



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DONOR RELATIONS

[BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY](#)

Waltham, Massachusetts



The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Brandeis University in the search for an **Executive Director of Donor Relations**.

The Executive Director of Donor Relations serves as a senior member of the Institutional Advancement leadership team and is responsible for providing strategic leadership, vision, design, and execution of a comprehensive and meaningful donor acknowledgement, stewardship, recognition, and engagement program across the entire university. The Executive Director will oversee, direct, and lead a team of eight to ten talented advancement professionals in support of the fundraising enterprise at all levels of giving and participation. As Brandeis begins the planning to embark upon a significant new campaign, the Executive Directors must demonstrate a proactive, creative, and entrepreneurial mindset, while also committing to continual improvement and evolution of the donor relations programs to not only inform, but to inspire donors and drive programmatic and staff performance.

The Executive Director will have a deep understanding of the importance of building life-long relationships between the university and its alumni, parents, founding families, and friends. The successful candidate will develop an extensive understanding of Brandeis University schools, departments, institutions, programs, projects, and donors to develop and implement innovative, inspiring, and impactful stewardship and engagement strategies. The Executive Director will work in concert with colleagues throughout Institutional Advancement and across the university to nurture lifelong relationship with the institution's diverse constituents and generous supporters. A central theme of this collaborative commitment is to foster a tradition of philanthropy that strengthens Brandeis University's commitment to a broad and critical education that enriches the lives of its students and prepares them for participation in a changing society, capable of promoting their own welfare, yet remaining deeply concerned about the welfare of others.

As one of the nation's leading private research universities, Brandeis University is dedicated to first-rate education while making groundbreaking discoveries. Ranked #5 by *Nature* among institutions with the highest output of top-quality research in the natural sciences, Brandeis University's faculty—which includes Nobel Prize recipients and Pulitzer Prize winners—are leaders in their fields who are as passionate about teaching and mentorship as they are about pushing the boundaries of knowledge. Through its graduates' experience of rigorous academics, scholarly inquiry, and experiential immersion, Brandeis is at the forefront to effect change in today's society. As a top-tier research university, collaboration among its faculty, staff, and students is routine practice and highly encouraged. Their work engenders breakthrough discoveries and provides its scholars with the ability to engage with new ideas and approaches. Recognized as a most-selective institution, Brandeis University is ranked among the top 40 universities in the United States by *U.S. News & World Report*, which is considered one of the pre-eminent rankings in the world for identifying institutions known for academic excellence.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Executive Director of Donor Relations will report to the Vice President, Administration & Operations, Elizabeth Crabtree.

PRINCIPAL OPPORTUNITIES

The **Executive Director of Donor Relations** is an essential, high-profile leadership position within the Advancement enterprise at Brandeis University. As a member of Institutional Advancement's management team, the Executive Director will be encouraged to explore new, creative, and entrepreneurial practices that engage alumni, parents, and friends around the world in meaningful relationships that promote and support the extraordinary work of the university.

As a young institution, boldly conceived, Brandeis University is intent upon carrying on the great traditions of learning at the highest level of rigor and meaning, with a moral conviction for inclusion and justice. Steeped in collaborative and interdisciplinary teaching and research, Brandeis is fueled by core values of academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, creativity, and an openness to different perspectives. At Brandeis, one will find a community of students and faculty with a passion for applying their knowledge and talents for the betterment of the world. The university's enduring commitment to its Jewish origins and values—welcoming of all, regardless of their backgrounds and circumstances, and championing the application of one's talents to improve the world—makes innovative and enlightened perspectives available to every member of the Brandeis community.

In July 2016, Brandeis inaugurated Ronald Liebowitz as its ninth President. President Liebowitz is a recognized administrative leader in higher education, having served previously as President of Middlebury College, where he had a transformative impact and was recognized in 2009 as one of the ten best U.S. college presidents by *Time* magazine.

Most recently, President Liebowitz released [A Framework for Our Future](#), which outlines a new vision for the university while embracing the strengths and values that make Brandeis truly unique. As the work of task forces and working groups convey the strategic objectives of the framework, the university's Division of Institutional Advancement is ramping up and preparing for the imminent launch of an exciting, new comprehensive campaign.

Now is an opportune time to join the Institutional Advancement enterprise at Brandeis, which enjoys tremendous support and partnership with the University administration, faculty, and board of trustees. The Executive Director will lead a core area of growth and investment—being at the forefront of developing and executing plans that will propel the university forward and engage the next generation of philanthropists in our efforts. This is an excellent career-defining opportunity for an individual who desires to apply their experience and fresh perspectives towards building a best-in-class, signature program that will have an enduring impact on the institution.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Director of Donor Relations will

- provide visionary leadership and direction in designing and coordinating a comprehensive university-wide donor engagement and stewardship program for donors at all levels of giving and participation;
- develop and manage an annual stewardship plan, calendar, and budget in support of standard strategy and campaign initiatives and priorities;
- develop extensive knowledge of Brandeis University schools, centers, and institutes and partner with senior leaders and key stakeholders across the campus to create bespoke donor engagement and appropriate recognition and stewardship programs for schools, centers, and institutes;

- serve as a high-level advisor to fundraising program managers to help support, enhance, and coordinate their donor engagement and stewardship efforts;
- manage a team of eight to ten donor relations staff, provide leadership, set and evaluate individual goals and responsibilities, and develop and sustain appropriate training and mentoring to ensure highly productive and motivated team members;
- oversee the documentation, cataloging, and maintenance of naming opportunities for donor recognition, including a database of physical named spaces and plaques;
- recommend strategies for named fund or physical space gift levels and participate in developing gift acceptance policies and procedures;
- develop and deliver strategic and thoughtful stewardship and donor relations plans to recognize current donors and inspire prospective donors to be part of the university's fundraising effort;
- drive concept and strategy behind all donor engagement and stewardship special events and programs to ensure consistent delivery and impact for both the university and the donor;
- oversee stewardship programs for lifetime and annual donors, including recognition societies and privileges, special events, and communications most effective for stewarding these groups of donors;
- establish effective policies and procedures related to gift acknowledgement, stewardship reporting, and compliance with use of gift funds that honor donor intent and preferences;
- identify and evaluate data and reporting tools needed to ensure effective and comprehensive stewardship, and the development and maintenance of reports and databases designed to support stewardship efforts;
- devise and coordinate effective and strategic stewardship communications including gift receipts, memorial and tribute cards, gift acknowledgements, student, faculty, and donor profiles, etc.; and
- ensure that stewardship communications and donor relations strategies are inclusive and reflect a broad range of identities and perspectives;

KEY COLLEAGUES



Zamira Korff

Senior Vice President of Institutional Advancement

Zamira Korff became Senior Vice President of Institutional Advancement in October 2017. Korff serves as Brandeis' senior fundraising executive and leads both alumni relations and advancement at the university.

Korff came to Brandeis from Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) of Boston. She joined CJP as Director of the Women's Division in 1997. She advanced to the positions of Director of Major Gifts and Director of Development before becoming Senior Vice President of Development in 2010. In 2015, she was named Senior Vice President of Strategic Philanthropy. In that role, she was responsible for working with CJP's top donors, leading a \$12 million-plus capital campaign, and raising \$55 million annually to sustain and support CJP's operations and community programs. In addition to leading the development department, Korff was responsible for developing the Israel and overseas agenda for CJP's Strategic Plan.

Before coming to Boston, Korff served as legislative aide to the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on European Affairs in Washington, D.C. On behalf of then-Senator Joseph Biden, Chair of the subcommittee, Korff helped create legislation on foreign-policy issues including arms control, collective security, free enterprise initiatives, and market development in the newly emerging democracies of Eastern Europe. She also concentrated her efforts on the conflict in Bosnia and the role of the United Nations as peacekeeper in the post-Cold War world.

Korff earned her bachelor's degree from the School of International Service at American University in Washington, D.C.



Elizabeth Crabtree

Vice President for Administration & Operations

Elizabeth Crabtree joined Institutional Advancement as Vice President for Administration and Operations in October 2018. She serves as the chief operating officer for the Division of Institutional Advancement and oversees all administrative, financial, technology, human resource and fundraising strategic support units. Crabtree is a key advisor to the Senior Vice President, effective partner with University Finance, Human Resources and Information Technology, and plays a leadership role in the planning and management of fundraising campaigns and initiatives.

Crabtree has over 20 years of senior management experience in fundraising and nonprofit management and is the Founder and President of Crabtree Lane LLC, a nonprofit management and consultancy practice. Before starting her consulting firm, Crabtree was Assistant Vice President for Strategy and Resource Development at Brown University where she served for 13 years as a member of the senior leadership team, managed a 50-member professional staff, and made significant contributions to the planning and execution of two successful multi-billion-dollar campaigns.

Previously, Crabtree served in fundraising and program management roles at public and private universities and led a corporate foundation in the Chicago area. Prior to her work in the nonprofit sector, Crabtree was a marketing director and senior analyst in the consumer products industry and was a talent manager and music agent in her early professional career. She earned her bachelor's degree in Music Composition and Arranging from Berklee College of Music in Boston and is an alumna of the executive master's program in Philanthropic Studies at Indiana University.



Hannah Peters

Vice President for Development

Hannah Peters became the Vice President for Development in Institutional Advancement in September 2019. Peters oversees all fundraising programs at Brandeis University, including providing centralized management for development programs within Brandeis schools, centers and institutes.

Previously, Peters served as Associate Dean for Development and External Relations at Harvard Divinity School. Chief among her responsibilities was to plan and lead the School's first major comprehensive fundraising campaign, which proved an unqualified success. All defined priorities were exceeded, including student scholarships; faculty research/professorships; and a naming gift for the School's signature capital project which enabled the reinvigoration of the campus's historic primary building.

Peters worked at several Harvard schools during her twenty years at the University, among them the Graduate School of Design, where, as Associate Dean she was charged with reinvigorating the School's development program, preliminary campaign planning, and international outreach. At Harvard Business School, she served as director of corporate and donor relations with responsibility for corporate partnerships, stewardship and customer service to the school's top donors during the HBS campaign. Previous positions include Director of Corporate Relations at Stanford University's School of Engineering and Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations at Tufts-New England Medical Center. Other non-profit work included positions at The Asia Society and the Executive Council on Foreign Diplomats.

Hannah earned her BS in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and a master's degree in international affairs and journalism from Columbia University.

**Farrah Rubenstein '97****Assistant Vice President, Volunteer Engagement & Leadership Development**

Farrah Rubenstein '97 has over twenty years of experience in the nonprofit sector and a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm. As Assistant Vice President, her work focuses on strengthening existing partnerships and building new bridges between alumni relations and development to enhance and expand volunteer opportunities and connect donors to the work of the university in meaningful ways. In addition to working within the Institutional Advancement office, Rubenstein works with faculty and staff across the university to create

a continuum of volunteer engagement across campus, promoting donor awareness and increased support.

Rubenstein previously worked at Gann Academy, where she served as the Director of Enrollment Management. In this role, she worked with volunteers, donors, faculty, staff, parents, and community members to strengthen Gann's reputation and enrollment as well as parent and student satisfaction. Rubenstein built and managed a team of professionals and volunteers charged with creating a system to support short- and long-term engagement and increased donor participation and giving.

Before that, Rubenstein served as the Director of Leadership and Board Development at Combined Jewish Philanthropies. During her tenure in this position, she strengthened and oversaw 28 high-level volunteer committees and partnered with ten agencies and numerous day schools, creating cross-collaboration and sustained pipelines of volunteer engagement. She also created and managed a governance and nomination process to ensure timely succession planning for all Committees and the Board of Directors. Rubenstein has also served as a major gifts officer for both Combined Jewish Philanthropies and Jewish Women's Archive.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES

Brandeis University seeks an Executive Director of Donor Relations with

- a minimum of five years of management experience in donor relations, stewardship strategy, special events, program management or development communications with a demonstrated understanding of fundraising and a record of success; experience with \$1 billion+ comprehensive campaigns highly desired;
- demonstrated experience creating and executing effective stewardship and donor engagement programs for a variety of donor types and interests;
- demonstrated experience in and a commitment to the development of stewardship and donor relations programs that are inclusive and address multiple perspectives and experiences;
- demonstrated success building, leading, mentoring, and managing teams;
- an ability to develop and manage budgets, and to create financial and statistical analyses to evaluate and benchmark program performance;
- an ability to strategically conceive of and execute stewardship strategies to most effectively cultivate and steward donors;
- an ability to meet tight deadlines and work on multiple projects simultaneously, while managing competing priorities;
- excellent organizational and interpersonal skills;
- highly proficient and professional written and verbal communication skills;
- an exceptional ability to absorb and translate information from a variety of sources into vehicles that resonate with multiple audiences;
- a commitment to collaborative teamwork and individual accountability;

- an aptitude for complex fundraising and database systems; use of technology and system for marketing, communications, and donor engagement;
- an ability to manage confidential information with absolute integrity and discretion; and
- an attitude of doing what it takes to get the job done.

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is eight years of progressively responsible job-related experience managing a donor relations and stewardship program in an institution of higher education, preferably a research institution.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Brandeis University is committed to providing its students, faculty, and staff with an environment conducive to learning and working and where all people are treated with respect and dignity.

Founded by the American Jewish community as a nonsectarian institution in 1948, at a time when exclusionary practices prevented equal access to some of the nation's best universities, Brandeis has always welcomed talented students and faculty of every ethnicity, religion, orientation, and cultural background. Social justice is central to the mission of Brandeis, which endeavors to foster a just and inclusive campus culture that embraces the diversity of our larger society. Brandeis embodies the American heritage of cultural diversity, equal access to opportunity, and freedom of expression. Learn more [here](#).

Brandeis University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of Brandeis University not to discriminate against any person on account of race, color, ancestry, religious creed, gender, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, genetic information, disability, veteran status, or any other category protected by federal or state law.

SALARY & BENEFITS

Brandeis University offers a competitive salary and benefits package.

LOCATION

Brandeis' 235-acre campus is located in Waltham, Massachusetts, in the suburbs of Boston, a global hub for higher education and innovation.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. **Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Brandeis University.** Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate is selected.

To apply for this position, visit:

[Executive Director of Donor Relations, Brandeis University.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Floyd Akins:

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

All inquiries will be held in confidence.