EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

XENIA, OH

GilmanPartners

EXECUTIVE SEARCH | TALENT ACQUISITION
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

4 Paws for Ability is a nonprofit organization dedicated to breeding, raising, training, and placing service dogs. These dogs are partnered with families who have children with special needs, as well as with disabled veterans, providing life-changing support and increased independence. Founded in 1998, the organization operates from its campus in Xenia, Ohio, and is supported by more than sixty staff members and thousands of volunteers. Each year, 4 Paws for Ability places over 100 service dogs, each trained with specialized tasks and skills tailored to mitigate the impacts of their partner's disabilities. To date, more than 2,000 service-dog teams have been created through the dedication of its staff, volunteers, and donors.

Mission: To enrich the lives of people with disabilities by placing life-changing service dogs.

THE OPPORTUNITY

- Are you inspired to lead a mission-driven organization that transforms lives by raising and training service dogs to support children and veterans with disabilities?
- Do you thrive as the face of an organization, building meaningful relationships with business leaders, community partners, and donors to advance fundraising and organizational growth?
- Can you partner with a passionate team and an engaged Board to shape strategy, drive growth, and expand impact?

WHAT YOU'LL BE DOING

FUNDRAISING, EXPANDING IMPACT & EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

- Build and sustain trusted relationships across the community, serving as a connector between 4 Paws, its Board, donors, and key stakeholders to advance the mission, strengthen philanthropic support, and drive organizational growth.
- Partner with the Board and staff to cultivate, solicit, and steward individual, corporate, foundation, and other philanthropic support.
- Strengthen and leverage a network of nonprofit, legal, and professional partners to support organizational growth and operational excellence.
- Representing the organization with credibility and enthusiasm in civic, professional, and business settings to elevate visibility and impact.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTION

- Define and shape the organization's strategic direction in alignment with its mission, vision, and long-term growth goals.
- Lead the development of a multi-year strategic plan, engaging key stakeholders and establishing clear, measurable goals at both the departmental and organizational levels.
- Monitor and evaluate organizational performance against strategic objectives, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement.
- Strengthen current and future stakeholder relationships, including client experience, employee engagement, and volunteer involvement.

LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Provide hands-on leadership to a growing team, building structure, processes, and accountability while fostering a collaborative, mission-driven nonprofit culture.
- Align organizational operations with both current priorities and long-term strategic direction.
- Shape and sustain a culture that empowers and engages employees, volunteers, donors, and other key stakeholders.
- Promote continuous improvement and innovation across all areas of the organization.
- Coach and mentor team members to support individual growth and professional development.
- Develop and maintain succession planning for key leadership and operational roles.

WHAT YOU'LL BE DOING, CONTINUED

FINANCIAL & OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- Maintain strong financial processes, controls, and reporting systems to ensure transparency and accountability.
- Ensure timely and accurate financial reporting in compliance with all regulatory and governmental requirements, including regular updates to the Board.
- Oversee core operational and internal processes to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and strengthen the organization's competitive advantages.
- Ensure full compliance with all legal, regulatory, and ethical standards governing the organization's operations.

IDEAL CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's degree in social work, business, finance, accounting, or a related field, or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- 10+ years of progressive leadership experience, including significant leadership experience within a complex nonprofit or mission-driven organization.
- Demonstrated success in fundraising and development, including building and stewarding donor relationships and securing philanthropic support from individuals, corporations, foundations, or other sources.
- Demonstrated success leading a mature, high-functioning organization—balancing operational excellence with continued strategic growth and impact expansion.
- Experience developing and executing organizational strategy, including long-range planning and measurable goal setting.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively manage and resolve complex or sensitive situations, including stake holder disputes, responding to negative social media attention, and addressing other challenging or high-conflict issues with professionalism, discretion, and sound judgment
- Proven success serving as a visible external representative, building relationships with donors, community partners, and stakeholders to expand mission impact.
- Experience in or meaningful exposure to nonprofit, social services, human services, or other mission-driven environments, with demonstrated empathy and understanding for the individuals, families, and communities served.

KEY PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Strategic & Visionary Leader: Thinks long-term, sets clear direction, and translates mission into actionable strategy.
- Comfort with Ambiguity: Navigates complexity and uncertainty with confidence, bringing clarity where structure is evolving.
- Macro-Level Operator: Focuses on the big picture while empowering others to manage execution and detail.
- External Relationship Builder: Energized by representing the organization, building awareness, and developing meaningful partnerships in the community.
- People Developer & Culture Builder: Invested in coaching, mentoring, and creating a collaborative, accountable, mission-driven culture.
- Collaborative Confidence: Leads effectively through subject matter experts, valuing their expertise while maintaining organizational alignment.
- Mission-Driven Mindset: Deep alignment with the organization's purpose and an authentic commitment to advancing the lives of the individuals, families, and communities served.

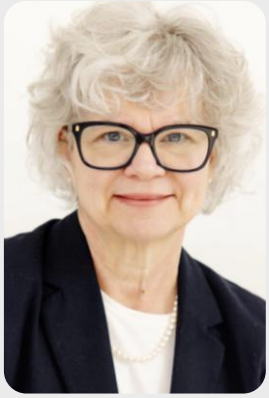
THE PAYOFF

This is a unique opportunity to lead a financially stable organization supported by a fully mission-aligned team and an active, engaged Board committed to growth and impact.

Based in Xenia, Ohio, this role offers a convenient commute from Dayton and surrounding communities in the broader Miami Valley region.

Please visit Gilman Partners' website to apply.

Megan Meyer
Executive Search Consultant
mmeyer@gilmanpartners.com



Kim McNeer
Executive Search Consultant
kmcneer@gilmanpartners.com

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Gilman Partners is committed to strengthening leadership teams and elevating talent in our communities—and that means all qualified applicants will receive consideration. You do not have to meet every qualification in this job description to apply. If you're drawn to the position and believe your experience makes you a good fit, we encourage you to apply.