

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT
GEORGE MARK CHILDREN'S HOUSE
SAN LEANDRO, CALIFORNIA



Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with George Mark Children's House in the search for an Assistant Director of Advancement.

The Assistant Director of Advancement will serve as an essential member of the George Mark Children's House Advancement Team, working with individual donors committed to supporting its mission to provide an important addition to the continuum of care for children with life-limiting illnesses. The Assistant Director of Advancement will work in collaboration with the Director of Advancement and Chief Executive Officer to develop compelling fundraising and solicitation strategies that result in increasing levels of support. The Assistant Director of Advancement will serve as an articulate, enthusiastic, and visible spokesperson for the organization.

George Mark Children's House (GMCH) focuses on quality of life and continuity of care for children with illnesses that modern healthcare cannot yet cure, or for those who have chronic medical conditions. George Mark Children's House was the first freestanding pediatric palliative care center in the United States. Since 2004, it has been a leader and model for the pediatric palliative care movement. It continues to help other homes across the United States get started, with the hope that centers like George Mark Children's House will become a standard of care for every child facing a chronic or terminal medical condition.

George Mark Children's House was founded by Kathleen Nicholson Hull, Psy.D., a clinical psychologist from Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland, in California. Dr. Hull knew through firsthand experience that a child's life-limiting diagnosis, or the death of a child, has a devastating and life-long impact on parents, siblings, extended family, and the family's community. She felt that there was a better way for these children to get exceptional, loving care than spending time in hospitals. George Mark is named for Dr. Hull's brothers, Mark and George, who died at the ages of 16 and 30, respectively.

Homes like George Mark are well-established in the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Germany. The vision—and hope—of George Mark Children's House is that one day, centers like theirs will become the norm in the U.S., operating in partnership with the medical community so that every child facing chronic or terminal medical conditions, as well as their families, can get the care and support they need.

The George Mark model of pediatric palliative care strives to achieve greater well-being and quality of life for children and their families. It makes a substantial difference in the lives of the children and families that GMCH serves, at significantly less cost than that of an acute care hospital facility.

It can be overwhelming and isolating to have a child with complex medical conditions. George Mark Children's House partners with families to bring an element of normalcy and joy into their lives. In addition to around-the-clock skilled pediatric nursing, George Mark Children's House offers everyday activities including play, art, music, movement, and hydrotherapy.

George Mark Children’s House has supportive services for many unique needs that families of children who have terminal illnesses may go through. These services include transitional care—palliative care for children who are no longer benefiting from an acute hospital environment yet are not able to be cared for at home. End-of-life care allows a patient’s family to stay in its own family suite and surround their child with love and support along with the support of the George Mark Children’s House end-of-life care team. Respite care provides high quality medical care and appropriate activities while offering parents and families a short break from the nonstop care at home. George Mark Children’s House also provides bereavement care for ongoing support of families following the death of their child. George Mark Children’s House develops an individualized care plan for each child, coordinating services among the George Mark care team—pediatricians, nurses and nursing assistants, social workers, child life specialists, palliative aquatics specialists, psychologists, support staff, and volunteers.

George Mark Children’s House relies largely on the generosity of individuals, foundations, and corporate donors for approximately 80% of its annual operating budget. Only a portion of its actual costs are funded by reimbursement from Medi-Cal and insurance companies.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Assistant Director of Advancement will report to the Director of Advancement, Ken Sommer and work closely with other members of the Advancement Team, the Chief Executive Officer, Board of Directors, and GMCH staff.

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT

I’ve worked in the non-profit world, and specifically in fundraising, for close to forty years, with many organizations, all of which had important missions. My time at George Mark Children’s House, however, has been by far the most meaningful and rewarding of my career. It is quite simply the best job I have ever had. I am awed by the way this organization holds up and supports its patients and families with love, compassion, and respect. The remarkable and caring staff and volunteers are truly my heroes.

While fundraising for George Mark has its challenges, as is the case with every organization I’ve worked for, doing so for George Mark has been extremely gratifying, with the knowledge that my efforts are truly making a difference in the lives of the patients and families we serve.

We have experienced record fundraising success in recent years, and I am excited to welcome a new member to our team to help us continue to grow and flourish, especially as we prepare to celebrate our 20th anniversary.

—Ken Sommer, Director of Advancement

GEORGE MARK CHILDREN'S HOUSE'S COMMITMENT TO AN INCLUSIVE CULTURE

George Mark Children’s House is committed to helping its staff do its best work. Its promise is to champion diversity, build an inclusive culture, and do its part to create a more equitable working environment. It can’t promise that it will always get it right, but George Mark Children's House will always put its people first.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Assistant Director or Advancement will

- cultivate and grow an individual donor portfolio of approximately 50-75 donors which includes donors giving \$1,000 and above in the past two years and/or lifetime giving of \$25,000 and above;
- oversee annual giving, including management of direct appeals, both mail and electronic;
- manage the prospect and donor moves management system and pipeline reporting to grow individual major gifts;
- support the Advancement team in major campaign and endowment cultivation and major donor solicitations;
- oversee an initial territory between San Francisco and South Bay (but not limited to this territory) including some donors out of the state of California;
- identify gaps and opportunities to build outreach, communications tracking, and engagement strategies and touchpoints for key stakeholders;
- in association with the Database Administrator, build a data tracking system to monitor the advancement program and provide recommendations to evolve the current program;
- bring and leverage external expertise and data points to help evolve metrics and identify areas to prioritize or deprioritize;
- recommend key systems upgrades and evolutions needed to serve GMCH's needs and goals;
- support community events and donor recognition by periodically attending community events; and
- manage the organization's donor recognition program.

LEADERSHIP

Ken Sommer

Director of Advancement

Ken Sommer has approximately 40 years of experience working for Bay Area non-profit organizations in fundraising, marketing and communications, public relations, and special event production. His previous work experience includes positions with Children's Hospital Oakland, Glide Church and Foundation, San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation. Ken grew up in the Bay Area and was a resident for 50 years, before recently relocating to Davis, California.

Shekinah Eliassen

Chief Executive Officer

Shekinah Eliassen was named Chief Executive Officer of George Mark Children's House in October of 2022. Shekinah has over 20 years of experience in business strategy, brand management, and eCommerce. She is passionate about building brands and organizations with purpose. She has lived in Boston, New York, San Francisco, and London, where she developed teams to build brands and digital disruption at Unilever and Clorox. She has increased her involvement in philanthropy and service focused organizations since 2012 when she and her husband, Peter, lost their first son, Lars, at three weeks old to a terminal brain condition. Shekinah and Peter savored the days they had with Lars at the heartwarming George Mark Children's House in San Leandro. Shekinah continued her professional career while always staying connected to GMCH, including joining as a Board Member in August 2020.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

George Mark Children's House seeks an Assistant Director of Advancement with

- a commitment to the mission of George Mark Children's House—to provide an important addition to the continuum of care for children with life-limiting illnesses, and an ability to work comfortably in a sub-acute health care setting serving children who are critically ill and their families;
- a history of fundraising success and building networks of donors across major giving, corporate and community relations, and events;
- a deep understanding of major donor programs;
- an ability to identify and engage new and prospective donors and funding partners;
- experience in community and public relations, public speaking, and marketing at non-profit organizations;
- an ability to communicate effectively with donors, community stakeholders, patients, patients' families, staff, volunteers, and contractors;
- an ability to establish and maintain productive and positive relationships with high-level internal and external stakeholders;
- superior written, verbal, editing, and proofreading skills;
- a commitment to excellent customer service and a high level of initiative, attention to detail, and an ability to follow through on assignments to completion;
- strong organizational skills and an ability to manage multiple, competing, and varied tasks utilizing time management, listening skills, problem-solving, decision making, delegation of duties, and workflow management;
- an ability to stay current on non-profit donor relations and stewardship trends, strategies, and services; and
- an ability to perform in an ethical and culturally sensitive manner without regard to any protected category as defined by federal, state, or local law.

A bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and experience is preferred for this position as is at least three years of experience in fundraising, including a history of successfully closing gifts. George Mark Children's House will consider candidates with a broad range of backgrounds. If you are excited about this role and feel that you can contribute to GMCH, but your experience does not exactly align with every qualification listed above, we encourage you to apply.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is \$120,000 to \$130,000 annually. George Mark Children's House offers a comprehensive benefits package including employer-paid health, dental, and vision as well as a wellness culture with team-building activities and special events like Wellness Wednesday, Family Picnic, and Remembrance Day, all within a unique, home-like setting located on five beautiful acres.

LOCATION

This position is in San Leandro, California in the East Bay of the San Francisco Bay Area.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

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

To apply for this position, visit: [Assistant Director of Advancement, George Mark Children's House.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Gregory Leet, [gregoryleet@aspenleadershipgroup.com.](mailto:gregoryleet@aspenleadershipgroup.com)

All inquiries will be held in confidence.