



ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

ARIZONA OPERA

Phoenix, Arizona



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The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Arizona Opera in the search for an Associate Director of Development, as the company continues to pursue its vision of artistic vitality, delivery of civic value, audience expansion, and institutional strength and sustainability.

The Associate Director of Development will work closely with the Director of Development to manage a blended portfolio of individual and institutional giving prospects and donors with a focus on current and prospective individual donors giving between \$5,000 and \$25,000 and above annually as well as foundation, government, and corporate sponsor relationships that support the company's full array of programmatic, educational, and strategic initiatives—including the company's two signature special events: the RED Party and the annual Gala. The Associate Director will oversee needs assessment, research, and cultivation of individual and institutional contacts, creation of sponsorship materials, creation of grant and sponsorship reports, acknowledgments, and management of all giving records, and will generate financial reporting and analysis related to individual and institutional giving for the department. The Associate Director will ensure appropriate crediting and sponsor recognition for all Arizona Opera performances and events, including both individual and institutional production sponsors, in partnership with the department of Marketing, Communications, and Public Relations.

Since 1971, Arizona Opera has produced over 170 fully staged operas and concerts. As one of the only companies in the country to perform in two major metropolitan cities, Arizona Opera presents artists of both international stature and emerging talent, and each season balances debut artists and the return of favorite performers. In addition to producing five operatic main stage offerings each year in both Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona Opera offers in-school touring productions and numerous outreach events for children and adults of all ages. The 2021/22 Season celebrated the company's 50th Anniversary.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Associate Director of Development will report to the Director of Development, Ashley Parks.

FROM THE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL DIRECTOR

As Arizona Opera celebrates the end of its 50th Anniversary Season—and as our sector emerges from the tremendous challenges of the pandemic—we are eager to begin a new chapter of rebuilding and redoubling our commitment to community service and impact through this remarkable art form.

Recent years have increasingly established Arizona Opera as an industry leader in terms of artistic vibrancy, delivery of civic value, and institutional strength and sustainability. These qualities have not only been expressed on the stage, where Arizona Opera has expanded its range of repertoire to regularly

include a rich mixture of both contemporary and canonical works, but also with regard to our activities off the stage, through an array of programs aimed at authentically serving people across the state, regardless of their experience with opera.

*Arizona Opera's Board and staff have worked actively together over the years to shape the evolution of the company, which has resulted in an organizational approach that is both nimble and strategic in nature, and which empowered the company to program throughout the pandemic in effective and innovative ways. From live, socially-distanced performances; to streamed concerts with orchestra; to new video series and podcasts; to the creation of our first feature film, *THE COPPER QUEEN*; to the launch of our soon to be released graphic novel, based on *CARMEN*; to our wide-reaching educational and community engagement programs—our commitment to Arizonans has never abated. In whatever way an opera company can serve a community, we have sought to do so during this chapter, when people have needed art the most.*

Now that we have returned to the theater for performances, we are intent on bringing forward all of the positive, if hard fought, lessons from the pandemic in order to usher in a new era of contribution to community through the art form of opera.

We look forward to welcoming our new Associate Director of Development as a key partner in our organization's efforts to further empower Arizona Opera to do this good work, through connecting our programs to the individuals, institutions, and resources necessary in order to propel our mission forward.

—Joseph Specter, President and General Director

ARIZONA OPERA'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Arizona Opera unequivocally denounces racism. It stands with those that demand equality and social justice for Black people and for all people of color. It affirms its commitment to the communities it serves today—and to those communities that it can and must serve more fully tomorrow. Performing arts organizations have a unique ability and responsibility to create a space for inspiration, thought, and discussion. Arizona Opera is taking the time to listen and learn how it can be a better, more inclusive organization. It is examining the organization and the practices of the industry to do its part in creating positive, enduring change in the days, weeks, and years to come.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Portfolio Management

The Associate Director of Development will

- manage a portfolio of current and prospective individual donors giving \$2,500 to \$25,000+ annually through all phases of the moves management cycle, with a strategic focus on portfolio growth to meet or exceed yearly revenue goals;
- manage a portfolio of current and prospective institutional funders, with a strategic focus on new sponsor acquisition and exceptional stewardship of current funders;
- develop fundraising strategies and prepare proposals, applications, reports, budgets, correspondence, and other written and financial materials;
- leverage cultivation opportunities, and support fundraising and event goals;
- identify new corporate and foundation grant opportunities, and seek opportunities to initiate contact on behalf of the Arizona Opera;

- establish and maintain relationships with foundation program officers, business and community leaders, corporate giving managers, and government officials to build increasing levels of engagement and support;
- track and report submission and reporting deadlines, in coordination with contract grant writer, as needed;
- work collaboratively with development, finance, accounting, community engagement, and marketing staff to develop program descriptions, budgets, and other materials as required for proposals and reports;
- ensure accurate and timely donor recognition for all individual and institutional donors in printed materials, programs, and digital communications;
- manage the timely distribution of sponsorship materials, including communication regarding upcoming events, performance tickets, logo recognition, and other benefits; and
- ensure excellent customer service is provided to donors through accessibility to staff and leadership, timely responsiveness, quality in all interactions, and personalized communications.

External Advancement

The Associate Director of Development will

- serve as the primary staff liaison to the Arizona Opera Business Council, a committee of established business professionals in both Phoenix and Tucson who support Arizona Opera's efforts to expand the company's corporate portfolio;
- work with key individual volunteers (Development Chair, Phoenix Bravo Committee members, Tucson Bravo Committee members) to identify individual giving prospects;
- liaise with institutional partners and the Director of Community Alliances to support programs that will most effectively deepen relationships across the community; and
- promote Arizona Opera's goal of becoming a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization, collaborating with internal and external stakeholders to build support and feedback on new initiatives, as set by the Director of Community Alliances.

LEADERSHIP

Joseph Specter

President and General Director

Joseph Specter, an experienced administrator who draws from a deep understanding of the arts and corporate environments, has served as President and General Director of Arizona Opera since June 2016. Specter served as General Director at Austin Opera from April 2012 until May 2016, leading that organization through significant, healthy budget growth, and revitalized subscriptions and contributions, all while presenting vibrant and artistically successful operatic productions. During his tenure in Austin, Specter also led the company through a strategic rebranding process and oversaw a major capital renovation of Austin Opera's rehearsal and office space.

Prior to joining Austin Opera, Specter served as Director of Institutional Relations at the Metropolitan Opera, where he worked on corporate sponsorships, as well as public and foundation grants. In that capacity, Specter partnered with over 100 institutional funders, representing more than \$5M in annual fundraising. Previously, Specter was Senior Client Service Associate at the investment firm Lord Abbett, where he worked with institutional investors in areas of marketing and relationship management.

A former professional baritone, Specter earned an artist diploma from Philadelphia's prestigious Academy of Vocal Arts and is an honors graduate of the double-degree program between Tufts University and the New England Conservatory of Music—in political science and voice, respectively. During his time as a

professional singer, Specter performed more than 20 opera and musical theater roles with regional opera companies and young artist training programs throughout the United States, including Opera Memphis, the Utah Festival Opera, and Sarasota Opera, and sang for three seasons in the extra chorus of the Metropolitan Opera.

Ashley Parks

Director of Development

Ashley Parks joined Arizona Opera in November 2016 as the Director of Development, where she is responsible for managing the company's overall fundraising initiatives.

Prior to joining Arizona Opera, Parks was the Director of Development at North Carolina Opera, where she implemented the company's first annual fundraising plan and created an engagement-focused benefits program. Parks previously served as the Deputy Director of Patron and Individual Giving at the Metropolitan Opera. She was responsible for a team that raised \$20M annually through gifts from \$2,500-\$25,000. In addition to managing the renewals of over 4,000 Patrons, she also staffed two Board members and her own portfolio of over 100 donors.

Parks previously held positions in both development and artistic administration with Houston Grand Opera, Washington National Opera, The Peace Center for the Performing Arts, and Brevard Music Center. She was a panelist on a session promoting positive relationships between opera companies and volunteer guilds at "Creative Resurgence: Opera Conference 2012." She also was a participant in Opera America's 2016 Leadership Intensive program.

A trained pianist, Parks has a B.M. in Music Theory from Furman University and an M.A in Arts Management from American University.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Arizona Opera seeks an Associate Director of Development with

- a commitment to the mission of the Arizona Opera—to elevate the transformative power of storytelling through music—cultivating community and strengthening a state and people as adventurous and diverse as the place they call home;
- knowledge of fundraising principles and best practices including the funding process for individual and institutional funders;
- experience building relationships with individuals, board and committee members, community, business, and government leaders;
- an ability to leverage the untapped growth potential in the current individual giving portfolio;
- excellent written and verbal communication skills with an ability to motivate and inspire through the written word;
- strong analytical skills, particularly in the comprehension and building of project budgets;
- a goal driven approach and an ability to confidently initiate donor visits and fundraising calls;
- the capacity to effectively prioritize and manage multiple tasks simultaneously and to meet deadlines consistently;
- an ability to be self-directed and work independently in an extremely fast-paced, transitional work environment focused on growth;
- discretion and professionalism;
- a team-focused and service-minded approach, a high degree of emotional intelligence as well as comfort asking for and receiving help;

- leadership initiative, a positive attitude, concern for people and community, presence, self-confidence, common sense, and strong listening skills; and
- proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite, Tessitura or other donor database software, and web-based research tools.

A bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and experience is required for this position as is at least five years of development, fundraising or related sales experience.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is \$75,000 to \$95,000 annually. Arizona Opera offers a competitive benefits package.

LOCATION

Arizona Opera offices are located in Phoenix, Arizona and the Opera performs in both Phoenix and Tucson. The Associate Director of Development will travel and manage relationships statewide, primarily with patrons in both cities. Candidates based in Tucson will be considered with the expectation that there will be regular visits in Phoenix.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Arizona Opera 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:

[Associate Director of Development, Arizona Opera.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Gregory Leet, gregoryleet@aspenleadershipgroup.com or Kim Farr, kimfarr@aspenleadershipgroup.com.

All inquiries will be held in confidence.