

Position

Major Gifts Officer

Description

The mission of the Topeka Zoo & Conservation Center is to enrich our community through wildlife conservation and education. We are committed to ensuring everyone feels welcome and valued by striving to create an environment that is as diverse as the wild spaces that we are trying to protect.

The Major Gifts Officer is a full-time, exempt position that leads the creation and execution of strategies for cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding a portfolio of 100+ major gift prospects, including individuals, foundations, and/or institutions with a capacity of \$10,000 and above. This position works closely with dynamic development and senior leadership colleagues as a key contributor to the success of the Topeka Zoo and Conservation Center's comprehensive fundraising program.

The Major Gifts Officer will identify, cultivate, and solicit prospective donors for the ongoing capital campaign for the Zoo's \$50 million master plan. The officer will meet with potential donors and ultimately solicit prospects for gifts at all appropriate gift levels.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Under the direction of the CEO, the candidate will develop and execute successful fundraising strategies for donors and prospects within assigned portfolios in support of the Zoo's annual fundraising goals and objectives.
- Collaborates with the CEO to establish personal goals, objectives, and strategies, and develops an annual operating plan.
- Actively manages 100+ major gift relationships and prospects through the identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship process.
- Discusses donor assets proficiently and listens for opportunities for gifts of assets or other non-cash gifts, such as planned gifts.
- Provides the opportunity for donors to receive recognition and increase future giving.
- Proactively reaches out to qualified prospects, making 30 substantial contacts per week and an average of 3-4 visits per week (150-180 visits annually).
- Serves as a qualification officer for new leads for major gift prospects (\$10,000+) and planned gifts from research, prospect tracking tools, donor base, and fundraising colleagues.
- Works with the Director of Development and appropriate front-line fundraisers to build relationships to close major gifts from various sources, including the Zoo's membership base, corporation engagement, and foundations, moving them through the donor pipeline as appropriate.
- Works with the front-line fundraising team to develop and support strategies for activities and special events for solicitation efforts.
- Works with the Director of Development and Deputy Director to ensure strategic solicitations are made and further develop fundraising opportunities in annual (operations) and major gifts areas.
- Tracks pledge schedules and customizes donor recognition efforts and acknowledgment letters.

- Communicates the Zoo's fundraising priorities to a diverse community, helping to position the Zoo as a leader in wildlife conservation and informal science education.
- Partners frequently with zoo colleagues across diverse departments to engage current and prospective donors.
- Understands and complies with the Zoo's gift-related policies and procedures and ensures ethical compliance, as defined by the Association for Fundraising Professionals.
- Writes briefing reports and proposals, stewardship reports, and assists with other donor communications as requested.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

Supervisory Responsibilities

This position does not supervise staff.

Qualifications

- Proven experience soliciting major gifts of \$10,000 and above and initiating major gifts fundraising strategies.
- Knowledge of and experience with development/fundraising concepts and techniques, as well as gift planning and procedures.
- Demonstrated ability to forecast fundraising targets and to evaluate and report progress.
- Ability to build and advance long-term relationships with fundraising constituents, including multiple prospects, major donors, board members, and volunteers.
- Established experience identifying, cultivating, and soliciting many prospective donors with successful results.
- Experience in charitable giving in the areas of capital campaigns and planned giving.
- Superior written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills and effective public presentation skills in small and large groups.
- Ability to analyze research data to align donors with appropriate projects.
- Excellent organizational skills with the ability to balance and prioritize multiple tasks and requests and meet deadlines in a professional manner.
- Ability to work successfully as part of an innovative and energized team or independently.
- Ability to handle confidential information with tact and discretion.
- Working familiarity with high-level event planning concepts.
- Ability to work a flexible schedule to attend zoo functions, including many evenings and some weekends.
- Commitment to the Topeka Zoo's mission and core values.

Education/Experience

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university.
- At least 6 years of fundraising experience with proven results in major gifts and capital campaigns.
- Experience fundraising for non-profit organizations focused on conservation and education is desirable.

Computer Skills

- Advanced proficiency in Microsoft Office, specifically Word, Excel, Outlook, and PowerPoint.
- Experience with DonorPerfect or other equivalent database programs preferred.

Licenses

A valid Kansas State Driver's License is required.

Compensation

The salary range for this position is \$75,500 to \$86,500, depending on experience and qualifications. The Topeka Zoo and Conservation Center provides full-time employees with a full range of benefits, including medical, dental, and vision insurance; paid vacation, holiday, and sick leave; a 401k retirement plan; complimentary Zoo membership; and discounts on Zoo concessions and merchandise.

Equal Opportunity Employment Statement

The Topeka Zoo and Conservation Center is an equal opportunity employer dedicated to a policy of non-discrimination in application and employment for any reason, including race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, national origin, age, disability, or medical status including genetic information, and/or veteran's status.

Application Process

Please send a cover letter and resume to Gwen Tomas at gtomas@topekazoo.org