



## Pop Culture Classroom Executive Director

***The Board seeks an imaginative leader with a passion for pop culture-based art, education and story-telling, and management experience to:***

- ***Deliver engaging and fun educational experiences through classes, events and internet-based platforms and collaboration;***
- ***Implement strong financial controls, accurate forecasting, efficient workflows and a lean operating infrastructure for the organization;***
- ***Increase and diversify earned and contributed revenue streams, and***
- ***Develop sustained, close partnerships with school districts and creative economy businesses, nonprofits and funders in Colorado and nationally.***

Pop Culture Classroom (PCC) was founded in 2010 by comic book, graphic arts and narrative storytelling enthusiasts of diverse professional and academic backgrounds. It was initially called Comic Book Classroom and the organization spawned the Denver Comic Con event in 2012 which has been held annually ever since. The organization and its convention were later renamed to more accurately reflect its mission and vision.

All PCC in-classroom, after school, and community education programs, and all aspects of the annual convention, are focused on promoting literacy and building community through the tools of pop culture and the power of self-expression. Programs given annually include:

- Pop culture-themed workshops, classroom sessions, outreach events, and drop-in sessions held at the organization's headquarters and locations throughout Colorado. An example is the "Storytelling Through Comics" program, a graphic literature creation program for grades 3-12 offered at low cost to schools, teachers and community organizations that includes instruction in reading & vocabulary, writing stories, and eventually the creation of an artist's own comic.
- The 3-day annual Denver Pop Culture Con, which includes extensive educational programs, workshops, presentations and exhibitions for students, educators and attendees that are given by publishing companies, media entities, artists and celebrities in the pop culture ecosystem;
- The Excellence in Graphic Literature (EGL) Awards that recognize truly amazing works and artists, with diverse artists and storytellers nominated and judged through an Advisory Board and juries consisting of publishing, arts, library and education professionals.

PCC has eleven staff, a six-member board, and an annual operating budget of \$2.5m. The organization annually provides 835 hours of education programs, and the annual 3-day conference features 900 exhibitors, hundreds of hours of presentations and workshops, is attended by 100K + individuals, and attracts business, foundation, community groups and corporate sponsors.

The Executive Director has three priorities: focus the org on advancing literacy through pop culture-based education programs and at the Denver Pop Culture Con event; diversify and strengthen contributed and earned revenue; and provide a solid, lean, sustainable operating infrastructure and base for delivery of in-person and online educational experiences through comics, games, film and television, and other pop culture media.

## **BASIC FUNCTION**

Reporting to the Board through its Chair, the Executive Director is responsible for PCC's overall strategy, hiring and management of staff, day-to-day operations and infrastructure, earned and contributed revenue and financial management. The Executive Director is additionally responsible for planning and financial forecasting, marketing and communications, human resources management and standards, controls and metrics and physical facilities. Of particular importance is strong cultivation of relationships with greater Colorado's K-12 school partners, municipal authorities, nonprofit education entities, organizations that are part of Colorado's creative economy, and funders both regionally and nationally.

The Executive Director will marshal the collective talent of the Pop Culture Classroom community to deliver quality educational experiences, resources, and events that measurably advance communities served, literacy, and the in-classroom experience of students and educators. Of particular importance for the Board is the Executive Director's role in diversifying revenue streams.

On-going responsibilities include:

### **LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT**

- In partnership with the Board of Directors, provide strategic plans, financial forecasts and budgets, and manage all day-to-day activities in compliance with the budget;
- Serve as chief advocate on building literacy and school-ready students through PCC's education programs and events; represent the goals and objectives of the organization before public bodies, boards, funders, the business community, etc.; build the public's understanding and embrace of PCC's work, events and program offerings;
- Implement an evidence-based annual performance evaluation for all programs, events and staff using both hard and soft metrics; have standards for eliminating old programs and events, and for establishing new ones;
- Update PCC's communications materials, social media and online presence to focus on engagement, fun interactions and diverse programs that can be delivered in-person or through mobile and other connected devices.

### **REVENUE**

- Set earned and contributed fundraising goals, strategies and targets for all donor and funding segments and events – with particular attention paid to growing contributed funding from individuals, businesses, foundations, schools and government entities; regularly communicate funding goals, strategies and progress to the Board;
- With the staff and the Board, actively drive direct solicitations to donors; continually seek to broaden fundraising so that development activities increase in sophistication and scope as awareness builds; create regular initiatives to target diverse sources of revenue and funding; develop special donor cultivation opportunities as appropriate;
- Promote a culture of fundraising within so that all staff and Board members understand and embrace the reality that they are an active part of the Development Team responsible for specific tasks, contribution of time and effort or material and in-kind contributions.

#### EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Shape programs that can be delivered through classroom, workshop, seminar and online settings, including:
  - Onsite, outreach and event programming focused on teaching students through the use of pop culture media;
  - Developing teaching and instructional guides using pop culture-based resources (comics, film, games, and cosplay), and education comics for classroom use;
  - Providing educational content and teacher training at our Pop Culture Con events;
- Foster an exciting contemporary pop vibe, a strong sense of innovation and exploration, and a sense of being on the cutting edge of artistic practice. “Cool” is important, yet results in the classroom are central to Pop Culture Classroom’s mission. The Executive Director will assure PCC’s position as a literacy programming thought-leader and innovator; oversee the development of an array of programs that are attractive, exciting and magnetic to youth; pay attention to metrics and evidence of outcomes;
- Convene relevant meetings that include partners, funders, business and community leaders, especially those involved in Colorado’s creative economy; develop cross-cutting projects and services in collaboration with other organizations and funders; seek government and other funding streams for pop culture tools and visual arts-based story telling that develop literacy and executive function skills useful in classroom and other settings.

#### FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

- With the finance director and outside auditor, understand the organization’s fiscal health; ensure that the organization adheres to a sustainable financial plan based on an annual budget reviewed and approved by the Board, and that financial performance positively tracks budget and operating plans; ensure that internal and external levels of compliance in all aspects of programs and services are met; ensure that there is a relationship between programmatic objectives and available resources;
- Effectively manage and lead day-to-day operations, programs and finances; ensure proper administration of the organization’s contracts, compliance with relevant employment laws, and meeting of other legal requirements; develop long- and short-term financial plans and prepare financial and operating reports for the Board; develop an atmosphere of transparency and accountability with the Board on the org’s financial condition;
- Oversee recruitment, retention, motivation and evaluation of staff and a cadre of volunteers; ensure that staff and volunteers receive appropriate ongoing training so they can effectively and efficiently serve PCC’s clientele and constituents;

#### BOARD RELATIONS

- With the Board Chair, coordinate the efforts of the Board; develop Board meeting agendas, schedules, retreats and other activities; encourage Board members’ involvement in PCC’s range of activities including fundraising;
- Communicate to the Board in a timely manner on matters critical to PCC’s oversight;

- Assist the Board in identifying and recruiting new Board members, whose talents, backgrounds, commitment, and fundraising abilities are congruent with Pop Culture Classroom's needs and mission.

## **IDEAL EXPERIENCE AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The Executive Director will be an experienced leader with the following experience and qualifications:

- Creative economy experience is important; a results-oriented social entrepreneur and hands-on "doer"; a builder with ambition to identify ways to grow the organization within its mission without jeopardizing organizational stability;
- Senior-level managerial and operational experience with similarly sized organizations (budget and staff) that includes strong financial management, risk management, contract compliance, financial controls & reporting, strategic planning and evidence-based decision making; ability to formulate and analyze alternative policies, actions, and strategies for solving organizational issues and ensuring compliance with the mission and vision; ability to clearly and effectively communicate explicit rationale for operating decisions to the Board;
- A track record improving earned and contributed revenue, including fundraising success with proven ability to attract financial support from foundations, businesses, individuals and government sources; demonstrated success with fundraising and personally interacting with and cultivating donors; knowledge of event marketing and techniques for maximizing attendance;
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills, a history of public advocacy including excellent public speaking skills for formal and extemporaneous presentations; a demonstrated ability to work effectively with representatives, advocates and professionals with different backgrounds and from various communities, experience with Colorado-based networks is desirable but not required;
- A team builder who shares information easily, listens as well as gives advice, and respects the abilities of others; someone who imparts trust and integrity; an individual possessing patience and a sense of humor, to maintain balance and perspective.

For more information please contact:

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