

KOYA

LEADERSHIP
PARTNERS



Vice President for Development and Marketing

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Merit School of Music
Chicago, IL

ABOUT THE MERIT SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Merit School of Music (Merit) transforms the lives of Chicago-area youth by removing barriers to high-quality music education.

Merit is a nationally accredited music school located in Chicago's West Loop. Their primary goals are to help young people transform their lives and experience personal growth through music by removing barriers to participation. For nearly 40 years, Merit has been home to a diverse community of talented young musicians and has acted as a springboard for achieving full musical and personal potential. Merit has 125

passionate and experienced teaching artists providing access to high-quality music education, engaging more than 3,500 students annually at their downtown location and in area schools and community centers.



Merit's award-winning students, who reflect the socioeconomic and ethnic diversity of Chicago, have the rare opportunity to learn together, dream together, teach each other, and broaden their horizons as they build inspiring lives through music. Merit develops musicians and provides young people with the tools they need to excel in life, with 100 percent of graduates going on to conservatory, college or university, and with many graduates being the first in their families to attend college.

Merit provides a distinctive music education pathway. It consists of five major areas, which students may join at any stage, including Early Childhood, Instrumental & Vocal Music, and Private Lessons. Merit's programming begins and concludes with two signature programs—*Merit Music in Communities*, an in-school music education program; and the audition-based *Alice S. Pfaelzer Tuition-Free Conservatory*, which requires and represents the highest level of achievement.

Under the leadership of President & Executive Director, **Charles Grode**, Merit has forged new partnerships across the nation and deepened the focus on Merit's transformational work. Approaching its 40th anniversary, Merit seeks stabilization to pursue a sustainable, demonstrable, and deeper impact with its diverse student body.

In October 2018, Merit initiated and co-led a collaborative planning process that resulted in an extraordinary \$3.5 million grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to a consortium of Chicago-area organizations. Dedicated to music and education, the grant will be used to increase diversity in the classical music field through the establishment of the **Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative (CMPI)**. Implementation of CMPI will be led by Merit and the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras.

CMPI aims to build robust Chicago-area training pathways for talented student musicians from traditionally underrepresented communities. Ultimately, the goal of CMPI is to increase diversity in America's professional music landscape, and particularly in its orchestras. Led by Merit, a diverse network of more than 20 well-established nonprofit Chicago music and youth-focused organizations will work to identify talented, motivated students early in their training, and together, help them to achieve their full musical potential.

For more information and history on Merit School of Music, please visit <https://meritmusic.org>.

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THE OPPORTUNITY

The Vice President for Development and Marketing (VP) will be the leader for all fundraising, marketing and communication strategies and initiatives for Merit. The VP will work in close partnership with the President & Executive Director and other leaders to implement strategies for stabilization, strategic growth, and impact.

The VP will be instrumental in driving Merit's future success. This leader will enhance the overall approach to advancement - one that creates a true culture of philanthropy in all parts of the organization, improves and develops sustained success in contributed revenue, and ultimately fulfills Merit's mission and achieves its vision. Inspired by a genuine passion for high quality music education, the VP will work tirelessly to promote and expand the efforts of the organization, raising financial support, engaging a wider range of potential donors and accelerating Merit's impact and brand in the community.

Reporting to and partnering with the President & Executive Director, the VP will work closely with the Board of Trustees, leadership team, development and marketing team, donors and other key stakeholders to advance Merit's fundraising efforts. This leader will be responsible for setting the large-scale strategy for development, marketing and stewardship efforts and executing on that plan.

The VP will be a bold thinker, a strategic and detail-oriented, 'hands-on' executor who will build and lead a best-in-class development and marketing program. The VP will motivate and inspire the development and marketing team. This leader will actively manage a donor portfolio by personally participating in cultivation, solicitation and stewardship. The VP will collaborate with leadership, including the Trustees, to ensure they are effectively supported and leveraged to achieve fundraising goals.

Specifically, the VP will provide leadership and supervision while overseeing organizational advancement efforts, including fundraising, external affairs, communications, marketing and media relations.

Key success factors of this senior-most development role include:

- Providing comprehensive and strategic leadership in developing a multi-faceted strategic approach to build a high-performing development organization with a high level of professionalism and dedication;
- Achieving strong fundraising success for Merit through a robust development program, including expanded engagement with alumni, individuals, corporations and foundations.
- Implementing a communications and marketing strategy executing brand objectives, analyzing market research and creating actionable data-based tactics;
- Expanding the number of donors and annual amounts raised for Merit's development plan and instilling a strong culture of philanthropy throughout the organization;
- Increasing the effectiveness and productivity of the team by serving as a coach and manager; setting goals and helping the team accomplish goals; motivating team members with energy and passion; and
- Increasing awareness and recognition for Merit and their mission.

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CANDIDATE PROFILE

The Vice President for Development and Marketing will be a focused, successful, self-motivated, proven development executive. This individual will be a natural leader and collaborator with a curious mindset.

The ideal candidate will have the following professional and personal qualities, characteristics and skills:

Strategic Leadership and Management Acumen

With a creative and business mindset, and working collaboratively with leadership, the VP will have the capacity to conceive and execute the development, marketing and communications strategy. The VP will be a strategic and results-oriented leader, evaluating outcomes with a metrics-based approach. The VP will have an assertive and collaborative approach, and an ability to translate Merit's development and marketing goals into clear objectives for the Trustees, leadership team and staff. The VP will strengthen the capacity and success of the development and marketing team through effective delegation and shared responsibility. This leader will be a builder with the ability to set priorities decisively, delegate responsibilities, assure accountability and allocate resources to ensure results.

Development and Marketing Expertise

The successful candidate will bring demonstrated expertise and contacts across a wide range of fundraising channels, including major donors, campaigns, corporations and foundations. The VP will be a confident partner with Trustees, the leadership team and others with the ability to provide strategic guidance and support in the cultivation of donors. The VP will have experience setting and implementing innovative marketing strategies. This leader will serve as a catalyst and leader within the organization. The VP will have an expert understanding of communications including: public relations, digital marketing, social media, web and mobile development and management. As a tactical leader, the VP will have a strong data and analysis orientation and a proven ability to use metrics to drive development decisions and achieve strategic objectives.

Ambassador for the Organization

The VP will bring exceptional relationship-development capabilities, building rapport internally and externally, and promoting Merit with all constituents. As an external voice of the organization, the VP will articulate and broadcast the vision of the organization to its current supporting community and future stakeholders. The VP must be a confident public speaker and have a solid understanding of how to utilize advertising and public relations for an organization such as Merit. The VP will build strong brand equity and awareness and will establish partnerships and seek opportunities to promote Merit. The successful candidate will be a dynamic, energetic and credible leader, which will be conveyed both internally to the organization and externally to the community, dealing effectively with people of varying philosophies, backgrounds and cultures.

A Champion for the Mission

The VP will have a passion for helping young people transform their lives and experience personal growth through music. With a strong work ethic, emotional intelligence and a sense of humor, the VP will lead and inspire others. The VP will embrace Merit's culture, while continually innovating to help expand its brand and impact. The VP will be an empathic, charismatic leader who has strong faith in humanity and treats others with respect. This leader will be an individual of unquestioned integrity, ethics and values; someone who can be trusted without reservation.

A Bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

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CONTACT

Marissa Martin and Chartise Clark of Koya Leadership Partners have been exclusively retained for this search. To express your interest in this role please submit your materials [here](#) or email Marissa and Chartise directly at koyachicago@koyapartners.com. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

Merit is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages applications from people of color, persons with disabilities, women, and LGBT applicants.

ABOUT KOYA LEADERSHIP PARTNERS

Koya Leadership Partners is a national retained executive search and human capital consulting firm that works exclusively with mission-driven organizations, institutions of higher education, and social enterprises. We deliver measurable results, finding exceptionally talented people who truly fit the unique culture of our client organizations and ensuring that organizations have the resources and strategies to support them. For more information about Koya Leadership Partners, visit www.koyapartners.com.