



Michelle Whiting & Associates
Development Strategies, Foundation Relations, Organizational Advancement
And Executive Search for the Nonprofit Sector

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PRETEND CITY CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

TITLE: Executive Director

MUSEUM: Pretend City Children's Museum

MISSION & ORGANIZATION: Pretend City is a nonprofit interactive children's museum that builds better brains through fun, whole body learning experiences, educational programs and creative exhibits. This mission is driven by a vision to empower children and their grown-ups to meaningfully connect with and expand their world. Designed as a small, interconnected city with a grocery store, farm, doctor's office, art studio, amphitheater, beach, marina and many other exhibits, Pretend City is a place to discover, learn, explore, play and be creative in a fun environment. Developed for children infant to 10 years old and their grown-ups, the museum is a community resource, where families, educators and community agencies come together to help each child reach his or her greatest potential.

After twelve years of intensive concept development, curriculum and program planning, facilities design, and fundraising, Pretend City Children's Museum opened the doors to its 28,000 square foot facility in August 2009 and saw over 200,000 visitors in the first year alone. Pretend City was designed with an important goal in mind, to build better brains in children infant to 10 years old. We have combined eight specific learning objectives with an informal immersive learning environment that is developmentally appropriate for infants, toddlers, and young children.

As Pretend City approaches its second birthday, we can boast of 2,000 + strong membership, a diverse \$3.7 million budget comprised of 50% earned income, a strong team of professional staff, and a committed, energetic, community-connected board of directors.

LOCATION: Pretend City is located in Irvine, California.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS: This position will report directly to the Board Chairperson. The Executive Director will directly supervise and manage five full-time positions including a Chief Operating Officer, and department heads in development, finance, as well as an administrative assistant. Indirectly, the Executive Director will provide inspirational leadership to over 40 FTE employees.

POSITION CONCEPT: The Executive Director will be a seasoned nonprofit professional who will have a proven ability to grow a first-class children's museum, and will have experience in launching and supporting programmatic and fund development initiatives that support Pretend City's mission. The Executive Director will possess extensive knowledge of the local, regional and national philanthropic landscape; exhibit strong leadership qualities and will have a career path that includes executive experience at one or more nonprofit Museums, Children's Museum or Child/Youth/Family serving organization of similar or larger budget and staff size. The Executive Director will match a passion for Pretend City with the ability to be successful in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial, dynamic organization.



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The Executive Director will work with the board to establish strategic partnerships that enhance and grow the Museum's presence, membership, and fundraising dollars, earned income and social enterprise initiatives over the next phase of the organization's development.

Immediate focus will include providing management direction to the staff through a team-work approach; and leading the board and staff in the development and implementation of a strategic plan to establish a sustainable business model, and course of action for the next three to five years and beyond. The ideal candidate will possess a combination of the following:

- Successful verifiable annual revenue building track record
- Demonstrated senior-level nonprofit experience in an entrepreneurial environment, including management of staff, successful earned income generation and fundraising, and development and execution of strategic and operational plans
- Demonstrated experience building and nurturing teams, creating collaborations and sustaining effective relationships with board, staff, members, volunteers, donors, philanthropic foundations, community leaders, political leaders, business leaders, educational institutions and other stakeholders
- Interest in and passion for early childhood development and education
- Experience running a vibrant, exciting, successful museum desirable
- The ability to identify, initiate, nurture, and maintain close relationships with major individual and institutional donors and donor prospects.
- A proven track record of leadership abilities, a high level of initiative, strong interpersonal skills, and creative and flexible problem solving skills
- The ability to partner with the board and to motivate, direct, and mentor staff
- Solid financial management skills
- A strong work ethic, good sense of humor, honesty, integrity, sincerity, a high energy level, and a strong commitment to teamwork

Critical immediate organizational priorities include the following:

- Develop and execute realistic short and long-term plans for generating the funds to increase both earned and contributed, build reserves, achieve long-range financial stability and lay the foundation for future growth
- Assess, design and implement an organizational structure to ensure that Pretend City has the capacity to develop and maintain excellent programs, exhibits and administrative support efficiently, effectively and energetically
- Cultivate and strengthen new and existing relationships, collaborations and partnerships in order to maximize efficient and effective use of community resources, enhance reputation and visibility, and strengthen Pretend City's position as a premier children's museum
- Maintain high levels of employee morale and volunteer engagement; foster a spirit of teamwork among staff, volunteers and other stakeholders; strengthen internal communications and decision making; and ensure accountability for results throughout the organization



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- Work in partnership with the board of trustees to increase their leadership development and training, diversify the board's membership, actively engage and energize all board member, and foster the boards' ability to leverage their talents and experiences to the short- and long-term benefit of the organization

EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE and CAREER PATH: A minimum of a Bachelor's Degree is required (though a Masters Degree is preferred.) The ideal candidate has seven to ten years plus of executive leadership experience in the non profit sector including Museums, Children's Museums, Education, Childhood Development organizations, and/or Youth and Family serving institutions.

COMPENSATION: Pretend City offers a competitive salary based on the candidate's experience, along with health, dental, vision, and vacation benefits.

APPLICATION PROCESS: Please submit: 1.) Cover letter 2.) Resume/CV 3.) Compensation history *and* Compensation requirements to [Michelle@ MichelleWhitingandAssociates.com](mailto:Michelle@MichelleWhitingandAssociates.com). All three attachments must be received; incomplete applications will not be considered. We request that you forward electronic submissions only.

All candidates are strongly encouraged to develop a cover letter that describes how their qualifications and experiences fully intersect with Pretend City's needs. No phone calls please. Only principal, qualified candidates will receive a response.

Pretend City Children's Museum is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer and actively seeks a diverse pool of candidates.