

Chicago Debate Commission

Major Gifts Officer (Full or part-time)

Position Overview and Job Description

The Chicago Debate Commission (CDC) seeks a Major Gifts Officer to support the organization's mission of advancing the academic success, life opportunities and leadership of Chicago youth through academic debate programs. The CDC facilitates, promotes and manages academic debate programming, running the Chicago Debate League in partnership with CPS. In FY18, the CDC's competitive debate programs will serve approximately 1400-1500 students in 75 high schools and middle schools. The organization trains and recruits debate coaches, provides comprehensive materials and support to build successful teams, and runs 40 tournaments plus a summer camp each year.

The CDC is undergoing exciting and unprecedented growth, with a plan to expand to 95 schools and almost 1800 students by FY20. Building community support and securing major gifts are critical to our success. The Major Gifts Officer (MGO) will be an important contributor to the CDC's growth effort and the MGO will have the chance to make a deep impact on the lives of thousands of Chicago students.

The MGO will join a team of 10 professionals who are committed to transforming the lives of CPS students and elevating excellence at CPS schools through debate.

Job Description

The Major Gifts Officer (MGO) is responsible for creating and executing a strategic major and planned gifts fundraising plan to build current and longer-term support for the CDC. We seek an individual with exceptional organizational, writing, and interpersonal skills, and significant experience in major gifts fundraising, who can work both independently and collaboratively in a dynamic environment. The MGO will report to the Executive Director and will work closely with the Development and Communications Manager and the Grantwriter/Development Associate.

The CDC has recently worked with high-level development consultants who have identified 50 major gift prospects, and strategies to engage them. This list, combined with our list of existing higher-level donors, form the basis for a robust major gifts program with 70-80 prospects. The MGO will have the ability to craft that program, while providing important support to the Executive Director, Board and others involved in major individual giving. Responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

Major Gifts

- Create a major gifts (\$2,500+) program plan consistent with the CDC's overall strategic plan, working in concert with the Executive Director, Development and Communications Manager, and Board Development Committee.

- To the extent not already completed, identify and qualify major gift prospects through internal and external sources.
- To the extent not already completed, create individual goals and personalized plans for each prospect.
- With the development team, establish portfolios of current and potential major donors for the Executive Director, Development and Communications Manager, and MGO.
- Take leadership in providing the tools, resources, schedules and reminders for the Executive Director and Development and Communications Manager to execute strategies for their portfolios.
- Maintain, manage and execute major gift strategies for the MGO's own portfolio.
- Prepare the Executive Director, Development and Communications Manager, and Board members for gift solicitations, accompany on calls as needed and provide appropriate follow-up.
- Plan and coordinate donor relationship-building activities and events through cultivation, recognition and stewardship.
- Work with development and communications staff to prepare proposals and other donor communication and solicitation materials.
- Research, propose and manage recognition programs for major gift donors.
- Ensure the accuracy and reliability of information entered into the donor database regarding the major gifts program.
- Create monthly reports that reflect activities and progress in meeting major gift goals.

Planned Gifts

- Convene and staff a working group to develop and execute strategies for initiation of a planned giving program for the CDC.
- Identify and cultivate prospects for planned gifts.
- Make appropriate requests for planned gifts in partnership with the Executive Director and assigned volunteers.
- Personally provide ongoing stewardship for members of any established planned giving society.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive menu of communications, cultivation and stewardship activities for planned giving donors.

Additional Duties

- Assist on ad hoc basis with annual appeal, special events, and other development activities.
- Complete other projects and duties as assigned.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's or Master's degree with strong academic record

- 3-5 years of experience in nonprofit development, with at least two years focused on major gifts. Experience in a highly successful major gifts program is a plus.
- Demonstrated record of successful solicitations, from identification of prospects through stewardship and closing of donations.
- Excellent interpersonal and communications skills.
- Exceptional organizational skills, with detail orientation and ability to manage multiple activities simultaneously.
- Exceptional writer with excellent editing and proofreading skills.
- Knowledge of Chicago donor community is a plus.
- Advanced computer skills including use of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Adobe. Experience with fundraising databases is a plus.
- Experience with design software (such as Adobe Creative Suite) is a plus.
- Position requires utmost integrity; ethical behavior and appropriate business practices are expected.
- Ability to work both collaboratively and independently.
- Commitment to advancing as a professional in nonprofit development.
- Enthusiasm for mission-driven work and interest in education issues.

Compensation and Work Conditions

Compensation will be based on experience and skills. Total working hours for the full-time position will be 40-50/week. Rarely, weekends or evenings are required. The position will begin in November/December 2017. The CDC provides medical insurance, generous PTO, and professional development opportunities.

We will also consider exceptional candidates interested in working 50-60% time.

To Apply

Candidates must submit the following:

- cover letter
- resume
- short writing sample
- salary requirements
- If you are interested in this position on a part-time basis, please indicate the number of days/hours you would prefer and your salary requirements relative to part-time employment.

Submit all materials **by October 6, 2017** by email to search@chicagodebateleague.org. *If possible, please collect all application materials in a single PDF.*

The Chicago Debate Commission is an equal opportunity employer.