



POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT: Executive Director

VIET-AID Boston, MA

The Vietnamese American Initiative for Development (Viet-AID), the first and only grassroots community development corporation founded and operated by Vietnamese refugees and immigrants in the U.S., seeks a dynamic and creative leader and team builder to guide the organization through a period of significant transition.

Founded in 1994 and located in the Fields Corner neighborhood (one of the largest Vietnamese population centers in the East Coast), Viet-AID's mission is to build a strong Vietnamese American community in Boston and a vibrant Field's Corner neighborhood. This mission is anchored by four basic goals: 1) increase civic participation, 2) promote economic development and self sufficiency, 3) build affordable housing for residents, and 4) foster youth/grassroots leadership.

History and Accomplishments of Viet-AID

In its 15 year history Viet-AID has successfully organized the community and responded to needs and wishes by developing a Vietnamese community center, desirable affordable housing and neighborhood retail businesses. While working on these community development practices, Viet-AID has addressed other neighborhood requirements by creating and operating a much-needed pre-school program and a family daycare network, providing assistance to Vietnamese-owned small businesses, promoting occupational health and safety in industries dominated by Vietnamese workers, providing homeowner services and supporting the social and cultural advancement of the Vietnamese community in Boston. Nationally, Viet-AID has proven to be a center for Vietnamese leadership development; many of Viet-AID's former staff have gone on to play leadership roles in organizations serving Vietnamese around the country.

Current programs and past accomplishments include:

- Community engagement, development and management of a \$5.1 million Vietnamese American Community Center that created and operates a bilingual and bicultural preschool, youth and senior programs, and community activities
- In 2008, counseled over 140 prospective businesses, and assisted 18 of them to become small business owners through two key business development initiatives: 1) Family Childcare System that creates self-employment for low-income women, many of whom are former welfare recipients; and 2) Small Business Assistance Program that helps community members improve economic security by running a small business. These initiatives also generate over \$100,000 annually to support Viet-AID's programs.
- Developed a portfolio of 83 rental and homeownership housing units, of which 100% are affordable units, and provided first-time home-buyer training and counseling to over 500 families.
- Improved neighborhood quality of life and contributed to neighborhood economic vitality by: 1) transforming former drug houses and abandoned lots into two four unit affordable housing projects, a multicultural community garden and a multi-purpose community center; 2) working with the police department, school department and MBTA to install new lighting systems around the Fields Corner subway station, to close off "crime spots" at the local school, to increase police presence in the neighborhood, and to organize and support a neighborhood crime watch; and 3) organizing an annual neighborhood clean-up and Taste of Fields Corner.

- Fostered youth and grassroots leadership development by engaging hundreds of youth and community residents in: 1) planning and building the community center; 2) designing and installing two mural projects that converted two blighted walls into cultural and racial reflections of the community; 3) planning and developing an oral history project to promote greater communication and understanding between young and old generations; and 4) planning and implementing a voter education campaign to promote greater civic participation.

As with other community development corporations serving urban populations, Viet-AID continues to reposition itself to remain competitive, nimble and responsive to the changing environment and needs of the community. To that end, a Community Assessment process is underway. Set up to engage local Vietnamese immigrants, the process is positioned to develop strategic priorities and work with other local ethnic-based and mainstream organizations to develop programs and advocate for policies and funding to support those programs. A priority of the community engagement process is to explore strategies for local agencies to work together to provide more comprehensive services to the community, to achieve economies of scale by consolidating programs and eliminating duplicative costs and administrative/operational redundancies, and to create opportunities for revenue sharing. The process also seeks to revitalize Viet-AID's membership and especially engage youth in new ways.

Viet-AID's \$1.3M operating budget supports the rich programming and community development activities through the effectiveness of its fourteen staff positions, including five teachers on staff at the child care center. A four person management team reports directly to the chief executive. Viet-AID's staff reflects the same commitment to the organization's mission as its Board, and the staff offer a wide range of professional expertise and history of public and community service.

Like other community development corporations, Viet-AID is a community-based, membership organization. Membership is open to anyone 18 years or older. Members have a right to participate in the business and social meetings of the organization, elect and remove board members and run for board membership. Viet-AID's Board of Directors presently has eight very active members who set policy, participate in community meetings and oversee operations.

The 18,000 square foot interior of Viet-AID's community building offers several community meeting spaces, including a classroom, a library and a main hall for community events. It houses Viet-AID's headquarters, the Au Co Pre-School as well as several income-generating community tenants.

To learn more about the programs of Viet-AID, log on to www.vietaid.org.

Opportunities and Challenges for the next Executive Director

The Executive Director will be entering the organization at a very exciting time. Providing leadership in the neighborhood and the city of Boston, in the Vietnamese community and the local community development network is all part of building and securing Viet-AID's position in the rapidly changing nonprofit environment.

A community assessment initiative is underway, but it will remain for the next chief executive to integrate him or herself into this process and be part of shaping a collective community vision, strategic priorities, and competitive strategies for achieving community vision. Strategic positioning will be high on the next leader's priority list; it will involve an internal assessment of existing organizational capacity of Viet-AID and other non-profit organizations in Fields Corner, mapping of partnerships and coalitions, general training and staffing needs, funding requirements, and gaps in capacity. The outcome of the assessment may well identify opportunities for strategic merging, partnerships or collaboration among neighborhood non-profits, between the intermediary/support organizations and neighborhood groups. While funding is committed for the community engagement and assessment process, the outcomes and new directions will need additional resources to be implemented.

Building financial resources for Viet-AID is vital. The next Executive Director will need to play an active role in fundraising as well as help the Board continue its strategic recruitment of new Board members, assuring that the Directors have a keen understanding of their fundraising responsibilities and a clear grasp of the key and essential role that fundraising plays in the success of a nonprofit.

The organization has been governed by a committed, eight person Board of Directors. The Directors are currently seeking to expand neighborhood representation and add new competencies by drawing on members of the Vietnamese and Fields Corner neighborhood who have recently participated in the broad community engagement work underway at the CDC and by reaching out to other professionals in the Boston area. Adding new members will necessitate the next chief executive ensuring a strong board building cycle of recruiting, orienting, engaging, educating and evaluating the Board.

Consistently marketing Viet-AID's mission, goals and accomplishments to the local community and the public at large, to partner organizations and to Viet-AID's internal community of parents, young people and elder Vietnamese will be a key priority in the coming years. Creatively utilizing technology to facilitate transparent communications, increase efficiency, and enhance the future of the organization will be an essential part of meeting that challenge.

Executive Director's Responsibilities

Viet-AID's Executive Director serves as its Chief Executive Officer. The Executive Director provides overall leadership for the strategic direction and daily operations of Viet-AID delivering high quality programs for neighborhood residents. Responsibilities include operations, financial management, marketing, fundraising, public/community relations, program development, human resources and buildings and grounds management.

The chief executive provides informed and dynamic leadership, convening the staff around shared purpose to ensure a high performing, outcomes-orientated, community-centered and financially sustainable organization. The Executive Director will provide leadership that values teamwork and delegation, the clear analysis of issues, the delineation of options, the use of information in decision-making, and the strategic assessment of organizational and community needs.

The Executive Director's responsibilities include working with the Board of Directors and committees to fulfill their requirement of financial oversight and in setting policies and strategic plans, including assisting with board development, board accountability and board objectives.

The Executive Director leads the management team responsible for administration of Viet-AID's services and development of income, including the development of multiple strategic alliances and collaborations at all levels of the organization consistent with the mission of Viet-AID.

The chief executive oversees preparation of the annual budget and shepherds it through the budgetary review and approval process. S/he ensures proper fiscal accounting and controls in accordance with the guidelines of funding sources and with sound accounting practices and is responsible for maintaining the fiscal solvency of the organization with sound management of all assets with the support of the Board.

Overseeing the development and implementation of the organization's annual marketing and fundraising plans, the Executive Director develops external relationships and actively seeks grants, donations and new revenue sources, government and private, to meet program goals in coordination with other staff and Board members. Additionally, the Executive Director advocates at the local, state and federal level for support of community development and promotes the organization's visibility and welfare through participation and membership in community forums, the community development network and is publicly visible within Boston.

The Executive Director:

- Serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the organization responsible for exemplary program and service delivery, financial management and administration;
- Recruits, develops and supports a high caliber, professional senior management team capable of running the programs and operations of the organization;
- Develops and implements Viet-AID's fundraising, revenue generation and external communication strategies;
- Negotiates and implements effective and fundable collaborations or alliances with other non-profits;
- Assists with board recruitment, orientation and development, population of committees, board accountability and board objectives; ensures adequate staffing of volunteer efforts;
- Directly reports to Board of Directors; presents policy and strategic issues requiring Board action and/or decision and ensures effective implementation of Board actions;
- Leads Viet AID's current and future community and organizational strategic planning processes that will engage community residents and organizations serving the Vietnamese and Dorchester communities while insuring continuity or integration of current projects, programs, and services;
- Develops and implements quality management tools and measures for all programs and services and insures that programs remain aligned to organization's mission and are appropriately coordinated;
- Promotes regular internal, transparent communication among staff and Board;
- Represents Viet AID with elected officials, government agencies, media, advocacy groups and leaders of the Dorchester and Vietnamese-American communities;
- Manages the development, monitoring and adjustment of Viet-AID's operating budget; works with Director of Finance to produce accurate, timely, comprehensive and understandable financial reports that are fully useable for financial management and planning.

Qualities of the Ideal Candidate

While no person is likely to contain all of the qualities sought for the Executive Director position, successful candidates will, first and foremost, combine creative and strategic thinking with team-building management strength. A collaborative working style with the tendency toward working with other leaders to leverage current resources and build on strengths is necessary. Individuals must have highly refined critical thinking skills, a natural service-orientation with a penchant for listening, with the ability to learn quickly, problem-solve effectively in a fast moving environment with the ability to work calmly and effectively in stressful and challenging situations.

The Executive must be a consensus builder, with the ability to be inclusive and then decisive with a drive to move the organization forward. S/he will possess the interpersonal communications skills and ambassadorial presence to build successful relationships with funders, stakeholders, staff, government officials and the public.

The ideal candidate will have:

- A minimum of three to five years of successful senior nonprofit management experience which includes experience in staff development and supervision, financial planning, budget development and management, accountability and compliance responsibilities and development and implementation of performance measures.
- Proven ability developing and implementing programs that respond to community needs, and familiarity with areas of community development, such as community building/organizing, affordable housing development, neighborhood commercial development, small business technical assistance, small business development, property and asset management, youth development and social services.
- Demonstrated success in developing and meeting fundraising and revenue generation plans.
- Proven ability to work in a racially and ethnically diverse environment and demonstrated commitment to diversity;

- Strong financial management skills with the ability to read and interpret financial statements and make timely adjustments in operations accordingly.
- Success bringing visibility to an organization by being a strong networker and communicator with the ability to tell the story of the agency.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills in English and fluency in Vietnamese desired.
- Prior or current service on or staffing of a nonprofit Board of Directors; experienced in board development, supporting board leadership and skilled at building the board/ED team.
- Fully computer literate including strong skills in word processing, spreadsheets, and internet; adept at the use of technology to share knowledge within the organization and to enhance the future of Viet-AID; knowledge of accounting software a plus.

Desirable

- A track record in building and sustaining collaborations with other nonprofit, for-profit and public sector agencies.
- Familiarity with non-profit organizations in the Greater Boston or national Asian communities;
- Familiarity with the players and programs in the Massachusetts community development sector.

Some experience requirements may be substituted with a professional or advanced degree in urban planning, non-profit management, business management, accounting/finance, real estate development, or law.

Compensation:

The compensation package is commensurate with experience and is competitive with community development corporations in the region.

Applications and Nominations

Due to the pace of this search, candidates are encouraged to apply as soon as possible, but no later than May 22, 2009. Applications including a cover letter describing your interest and qualifications, your resume (in Word format) and salary history should be sent to:

Suzanne Maas
Leadership Transitions
search@leadertransitions.com

In order to expedite the internal sorting and reviewing process, please type your name (Last, First) followed by “Viet-AID” as the only contents in the subject line of your e-mail. Please note in your e-mail where you learned of this position.

Viet-AID is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to recruiting a diverse pool of candidates for this position.