanthropic work and further its mission. S/he positively engages and inspires people to support the Foundation. The Executive Director will also serve as the public face of the Foundation on a day-to-day basis.

### **Reporting and Collaborative Relationships within the Foundation**

The position reports to the Board of Trustees (the “Board”). S/he performs duties and responsibilities directed by the Board and carries out the responsibilities of the position working in partnership with the

Board. The Executive Director reports directly to the Board President and the Board's Executive Committee. S/he collaborates closely with the Foundation's Associate Director as well as all other board committees: Finance, Investment, Development, Marketing, and Governance.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES**

### **Development**

The primary foci of the Executive Director are fundraising to support our programs and building strategic relationships in service of our development efforts. Responsibilities include:

- Establishes fundraising goals with the Board and monitors progress against these goals.
- Develops fresh strategies to encourage new or increased gifts as well as increase community outreach and donor engagement.
- Identifies and builds relationships with potential donors: Major donors, individuals, corporate sponsors, grant-making organizations, and foundations.
- Secures commitments of participation or donation from donors.
- Directs fundraising efforts in partnership with the Board.
- Designs and manages fundraising activities with the support of the Associate Director, committees, volunteers, and the Board.
- Writes grant applications.
- Coordinates events such as our Twilight Soiree and others.

### **Relationship Building**

- Builds relationships with partner organizations including the Geauga Park District, township park boards, Geauga County school districts, Western Reserve Land Conservancy, Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society, Protect Geauga Parks, Geauga County Public Libraries, Burton Public Library, and others as appropriate.
- Actively solicits and listens to input from Foundation and park stakeholders, involving them in planning, activities, and program management

### **Organizational Management**

- Manages the day-to-day office functions and works collaboratively with Foundation staff and Board members.
- Supports committee activities.
- Oversees bookkeeping.
- Manages financial reporting and compliance; coordinates annual audit processes.
- Maintains and updates fundraising and donor databases using Bloomerang.
- Oversees Foundation projects and grants to ensure our investments meet the mission and goals of the Foundation.
- Works with the Board to ensure the Foundation is operating legally, ethically, and efficiently.
- Carries out duties and responsibilities in coordination with the Associate Director.
- Supports him/herself administratively.
- Performs duties and responsibilities directed by the Board.

### **Strategic Planning**

- Works closely with the Board on strategic planning.

- Participates in the development of a 3-year strategic plan and is responsible for its implementation.
- Maintains a solid working knowledge of significant developments and trends in nature and parks-related non-profit domains. Advises the Board on these development and trends.
- Convenes advisory groups and taskforces as needed to support the Foundation's mission.

#### **Communications: Marketing and Public Relations**

- Works in partnership with the Associate Director to build awareness of the Foundation through marketing, the Foundation website, public and media relations, social media, community events, and public speaking.
- Establishes positive and productive working relationships with relevant community organizations and individuals.
- Participates in crafting messaging and publicizing the work of the Foundation.
- Collaborates with the Associate Director to produce of all marketing and public relations messaging including press releases, website design and content, newsletters, web posting, advertising, among other media.
- Builds brand recognition of the Foundation.

#### **Qualifications**

- Bachelor's degree
- Experience working for non-profits
- Experience in a "start-up" or grass roots organization
- Experience planning and executing successful and creative fundraising efforts, including annual or special appeals, major gifts, capital campaigns, grant writing, planned giving, and special events
- Experience with CRM databases, preferably Bloomerang
- Proven effective public speaking, presentation, influence, and writing skills; possess a professional presence at all times, adapting effectively to one's audience
- Past professional or volunteer work connected to the environment, education, natural science, or other programs the Foundation supports
- Knowledge of NE Ohio park and conservancy efforts
- Experience successfully managing budgets and projects; experience using accounting software, specifically QuickBooks Online
- Proficient in use of MS Office
- Prefer residence or connection to Geauga County or NE Ohio

#### **Required Attributes**

- Possesses a visible passion for the Foundation's mission and nature
- Brings creative ideas and "fresh eyes" to the Foundation and its development efforts
- Demonstrates highly ethical standards, proven integrity
- Displays optimism and sensitivity to the need of donors
- Demonstrates strong analytical and strategic thinking abilities
- Energetic and driven by environmental or park-related initiatives
- Motivated and able to collaborate and work with other groups and organizations that either share or overlap with the mission of the Foundation to gain support for our work
- Works independently while demonstrating the ability to work effectively as part of a team in a

collegial environment

- Willing and able to drive across NE Ohio to meet with donors, corporations, partner organizations, and sponsors
- Willing to work some nights and weekends

**Compensation**

- Salary commensurate with experience and fit
- Expenses including mileage, entertainment, cell phone
- Paid time-off

Interested candidates should send a cover letter, resume, and list of references to [linda@orgsuccess.com](mailto:linda@orgsuccess.com). The deadline for accepting applications is August 30, 2020. No phone calls please. The Foundation for Geauga Parks is an Equal Opportunity Employer.