

the MCKNIGHT CENTER

FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS AT OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

MARILYNN AND CARL THOMA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION

The McKnight Foundation is accepting applications for an entrepreneurial, motivated and passionate individual to serve as the founding Marilyn and Carl Thoma Executive Director for the McKnight Center for the Performing Arts, located in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Rich in tradition, uncompromisingly committed to excellence in performing arts, and supported with a gift from Marilyn and Carl Thoma, the Executive Director for the McKnight Center for the Performing Arts will be well-positioned to lead Oklahoma State University into the international spotlight.

THE ORGANIZATION

The McKnight Center for the Performing Arts will be an epicenter for performing arts activity, attracting world-class professional performances and will be a catalyst for culture and growth for Oklahoma State University, Stillwater and the regional arts community (including Tulsa, Oklahoma City, Dallas and others).

THE MCKNIGHT CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS Foundation (the "Foundation") has been founded to operate the McKnight Center for the Performing Arts at Oklahoma State University (The McKnight Center") in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Construction of the \$70 million McKnight Center has begun, with scheduled completion and inauguration in Fall 2019. The new executive director will provide input on the facility construction as OSU moves forward with the project.

The 93,000-square-foot McKnight Center for the Performing Arts will feature state-of-the-art technology designed to enhance the performance and audience experience. It will include an acoustically perfected 1,100-seat performance hall, 222-seat recital hall and an outdoor plaza with a large viewing screen for broadcasting performances in the hall as well as other performances from anywhere else in the world (McKnightCenter.okstate.edu). In a second phase, a new home for the OSU Department of Music and its master class curriculum will complement the McKnight Center. Teaching studios for one-on-one lessons and ensemble rooms for small or large groups will be located in the center. These spaces will be engineered with the latest acoustics and technology for instruction, practice and performance.

The Foundation governed by a seven member Board of Trustees and an Executive Director will be engaged for the operation and programming of the McKnight Center.

A fundraising campaign is underway to provide an endowment to generate annual programming budget. Based on responses to date, this fundraising campaign is projected to be completed in 2016.

With the programming endowment, the McKnight Center will present celebrated national and international performing arts productions and artists that will enhance the cultural experience on campus, in the Stillwater community and across the region. It is the vision of the Foundation that the McKnight Center presents an annual world-class series of concerts and events including, but not limited to:

- Classical and Pops Concerts together with the production of mini festivals within the season
- Jazz
- Broadway in Stillwater
- World Sounds

- Dance
- Repertory Theatre
- Annual festival featuring Oklahoma and regional performing artists of all genres
- The McKnight Center will also showcase musical excellence from the OSU School of Music: faculty artist recital series; guest, alumni and student recitals; full opera productions and opera scenes; symphony, band, choral and jazz; master classes, competitions and lectures; and outreach programs for Stillwater children and youth.

By bringing world-class orchestras to Oklahoma State University, the new facility will allow students at OSU to achieve their fullest potential through interaction with the finest artists in the world. These opportunities will enhance OSU award-winning music and theatre programs, which are currently thriving under the direction of its impressive faculty comprised of sought-after singers, famous composers and music theorists shaping the industry.

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

One of the nation's top research universities, Oklahoma State University has an enrollment of approximately 36,000, 25,000 of whom attend the main Stillwater campus. OSU was founded in 1890 and is a comprehensive liberal arts and land-grant institution. It has programs in the arts and sciences, engineering, business, education, human sciences and agriculture, with several programs rated in the top ten in the United States. It grants associates, undergraduate, masters and doctoral degrees. It has campuses in Tulsa, Oklahoma City and Okmulgee, including the OSU Institute of Technology and OSU Center for Health Sciences.

THE COMMUNITY

Stillwater has a population of about 48,000 and is ranked as one of the top 100 best places to live in the U.S. (small to mid-sized cities) on Livability's 2016 list. It is located approximately one hour from Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

As the home of Oklahoma State University, a branch of Northern Oklahoma College, Meridian Technology and the Oklahoma State Department of Career and Technology Education and high-performing Stillwater Public Schools, education is a core value of Stillwater.

The Stillwater Medical Center is an award-winning hospital that provides ready access to high quality, full service health care.

Stillwater has more than 5,000 acres of parkland, including five ball complexes, ten tennis courts, two disc golf courses, four lakes, one swimming pool, 14 playgrounds, one skate and bmx bike ramp, special services centers, including the Multi Arts Center, Senior Activity Center, Community Center, Armory Gymnasium, Lakeside Golf Course, Stillwater Country Club, and Karsten Creek Golf Course. Lake McMurry offers hiking and mountain-bike trails, back-to-nature camping and well-stocked reserves for fishing. Nearby Lake Carl Blackwell offers camping, covered pavilion, grills, restrooms and boat rentals.

Stillwater is nearly equidistance from Oklahoma City and Tulsa, and has a regional airport with non-stop commercial flights to Dallas.

Some recent rankings of note:

- In 2015, *TIME Inc./Money Magazine* named Stillwater as one of the top 25 places to retire in the United States.
- Movoto named Stillwater as one of the 10 happiest small places in America in 2014.
- In 2014, the *USA Today* recognized Stillwater one of nine cities with the fastest growing income between 2010-2012. Stillwater's income grew more than 17 percent during that time.
- In 2016, *USA Today* recognized Stillwater as one of the top 25 best small college towns in America.

- In 2013, Lumosity completed a study that found Stillwater was the No. 25 smartest city in the United States with a score of 102.59.

POSITION SUMMARY

Reporting to the Board of Trustees, the Marilyn and Carl Thoma Executive Director will provide overall leadership to the Foundation. The scope of responsibility includes program planning, fundraising and donor relations, audience development, strategic planning and execution, marketing/advertising, external and community relations, volunteer and personnel management and the overall operational, financial, and administrative management of the organization. The Executive Director will develop relationships and collaborations with musical, performing, educational, and community organizations to increase the Foundation's outreach throughout Oklahoma, the region, the nation and the world. Work to schedule the inaugural season and grand opening of The McKnight Center will begin at once.

The Executive Director will maintain a high professional profile and work closely with the Board to ensure strong fiscal health and effective governance. In partnership with the Artistic Directors and the Board, the Executive Director will develop a broad range of programming, and work to enhance public awareness and recognition of the Foundation as one of the leading performing arts organizations in the United States.

Candidates will be expected to have an established reputation for excellence in performing arts management, and must be engaged in and excited by the collaborative leadership process.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In keeping with leadership of a versatile, high-quality, and community-oriented performing arts center, responsibilities of the Executive Director include but are not limited to the following:

Revenue Enhancement

Lead the Foundation's development program, design comprehensive plans that maximize contributed income, and assume a leading and active role in fundraising in consultation and cooperation with the Artistic Directors and the Board. The Executive Director will:

- In close collaboration with the OSU Foundation (the fundraising organization benefiting Oklahoma State University), this position will identify fundraising staffing needs, priorities for fundraising and coordinate donor activities. Donor gifts and donor records will flow through and be maintained at the OSU Foundation.
- Take a direct leadership role in development programs, including but not limited to annual fundraising efforts, the Foundation's Endowment Fund, and planned giving.
- Partner with the Artistic Directors and the Board of Directors, in collaboration with the OSU Foundation, to identify, solicit, cultivate and maintain strong relationships with individual, corporate, foundation, diplomatic and government donors and sponsors.
- Broaden the organization's donor base – diversifying in terms of types (e.g., corporate, government, individual) and scale (small donors to large donors).

Branding and Institutional Visibility

Oversee audience development, marketing and public relations activities for the organization. The Executive Director will:

- Develop innovative plans to establish and maintain a strong audience of performing arts - particularly the new and younger audience - and implement a strategy for developing them as patrons and donors.

- Communicate the work and mission of the organization to the public through traditional and new media sources.
- Lead the effort to increase the awareness and impact of the Foundation's brand, clearly articulating mission, vision, programs and strategic direction to the public.
- Cultivate good relations with media and stay abreast of developments in the regional, national and international performing arts communities.

Operational and Strategic Planning

Direct and manage all aspects of the organization's operations, budget, and administration to ensure fiscal responsibility and the most effective use of resources. The Executive Director will:

- Implement and monitor a long-term strategic and short-term operating plan in coordination with the Board of Trustees, and assume joint responsibility for its implementation, reporting progress towards goals regularly.
- Oversee all day-to-day operations to ensure that patrons and other community members have a world class experience each time they interact with the organization.
- Work collaboratively with the OSU Foundation to develop an annual budget and business plan based on high-quality programming for presentation to the Board. Manage cash flow and present appropriate financial information to the Board on a regular and timely basis. Ensure financial controls are in place to maintain oversight and ethical use of funds. Provide oversight and supervision of bookkeeping and accounting in accordance with accepted accounting principles for non-profits.
- Ensure that the Foundation is effectively structured to execute the vision set forth by the Board, and that it is staffed with highly competent persons, including paid staff and a cadre of engaged and enthusiastic volunteers. Interview, hire, train, and mentor staff and volunteers. Assign work, and complete job performance reviews on a regular basis as requested by the Board of Trustees.
- Plan and execute the festivals, concerts, events, and activities, which include programming, artist engagement, celebrations, special fundraising, and other events as needed.
- Oversee and negotiate contractual matters and arrangements for guest orchestras, artists, conductors and other industry specialists with internal and external partners.
- Maintain the Foundation's highest ethical standards, ensuring that all business policies and practices are lawful and transparent.

Outreach and Education

Create and execute plans to ensure a systematic, values-based approach to outreach and education. The Executive Director will:

- Develop collaborative partnerships with community arts, education, and cultural organizations to advance the Foundation's outreach activities.
- Work with all members of the communities in our region, develop appropriate strategic partnerships, and seek to include members of the communities' various multicultural groups and people of all ages.
- Represent the Foundation at various community events in a manner that enhances our reputation and improves our ability to serve the cultural needs of the region.

Governance

Engage and utilize the talents and resources of the Board of Trustees. Support the Board to maintain engagement, proper governance, financial sustainability, and engaged ambassadorship.

- Initiate and maintain effective communications with the Board Chair, Board of Directors and staff.
- Serve as a trusted advisor to the Board, while engaging, educating, and motivating the Trustees to maximize their effectiveness.
- Provide leading practices in Board governance to the Board.

Financial Management

Oversee the fiscal well-being of the organization and, in coordination with the Treasurer, present, monitor, and report annual operating budgets to the Board, with a view towards long-term financial sustainability.

- Review and provide monthly financial statements and cash flow projections for Board review and approval. Monitor and coordinate with staff to understand and allocate expenditures.
- Negotiate all leases and rentals needed for the full season and educational programs.

TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Executive Director will embrace the Foundation's mission and goals, promote the Board's strategic vision, and be a team player and collaborator, who values the input and strengths of others. While maintaining a practical approach towards objectives and accomplishments, and carefully utilizing available resources, the Executive Director will involve and engage staff, Board, and all stakeholders to create win-win outcomes. While possessing the skills necessary for achievement and success, the Executive Director will maintain a positive outlook towards all challenges and an ability to learn from others and all experiences. The Executive Director will embrace the Foundation's mission and goals, and, in conjunction with the artistic leadership, promote the Board's strategic vision.

The selected candidate should also demonstrate the following competencies:

- **Stakeholder Focus and Interpersonal Skills.** Maintains a commitment to the satisfaction of stakeholders, by listening to, comprehending, and relating to input and insights, while demonstrating the understanding and acceptance of varying thoughts and attitudes.
- **Leadership and Personal Accountability.** Continually displays the ability to meet or exceed expectations, while holding herself/himself and others to a high level of ethical behavior for both professional and personal actions.
 - Results-oriented leadership, a positive attitude and the ability to inspire and mobilize the Foundation's staff and stakeholders to reach a common vision and organizational goals, at all times observing the highest ethical and professional standards
 - Superior relationship and team building skills; highly collaborative, with the ability to interact effectively with the Artistic Directors, Board of Trustees, staff, patrons, donors, and the local, national and international community
- **Self-Management and Planning & Organizing.** Demonstrates good use of available time and prioritizes objectives, creating work plans and systems with others to achieve mutual goals.

QUALIFICATIONS

The successful candidate will have a passion for the performing arts, and knowledge of and enthusiasm to lead the development, marketing, and community engagement efforts of a performing arts organization; a minimum five (5) years' experience in a leadership position within a nonprofit performing arts organization; fundraising experience; experience managing a board; marketing experience; outstanding knowledge of nonprofit finance; technology and verbal and written communication skills. Qualified applicants will have a Bachelor's degree and, preferably, an advanced degree, with an MBA or a Master degree in Arts or in Nonprofit Administration preferred.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Generous compensation and benefit package commensurate with experience.

APPLICATION AND INQUIRIES

For more information, visit McKnightCenter.okstate.edu. Submit cover letter, resume, and references (electronic submissions preferred), outlining demonstrable accomplishments to:

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