



HANA AND ARTHUR GINZBARG

nature discovery center

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www.naturediscoverycenter.org



Nature Discovery Center Director of Development Job Description

OUR WORK

Mission and Overview: The mission of the Nature Discovery Center is to ignite lifelong curiosity, understanding, and respect for nature through education. We believe a personal connection to nature is an essential part of life. An interactive hands-on approach to learning is designed to nurture the inquiring mind, awaken a natural curiosity and sense of wonder, and spark an interest in the study of nature and science.

The Center is a four-acre nature park devoted to deep learning, native plants and animals, and the ethic of preservation in a unique environment. Located inside the 610 Loop, the Center is home to the 1925 craftsman-style Henshaw House, which serves as the nature center building. The Center also includes Russ Pitman Park, an outdoor classroom with five-habitat zones representative of the Texas Gulf Coast, including Prairie Wetland, Shady Wetland, Pocket Prairie, Riparian and Woodland environments. Over 70,000 visitors enjoy the Nature Discovery Center by visiting the hands-on discovery rooms, participating in camps and family events, birding, attending adult lectures and most importantly, exposing many children for the first time to the joys of nature.

History: Established in 1979 by the non-profit Friends of Bellaire Parks, now Nature Discovery Center, the organization raised funds to purchase a four-acre estate, which became Russ Pitman Park. Subsequently, the organization renovated the historic 1925 Henshaw House in the Park and gave both to the City of Bellaire, TX. The Center has been functioning as a 501c3 since 1988, operating out of the Henshaw House, which contains both administrative offices and discovery rooms.

Leadership: Executive Director, DeAndra Ramsey, joined the organization in 2021. DeAndra grew up along the Gulf Coast of Texas with a love of animals and nature. She attended Texas A&M University where she obtained her B.S in Biomedical Science. DeAndra has worked in the conservation community for over 15 years. Beginning in 2003, she became an active community speaker engaging the public in bat education. She began her career at the Houston Zoo in 2010, where she was involved in many conservation initiatives ranging from pollinator conservation to habitat restoration. She was awarded the title of Conservation Champion due to her work with the Texas Bat Monitoring project she has led at the Houston Zoo along with facilitating the partnership between the Houston Zoo and Bat Conservation International. DeAndra also works with Buffalo Bayou Partnership to further conservation education efforts in relation to our amazing urban wildlife we have right here in Houston. DeAndra is excited to bring her expertise in community engagement, conservation education, and environmental advocacy to the Nature Discovery Center.

The Center has a Board of Directors with twelve members, an Advisory Council, a volunteer force, and a staff of five: Executive Director, Development Director, Office Manager, Media & Marketing Coordinator, and Head Naturalist. The average annual operating budget is \$500,000.

JOB SUMMARY

The Director of Development reports to the Executive Director and works closely with the Board of Directors. The Director of Development is responsible for all aspects of fund development including major gifts from individuals, foundations and corporations; annual giving from all sources; cultivation and stewardship; grant writing; fundraising initiatives and related special events; and, overseeing research, data entry, gift processing and acknowledgements.

Primary Responsibilities:

- Develop and implement all short and long-range strategic development plans with the Executive Director in order to diversify the organization's funding base and support its long-term goals, including annual gifts, major gifts, planned giving and corporate and foundation solicitation.
- Work with Board of Directors to identify and build relationships with a network of potential major funders and additional partners with influence and substantial resources.
- Cultivate strong relationships with grant administrators and/or their board members. Closely monitor and adhere to grant deadlines.
- Keep up-to-date, accurate records in a database and work closely with administrative management to ensure that all donations are accurately entered and acknowledged.
- Ensure that all donor outreach and follow-up is conducted in a timely manner.
- Raise visibility and funding potential of NDC through creative public relations and special events, including manage the annual gala.
- Work collaboratively and creatively with the marketing area to appropriately position development opportunities and integrate messaging in publications and appeals.
- Prepare annual development plan to parallel annual budget; monitor progress against goals and produce monthly reports.

Education, Experience, and Skills:

- Deep appreciation and understanding of the NDC's mission and the ability to articulate its values and vision internally and externally.
- Bachelor's degree required.
- Experience working in a nonprofit environment.
- Computer skills, including proficiency in Microsoft Word and comfort with Excel. Familiarity with Neon is preferred; Basic graphic design is also a plus.
- Dynamic, energetic, flexible and adaptable.
- Problem solver, collegial colleague, and consensus builder.
- Detail oriented, capable of balancing multiple priorities in a complex environment.
- Creative, collaborative leader who is adept at developing new ideas and approaches to cultivate major gifts from individuals, foundations, government and corporate donors.
- Preferred: Experience in donor cultivation, grant writing, and special events.
- Preferred: 2 to 5+ years of increasing responsibility in nonprofit fundraising.

Please send resume and cover letter to:

Executive Director, DeAndra Ramsey dramsey@naturediscoverycenter.org

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