

February 7, 2020

Bellevue Schools Foundation  
12241 Main St #5  
Bellevue, WA 98005

Dear Search Committee:

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application materials for the Executive Director role at the Bellevue Schools Foundation. I was thrilled to see this role open as it combines my education and philanthropy background with my passion for and experience in capacity building. With the population of Bellevue rapidly changing, the Foundation's potential for community partnerships and increased visibility is limitless. After reviewing the full description, I know that I would be an excellent fit for this position during this pivotal time.

While my résumé provides more specifics, my previous roles have allowed me to develop a robust skillset in the following areas that would be instrumental in my success as the Executive Director:

- My broad range of fundraising experience, including crafting and executing strategic fundraising plans has allowed me to diversify funding for organizations I have worked with.
- I have extensive experience in working with boards, both in board and staff leadership roles.
- I demonstrate a high level of organization when managing program operations and budgets.
- I have built and managed key relationships in the private, public and nonprofit sectors that would be vital for foundation growth and diversification of funding.
- I excel at volunteer management through recruiting, training and supporting board volunteers; maximizing organizational capacity.

After reviewing my additional credentials, I believe you will agree that I have the desire, knowledge, and abilities required for success as the next Executive Director of the Bellevue Schools Foundation. I look forward to hearing more about the hiring process.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Wilson



- Formed and managed partnerships through events with non-profits on local and national levels including the United Way, Habitat for Humanity, Puget Sound Blood Center, Seattle Foundation, Sanctuary Art Center and more.
- Leveraged community partnerships to create community experiences including Women in Leadership speaker series, Winterim Programming, Diversity Leadership Programming and Service Day
- Served as member of TEDx Forest Ridge Planning Committee, Forest Ridge Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Regional PNAIS Diversity Committee and Global Advisory Council
- Served as United Way Giving Campaign Chair, resulting in increased employee giving

#### **President Junior League of Seattle 12/2011-6/2014**

- Directed all governance and management functions for 90 year-old, 1500 member organization through President-Elect and President roles
- Developed, implemented and met strategic roadmap objectives, community impact, advocacy, membership development, leadership development, operations and fundraising initiatives
- Supervised three paid staff and over 100 volunteer leaders to execute organization operations
- Created metrics for measuring impact for community programming
- Served as spokesperson for the Junior League of Seattle externally through media channels and internally while presiding over general membership meetings

#### **Youth Development Director Lake Heights Family YMCA 9/2003- 8/2006**

- Created leadership and recreational programming for over 350 students at 12 different schools in the Eastside area
- Produced and implemented effective marketing campaign targeting a diverse population for recruitment of newly developed program
- Planned and executed events for annual campaign and capital campaign
- Managed all public relations efforts for branch and served as media spokesperson for youth development initiatives
- Recruited, hired, trained and supervised all youth development staff, interns and volunteers
- Served as a liaison between the YMCA of Greater Seattle and the Kobe (Japan) and Chiang Mai (Thailand) YMCAs
- Served as staff support to volunteers for the annual fundraising campaign
- Created partnerships with school districts, city governments local and national non-profits for youth development programming

#### **Education**

Master of Education, **Educational Policy and Leadership**, University of Texas at Arlington, 2011

Graduate Certificate, **Organizational Change and Development**, Hawaii Pacific University, 2003

Bachelor of Arts, **Psychology and Communication**, Western Washington University, 2002

**Leadership Tomorrow Seattle**, Class of 2010

#### **Relevant Philanthropic Experience**

##### **Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture (2014-present)**

Board of Directors Member (2014-Present); Board President (2018-2020), Board Vice President (2016-2018), Curator's Dinner Chair (2016, 2017)

##### **Seattle Children's Hospital Guild Association- Color Me Happy Guild (2014-Present)**

Founding President, 2014-present; Chair, Annual Golf Tournament, 2015-2017

**YMCA of Greater Seattle (2007-present)**

Board of Managers Member (University Family YMCA), 2007-2014, 2017-present; Board Chair (University Family YMCA), 2009-2011; Board Development and Operations/Nominating Committee Chair, 2009-2011, 2017-present; Financial Development Chair (University Family YMCA), 2008 and 2009 Annual Campaign Chair (University Family YMCA)

**Junior League of Seattle (2007-present)**

Honorary Gala Chair, 2017; AJLI Conference Host Committee Chair, 2015; Nominating Committee Member, 2014-2015; 2013-2014 President; Board of Directors Secretary, 2011-12; Fundraising Manager, 2010-2011; Member, 2011 Dorothy Stimson Bullitt Award Committee; Chair, Project Development Committee, 2009-2010; Vice Chair, LifeBooks Committee, 2008-2009; Co-chair, Junior League Provisional Childhaven Backpack Project, 2007-2008

**The Ruby Room (2006-2009)**

Board of Directors Member, 2006-2009; Financial Development and Public Relations Chair, 2007-2009

**Seattle Works (2003-2011)**

Bridge Board Training Program Faculty Member- 2010- 2011; Rebuilding New Orleans Trip Leader, 2008; Seattle Works Auction Committee, 2006, 2007; Team Works Captain, Seattle Works, 2005-2007

**Other**

Member, Group Health Leadership Advisory Council (Eastside), 2013-2016; Seattle Central Community College Scholarship Review Committee, 2016; Washington State Charter Schools Sector Leaders, 2014-2015; Associate, ArtsFund, 2010-2013 ; National Assembly Delegate, YMCA of the USA, 2006-2010; Volunteer, Habitat for Humanity (Jacksonville, FL., Thibodaux, LA. and Seattle, WA), 2006-2015; Volunteer Group Leader, Katrina Corps, 2008-2009; Running Buddy, Girls on the Run (multiple years); Commissioner, Seattle Center Advisory Commission, 2005-2006



**Bellevue Schools Foundation  
Executive Director Candidate Questionnaire**

**Name:** Rebecca Wilson

1. Why are you interested in becoming the Executive Director of the Bellevue Schools Foundation?

There are several reasons why I am interested in serving as the Executive Director of the Bellevue Schools Foundation. The scope of work of the Executive Director speaks to my passions and strengths. Access in education is important to me and I would be honored to be able to play such an important role in ensuring a positive experience for both the students and the educators serving the Bellevue School District. I also very much enjoy strategic and annual planning and building a team. I very much enjoyed serving as the Executive Director of another foundation and would love to serve in a similar capacity for a cause I am very much passionate about.

2. Why did you leave your two most recent employers?

I left Forest Ridge after 11 years because I was ready for something new. I left my role at the Physio Foundation because it was a part-time role. I was also doing strategy and education consulting at the time for a full-time income and decided I wanted to be focused on one professional role.

3. What makes you a great leader?

Before answering this, I posed this question to people that I have been able to work with in leadership capacities. My focus on servant leadership was the common theme in all responses. Modeling the way by not being afraid to jump in and help, inspiring a shared vision for the group, the organization and its constituents and showing gratitude are all very important to me and shine through in my leadership.

4. In your opinion, what are the most important leadership qualities of the Executive Director of the Bellevue Schools Foundation?

For any role in philanthropy, leadership in a collaborative nature is imperative. Also, I believe the organization is in an exciting time of transition, with imminent growth ahead. The Executive Director will need to work with the board and staff to create a shared vision and a collaborative relationship with the school district to navigate through and thrive in that growth.

5. What key principles do you want everyone in the organization to understand about philanthropy and fund development?

Philanthropy and fund development are very much relationship based. I have found that the emphasis on relationship building and stewardship leads to prevention of donor fatigue and fundraising decline. Board and staff training on stewardship is imperative.

6. Describe how you have elevated diversity and inclusion as a priority for yourself personally and in your organizations.

Without perspective of other viewpoints, one becomes stagnant. I am fortunate enough to be a part of many communities with very different backgrounds that constantly engages in conversation around access- which usually is a barrier for diversity and inclusion.

I have served on the Y board for many years and served as chair a few years ago. Diversity was an issue, so we as the board stepped back and asked the question of who was missing from the table, who we needed at the table and why they are not at the table. After discussions with community leaders, we modified the time of the meeting to be more accommodating for those with families. We also had the timing coincide with a drop-in child care class for Y members. We also expanded our committee membership to include community members for those who weren't able to commit to all of the meetings. I also created personal involvement plans for board members, so everyone felt that their time, talent and treasure, regardless of amount, was recognized and appreciated. This transparency and increased level of access for all shifted the culture.

7. Please describe your experience and success in the following areas. Include specific examples:

- a. Developing and managing the business, financial and budgeting aspects of an organization like the Bellevue Schools Foundation.

I managed a budget with a similar size at Forest Ridge. I implemented financial policies and procedures, as well as budget and accounting guidelines at the Physio Foundation.

- b. Building a vision for an organization, then developing, implementing and utilizing strategic plans and organizational goals.

When I first started as the Youth Development Director at the YMCA, I had no program and no budget. Using the framework of the YMCA of Greater Seattle's strategic plan, I was able to build the vision of a "Y in the classroom" model and implement programming in many schools on the Eastside, while fundraising for the program budget. While I have refreshed organizational visions and created many strategic and annual plans since then, I am most proud of the impact of that role.

- c. Leading a successful organizational change or transition; implementing new ideas.

I started at the Physio Foundation as a contractor with the scope of work including shifting the Foundation from a corporate setting and backing, to an independent foundation. This including setting up all of the organizational infrastructure (accounting, IT, etc.) as well as setting up policies and procedures, funding guidelines etc.

- d. Recruiting, developing, coaching, motivating, and empowering staff as a cohesive team.

My biggest success around staff development was my time at Forest Ridge. While I have led many successful teams in the past and very much enjoy building a team and shifting culture, my role as Director of Student Life. I inherited a very short tenured boarding program staff of 10, with a very negative culture. The boarding program was four years old at that point, and the average tenure for a residential life specialist was 4 months. I made a point to meet with all of them individually in the first month that I oversaw the program. We set out career goals for all, which didn't necessarily include staying at Forest Ridge. We calendared monthly department events to ensure that everyone got face to face time with their colleagues and some time to play together. I had 100% retention for that school year.

- e. Developing and managing a positive, inclusive organizational culture and professional working environment.

My answer for the prompt above would also be relevant for this prompt.

f. Marketing and public relations; building public awareness for an organization.

While all of my paid and volunteer roles have had elements of marketing and public relations, I saw this prompt and thought of my time as President of the Junior League. I had the privilege of serving as president during the 90<sup>th</sup> year. We had not had a large public presence for a few years and I thought it would be important to let the community know we had been serving the community for 90 years. I brought past presidents in and asked for their stories to publicize. I asked all of our partner organizations, both past and present, to share their Junior League story with their constituents. I also convened a group of PR and Marketing professionals who were members to create a solid campaign in addition to the story telling. We increased our social media presence, I was interviewed for a number of media outlets and the League was featured at venues we had never thought of before, including Safeco Field.

g. Securing individual major gifts, corporate financial and/or other contributions and grants.

In my role at the Physio Foundation, I was responsible for securing corporate sponsorships for the annual golf tournament. Through my roles at the YMCA and Forest Ridge, I was responsible for a lot of grant writing efforts, which resulted in private foundation and County funding. As a board member of the Y and the Burke, I have been responsible for securing several individual major gifts of \$10k and above for both capital and operational funding.

h. Grant making.

My role at the Physio Foundation include updating how the organization gives. We moved to a "trust-based grantmaking" model, based on our targeted grantees and our organizational model. I have also served on grantmaking committees for the YMCA, United Way, Seattle Colleges Foundation, Washington Women's Foundation and the Women's Funding Alliance.

8. While the Executive Director is not expected to be an expert in IT, the ED is expected to develop technology strategies that will grow the Foundation's ability to significantly increase financial contributions. Describe your technology experience and what assistance and expertise you would need to develop and implement new strategies.

We are surrounded by technologies that can increase our impact and maximize efficiencies. I have been able to maximize organizational capacity through tools specifically for nonprofits such as the Google for Nonprofits suite, Microsoft for Nonprofits, free nonprofit social media strategic marketing tools and more. I enjoy streamlining operations with these tools. While technically marketing and not IT, I would need budget assistance in a website and brand refresh in addition to any training resources that staff may need to be successful in their role, if updated technology resources are needed. For the website, I have worked with a few firms that love working with youth serving organizations at a reduced cost. In order to increase financial contributions, your messaging needs to be clear and inviting. A refresh that includes mobile optimization would be helpful.

9. Please describe your experience in working with or serving on a nonprofit board of directors. What are the keys to success in working with a nonprofit board?

I have both reported to and served on a board of directors. A shared vision, clear expectations through the lens of a strategic plan/annual plan and open communication are imperative for successful relationships between boards and staff and relationships amongst board members.

This board/staff/school district relationship is very similar to my experience with the Burke Museum Association board. The BMA is a separate organization from the Burke Museum, which is a State organization. The BMA's role is to support Burke operations through fundraising and advocacy. In my role as board president, the Executive Committee worked with their committees to further define the work of the board, to prevent missteps.

When I reported to the board of the Physio Foundation, the key to my success open communication and relationship building. I had frequent communication with board members and seasonal 1:1 meetings, ensuring that board members had the tools they needed for success.

10. Please describe your experience collaborating with partners (other organizations and/or agencies) to develop and achieve goals.

In the education and nonprofit sectors, collaboration is important for success. In many roles I have served in, I have had the opportunity to collaborate with other organizations to meet collective goals. The grantmaking model of the Physio Foundation speaks to this. The organization's goal was to increase the number of citizens who were comfortable in performing hands-only CPR in the community in case of emergency. To do this, we partnered with known, connected and respected community partners like the American Red Cross, the Nick of Time Foundation and the YMCA of Greater Seattle. While we had our own connections, we realized that these organizations had a reach where we didn't, increasing the number of citizen's trained in hands-only CPR.

11. What do you stand for?

My philanthropic passions are education, youth development and healthy living. Through those themes, I work hard to ensure access to resources for all in those areas.

12. Where do you see yourself professionally in five years?

After spending many years in educational leadership, I really find that I can thrive in philanthropic leadership roles. If this role is a good fit, I hope to be serving in this role in five years.

13. If offered this position, are there any circumstances, relocation or otherwise, which would negatively impact your ability to accept it and begin work within a reasonable period of time thereafter?

No.

**Thank you for your interest in Bellevue Schools Foundation!**

**Please email completed questionnaire to [marcia@hagel.net](mailto:marcia@hagel.net)**