

Executive Director – Morris Museum

Morristown, NJ

Morris Museum Overview

The Morris Museum is a dynamic institution dedicated to elevating the cultural consciousness, exciting the mind and enhancing the quality of life of its visitors by advancing the understanding and enjoyment of the visual and performing arts and humanities through exhibitions, performances and educational programs. The Museum achieves this by fostering a welcoming, inclusive and creative environment while responsibly utilizing its substantial human and physical resources, including stewardship of truly unique permanent collections.

The Morris Museum is one of New Jersey's largest and oldest cultural institutions, started in 1913 as a small exhibit in a local settlement house (Morristown's Neighborhood House). The Museum has moved several times over its almost 100 years to accommodate a rapidly growing set of collections and increasing number of visitors, finally settling into its current location, the historic *Twin Oaks* mansion, in 1964. With renovations and expansions of this facility in 1970, the 1990's, and most recently in 2007, the Museum's 88,000 sq. ft. of space sits on eight acres of land, with extensive exhibition galleries, a 312-seat theater, educational classrooms, as well as a new entrance pavilion and a grand court.

Through all of its spaces and outreach programs, the Museum and its staff of 30 employees serve approximately 200,000 individuals a year, about half of whom are children from communities across northern and central New Jersey. This largely suburban region (within an easy commute of New York City) is incredibly diverse, giving the Museum the opportunity to serve communities representing a wide range of socio-economic, age and ethnic/religious interests.

An important component of the Morris Museum is the Bickford Theatre. Opened in 1986 and self-producing since 1994, the Bickford presents an extraordinarily wide variety of programming including professional productions of musicals, dramas, comedies, and mysteries; children's theater; a jazz series and special concerts; and film programming using its digital projection equipment. Affiliation with Actors' Equity makes it possible for distinguished stars, professional actors and stage managers to work at the Bickford.

The Museum's permanent collections include diverse holdings of fine and decorative arts with particular strength in costumes, textiles and glass. Ethnological, geological and zoological materials are also well represented, with storage for a major portion of these collections provided on-site by a 3,000 sq. ft. vault.

There are four galleries at the Museum devoted to the history of North American native peoples, New Jersey geological materials, New Jersey natural science, and a model train display. Eight additional galleries host traveling and special exhibits and include the 4,200 sq. ft. Main Exhibition Hall.

The Museum has a growing representation of contemporary New Jersey artists, including works by Roy Crosse, Marion Held, Albert Green, Chris Kappmeier, Kay Walkingstick, W. Carl Burger, Willie Cole, Mona Brody, Elizabeth Murray, Sassona Norton, and Gregory Amenoff.

The Morris Museum's newest acquisition is the world-renowned, 700 piece *Murtoigh D. Guinness Collection of Mechanical Musical Instruments and Automata* (animated figures that mimic people or animals). The Guinness collection is one of the finest of its kind in the world and reflects exquisite artistry and craftsmanship married with innovative technology in the realm of entertainment on demand.

Position Description:

The Executive Director serves as Chief Executive Officer of the Museum, reports to the Board of Trustees through its chair as well as at meetings of the Board, and serves as its Chief Staff Advisor in all Museum related matters. The Director works in close collaboration with all standing and ad hoc committees of the Board and with the Museum's partnering organizations. The Executive Director is the advocate and visible public spokesperson for the Museum locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

His/her primary responsibilities are providing leadership to the Museum guided by its mission and values. The Executive Director is expected to develop an encompassing vision for the Museum (along with the Board of Trustees and staff), oversee strategic planning, and lead the implementation of the resulting plan. Other position priorities include sustaining the Museum's programmatic excellence, including fundraising strategies; overseeing staffing, budgeting, marketing, operations and general administration. Integral to the success of the Executive Director will be his/her interaction and relationship-development with the Museum's important constituencies, including Patrons of all generations; Donors; Volunteers; Staff; Trustees; area cultural, civic and ethnic organizations; businesses and government entities.

Responsibilities, Challenges and Opportunities:

Leadership

- Establish the artistic and cultural vision, strategic and business plans to assure the success of the Museum in accomplishing its mission.
- Lead the effort to develop new sources of funding and revenue.
- Ensure that the human capital and physical infrastructure of the Museum are appropriate to fulfill its mission.
- Partner with Curatorial, Theatrical, Educational and other critical staff to develop exceptional exhibition, production and educational programs.
- Establish and sustain strong and productive relationships with the Museum's stakeholders.
- Raise the visibility of the Museum locally, nationally and internationally among the organization's many constituencies as well as its institutional peers.
- Ensure that strong governance is in place for the organization and that the Museum adheres to the highest ethical standards.

Development and Fund Raising

- Foster greater coordination among the Staff to originate and implement exhibitions and events that increase patron attendance, membership and fund-raising opportunities.
- Working with the Director of Development, develop and maintain strong professional and personal relationships with the funding community at all levels: local, regional, national and international.
- Use traditional methods as well as new to increase attendance at Museum exhibitions and programs as well as the number of individual and corporate memberships.
- Expand the Museum's funding from foundations and corporate sponsors.

Responsibilities, Challenges and Opportunities:

(Continued)

Exhibitions and Collections

- Working with Museum Staff, strive to maximize the exhibition spaces of the Museum, the goal being to improve overall attendance and public awareness.
- Utilize the Museum's current collections to their best potential.
- Working with Curatorial Staff, develop/refine the collections strategy for the Museum's current holdings; concomitantly, develop a long-term acquisition policy/strategy.
- Explore cultivating strategies to garner collections from members/donors, a historically important source for the Museum.

Programs and Events

- Develop a strategy to optimize the use of the Museum's physical plant and Staff to best display the institution's capabilities (cultural, educational) while also affording the Museum the greatest development opportunities.
- Working with the Bickford's Artistic Director, support and refine the theater's offerings as well as looking to expand its role at the Museum.
- Seek to increase the utilization of the Museum's facilities for programs and events sponsored by other arts/cultural organizations.
- Work with Volunteers and their Organizations to facilitate and broaden their efforts, especially as it involves events at the facility or events held on the Museum's behalf.
- Expand efforts to host sponsored events and programs at the Museum.

Education Programs

- With the Educational Staff and Volunteers, evaluate current internal and outreach programs to determine how the Museum can best achieve its educational mission in light of recent state fiscal reforms and changing modes of educational engagement.
- Reach out to other educational and cultural institutions in the region to determine what benefits may arise from cooperative programs.
- Seek new sources of funding for current and new programs.

Responsibilities, Challenges and Opportunities:

(Continued)

Staff Management

- Ensure the organization is effectively structured and staffed with high quality, competent, motivated and team-oriented professionals operating in a collegial atmosphere infused with trust.
- Design and implement a formalized annual employee review process working with the Board of Trustees and top Staff.
- Motivate, inspire and energize the Staff, fostering creativity and innovation especially in the areas of exhibitions and programs/events.
- Encourage and incent team building among and between Staff, Board of Trustees and Volunteers to maximize the Museum's potential across platforms.

Marketing and Public Relations

- In partnership with the appropriate Staff, sustain and participate in the Museum's marketing and public relations efforts.
- Develop with Staff and the Board of Trustees an overall marketing/public relations strategy for the Museum.
- Utilize internet and social media to improve the Museum's profile to all its stakeholders.
- Seek opportunities to use aspects of the Museum's collections to raise the institution's reputation beyond its traditional range.

Financial Management

- Work with the Chief Financial Officer to gain a strong understanding of the financial underpinnings of the Museum and its opportunities to increase revenues and reduce expenses.
- In partnership with the Chief Financial Officer, Board Finance Committee and Treasurer, develop and present an annual operating budget as well as capital, program and project budgets to the Board.
- Establish financial metrics to measure Museum performance.
- Oversee financial analysis and forecasting throughout the fiscal year.
- Ensure effective development and submission of operating and special purpose grant proposals.
- Understand the investment strategy for endowment funds.
- Ensure sound fiscal management policies, procedures, controls and management are in place.
- Ensure compliance with all ethical and regulatory standards of accounting and financial reporting.

Qualifications

Professional Qualifications

- The new Executive Director must be able to develop and communicate a vision that inspires and excites an engaged Board, dedicated Staff and diverse Community.
- Experience managing a cultural institution or museum is expected, though length of tenure is less important than a record of achievement.
- An appropriate level of academic achievement is an important criterion, as is demonstrated commitment to a visitor-centered experience.
- The ability to work in collaboration with the Museum's many different constituencies – Patrons, Donors, Volunteers, Staff, Trustees, area cultural and ethnic organizations, businesses and government entities – is expected.

Personal Values

- Demonstrates honesty and ethical behavior.
- Open to new ideas, information and methods.
- Seeks out diverse points of view when making decisions.
- Strives to keep lines of communication open to all stakeholders via multiple channels.
- Exhibits a passion for his/her job and is able to communicate that passion to others.
- Willing to commit themselves to the institutional mission.
- Strong enough to be held accountable/responsible for his/her own actions.
- Treats everyone with respect regardless of age, income, sexual orientation, gender, race, disability or other identity group memberships.

Please forward a cover letter and resume to info@cfnj.org