

Cayton Children's Museum

Chief Advancement Officer

Cayton's CEO and the Board's leadership seek an experienced major gifts officer and development professional to orchestrate the targeting, approach and solicitation of current and next generation individual, foundation and business donors to fund a \$5 million vision for the Museum's next stage of evolution.

The [Cayton Children's Museum](#) in Santa Monica activates the power of play to enrich the lives of children and their families; build stronger, more connected communities; and create a better world. Collaborating closely with schools, partners, and diverse community constituents, the Museum welcomes more than 150,000 visitors annually and serves as a hub for families, schools, and community partners across Los Angeles's Westside.

Thomas Sullivan has already had significant impact on the organization since joining as CEO less than 12 months ago. With two decades of museum leadership experience that includes innovative exhibit development and delivery of rich early childhood education experiences, he and the Board have set the Cayton on a growth, impact, and sustainability path which has been very well-received by the Cayton community.

The Cayton is at an inflection point and charting a course for an exciting future. The Museum is guided by a \$5 million vision, with three interconnected objectives to engage a broader and more diverse audience, increase annual attendance, and include one-of-a-kind interactive exhibit experiences that engage all members of the community and all age groups. The \$5 million revenue goal spans two years, and increased goals will be developed for the years beyond.

BASIC FUNCTION

The CEO runs the business of the Cayton, is a dynamic and visionary leader, and ensures the intended impact of the Museum is achieved. The Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) will build and strengthen the development function and increase contributed revenue to champion the initiatives mentioned above. The CAO will drive direct solicitations and themselves carry a robust portfolio.

The CAO will design and implement strategies for targeting and soliciting major- and principal-level gifts from individual, corporate, and institutional donors, taking a moves management approach that encourages giving at donor capacity. This is a donor-facing and community-centric role, serving as the first line of conversation and engagement for the Museum's longstanding donors and newest friends. The CAO will develop the required infrastructure and workflows to support this, build a lean but mighty team to execute various supportive functions, and sustainably grow the donor base and steward donors.

The CAO will develop a comprehensive advancement strategy, including messaging and materials to engage donors with different capacities and interests, and will report on strategy execution to the CEO and Board. The position requires a relationship-focused, results-oriented individual with a dealmaker's sensibility, a deep understanding of philanthropic engagement and community relationships, and the ability to inspire stakeholders at all levels with the Museum's vision.

The CAO will liaise with the Board, some of whom are the largest philanthropic champions of the Cayton and are in a unique ability to facilitate meaningful relationships. The CAO provides

support and positions the CEO, the Board, and staff to directly approach and solicit individual, foundation, and business donors and prospects.

The priorities for the Chief Advancement Officer are to:

- Nurture and advance the philanthropic community at the Cayton, starting with top donors and prospects.
- Build a qualified donor pipeline with wealth screening, segmentation, and moves-management tracking.
- Actively cultivate, directly solicit, and steward a portfolio of major- and principal-level individual and institutional donors; energize and support the Board with their fundraising commitments, and facilitate their participation by inviting collaboration around their professional talents
- Follow up on the recent Playmakers Gala, reaching out to major prospects, sponsors and attendees. Assume leadership and accountability for the planning and execution of the annual Playmakers Gala in the Fall, Spring Fundraiser, and other events to ensure they generate revenue associated with well-attended events and also build awareness, enthusiasm, loyalty, and commitment among key constituents and with the general public.
- Work closely with the CEO, the Board, and the Development Team to establish the Museum's annual and strategic long-term philanthropic priorities and convert these priorities into an Advancement Plan outlining goals, strategies, and measurable targets; ensure Vision readiness including case for support, messaging, and identifying leadership prospects and major gift opportunities; define roles and objectives for every Board and staff member of the Cayton.
- Provide infrastructure needed to increase revenue from individual gifts, capital campaigns, events, bi-annual membership drives, planned giving, and institutional and corporate support; audit current CRM (Versai and other tools) to ensure that systems have required features and functions and that data is accurate.

ONGOING RESPONSIBILITIES

FUNDRAISING

- Lead the development and execution of the Museum's fundraising strategy, including individual, corporate, foundation, and public funding; develop, implement, and monitor progress toward fundraising goals to ensure the Museum meets its annual and long-term revenue objectives.
- Oversee and provide leadership for the different philanthropic tactics and approaches needed to secure gifts from individuals (high net worth donors, major donors, and annual fund donors), institutional foundations, and corporations.
- Steward a portfolio of major and principal donors and prospects; cultivate and manage relations with donors and key partners.
- Work with members of the Board and other fundraising volunteers to identify, cultivate, and solicit donors; support their individual fundraising efforts and expand their engagement with key donors.

MANAGEMENT

- Recruit, manage, and inspire a mission-driven, focused, high-impact, and inclusive environment; encourage cross-functional collaboration and cohesion; promote a culture where new ideas are embraced; provide mentorship focused on decision-making, problem-solving, and growth; oversee staff performance to ensure team achieve goals in alignment with Museum's mission; manage consultant and vendor contracts.
- Oversee the continued refinement and implementation of systems and strategies for donor engagement, stewardship, and pipeline development.
- Promote and strengthen external visibility of the Museum prioritizing funder-facing meetings, interactions, and high-profile events.
- Develop and execute a strategic communications plan to promote the Museum's fundraising efforts and expand awareness of Museum's programs and impact; collaborate with the marketing and communications teams to ensure cohesive messaging across all channels and campaigns to convey impact.
- Prepare regular reports and updates for the Board, ensuring strong communication and alignment between staff and Board leadership on fundraising strategies and outcomes; model and lead best practices for Board engagement in fundraising.
- Develop and manage annual advancement budget, ensuring all campaigns and activities are financially sustainable.
- Develop and implement meaningful metrics of progress at the individual and team levels and create reporting mechanisms for internal, executive, and Board review and monitoring.
- Ensure proper stewardship of donations and adherence to all legal and ethical guidelines related to charitable giving.
- With the Board of Directors, identify, recruit, and cultivate new Board members, ensuring they understand their participation in philanthropy and overall fundraising priorities.

EXPERIENCE & CHARACTERISTICS

The Chief Advancement Officer will have a deep understanding of the Los Angeles philanthropic landscape and will be a relationship-based go-getter who gets their energy by making the case to support mission-driven organizations and closing meaningful gifts. The role requires the drive, initiative, and flexibility to meet donors where they are, including on evenings and weekends.

In addition, the successful candidate will possess a combination of the following experiences and characteristics:

- Minimum of five years of progressive experience managing all aspects of nonprofit fundraising; broad-based knowledge of various development activities including proposal and grant development, capital elements, planned giving, event planning and management, and different approaches to direct solicitations; a verified record of meeting or exceeding measurable fundraising goals.
- Personal success in cultivating and stewarding major- and principal-level gifts from individuals, foundations, corporations, and community partners.

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- Building a fundraising program, i.e., annual fund program, major gifts, planned giving, events, etc., from the ground up.
- Designing and implementing effective strategic marketing and communications programs.
- Exceptional leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills with the demonstrated ability to inspire and build relationships with diverse stakeholders.
- Working with a Board of Directors and senior executives to drive fundraising strategy.
- A commitment to the vision and purpose of the Museum; integrity and credibility; a true interest in serving people inside and outside of the organization; unflappable and committed to creative problem-solving, even under pressure.
- Skilled at motivating, directing, and managing staff, board members, and consultants and in coordinating and supporting the fundraising activities of others.
- Business acumen; experience creating budgets and forecasting revenue; data-driven; organized.
- A good listener; intrepid yet tactful; determined yet with the flexibility to find alternative ways to reach funding objectives when barriers arise; a skilled negotiator who does not drive themselves or others into a corner; a person able to analyze and formulate disparate information into sound, well-organized plans.
- Emotionally mature and imbues confidence; the flexibility and sensitivity to work with diverse personalities and situations.
- MBA, Masters in Nonprofit Fundraising, or related experience.

The expected compensation range for this position is \$155,000 - \$180,000 based on experience.

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