



Executive Director Job Description July 2008

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The Lawrence History Center (LHC) is seeking a dynamic leader to assume the position of Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for the development, execution, and management of the policies, programs, and initiatives of the LHC/Immigrant City Archives as directed by its Board of Directors in its mission of preserving and sharing Lawrence's history

Responsibilities

Candidate must demonstrate the ability to work at both strategic and practical levels. Strong management experience and administrative skills desired, including but not limited to: people, processes, program management, and financial management. The ideal candidate will be ambitious and effective with both the Board and the community. The candidate must have the ability to connect and inspire others both internal and external to LHC and earn the respect of the employees, volunteers, and community members. A balance of vision, practical skills, and good business sense is a necessity.

The Executive Director is hired by and reports to the Board of Directors, and is responsible for daily operations, providing general coordination and oversight for ongoing programs and facilities and assistance with planning and development of new programs and activities. The Executive Director leads and assists in broad-based fundraising to assure that the LHC is managed, preserved, and interpreted to professional standards. The Executive Director works to increase LHC's audience and provide them with quality archival and historic site experiences, and works to achieve the fullest benefits possible from Board Members' support potential, abilities, and connections.

Specific job responsibilities include implementation/oversight/management of:

- Daily educational programming and year-round special events and workshops;
- Preservation, restoration and maintenance of buildings, grounds, and collections;
- Marketing and public relations, including the oversight of the expansion of the website;
- Fundraising activities, including grant research and preparation, annual appeal, membership maintenance and expansion, and other board-approved fundraising initiatives;
- Financial management and oversight, including reporting, budgeting and working with Treasurer and auditing firm to prepare annual Federal and state reporting requirements.

Qualifications

A Bachelor's and Master's degree and/or executive level experience in a nonprofit organization. Proven leadership skills, fundraising experience, financial management, and ability to manage and motivate staff required. Strong oral and written communication skills with public presentation are necessary; Prior experience working with local government, experience in history, architecture and/or preservation preferred. The ability to communicate in Spanish is ideal, but not required.

Compensation

This salary level is \$40,000 - \$50,000, depending on experience. The Board of Directors is committed to increasing staff salaries and benefits to the extent the budget permits, in order to match the expansion of the LHC and its programming and services.

How to Apply

Submit a letter of interest with salary requirements, resume, and references to HR Committee, Lawrence History Center, 6 Essex Street, Lawrence, MA 01840 or email to hr@lawrencehistory.org. **No phone calls please.** The position is open until filled but applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis with preference for early applicants. We hope to have the new hire start by October 1, 2008. The Lawrence History Center is an equal opportunity employer.

About the Lawrence History Center

Since 1978, the Lawrence History Center, formerly Immigrant City Archives, has collected and preserved documents and artifacts pertaining to the history of Lawrence, Massachusetts and its people. The collection contains the bulk of the business and planning records of the Essex Company that created Lawrence, noncurrent municipal records, thousands of historic photographs and glass plate negatives, organizational records from local businesses and agencies, 700 oral histories with eye witness accounts as far back as 1910, and an array of family and individual records that document the diverse and intellectually challenging nature of Lawrence. LHC employs those materials through exhibits, educational programs and research services to foster understanding of the interaction of the built community and the lives of ordinary people. The Lawrence History Center is located in the Essex Company complex, included on the National Register of Historic Places.

The LHC has worked from its very first days to make the rich history of Lawrence and its people accessible to all. In the past decade, the organization has moved strongly to digitize the collection; develop a web site that has received more than 100,000 hits in the last year; become a Massachusetts registered Professional Development Provider for teachers; brought new educational offerings into charter and public schools; built our Dengler History Award into one of the most significant recognitions of leadership in Lawrence; begun the long awaited physical restoration of our buildings; and put our unequalled archival collection into play to ensure that the significant revival of the Lawrence mill district creates a revitalized Lawrence that is true to its past.

The goals of the Lawrence History Center are to:

1. Collect, preserve, arrange, describe and exhibit documents, city records, photographs and other artifacts that constitute the historical record of Lawrence, Massachusetts;
2. Preserve the historic site of the company that built Lawrence;
3. Provide access to the materials and site for education and research;
4. Ensure the use of this cultural asset to contribute to the economic and social enhancement of Lawrence.

Primary Organizational Activities

1. Build, preserve and make accessible our collection.

Building the collection comes in many forms: the web site and exhibits introduce us to the public; former Lawrencians seek a repository for family memorabilia; we serve as the repository of City documents. Significant acquisitions include: YWCA and International Institute records documenting immigrant experiences. Essex Company and Urban Renewal papers teach the development and re-development of the City. The Strike of 1912 collection is one of the most complete of that labor movement. The collection is appropriately housed and catalogued into an archival and museum database system. We are in the process of a long – term, multi-faceted digitization process to further maintain and preserve this priceless and non-replaceable record. We promote the collection through our newsletters, broadcast interviews, news stories and exhibits. The collection is made available to researchers who come to Essex Street, and more extensively, through the website (www.lawrencehistory.org). The website has increased our collection, our visibility, our communication and the Lawrence community's awareness of the importance of *their* city's history.

2. Stabilize and restore our historic Essex Company Compound.

After 30 years of building a document collection, we have turned our attention to the complex. The time is right: with the focus on renewing Essex Street and the significant development taking place, Essex Street needs a cultural venue. That is the History Center. With funding from National Trust, Community Development Block Grants and the Essex County Community Foundation we have begun the process. The main building has had significant work – new roof, chimneys; re-pointing, elevator. Turning our attention to the remainder of the complex, we have had structural engineering analysis to prepare the way to stabilize, repair and restore the buildings, including the blacksmith shop, carpenter shop, stable and warehouse. Permanent descriptive panels are planned. Residents will feel welcome to enter the courtyard and experience and appreciate this site!

3. Develop educational programs and exhibits that showcase the role of Lawrence in American history, and highlight the unique contributions of immigrants to national life.

We present programs and lectures with schools and other youth organizations in Lawrence and beyond that bring in teachers for in-service curriculum workshops and students for tours and hands-on research. The general public, including professionals, scholars and family historians, are invited to become members to gain access to historic materials. Membership for Lawrence students is free. A genealogy group meets once a month. Once again, the newsletter and website are instrumental in communicating that these resources are available.

4. *Play a leadership role in the revitalization of Lawrence and in particular the Mill District.*

LHC is actively involved with the City of Lawrence and other organizations, such as the Lawrence Cultural Alliance, Lawrence CommunityWorks, Lawrence Public Library, Groundwork Lawrence, Essex Art Center and the Lawrence Historical Awareness Collaborative. Our building is the eastern anchor for the ambitious Essex Street renewal project currently underway. We are presently taking the lead in exploration of the designation of Lawrence as a National Labor Landmark site.

Organizational Information

The Lawrence History Center currently has 5 staff positions: Executive Director (40 hrs/week), Collections Manager (28 hrs/week), Special Assistant to the Director (28 hrs/week), Education Coordinator (20 hrs/week), and an Oral History Director (7 hrs/week). The FY09 approved budget is \$268,000. The Center has very significantly expanded its level of activity in the past two years, and this position represents a continued growth opportunity for the new director.

Background on Lawrence

Lawrence, Massachusetts, a mill city of 72,000 located about 30 miles north of Boston was established as a planned industrial city in the 1840s. Like many manufacturing cities, Lawrence has been hard hit over the last 30 years by loss of industry, jobs and capital, and remains one of the most economically distressed in the US. Median household income is just \$27,983, compared to \$50,502 statewide. Poverty rates are twice the national average, and a high school graduation rate of 40% (compared to 80% nationwide). Lawrence has always been an immigrant city with Latinos comprising a 60+% majority of the city's population; there is also a growing enclave of Southeast Asians. Lawrence is also a youthful city with nearly 40% of its population under the age of 18.

Population Served

The Lawrence History Center serves all Lawrence residents (adults and youth); people doing business in Lawrence, such as architects, engineers, attorneys and developers, who access our resources to answer questions about Lawrence structures or properties; teachers; people with roots in Lawrence and researchers world-wide.