



WOODLAWN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The board of directors of Woodlawn, a prized cultural institution in Ellsworth, Maine, invites applications for the executive director position. Encompassing a significant historic home, a museum collection, beautiful grounds, and distinctive event space, Woodlawn is well positioned to advance its mission: nurturing curiosity and a sense of place by promoting Downeast Maine's cultural heritage and offering diverse educational and recreational experiences. The organization's next executive director will be pivotal in ensuring Woodlawn's sustainability through responsible stewardship, entrepreneurial initiative, and robust community connections.

Organizational Overview

Woodlawn is governed by the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations, which formed in 1901 out of a concern for the imminent loss of the natural landscape of Mount Desert Island available for public use. Empowered by the Maine Legislature in 1903 to own lands of "scenic beauty, historical significance, scientific study or sanitary value," the Trustees acquired nearly 5,000 acres, which they subsequently donated to the United States, forming the core of what became Acadia National Park; and the Trustees' contributions to the Park continued intermittently through 2016, when they transferred their last remaining property within the boundary of the Park in celebration of Acadia's Centennial. The Trustees' legacy, however, extends beyond the confines of Acadia National Park, as they have owned and made the Woodlawn estate available for public use and enjoyment since 1929.

The centerpiece of the Woodlawn estate is a three-story brick mansion with elegant Federal and Greek Revival styling, built between 1824 and 1827 for John Black, his wife Mary, and their eight children. The Black House includes a wing that John used as his office to run his lumber, shipping, and mercantile businesses; five bedrooms; and seven chimneys; and behind the main house is an attached Ell originally used for cooking and housework. A registered National Historic Landmark, the Black House serves as a museum today, open seasonally and housing a collection of furnishings, portraits, books, souvenirs, silver, china, glassware, and other items directly connected to three generations of the Black family and their employees.

New to the estate is The Barn, a state-of-the-art event center constructed on the footprint of the Black family's original carriage and horse barn. Since spring of 2024, The Woodlawn Barn has been available to the public for meetings, weddings, educational programming, and special events.

The Woodlawn property spans 220 acres with 180 acres of usable space, including three miles of field walking and forest hiking trails (where leashed dogs are welcome), Maine's only regulation-size croquet court, a sledding hill, and pond.

For more information about Woodlawn, visit <https://www.woodlawnellsworth.org/>.

Role and Responsibilities

The executive director serves as Woodlawn's chief executive, principal fundraiser, and primary spokesperson, managing the campus, facilities, and collections of Woodlawn as well as all programming and rentals. This individual reports to the Trustees and oversees a small staff. Specific responsibilities include:

Executive Leadership and Organizational Management

- With strategic direction from the Trustees, advance Woodlawn's mission, vision, and goals in collaboration with the board, staff, and community stakeholders across the region

- Organize, motivate, and mentor staff and volunteers to ensure alignment and optimize organizational impact
- Oversee human resource processes including hiring, professional development, compensation and benefits, and separation if necessary
- Maintain a business-oriented, professional, results-driven environment across the organization
- Establish goals, objectives, and operational plans in collaboration with the board, staff, and community partners

Development and Fundraising

- Drive development and fundraising initiatives, leveraging the board and staff as needed, to ensure sufficient funding for annual operations and capital projects and adequate reserves
- Initiate, cultivate, and extend relationships with the organization's portfolio of individual, foundation, governmental, and corporate donors
- Participate in grant writing and management as needed
- Work with the board and staff to plan and host fundraising and friend-raising events

Financial Management and Administration

- In collaboration with the board president, treasurer and finance committee, develop the annual budget for board approval and provide accurate financial reports to the board as directed
- Prudently direct resources and manage all financials within budgetary guidelines and according to current nonprofit laws and regulations, upholding the fiscal integrity of the organization
- Manage daily financial operations to ensure maximum utilization of resources and optimum financial positioning
- Ensure timely preparation of the annual audit and 990 tax return

Collections, Community Engagement & Education Programs

- Provide executive leadership in managing compelling, culturally relevant, and innovative public history programs, education initiatives, and community engagement efforts
- Work with the education team to maintain and grow sustainably schools and community outreach initiatives
- Build enduring relationships to support a sustainable, visitor-friendly suite of activities and events that highlight the richness of Woodlawn as an educational and tourist destination and a place for community connection

Board Relations

- Maintain regular and ongoing communication to build strong relationships and close collaboration with the board of trustees
- Attend all board meetings and provide reports and updates on staff as well as all current work, project timelines, and organizational progress
- Provide opportunities for relationship-building between the board and staff to maintain alignment of strategic visioning and program management

External Relations and Communications

- Represent the organization and serve as chief spokesperson through media engagements and at public events, conferences, and partnership meetings
- Ensure high visibility to prospects and the public to create engaged philanthropy
- Engage with constituents and existing and prospective partners across the county
- Manage all aspects of the organization's marketing and public relations, including paid advertising campaigns

Position Requirements

Leading an historic organization successfully into the future requires a broad set of attributes and skills. The Trustees expect that the winning candidate will bring:

- A passion for Woodlawn's mission, deep appreciation for the unique character of Downeast Maine, and keen interest in the history of our region
- Appreciation for the history of Woodlawn and evident understanding of the responsibility to care for the landscape and collections which are held in public trust
- Solid organizational leadership experience in the nonprofit sector
- Past success as a principal fundraising officer, designing fundraising programs, making individual and major gift solicitations, cultivating foundations, and developing fundraising strategies
- Entrepreneurial spirit and a leadership style that is visionary, strategic, motivating, collaborative, and inspiring
- Experience as an effective relationship builder with the capacity to develop and maintain partnerships with diverse stakeholders, including civic, business and community leaders; board members and other volunteers; educators; donors; and foundations
- Financial and operational acumen to grow and maintain a stable and sustainable organization including stewardship of a complex facility and valuable collections, budget preparation and management, analysis, decision-making, and reporting
- Strong organizational problem-solving skills, poise, and good humor
- The ability to prioritize and adapt to unexpected or changing circumstances
- Intellectual curiosity, transparency, and humility
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills

Compensation

Woodlawn's executive director will earn a salary of \$75,000-85,000 commensurate with experience and benefits including health and dental insurance, paid time off, and a 3% IRA match after one year. Temporary onsite housing would be offered under certain conditions to ease the leadership transition. The successful candidate can expect a formal review after the initial six months, and an annual review thereafter.

Nondiscrimination

Woodlawn does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, national origin, ancestry, public assistance, ethnic background, religion, marital status, economic class, age, disability or handicap (mental or physical), sex, creed, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and any other legally protected characteristics in admission or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment. The organization complies with all applicable national, state and local laws pertaining to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity.

To apply

Interested candidates should send a cover letter and resume to Starboard Leadership Consulting at the following address: search2@starboardleadership.com. Paper copies may be sent to Jessica Weiner, Starboard Leadership Consulting, 84 Harlow Street, Bangor, ME 04401, but electronic submissions of material are preferred. No phone inquiries, please. The application deadline is June 19, and review of all submissions will begin immediately thereafter.