

Job Title:

Director of Early Childhood Initiatives
Full-Time, Exempt

Reports to:

Fox Valley United Way CEO

Position Summary:

The Director of Early Childhood Initiatives plays a key role in our mission and vision by supporting our efforts to provide and coordinate resources and opportunities that build a strong foundation for local families with young children throughout our service area. This position is directly responsible for program coordination, administration, operations, and grant management of the SPARK Early Childhood Collaboration. An education initiative of Fox Valley United Way (FVUW), SPARK is a collaboration comprised of the City of Aurora, local school districts, providers, business and philanthropic stakeholders, and community participants, serving as an advocate for the interests of young children and their families to the private and public sectors within and outside of Aurora. This position requires an entrepreneurial professional who understands the collective impact model of work.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES: (Essential functions of the job)**Operation of the Collaboration**

- Direct day-to-day operation and development of SPARK
- Analyze staffing needs for employees and volunteers; make recommendations for staffing, service delivery, and budget
- Supervise and evaluate the performance of SPARK staff
- Develop short and long-term strategic planning for the Collaboration
- Establish and maintain effective professional relationships with federal, state, county, city, and community organizations and funders on behalf of SPARK
- Cultivate, grow, and preside over a SPARK Executive Committee that represents and supports the work and direction of the collaboration

Program Management

- Oversee the development, implementation, outcomes, and evaluation of Early Childhood programs
- Develop program budgets
- Supervise program staff, volunteers and consultants
- Collect, analyze, and report on program data to be used to tell a compelling story identifying community impact

Financial Oversight

- Research, identify, and implement strategies for funding opportunities to support the work of SPARK
- Manage grant applications, awards, reports, and requirements
- Develop annual budget and financial reports, including detailed projections of programmatic revenues and expenses
- Monitor SPARK's financial performance and implement strategies to mitigate financial risk
- Manage and grow financial contributions from collaboration partners

Community and Public Relations

- Represent and market the SPARK to education, social service, health, business, and civic organizations
- Modeling the SPARK Collective Impact process, supporting Early Childhood efforts throughout the FVUW service area
- Identify opportunities to collaborate with Early Childhood stakeholders throughout the FVUW service area
- Collect data to identify gaps in support of Early Childhood efforts throughout the FVUW service area
- Keep informed regarding issues affecting young children and their families and community needs, concerns, and opportunities
- Act as a spokesperson for Early Childhood efforts with media, community organizations, other agencies, and groups
- Advocate for quality and equitable early childhood education and care for all young children

COMPETENCIES:

To perform this job successfully, the incumbent should demonstrate the following competencies:

- Strategic Thinker – Ability to show progressive thinking,
- Relationship Cultivation – Ability to engage and influence stakeholders. Ability to relate with a diverse group of individuals or organizations.
- Teamwork Collaboration – Understands the importance of collective communication among the team
- Interpersonal Skills – demonstrates comfort in socializing professionally in both intimate settings and at larger social events
- Excellent verbal and written communications skills

JOB REQUIREMENTS:

Incumbent must have a passion for working in a mission-driven organization.

Education:

Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education or related field or equivalent experience. Master's degree desirable.

Experience:

- Experience working with or in early childhood care and education programs
- Experience working with children from underserved and priority populations (vulnerable populations), demonstrating a deep understanding of institutional poverty and the cultural framework of the Aurora community.
- Ability to establish good working relationships with diverse federal, state, county, city, and community agencies and groups and to do public speaking as necessary
- Experience in education, nonprofit, or academic-related organizations
- Background working with grants, LOI's, reports, and funding requests
- Flexibility to work occasional night and weekend hours may be required to complete FVUW activities successfully.

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DISCLAIMER:

This job description is intended to convey the essential functions of this position, and it is not intended to be an exhaustive list of skills, duties, responsibilities or working conditions associated with the position.