



DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Riveredge is more than a nature center. Its 52-year legacy as a pioneer in the areas of land restoration, research, and inquiry based education throughout Wisconsin serve as a strong foundation to its future initiatives. Today, Riveredge is reimagining the role of the nature center by empowering and supporting communities to live in harmony with their natural environment in a way that encourages exploration, adventure, and fun, while contributing to the overall quality of life for our neighbors throughout southeastern Wisconsin.

In 2014, Riveredge adopted an “audacious goal” to become a leading destination in the Midwest for learning, discovering, and experiencing the interconnections between nature and society. Riveredge is achieving this goal through the creation of partnerships which transform the culture of our formal education systems, communities, and lifestyles.

Since that time, membership and program reach has doubled, a public nature-based elementary school program has been developed and launched on site, an upper Milwaukee River watershed partnership (Community Rivers Program) was created with five municipalities, four (out of five) capital campaigns have been completed, and, most importantly, a culture of engagement, innovation, adventure, and joy has become part of everything Riveredge does.

This is an exciting time in the history of Riveredge as we work to pioneer strategies to redefine the role of nature centers in today’s society, including rapid shifts in programming due to the changes brought on by the pandemic. Riveredge is launching into its next strategic planning efforts this winter as preparation for years of exciting growth ahead.

Riveredge is seeking a dynamic, enthusiastic, and creative individual to lead our team in philanthropic efforts.

Position Purpose

The Development Director provides key leadership to all philanthropic initiatives at Riveredge Nature Center and serves as an important part of the Center’s leadership team. The Director of Development oversees a team of 3-5 that support the Development efforts in membership, grants, marketing, social media and volunteer coordination. The Director of Development is critical to planning, implementing, and supervising all aspects of fund development.

Primary Duties

Fundraising

- Provide leadership for all fund solicitation efforts at Riveredge including annual fund, designated gifts & grants, planned giving, and corporate sponsorship.
- Create a vision for and build a development team that supports the successful pursuit of the expansion of Riveredge’s programs, staff, and general infrastructure.
- Provide leadership to efforts which support current donors, cultivate new donors, and develop relationships with the community in general, while communicating Riveredge’s mission, vision, and impact.
- Write appeals, solicitation letters, donor event invitations, and email campaigns.
- Serve as the clearing house for any solicitations, both monetary and in-kind.
- Continue to review, refine and update as needed, attractive corporate membership opportunities.

Special Events

- In collaboration with the Special Events and Volunteer Manager, play a key role in the planning and implementation of Riveredge's large events which currently include the annual Farm-to-Table Dinner, the Frothy Forage, Riveredge Bike Ride, and Sturgeon Fest. Activities include, however are not limited to leadership in securing corporate sponsors, auction packages and in-kind donations.
- Seek out and obtain corporate sponsorship for a variety of special events.

Membership

- Oversee the daily activities related to membership management, renewal reminders, member communications, and membership events.
- Track and analyze membership statistics and trends on a regular basis.
- Engage in innovative activities to recruit and retain new member households.
- Continue to review, refine and update as needed, attractive corporate membership opportunities. Build partnerships with corporations to participate in the membership package.

Capital Campaign

- Along with the Executive Director and Philanthropy Committee, work to complete the capital campaign project: the Education Center.
- With the Board and Executive Director, launch and spearhead future capital campaigns for special projects at Riveredge, including land acquisition fund opportunities.
- Provide leadership to grant writing for campaign projects and solicitation of donor prospects, as appropriate.
- Strategize and implement ways to increase existing and new prospective donors.
- With the Development team, provide accurate campaign reports to the campaign cabinet and Board of Directors.
- Provide co-leadership with virtual and in-person campaign events.

Administration & Organizational Leadership

- Oversee the daily activities of the development area relating to record-keeping, budget management, donor contacts, pledge reminders, and gift acknowledgements.
- Develop and administer budgets for the Development Department.
- Coordinate across departments, supporting all of Riveredge activities, events, programs and growth, addressing specific funding needs and potential donors.
- Work with the Marketing & Communications Specialist to forward the work of both departments and ensure they complement each other.
- Work as a close partner with the Executive Director and support their development work.
- Provide direct supervision to the Development team and conduct regular performance reviews.
- Provide regular updates to the Executive Director and Board of Directors in regards to development, membership and all activities of the Development team and Riveredge wide fund raising initiatives.
- Serve as a member of the leadership team responsible for day-to-day organizational management and planning.
- Participate on various Riveredge committees (both Board and internal).
- Represent Riveredge at community and environmental committees/organizations as appropriate.
- Contribute to the staff team philosophy at Riveredge by staffing the Visitor Center on 3-4 Saturdays per year.
- Other responsibilities as assigned by the Executive Director.

Position Expectations

In addition to the Primary Duties, the Development Director is expected to meet the following expectations set forth for all staff members of Riveredge Nature Center:

- Meaningfully contribute to the Riveredge staff team. This includes helping with projects, programs, and events that may fall outside of the primary duties or departments of this position description.

- Foster an inclusive and supportive environment through personal actions such as supporting and helping other staff members and volunteers.
- Provide high quality customer service experiences to all guests and volunteers.
- Regularly participate in staff meetings and internal professional development training.
- Seek out professional development opportunities outside of Riveredge Nature Center to further expand and improve your skills, talents, thoughts and ideas.
- Strive for excellence and innovation.

Quantitative Expectations

Riveredge is currently developing its next set of strategic goals to support the ongoing progress toward achievement of its BHAG (Big, Hairy, Audacious Goal). This set of strategic initiatives and goals will include intended growth in participation and financial metrics. Within the Development Department, the following metrics are utilized in documenting achievement and growth:

- Memberships
- Annual fund contributions
- Designated grants and gifts
- Special event & program sponsorships
- Annual Farm Dinner (Riveredge’s version of a gala)

Annual goals in these areas will be developed in collaboration with the Riveredge Leadership team.

Benefits & Working Conditions

This is a full-time, Director level, exempt, salaried position and provides the following benefits. Specific quantities of benefits will be presented in the offer letter. Salary is commensurate with experience.

- Short and long term disability paid 100% by Riveredge,
- Optional participation in a health insurance and dental insurance programs,
- Matching retirement contributions,
- Generous paid time off (PTO) allotment,
- Paid holidays, and
- Flex time scheduling options

Additional working conditions include:

- Work evenings and weekends on an occasional basis.
- Assume occasional travel for networking and professional development opportunities.
- Telecommuting privileges exist for all staff and are available through coordination with your direct supervisor.

Be Your Authentic Self

The Riveredge team values diversity – in who we are, in how we think, and how we accomplish audacious goals together. Everyone is invited to bring their authentic self to their work: their passions, their interest, their skills and talents. We strive to build and demonstrate a growth mindset; we learn from each other and continually seek to get better in our positions, and as people, every day. We promote equity, support one other, and build diverse teams where each member can bring their unique strengths with them to the table.

Required Qualifications

- Enthusiastic, positive, motivated, and enjoys having fun while striving to meet and exceed goals
- Enjoys working as part of a team
- Enjoys serving as a positive mentor for others
- Two years of fundraising experience

- Excellent interpersonal skills; proven leadership ability
- Strong strategic thinking and vision
- Excellent persuasive writing skills; experience writing grant, foundation, and individual requests
- Very strong organizational skills and a proven ability to manage projects, deadlines, and teams
- Self-starter and a well-developed ability to set and meet goals and outcomes
- Ability to work as a member of a team by sharing decision making while personally assuming responsibility and accountability
- Technologically proficient
- Belief in the power of nature and the need to engage more youth, families, and communities in our natural world

Additional, Desired Qualifications

- 4+ years of experience preferred
- Proven success in solicitation and marketing of major and planned gifts
- Fundraising certification preference
- Previous supervisory experience
- High level of competency in the use of CRM software and standard office applications such as Microsoft Office and Google.

Positive Availability & Application Directions

Deadline: **Position is open until filled.** Qualified applicants will be contacted when application is received.

Please send resume, cover letter, and contact information for three references (as one PDF) to jobs@riveredge.us. Questions may be directed

To Learn More

To learn more about Riveredge's mission, vision, core values, and recent mission impacts, please visit:

- <https://www.riveredgenaturecenter.org/the-mission/>
- <https://www.riveredgenaturecenter.org/history/annual-reports/>
- Growing Wild: 50 Years of Riveredge - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9YVOGgjhDY>