



CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER
CHARLESTON PARKS CONSERVANCY
Charleston, South Carolina
[Charleston Parks Conservancy](#)



The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Charleston Parks Conservancy in the search for a Chief Development Officer.

The Chief Development Officer will be the primary strategist for and manager of the Conservancy's fundraising and outreach activities that generate financial support from individuals, foundations, corporations, and government agencies. The Chief Development Officer will have a key role in crafting the vision for the future of Charleston's parks and open spaces and responsibility for developing strategies and work plans to obtain the financial resources to achieve that vision.

The Chief Development Officer's primary focus will be developing and securing major gifts as well as leading a staff of professionals and contractors responsible for membership and annual giving, corporate relationships, and institutional giving. The Chief Development Officer will be a prominent ambassador for the Conservancy across a wide variety of public settings.

Charleston Parks Conservancy inspires the people of Charleston to connect with their parks and create stunning public spaces, contributing to a higher quality of life and building stronger communities.

Founded in 2007, the Charleston Parks Conservancy is the leading advocate and steward of Charleston's urban and suburban parks. Since its founding, it has led efforts to rejuvenate, redesign, expand, and beautify twenty-five of the city's parks. Today, it is actively involved in the cultivation and nurturing of twenty of those same parks.

Efforts to create, expand, sustain, and reinvigorate Charleston's urban parks require a collaborative approach. Charleston Parks Conservancy partners with the City of Charleston's Parks Department on each one of its capital projects and coordinates the ongoing work of maintaining these stunning places. Its expert staff works alongside a growing and passionate corps of volunteers, the Parks Angels, creating opportunities for community engagement through park maintenance and community programs. The successful combination of government, non-profit, and citizen support has created high quality parks that are wondrous, welcoming, and active places now, and for future generations. Charleston Parks Conservancy actively shares its knowledge of Lowcountry horticulture through its Community Gardens and Garden in the Parks programs. Hands-on demonstrations are offered every week in many different parks and gardens, as well as on its social media channels.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Chief Development Officer will report to the Executive Director, Tom McGuire. The Chief Development Officer will oversee a staff of four professionals, the Donor Relations Manager, Corporate Relations Manager, Digital Marketing Manager, and Grants Writer as well as at least four consultants.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Conservancy is at an inflection point as it moves beyond its initial founding period to become a true institution. We are undergoing a leadership transition from our founder and refocusing our mission to more completely connect to the city's diverse neighborhoods and wide variety of needs. As we work through that transition, it's clear that we are poised for dramatic growth of our scope and impact. Our new Chief Development Officer will be joining an organization with a strong track record and reputation as well as strong Board leadership and the financial capacity to build a robust, high impact organization that can fundamentally improve the lives of all the city's residents. An effective Chief Development Officer will be critical to our success.

Also of note is that the Chief Development Officer will be partnering with an Executive Director who is an experienced development professional and fundraiser. While the CDO will be responsible for the Conservancy's Development program, they will have a truly supportive collaborator who has ambitious, but realistic goals to partner with to build the program.

–Tom McGuire, Executive Director

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Charleston Parks Conservancy is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace in which all employees have an opportunity to participate and contribute to the success of the business and are valued for their skills, experience, and unique perspectives. This commitment is embodied in the Conservancy policy and the way it does business. It is an important principle of sound business management. Diversity may be measured by, but is not limited to, differences in age, ethnicity, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic circumstance, class, religion, disability, geography, and profession. Charleston Parks Conservancy acknowledges and respects the many differences that comprise thriving communities and seeks diversity to ensure that a range of perspectives, opinions, and experiences are recognized and acted upon in achieving its mission. The Conservancy provides equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded, such as those with a disability or members of marginalized groups. It embraces everyone regardless of race, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and religious and cultural beliefs.

Charleston Parks Conservancy is also in the process of developing its Diversity in Horticulture (working name) Fellowship Program. The incoming Chief Development Officer will play a vital role in developing the philanthropic support base for this program, which is envisioned as a core part of the Conservancy's public programs in the future. This effort seeks to foster a new generation of horticulture and landscape professionals from traditionally disadvantaged communities through on-the-job skills training, professional development, and job placement while working to improve and maintain Charleston's parks and public spaces. The Conservancy will recruit annually a class of six Fellows from varying backgrounds for an immersive year of working in parks, gardens, and public spaces around Charleston with the goal of placing them in a career-oriented job upon completion of the program.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Development Officer will

- lead the strategy and execution of all fundraising programs;
- personally engage and develop relationships with major donors, prospects, and the community;
- oversee all annual budgeting and planning for the fundraising program;
- support organization-wide strategic planning and management;
- increase Annual Fund giving from approximately \$750,000 to \$2 million;
- establish and institutionalize the major donor program including the evolution from personality driven to institutionally focused;
- lead a \$2.5 million, 5 year campaign for the Diversity in Horticulture program;
- lead the development and execution of a capital campaign for education and events building;
- serve as an engaged member of the senior leadership team;
- work towards the creation of a culture of philanthropy both internally and among the Conservancy's supporters; and
- build a talented development team with support of the Executive Director and Board.

LEADERSHIP AND KEY COLLEAGUES

Tom McGuire

Executive Director

Tom has spent over 25 years managing non-profit organizations, developing expertise in strategic planning, program development, and fundraising with a particular focus on connecting people to nature. Most recently, Tom was Senior Contributor to Schultz & Williams, a national fundraising consulting firm. Prior to that, Tom served as Executive Director of the Friends of the National Arboretum in Washington D.C., where he reinvigorated and refocused the organization, putting it on a solid growth trajectory for the future. His work at FONA included guiding FONA through strategic reinvention, launching its first capital campaign, creating numerous education programs, and engaging citizens in advocacy and conservation action.

Prior to FONA, Tom was General Manager of eNature.com, a nature-focused tech business, and served as the National Wildlife Federation's Vice President of Membership and Marketing, responsible for NWF's million plus membership program and related activities, including fundraising, magazine publishing, grass-roots advocacy and volunteerism.

In addition to his time at NWF, Tom worked in Silicon Valley as Vice President of the Electronic Frontier Foundation and in Washington, D.C. at the World Wildlife Fund. Tom's private sector experience includes marketing and publishing at American Express, investment banking within the media and telecom world, and as a technology entrepreneur.

Tom has served in leadership positions on the boards of multiple non-profit organizations and is a regular contributor to industry publications and conferences. He has contributed to outlets ranging from the *Wall Street Journal* and CNN to the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, *Bird Watchers Digest* and NPR's Science Friday. He has a BA and an MBA from the University of Virginia and attended the Stanford Professional Publishing Institute.

Amanda Côté
Director of Operations

Amanda Côté has served as the Director of Operations for the Conservancy since 2014. Amanda manages all internal operations for the organization including financial management, volunteer resource management, and human resources management. She received her Society for Human Resources Management Certified Professional (SHRM-CP) designation in 2016. Prior to joining the Conservancy, she served as Director of Operations for the Charleston Promise Neighborhood.

Amanda has volunteered with many of Charleston's non-profits for over twenty years including Reading Partners, Communities in Schools, and Lowcountry AIDS Services (now Palmetto Community Care). A resident of Charleston for over 25 years, Amanda grew up in Darlington and Clover South Carolina and received her bachelor's degree from Clemson University. She enjoys exploring Charleston and its parks by foot and bicycle with her husband, Gilles.

Leslie Wade
Programs Director

Leslie serves as the Conservancy's Community Programs Director. Prior to joining the Conservancy, Leslie served as Executive Director for a therapeutic horticulture organization, and her many years as a Director of Operations for a local, multi-unit restaurant group merged with her six years with the Conservancy will translate well into her current role.

Leslie's love of nature and being outdoors began as a child and was fostered by her grandparent's farms and parent's gardens. This led her along the path of study, work and a lifelong passion of plants, parks and people. Whether through her studies and work at Virginia Tech, directing and developing horticulture therapy programs or directing a restaurant group and staff operations, a key element was always present and that is the human element and the connection to our natural spaces. Leslie is a strong believer in the importance of building community through parks, gardens and park gatherings and how these improve the well-being of individuals, families, neighborhoods and cities. Since 2014, Leslie's work with the Conservancy has provided her the opportunity to engage the Charleston community in park based learning, collaborative efforts, bringing neighbors together, and healthy living pursuits. The power of parks is in the forefront of her everyday life with her family, friends and work.

Charley McLendon
Chair, Board of Directors

Charles "Charley" McLendon, Jr. is managing principal and owner of Laurens Capital Advisors, an investment and advisory firm focused on financial services consulting, new business development, and investment in structured finance and real estate related markets. He serves on the Executive Committee of Charleston Angel Partners, an angel investment group that facilitates access to investment opportunities in local and regional early-stage companies.

Charley moved to Charleston in 2010 after spending most of his career in New York in the financial services industry. He has held a number of senior positions in the fixed income credit and capital markets businesses including; Managing Partner at MAXEX, LLC, Managing Partner at Vertical Capital Management, President and CIO of Primus Guaranty, and Managing Director at Bank of America, running several businesses including the Investment Grade sales and trading division. He has served on several industry related boards including Markit Partners, In Capital, Vertical Capital and Blue Ridge Funding.

In addition to his non-profit responsibilities for the Charleston Parks Conservancy, Charley serves on the board of Lowcountry Local First, The B. Robert Williamson Jr. Foundation and as Treasurer of Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church in Charleston. He is a former board member of UNC Global and the Board of

Visitors at the University of North Carolina. Charley is a graduate of the University of North Carolina and holds an MBA from the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business. He is a native of North Carolina and is happy to be back in the South and to call Charleston home. Charley and his wife Martha reside in the downtown neighborhood of Ansonborough, and enjoy Charleston's many parks.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Charleston Parks Conservancy seeks a Chief Development Officer with

- a commitment to the mission of Charleston Parks Conservancy and an ability to be an authentic and passionate representative of Charleston's parks and public spaces;
- an ability to build meaningful and enduring relationships with new and existing donors;
- experience as an entrepreneurial development professional across many aspects of development ranging from annual fund programs to major gifts to capital campaigns;
- experience working with and engaging a Board of Directors as well as corporate and community partners;
- campaign experience, particularly major giving campaigns;
- experience securing gifts with significant organizational impact;
- outstanding written and verbal communications skills including public speaking and presentation skills;
- experience managing fundraising and departmental budgets and establishing and achieving strategic goals;
- an ability to lead and motivate staff and volunteers; and
- facility with technology and fundraising software.

This position requires at least six years of experience in non-profit fundraising or private sector revenue generation. Experience working in public gardens and parks is desirable.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Charleston Parks Conservancy offers a competitive benefits package. The salary range for this position is \$90,000 to \$110,000 annually.

LOCATION

This position is located in Charleston, South Carolina.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Charleston Parks Conservancy as well as the responsibilities and qualifications presented in the prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit:

[Chief Development Officer, Charleston Parks Conservancy.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Don Hasseltine:

[donhasseltine@aspenleadershipgroup.com.](mailto:donhasseltine@aspenleadershipgroup.com)

All inquiries will be held in confidence.