



## SENIOR DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT WASHINGTON, DC



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**WHERE DC YOUTH BELONG, ASPIRE & ACHIEVE**

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## THE MISSION

Sitar Arts Center transforms the lives of children and teens born into a world of unequal access to opportunity. Sitar envisions a city that considers high-quality arts education and transformative arts experiences to be essential for all. It delivers those experiences to vulnerable, financially disadvantaged children and teens, engaging them in the highest-quality visual, performing, and digital arts in order to help them learn about themselves and gain critical life skills needed to thrive in the 21st century. Sitar creates community for these children and their families and is an untiring voice on their behalf.

## HISTORY

Named for Patricia Sitar, an intensely creative woman who dedicated her life to exploring the arts and their potential to improve society, the Sitar Arts Center officially opened in 2000 in the basement of a subsidized-housing apartment building. The Center was founded by Rhonda Buckley, director of a small afterschool music education program for inner-city children. The impact that music had on participating children inspired Sitar to expand its work to make the arts a part of children's everyday lives.

Sitar has been recognized locally and nationally, with the prestigious National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award from the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities (2009), the Washington Post Award for Excellence in Nonprofit Management (2015), and the District of Columbia's Mayor's Art Award for Outstanding Contribution to Arts Education (2002 and 2017).

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Through Sitar's high-quality arts experiences, students gain key skills required to succeed in all stages of life. Low-income children can face significant obstacles that impede their educational development and put them at a permanent disadvantage. With collaborative teaching models that foster student engagement and civic interaction, Sitar bridges gaps for students to ensure their successful development. Through the arts, Sitar teaches communication, expression, and comprehension, enabling young adults to use these valuable skills in school, in work, and in life.

## IMPACT

**76%**

of Sitar Early Childhood Parents read with their children every day by semester's end

**92%**

of students begin using new words learned in early childhood arts classes

**85%**

of Sitar students are proficient in 21st Century Skills: Collaboration, Communication, Initiative & Accountability, and Creative & Critical Thinking

**100%**

of Sitar's alumni graduate from high school and 93% surveyed are enrolled in a 2- or 4-year college or university



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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MAUREEN DWYER

Maureen Dwyer was one of Sitar's first employees. She served as Grants Manager, Institutional Giving Manager, and Deputy Director before being appointed Executive Director in 2011. As the leader of Sitar, Maureen oversees all of its operations, including staffing, programs, and fundraising. She continues to play a primary fundraising role as Executive Director and is a member of the 2014 Leadership Greater Washington class.

## KEEPING THE ARTS ACCESSIBLE

Sitar is committed to an inclusive community, in which 80% of its students come from low-income and 20% from higher-income families. To sustain this model, it depends on an active fundraising program that keeps tuition low and ensures no child is turned away because of an inability to pay. Contributions supply more than 90% of Sitar's annual income, supporting rich after-school, weekend, and summer programs. In 2017, Sitar completed a strategic planning process that committed the Center (1) to continue its record of manageable growth through smart investments in resources, capacity, and infrastructure and (2) to expand its geographic reach through off-site programs that will help D.C. families in more neighborhoods secure critical educational resources in the midst of rapid gentrification. Both commitments require a renewed focus on building community ties and engaging funders and policy makers in supporting Sitar as a destination for early childhood arts development.

## FUNDRAISING PROGRAM

Since 2010, Sitar's fundraising program has doubled philanthropic revenue to secure approximately \$1.8M from all constituencies. Government agencies and foundations generate about half of this revenue, with the remainder coming from a mix of individual gifts at the small and major level, Board giving, and corporate donations.

The Senior Director of Development will work with the Executive Director, Board, staff, and arts volunteers to build a donor pipeline and major gifts program that increases the number of individual donors giving at the \$5K+ level and lays a foundation to secure 5- and 6-figure individual gifts. The Senior Director will leverage Sitar's devoted supporters and its award-winning programs to broaden relationships, deepen engagement, and expand sources of support.



## STUDENT STORIES

"The Sitar Arts Center has introduced me to an entirely different world. A world of freedom. Sitar has enabled me to express myself."

*Tyra, Age 14*

"Sitar Arts Center has not only given me a deeper, more elaborate understanding of the arts, but also a home where I have matured and grown around the arts. Because of Sitar Arts Center, I will be graduating from high school and going to college."

*Joel, Age 17*



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## THE OPPORTUNITY

Sitar Arts Center is seeking to hire a Senior Director of Development responsible for ensuring that Sitar's contributed support advanced its mission and core programs in concert with its strategic plan. Reporting to the Executive Director and serving on the senior leadership team, the Senior Director is primarily responsible for developing a vision to expand a fundraising program that generates 90% of the Center's revenue and to make Sitar operationally equal to the passion of its mission. The Senior Director is primarily responsible for identifying, cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding a diverse portfolio of major donors; for leading a department of two full-time employees in executing a comprehensive development efforts; and for serving as the development department's liaison to Sitar's marketing, finance, and programs.

## MAJOR GIFT STRATEGY AND OUTREACH

- Identify and execute strategies to build an integrated major gifts program that fosters broad-based support and long-term partnerships with individuals and corporations.
- Play a primary role in identifying unaffiliated major gift prospects with a high affinity for the Center.
- Work with the Executive Director and senior leadership team to articulate a compelling case for support that positions Sitar Arts Center as a center for the reinvention of arts education and youth development programs.
- Develop personalized cultivation and solicitation plans that connect new donors and volunteers to Sitar, deepen their engagement in the Center's work, and increase levels of giving and voluntarism.
- Pursue creative giving opportunities, such as named gifts, endowed chairs, and partnerships, that maximize opportunities for donor support and programmatic innovation.
- Secure annual, major, planned, and campaign gifts, with a focus on 5- and 6-figure donations.
- Design and execute a comprehensive stewardship program that appropriately recognizes and energizes donors and integrates them into a community of Sitar supporters.
- Oversee an annual gala that showcases and leverages Sitar Arts Center's accomplishments.
- Direct the development of donor-facing communications in a variety of digital and print media, such as annual appeals, annual report, and newsletter.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Become a trusted partner to the Executive Director and Board, collaborating to establish annual goals, leading the development of the annual contributed income budget, and providing regular financial reports and recommendations on initiatives and progress.
- Provide confident guidance to engage volunteer fundraising committee members (including host committees, leadership council, etc.); appropriately leverage volunteer skills and interests and ensure volunteers are adequately prepared for all forms of donor outreach and solicitation.
- Identify opportunities to fully engage program staff in fundraising with all constituencies, including individuals, institutions, and government agencies.
- Articulate a compelling vision of the development department and guide and empower staff to enact it in day-to-day decisions.
- Ensure that the development department is appropriately structured, staffed, and supported to achieve organizational goals; provide professional development opportunities and annual reviews to continually elevate performance and manage the development budget.

## THE CANDIDATE

The ideal Senior Director of Development will be a confident major gift fundraiser with a track record of proactively identifying new funding communities, engaging them in fully integrated and well-developed fundraising programs, and sustainably increasing annual revenue. The Senior Director who can do this work will combine a sophisticated and creative approach to prospect identification with exceptional follow-through and relationship management skills, in working with donors and in effectively engaging leaders, volunteers, and staff. Like Sitar Arts Center's donors and staff, the Senior Director will have a personal and passionate belief in the value of arts education and the ability to offer a compelling vision of this value to prospects and donors. Specific qualifications include:

### BACKGROUND

- Record of progressively responsible experience in non-profit fundraising, with a minimum of 5 years of experience in a senior fundraising role.
- Professional or personal experience in an arts or youth development organization is useful.
- Bachelor's degree is required.

### SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Successful experience diversifying and expanding a donor base and increasing number of gifts and annual revenue.
- Record of securing 5- and 6-figure gifts from individuals and corporations.
- Ability to make a personal, impassioned, and zealous case for arts education and youth development.
- Gregarious and charismatic demeanor that others find energizing and inspiring.
- Exceptional emotional and social instincts in reading others' motivations and needs and adapting to diverse audiences.
- Excellent communication skills, including in person, on the phone, and in writing.
- Prior experience effectively building and leading a fundraising staff.
- Patience and tenacity in working with both internal and external stakeholders.
- Sophisticated understanding of Board governance and dynamics.
- Experience with fundraising software and database management is preferred.
- Familiarity with the Washington, D.C.-based philanthropic community.

### LEADERSHIP AND WORK STYLE

- Good instincts for balancing oversight and delegation on a small fundraising team.
- Flexible and capable of comfortably tolerating ambiguity in a growing organization.
- Clear evidence of the ability to work in team environments, including the ability to work with a great degree of independence, to follow through and meet commitments, and to be open and responsive to others' needs.
- Ability to prioritize appropriately and make wise judgments in a fast-paced work environment.

TO APPLY



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Questions, résumés, and CVs should be sent to  
[search@driconsulting.com](mailto:search@driconsulting.com)

All first round interviews for this position will take place at Development Resources, inc. at 1820 N. Fort Myer Drive, Suite 702, Arlington, VA 22209, (703) 294-6684, or via telephone/video conference.

DRi is an executive search and development consulting firm that places senior executives and works with them to build talented staffs, develop bold strategic plans, and design powerful fundraising programs.

Sitar Arts Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is seeking a diverse slate of qualified candidates for formal consideration.



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