



OPEN JOB TITLE: Director of Advocacy
APPLICATION DEADLINE: July 31, 2023

BACKGROUND

The merged entity of the Iowa City Area Business Partnership and Iowa City Area Development Group serves over 1,000 businesses in the Johnson County region. With a population of over 150,000, our mission is to actively foster a better business environment. We are looking for an experienced director-level team member who is team-oriented, excels at winning people over, exudes positivity, and enjoys working with a variety of people on solutions to existing challenges.

ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES & SPECIFIC DUTIES:

The Director of Advocacy represents our members at all levels of government. The primary responsibilities of the position are to:

- 1) Direct the advocacy activities, government relations, and public policy strategies
- 2) Build and foster relationships with key constituents across all sectors (private businesses, public entities, and non-profits)
- 3) Collaborate with other economic and community development initiatives of the organization and build advocacy for them
- 4) Oversee leadership pipeline programs of Executive Leadership Program, Community Leadership Program and the Youth Leadership Program.

Specific duties within each of these three buckets include:

Public Policy Leadership in the Community

- Lead and be visible at key community events, stewarding the organization's brand
- Represent the organization on external committees and boards
- Travel as needed to Des Moines and other locations to meet with State or Federal legislators
- Deliver presentations as needed

Advocacy, Government Relations, & Public Policy

- Assess, develop, and continuously improve the advocacy program of work, ensuring value to members and increasing the organization's relevance in public policy discussions and decision making at all levels of government
- Manage the work of the organization's Business Council on Legislative Action, a group of members that serve in an advisory capacity to shape the Business Partnership's legislative agenda and guide actions
- Facilitate the development and execution of the organization's annual local, state and federal legislative agenda and advocacy positions.

- Regularly monitor the work of government entities to identify issues of relevance to the organization members, attending meetings and advocating when necessary on behalf of the membership
- Recommend our position and level of participation in public policy issues both proactively and as requests from outside groups arise, providing research on the issue and decision logic
- Foster member engagement in advocating for the organization's priorities, organizing proactive and grassroots advocacy campaigns as necessary
- Develop voter guides for local elections and organize candidate forums
- Communicate with members about opportunities to serve on boards and commissions at the local, county, and state level.
- Work with other staff to plan and develop communications and events that inform and connect members to the Business Partnership's advocacy work
- Educate and engage staff and board on the importance of advocacy work in serving our mission
- Collaborate with regional and state partners to identify and foster regional public policy efforts
- Educate members on running for office by connecting them to resources and providing them with mentorship
- Provide consultation to members with questions about navigating policies and regulations

Building Relationships with Key Constituents

- Develop and maintain relationships with area elected officials, administrators, and other key constituents, serving as a credible resource on business issues and providing proactive solutions
- Develop and maintain relationships with key businesses and industries to understand needs, serving as a credible resource on government and providing relevant and timely information on business impacts
- Develop and maintain relationships with key partners to help advance community and economic development initiatives, providing research and advocacy support as needed
- Develop and maintain relationships with the media, proactively communicating the organization's position on issues, responding to inquiries in a timely manner, and fostering a positive perception of the organization's advocacy work
- Coordinate public/private/non-profit partnerships to develop proactive and win-win solutions where possible.

Oversee Pipeline Leadership Programs

- Work with the University of Iowa to grow the existing Executive Leadership Program
- Oversee the highly successful Community Leadership Program and volunteers to ensure it continues to be a pipeline for future community leadership
- Support the development and implementation of a new Youth Leadership Program currently underway.

This role will report directly to the President & CEO.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Education & Experience:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent related experience
- At least 10 years of professional experience in government affairs, public policy or grassroots advocacy work within public, private or non-profit sector

- Experience in strategically leading the development and implementation of programs and initiatives

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities:

- Strong understanding of how government entities work
- General understanding of how private business entities work
- Ability to quickly identify and represent public policy needs of businesses of varying size, type and industry
- Ability to clearly and constructively communicate thoughts, ideas, concerns, research, positions, etc. to various audiences both verbally and in writing; as well as be able to articulate the organization's overall mission, vision and values
- Ability to build relationships with diverse constituents at all levels
- Must be able to work in a bipartisan way with stakeholders of any political party to advance the work of the organization
- Must be able to work collaboratively on a team
- Must be able to oversee the work of interns or contracted staff
- Ability to occasionally travel and work non-traditional hours

HIRING PROCESS:

If interested, please submit a cover letter, resume, and diversity statement by **July 31, 2023** to:

Nancy Bird at nancy@iowacityarea.com

A hiring committee will conduct interviews the first week of August 2023 with the goal of having the role commence in the same month.

This is an exempt, full-time, benefits eligible position. Salary for the role will be commensurate with experience.

The merged entity of the Iowa City Area Business Partnership and the Iowa City Area Development Group is an Equal Opportunity Employer.