



## **Director of Community Engagement- Van Go, Inc.**

### **About Us:**

Van Go, Inc. is an arts-based nonprofit organization providing comprehensive, 'earn while you learn' employment programs and social services to Douglas County youth, ages 14-24. Using art as the vehicle, Van Go provides employability and life skills training, health and wellness education, and social service supports to inspire our youth to create their own visions of success. Van Go's nationally recognized programs put art to work, meet young people where they are, and spark what is possible through creative expression.

**Our mission is to inspire young lives through art, work, and community.**

### **Our Core Values - At Van Go, we:**

- *Believe in the power of art*
- *Create a safe environment for self-expression*
- *Prioritize overall health and well-being*
- *Encourage self-empowerment*
- *Nurture community and a caring "home away from home"*
- *Inspire hope for the future*

### **Position Summary:**

The role of the Director of Community Engagement oversees fundraising, grant writing, external communications, marketing, public relations, event planning, and outreach initiatives, working closely with the Executive Director, Community Engagement team and program staff. This position plays a crucial role in cultivating partnerships with donors, families, foundations, local businesses, schools, government agencies and other civic and non-profit groups, while championing Van Go's values of creativity, equity, and youth empowerment. This position requires an energetic, passionate and strategic communicator who thrives in a fast-paced and collaborative environment and is deeply committed to community-based, youth-centric work.

### **Essential Duties and Responsibilities:**

The Director of Community Engagement should be well-structured to fill the responsibility, oversight and management of all activities which promote the organization and raise funds for Van Go. This includes:

#### **Fundraising & Grants**

- In coordination with Executive Director and Community Engagement Team, the Board of Directors, volunteers and contractors, develop, coordinate and execute all fundraising events and activities.
- Lead donor cultivation and appreciation events, as well as community engagement gatherings, to deepen engagement, elevate public awareness, and drive financial support for the organization.
- Support Community Engagement staff in stewarding donor and sponsor relationships through events, recognition and ongoing communication.
- Design, implement and manage all fundraising activities to maintain and grow a strong and diversified funding base which aligns with the agency's budget and goals.

- Identify and cultivate potential individual, corporate, and foundation supporters through community networks.
- In coordination with the Community Engagement Team, develop annual fundraising plan to ensure successful execution of all cultivation, stewardship and solicitation activities.
- Monitor, assess, and report on progress toward budgetary and fundraising goals, including event outcomes, grants and other fundraising goals; Provide regular updates to the Executive Director, staff and the Board of Directors.
- Ensure effective administration of all development activities, including maintaining the development calendar, managing the donor database (Donor Perfect), coordinating donor communications, overseeing event planning, and ensuring consistency across social media and communication platforms.
- Stay informed about current trends, best practices, and emerging strategies in philanthropy; Bring innovative ideas to enhance Van Go's fundraising efforts.
- In coordination with the Executive Director and the Community Engagement Team, lead in the preparation, writing, and submission of grant proposals; ensure timely reporting, compliance, and execution of awarded grants in alignment with funder requirements and organizational goals.

### **Community Outreach & Partnerships**

- In coordination with the Executive Director, serve as a spokesperson for Van Go and represent the organization in community-based events.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with community stakeholders, including schools, businesses, government agencies, educational organizations, arts organizations, non-profits and civic groups.
- Identify and pursue opportunities for community collaboration and strategic partnerships that enhance program impact and visibility.
- Develop and implement strategies to increase self-generated income through the rental of Van Go's gallery space for community events, meetings, and private functions. Build relationships with local businesses, organizations, and individuals to promote the space as a unique, mission-driven venue.
- Coordinate space rentals with internal staff to ensure rental activities align with Van Go's programming schedule and values, maintaining high standards of hospitality and professionalism.
- Track and evaluate rental income, usage trends, and customer feedback to inform future outreach and pricing strategies.

### **Event Planning & Public Engagement**

- Lead planning and execution of Van Go events, including seasonal art sales, open houses, and community celebrations.
- Coordinate and execute all Van Go promotional events – from seasonal sales and mural unveilings to community open houses that highlight the youth; Oversee planning, logistics, volunteer engagement and post-event evaluation to ensure each gathering elevates youth artists, strengthens community connections, and advances the organization's visibility and fundraising goals.
- Secure corporate event sponsorships by cultivating new partnerships and deepening existing relationships with a strategic focus on increasing sponsor engagement and elevating levels of financial and in-kind commitment over time.

### **Marketing, Communication & Storytelling**

- Oversee Van Go's external communications strategy, including newsletters, press releases, social media and website content.
- Work collaboratively with internal teams and external partners to craft strategic messaging, develop marketing and communication materials, and produce cohesive branded collateral across all promotional platforms.
- Craft compelling narratives that highlight the success of Van Go's youth and programs to inspire community support and involvement.
- Ensure consistency in messaging across all platforms, while upholding the organization's voice and values.

- In coordination with the Executive Director, serve as liaison between Van Go's staff, Board Members, and community partners to ensure alignment in messaging and outreach.
- Collaborate with program and development teams to integrate youth voices and stories into public-facing initiatives.
- Track engagement metrics and community feedback to inform outreach strategy and improve efforts over time.
- Contribute to organization's long-term planning and visibility goals, identifying new opportunities to grow community impact.

## **Qualifications:**

### **Education**

- Bachelor's degree in communications, non-profit management, public relations, marketing, arts administration, or a related field required.

### **Experience**

- Minimum of 5 years of professional experience in fundraising, community engagement, non-profit development, or a related field, with demonstrated success managing donor relationships, events and external communications.
- At least two (2+) years of experience supervising staff and leading teams.
- Proven track record with grant writing, grant management, and reporting in alignment with funder expectations.
- Experience leading fundraising campaigns, donor cultivation, and stewardship strategies, including the ability to secure corporate sponsorships and expand donor engagement.
- Skilled in event planning and execution, including budgeting, logistics, volunteer coordination, and post-event analysis.
- Experience developing and managing community partnerships with schools, businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations.
- Knowledge of Douglas County community resources and experience managing and strengthening community partnerships, including school, business, government agencies, and non-profit organizations.

### **Communication & Technical Skills**

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with the ability to craft mission-drive messages that resonate with diverse audiences.
- Strong background in strategic communications, including storytelling, content development, marketing, and public relations.
- Proficiency with donor database systems (e.g. Donor Perfect or similar CRM), Microsoft Office Suite and social media management tools.

### **Core Competencies & Values**

- Demonstrated ability to work both independently and collaboratively in a fast-paced, mission-driven environment.
- Strong organizational, time management, and project coordination skills with the ability to prioritize and manage multiple priorities with strong attention to detail.
- Deep commitment to youth development, equity, and inclusion, and the ability to center youth voices in community outreach and storytelling.
- Ability to effectively engage with youth of different ages and diverse backgrounds with empathy, enthusiasm and respect.
- Commitment to upholding Van Go's mission, educational philosophy, code of ethics, professional standards and equity values is expected, along with the belief in the transformative power of creative expression.
- Exhibits key personal characteristics: adaptability, collaboration, personal impact, dependability, safety awareness, professionalism, and teamwork.

- Strong interpersonal skills, including the ability to listen with patience, communicate clearly, inspire creativity, build relationships, and foster resilience and encouragement.

#### **Additional Conditions/Requirements:**

The Community Engagement Director must pass a series of pre-employment background checks as a condition of employment. Reliable transportation, a valid and unrestricted driver's license, a clean driving record, and proof of insurance are required. Physical requirements or considerations to perform this job successfully include:

- Ability to move items/event supplies weighing up to 30 pounds
- Ability to work at a computer for extended periods of time
- Ability to move frequently in the completion of job requirements
- Ability to complete multiple projects and tasks under deadlines

The work hours for this position are primarily concentrated Monday – Friday, with weekend and evening flexibility to meet the needs of the position responsibilities and organization including but not limited to networking and donor engagement events, speaking engagements, fundraisers and other community engagements.

Van Go is committed to maintaining a culture of integrity, kindness, dignity, and respect. Van Go requires every employee to conduct themselves in a positive, collaborative, and professional manner at all times.

#### **Compensation/Benefits:**

The Director of Community Engagement position is full time, salaried, and exempt. The salary range starts at \$55,000. Compensation discussions are a part of the interview process and commensurate with education, experience, and demonstrated skills/traits.

Van Go is committed to a healthy work-life balance, and our employees enjoy **health and dental insurance, IRA contributions, life and accidental death insurance, voluntary vision insurance, and a FUN, collaborative, creative and rewarding work environment.**

*Van Go, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion. Van Go, Inc. believes that equity, inclusion, diversity, and antiracism are essential to our mission. We want our Van Go community to benefit from varied ideas, world views, and personal experiences. We stand against all forms of discrimination and are committed to creating an environment grounded in our equity values. Van Go welcomes everyone. Applications are encouraged from all persons regardless of their race, color, ancestry, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, medical/physical/mental condition, pregnancy/childbirth and related medical condition, age, marital status, or veteran status.*

#### **Application Procedure:**

Please submit the following to [us@van-go.org](mailto:us@van-go.org) for consideration:

- **Cover letter** – A one-page letter detailing your interest in the role, your relevant experience, and your passion for community engagement and the mission of Van Go.
- **Resume** – A current resume outlining your education, work history, and relevant accomplishments.
- **Three Professional References** – Names, titles, and contact information for three individuals who can speak to your qualifications and work style.

**Application Deadline: August 8, 2025**

**Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Position may be filled before deadline, so early applications are encouraged.**