



Executive Director Job Description

Are you a people-first value-based leader looking for an opportunity to lead a diverse group of professionals through accelerating change? Do you think strategically about how you can help to enhance the client experience while improving organizational effectiveness? Have you had experience developing a collaborative, compassionate, and respectful culture while building a unified, focused, high-performing team able to adapt to an everchanging world around them?

If you have the skills and desire to lead an engaged team of passionate professionals and inspired volunteers with a strong commitment to serving our clients' needs, this is the opportunity for you!

Helping Paws, a Hopkins, Minnesota based 501(c)(3) non-profit, is currently seeking an Executive Director to join the organization. Founded in 1988, Helping Paws breeds, trains and places service dogs with: individuals who have physical disabilities and veterans and first responders who have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). We also place facility dogs with trained handlers who are mental health, care giving or advocacy professionals. Our mission is to further people's independence and quality of life through the use of Assistance Dogs. Recognized as a leader in the assistance dog community, Helping Paws is an accredited member of Assistance Dogs International (ADI), meets the standards of the Charity Review Council for Minnesota, and has been serving community members of Minnesota and border areas for over 30 years.

The Opportunity

At Helping Paws, the Executive Director is responsible for moving the organization forward in ways that maximize the value to the communities we serve. You will lead both the strategic and operational functions of the organization and be responsible for the long-term growth and success of Helping Paws. The Executive Director is responsible for the organization's consistent achievement of its mission, goals, and financial objectives, and works closely with the governing Board of Directors to develop and execute a strategic plan that ensures we are meeting the needs of the communities and graduate teams we serve. Day to day areas of responsibility will include strategic development, board communications, fundraising and donor relations, program development, financial management, and staff development. Additionally, you will work collaboratively with all staff to provide services and support to all members of the Helping Paws community, including clients, dogs, volunteers, Board members, donors, supporters, staff members and the community at large. Success in this role will come through a foundation of broad management experience and business expertise, demonstrated emotional intelligence (EQ), and a passion for developing highly effective work teams across multiple functions and levels.



Position Summary and Responsibilities Profile

Specific opportunities and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

Fundraising and Donor Relations

- Responsible for development and execution of a comprehensive multi-year fundraising plan.
- Establish a close, effective working relationship with the Development Committee, with responsibility for leading activities that advance relationships with and growth of major individual, corporate, private, public, and foundation donors.
- Actively engage Board in fundraising and development activities.

Vision and Strategic Development

- Partner with the Board of Directors to develop, execute, and measure long-term and short-term strategic plans providing organizational direction with actionable annual goals and objectives supporting the organization's mission and vision.
- Identify opportunities to deliver on core values through future growth initiatives, process and program improvements, organizational change and/or expansion, and/or technology integration.
- Participate in professional industry and national groups to incorporate best practices, ensuring we hold ourselves to the highest standards of excellence.

Financial and Operational Management

- Build a sustainable financial model, ensuring compliance with all fiscal policies and acting with ethics and integrity in everything you do.
- Monitor and oversee the organization's finances including transparent budgeting, financial reporting, and cash management processes.

Programs Management

- Partner with Director of Programs to assess and modify components of all existing Helping Paws programs through feedback received from graduate teams, staff, volunteers, and committee participants.
- Research and evaluate possible future programs and growth opportunities to serve other communities in need, embracing education, flexibility, and adaptability in our programs.
- Approach our mission with a view of the whole life of our dogs inclusive of career changes and follow-up from birth to end of service.
- Partner with Programs to positively support and serve our graduate teams throughout the various stages of their engagement lifecycle with Helping Paws.
- Ensure that all programs are compliant with ADI standards.

Staff and Volunteer Management

- Recruit, hire and develop staff to meet the organization's needs, continually assessing staffing levels, staff needs and performance as well as identifying recommendations for change.
- Maintain and motivate a well-trained client focused and performance-driven team that consistently promotes a culture of professional development and cross-functional learning opportunities to support organizational needs.
- Support our exceptional volunteer program, ensuring the organization has the necessary highly talented, effective, and engaged volunteers to meet needs while recognizing and celebrating the passion and power of our volunteers
- Take a hands-on approach to help the team, embracing a "whatever it takes" mentality towards getting things done and supporting the communities we serve even during non-traditional business hours.



HELPING PAWS

Marketing and Communications

- Assist in the development and execution of the organization's marketing strategy, including social media, public relations, web design, and marketing content.
- Oversee the organization's brand and external communications with critical stakeholders including volunteers, donors, key business partners and the public.
- Serve as a chief spokesperson for Helping Paws, promoting and representing the organization and being an active participant in the communities we serve
- Cultivate and encourage meaningful relationships with graduate teams.

Board of Director Engagement

- Serve as primary organizational liaison to a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of business and community leaders, as well as service dog graduate teams.
- Actively work and partner with board, attending board and other meetings necessary to ensure Helping Paws staff have a voice.
- Leverage board relationships to broaden Helping Paws visibility in the community while encouraging active board member funding development and donor relations engagement.
- Maintain positive, collaborative, and cohesive relationships with board members.

Qualifications and Characteristics

Qualified candidates will have related leadership experience working with a non-profit organization of similar size and complexity. Previous experience working with persons with disabilities is a plus.

- Five plus years of applicable leadership experience with continuing education in support of skills growth.
- Two or more years of prior staff management experience with demonstrated ability to coach, direct, and develop individuals. Additional experience with volunteer management and leadership is preferred.
- Demonstrated experience of positive growth across areas of revenue, program development, and fundraising.
- Ability to build, foster, and maintain productive and strong relationships with staff, volunteers, donors, and key business partners.
- Proven ability to think critically and effectively communicate with clients and stakeholders (internal and external) while leveraging a keen understanding of multiple leadership, communication, and thinking styles.
- A client-driven mindset that is coupled with strong organization and facilitation skills.
- Adept ability to problem solve, resolve conflict, and influence change.
- Prior experience working with people with physical disabilities or post-traumatic stress and/or Assistance Dogs is highly desired.
- Prior experience with the Microsoft suite of products and overall computer literacy is required.
- Bachelor's degree is required with a Master's degree a plus.

For immediate consideration, please email your resume to khagglund@helpingpaws.org. Please include salary requirements and your reasons for interest in Helping Paws.

Helping Paws shall provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs, facilities and employment without regard to race, color, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry, ethnicity, sex (including pregnancy and sexual orientation), gender (including gender nonconformity and status as a transgender individual), age, physical or mental disability, citizenship, past, current, or prospective service in the uniformed services, genetic information, other protected classes recognized by applicable state or local law, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, or local law.