



MAJOR GIFTS OFFICER

COLBURN SCHOOL

Location – Hybrid (Metropolitan Los Angeles)



The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with the Colburn School in the search for a Major Gifts Officer.

In pursuit of fundraising goals each year, the Major Gifts Officer will develop and manage a portfolio of donors (individuals and corporate partners) who make annual, endowment, capital, special projects, and planned gifts to Colburn School. Responsibilities include prospecting for growth in contributed revenue, especially in light of the new Frank Gehry-designed Colburn Center project. The Major Gifts Officer will steward and cultivate current and new donors to the School, support operations and scholarship fundraising, diligently track portfolio activity in the School's CRM, and build momentum for the campus expansion project that was announced in March 2022. Upcoming activities for the exciting project include a seat naming campaign, groundbreaking and building opening events, and numerous other donor engagement opportunities.

The Colburn School provides access to quality instruction for anyone who possesses a passion for music, dance, and drama, so they may further explore their interests and continue developing their talents. Colburn's renowned faculty guide students through classes appropriate, and catered to, their age and skill level. The Colburn Community School of Performing Arts provides music instruction to beginners of any age, as well as to those who want to hone their skills, or participate in one of the School's ensembles, orchestras, or choirs. Highly gifted pre-college students may apply to study at the Colburn Music or Dance Academies, and college-age students prepare for careers in music performance through certificate, and bachelor's, and master's degree programs at the Colburn Conservatory of Music.

The staff and faculty of the Colburn School are committed to bringing music and dance performances and education into the greater community so others can experience the many benefits associated with the performing arts. Every year, Colburn students and faculty present hundreds of free or affordable performances in Colburn's beautiful professional theaters on campus, as well as in prestigious venues around Los Angeles. The Colburn School partners with 15 Los Angeles Unified School District schools—13 of which receive Title I funding—to provide interactive and engaging concerts and instructional sessions to 5,000 students every year.

Colburn's goal is to accommodate students in developing a lifelong appreciation for the performing arts—whenever possible, and without the constraints of financial concerns—awarding over \$1.3 million in scholarships in the Colburn Community School of Performing Arts and the music and dance academies, every year. Additionally, all students at the prestigious Colburn Conservatory of Music receive full tuition, room, and board scholarships, and are admitted based solely on talent—regardless of socioeconomic background. This is Colburn's access to excellence promise.

THE COLBURN CENTER

Born out of its aspiration to serve both the community and the School, the Colburn Center—a 100,000 square-foot addition of state-of-the-art performance venues and learning spaces—will unite Colburn’s passion for the performing arts and collaboration to spark interdisciplinary educational partnerships and residences across the region.

In this endeavor, the Colburn School has partnered with a world-renowned design team comprised of Los Angeles-based professionals who are experts in their field, including Frank Gehry, whose architectural career has spanned more than six decades and has earned him several of the most significant awards in architecture—including the Pritzker Prize; and Yasuhisa Toyota, an established international authority in the field of concert hall design, whose more than 30 years of experience includes designing some of the world’s finest performance venues.

The Colburn Center will include:

- **The Terri and Jerry Kohl Hall.** Named in appreciation of Terri and Jerry Kohl’s leadership gift to the campaign, the 1,000-seat Terri and Jerry Kohl Hall uses an in-the-round design to create intimacy between the performers and the audience and removes the stage lip, putting front-row seats at eye-level with the artists. The flexible configurations of the Hall will accommodate the grandest works and the largest orchestrations, providing an immersive experience for concertgoers. Opera, dance, and musical theater will feel equally at home in this space.
- **A 100-seat extra large studio theater.** With retractable seating, the theater can serve as a rehearsal space, as well as a dynamic and flexible performance venue. Enclosed by glass and connected to the main lobby of Kohl Hall, this space will be a welcoming and versatile venue for the dance program—and more!
- **Four glass-enclosed large dance studios.** Transparent walls of four oversized dance studios on the corner of 2nd and Hill Streets provide a window into the beauty and hard work of dance training, literally “turning out” the building to the public as they experience DTLA in a whole new light.
- **A 1,000-seat public performance plaza.** The Center’s open-air plaza will feature state-of-the-art projection, sound, and lighting technology that can broadcast performances from inside the Center to the outdoor space, or support independent performances created just for the plaza.
- **Multiple gardens and green spaces.** Plans for the project include three garden spaces: a family garden located at the ground level of the dance school, a public garden on the corner of Hill and Olive streets, and a rooftop garden atop the dance school’s studio theater. These gardens aim to contribute to downtown Los Angeles’ greening and will welcome students, parents, and visitors to gather and find respite in this outdoor environment.

Learn more [here](#).

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Major Gifts Officer will report to the Assistant Vice President of Philanthropy, Nina Zhou.

FROM THE ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT

The Colburn School is truly one of its kind in the topography of performing arts institutions across the globe. From its remarkable history to each phase of its visionary aspirations, this is an organization that began as a community venture and continues to carry its founding principle of ‘access to excellence’ into its work 70 years later—throughout all units of the School.

The Colburn Center, as announced earlier this year, is a project that will inspire future students of the Colburn School to learn, perform, and dream in a newly designed Frank Gehry building at the heart of downtown Los Angeles. The \$350 million campaign—of which \$270 million has been raised—will be an incredible tool for the philanthropy team to cultivate existing patrons and introduce new donors to the Colburn community. Our goal is to not only achieve financial sustainability, but to grow our visibility and profile as a whole, which will in turn serve the long-term community building objectives of the School. I have no doubt that this project will become a centerpiece in the activities and conversations of the California arts community and beyond.

Already now in the public phase of the campaign, there has never been a more exciting time to join the Colburn School. We have an exceptional team of creative and dedicated professionals who believe in the realization of this project and in our donor community, and the Major Gifts Officer can play a critical part in this achievement. I am looking forward to finding someone who is just as enthusiastic, conscientious, and thoughtful as those already on our team as we strive to create a brighter future for this School and the community it serves.

—Nina Zhou, Assistant Vice President of Philanthropy

COLBURN SCHOOL'S COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

The Colburn School is dedicated to providing equitable access to excellence in performing arts education. Founded on the core principle of community, Colburn believes that equity, diversity, and inclusion are vital to its collective success.

BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and low-income communities continue to be underrepresented in many major disciplines that are served by the institution, including classical music and ballet. The School seeks to help correct this and believes that it is uniquely positioned to address access barriers at all points of artistic development.

The Colburn School's programs are designed to identify dedicated students—at all levels—who face structural inequities that create barriers to quality arts education, and to support them with the resources of the institution for as long as they wish to study. By providing the highest level of performing arts instruction—starting in early childhood and extending through pre-professional studies—along with a robust scholarship program, the School offers students and families an unparalleled arts education curriculum.

In conversation with its staff, faculty, students, and board, the Colburn School has developed a series of initiatives grounded in these cornerstones, which began with the 2020–21 academic year, and will continue long after—becoming part of the fabric of the institution, integrated with the existing access to excellence mission.

The School seeks to recruit, train, and empower the next generation of artists who will use their gifts to enact meaningful change in the world. It believes these deep commitments will result in a stronger, more diverse artistic workforce and creative society.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Major Gifts Officer will

- cultivate annual, endowment, planned, and special campaign gifts to further the mission of the Colburn School—to provide access to excellence in the arts and the highest quality performing arts education at all levels of development in an optimal learning environment;
- maintain a dynamic portfolio of donors and prospects as needed for continued cultivation and solicitation, including prospective donors with the capacity to make five-, six-, and seven-figure gifts, with an eye on establishing a pipeline to grow contributed revenue for the School;
- work together with a team of philanthropy officers on creating fundraising programs to engage campaign donors (e.g., seat-naming campaigns) with specific focus on public-phase fundraising;
- work closely with the President, Vice President of Philanthropy, Assistant Vice President of Philanthropy, and Board leadership on campaign activities, tracking, and gift solicitation—including the creation of custom proposals, marketing campaigns, and events;
- initiate gift discussions with, and respond to inquiries from, donors and prospects;
- collaborate with other philanthropy staff and leadership in gift solicitations, providing expertise on building and performing arts campaign fundraising strategies;
- gather information about donors' specific interests to pair with the Colburn School's programs and upcoming campaign opportunities;
- move prospects through the cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship cycle in collaboration with leadership and deans;
- work with donors, prospects, and their legal and financial advisors to establish charitable trusts, bequests, and complex outright gifts to benefit the School;
- cultivate corporate partnerships for special events sponsorships, campaign sponsorships, and naming opportunities for the School;
- represent Colburn in discussions with donors regarding the use of their gifts;
- work with the philanthropy and finance teams to determine School compliance with donor restrictions and donor intent in its management of gifts and funds;
- partner with the Philanthropy Executive Associate on campaign stewardship and tracking;
- work with the Philanthropy Data Systems Manager to grow Philanthropy Officers' portfolios through prospecting and related fundraising functions;
- promote interaction with donors and prospects through participation on major events throughout the year, including Colburn Society events, its yearly Gala, house concerts, recitals, and other key events in order to attract and retain new and existing donors;
- provide accurate documentation of outright gifts, as well as complex and deferred gift vehicles;
- draft pledge and gift agreements with varying degrees of complexity, and sample bequest language for gifts to Colburn;
- maintain best practices and ensure a coordinated and collaborative approach;
- establish credibility and collaborative relationships with senior leadership, Board members, donors, volunteers, and colleagues from all academic units and other departments;
- develop a current, thorough, and comprehensive understanding of the Colburn School's mission, areas of excellence, student population, student and faculty profiles, services, programs, and goals;
- support the philanthropy team's responsibility for accomplishment of the School's contributed revenue goals each year; and
- staff concerts and events as a philanthropy donor services representative to bolster Colburn donor community engagement.

KEY COLLEAGUES

Nina Zhou

Assistant Vice President, Philanthropy

With over fifteen years of experience as a strategic leader, educator, pianist, and builder of communities and high-functioning teams, Nina Zhou is entering her fourth year as the Assistant Vice President of Philanthropy at the Colburn School. Prior to Colburn, Ms. Zhou served as the Managing Director of Development for the San Francisco Symphony, where she co-led a fundraising team of 23; oversaw development operations; led annual fund, membership, special projects, and endowment campaigns; restructured the department staffing; and worked with board leadership and others on the executive team on trustee giving and governance.

A pianist and educator by training, Ms. Zhou has had a decade of experience as a performer, including serving as Pianist for the New World Symphony, and as a faculty member in both pre-collegiate and college settings. Having been on all sides of the performing arts stage, she has now dedicated herself to delivering access and opportunities to young people through education, arts, and social impact sectors, and is passionate about partnering with philanthropists and funders on their investment in these areas. Ms. Zhou holds both a Doctor of Music in Piano Performance, Music Education, and Arts Administration and a Master of Music in Piano Performance from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music and received her Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance from Oberlin College and Conservatory of Music.

Annie Wickert

Vice President, Philanthropy

Annie Wickert joined the Colburn School leadership team as Vice President of Philanthropy in June of 2018. Ms. Wickert has twenty years of experience fundraising, growing communities, and deepening engagement with programmatic work in the non-profit sector.

Prior to Colburn, Ms. Wickert served as Director of Partnerships and External Relations at Stanford's Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (PACS). PACS' primary participants are Stanford faculty, visiting scholars, postdoctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students, and nonprofit and foundation practitioners. Ms. Wickert directed fundraising, public engagement activities, philanthropic partnerships, and ongoing learning opportunities for practitioners and philanthropists—including its flagship event, the Philanthropy Innovation Summit. She was responsible for guiding Stanford PACS' communications for diverse audiences of practitioners, philanthropists, institutions, and academics.

Serving in the performance sector as well, Ms. Wickert led fundraising at Music@Menlo and, prior to that, was a member of the philanthropy and campaign team at the Harvard Art Museums, after starting her fundraising career at the San Diego Museum of Man. She is the recent past president of the Board of Directors of Young Audiences of Northern California and has a BA in Art History from UCLA and an MA in Museum Studies from Harvard University.

Sel Kardan

President and Chief Executive Officer

Sel Kardan joined the Colburn School as President and CEO in October 2009, bringing years of experience as a performing arts executive, educator, and violist. In his role as President and CEO, Mr. Kardan shapes and leads the future path of Colburn and its four divisions: the Community School of Performing Arts, Music Academy, Trudl Zipper Dance Institute, and Conservatory, which together serve more than 2,000 students, from early childhood development to post graduate studies.

Mr. Kardan's vision for the Colburn School is distinguished by his commitment to the School's continuum of education—providing a place where students of all ages and skill levels can nurture their craft. In carrying out this institutional vision, Mr. Kardan has overseen the creation of two new academies: the

Music Academy, a program for gifted young pre-college musicians; and the Dance Academy, a training program for exceptional pre-professional ballet dancers. Recognizing Colburn's role as a cultural resource in the Los Angeles community, he has also worked to greatly expand community engagement initiatives and need-based scholarship opportunities for Colburn students. Under Mr. Kardan's administrative leadership, Colburn has enjoyed growth in enrollment, greater national visibility, increased philanthropic support, and stable financial health.

Prior to coming to Colburn in 2009, Mr. Kardan served as President and CEO of the Music Institute of Chicago, where he was the driving force behind the creation of the Academy, an elite pre-conservatory training center for young musicians. He was formerly Executive Director of the Shriver Hall Concert Series in Baltimore, a leading presenter of classical solo and chamber music, and Executive Director of the Heifetz International Music Institute—a summer training program and festival for gifted string players. A native of Philadelphia, Mr. Kardan is a graduate of the Peabody Institute and performed and taught at both, the pre-college and collegiate level as a violist prior to beginning an administrative career.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Colburn School seeks a Major Gifts Officer with

- direct experience with capital campaign projects, complex gift agreements—including long-term recognition activities (naming), and corporate partnerships;
- a commitment to the mission of Colburn School—to provide access to excellence in the arts and the highest quality performing arts education at all levels of development in an optimal learning environment;
- a strong aptitude for design and branding, messaging, and the common technology used to support and advance these activities, like Adobe Creative Suite, email marketing, CRM systems, and websites;
- experience managing a variety of staff and academic, or artistic, leadership through indirect influence and partnerships;
- experience with self-directed projects;
- an ability to work independently and closely with a broad team of varying constituents, including staff, faculty, volunteers, and trustees;
- strong interpersonal and writing skills, and an ability to communicate effectively in verbal and written form;
- an ability to collaborate with multiple stakeholders, and operate tactfully and strategically;
- an ability to handle highly sensitive and confidential information appropriately; and
- website development experience (beneficial).

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is at least seven years of fundraising experience.

SALARY & BENEFITS

The Colburn School offers a competitive salary and a comprehensive package of employee benefits.

LOCATION

The Major Gifts Officer role will be a hybrid position with a mix of in-person and remote work alongside the philanthropy team. Candidates must be locally situated in Los Angeles, and on-campus work at the School will be dependent on the individual's portfolio work as well as staffing needs at various events and meetings throughout the year. The Colburn School is located at the center of the thriving downtown Los Angeles arts and cultural corridor. Its immediate neighbors are the Walt Disney Concert Hall, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, The Music Center, Grand Performances at California Plaza, The Broad, and the Museum of Contemporary Art.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

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

To apply for this position, visit: [Major Gifts Officer, Colburn School](#).

To nominate a candidate, please contact Ron Schiller, ronschiller@aspenleadershipgroup.com.

All inquiries will be held in confidence.