



CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Director of Development WOODLAND SCHOOL

Portola Valley, CA

Application Deadline: February 1, 2010

Established in 1981, Woodland School is an independent, coeducational, nonsectarian school offering a traditional academic curriculum and exciting enrichment programs within an atmosphere characterized by high behavioral standards and an emphasis on the enduring values of politeness, respect, and citizenship. Located on a beautiful 10.5-acre leased campus in Portola Valley – a picturesque small town located just west of Stanford University – Woodland serves more than 250 students in preschool through eighth grade 8.

With a strong record of developing well-rounded and academically successful students, Woodland's knowledge-based curriculum and values-based philosophy have made it an appealing choice for a diverse group of families. Reflecting Silicon Valley's rich mix of cultures, Woodland serves students from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, including many international families.

Described by members of the school family as "the little school that could," Woodland is also a school on the move. Since Head of School John Ora joined Woodland in 2007, enrollment has increased by more than 35 students and the school has joined the California Association of Independent Schools, elevating its visibility in the local educational marketplace. Woodland's leadership must decide within the next few years whether to sign a long-term lease for the school's current location or seek its own site.

Although Woodland is prudently managed and financially sound, the school's budget is almost entirely tuition-driven. With neither a formal development staff nor an established culture of giving yet in place, Woodland is now seeking to move to the next level with the appointment of its first-ever Director of Development. The Head and Board of Trustees are eager to hire an experienced, hands-on development officer who will partner with them in this exciting endeavor.

WHO SHOULD APPLY:

This is an excellent career opportunity for an experienced development professional who aspires to play a key leadership role in a young and dynamic school. As Woodland's first Director of Development, the successful candidate will have the opportunity to create the advancement operation from the ground up, playing a vital role in moving this warm and welcoming independent school from good to great. For July of 2010, the school is seeking a talented and enthusiastic fundraiser with an engaging personality and solid skills in development and marketing.

AT A GLANCE

Location: 10.5-acre leased campus near Palo Alto

2009-10 Enrollment: 257
Lower School : 193

Middle School: 64

Students from Racial/Ethnic Minorities: 40%

Faculty: 31

Operating Budget: \$4 million

Indebtedness: None

Endowment: None

Development Funds Raised Last Year: \$14,000

Annual Giving: \$6,000

Parent Participation: 28%:

Tuition, 2009-10: \$14,000-\$17,000

Financial Aid, 2009-10: \$430,000

Students receiving aid: 16%

Board of Trustees: 9

Accreditation: California Association of Independent Schools (provisional)



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On the web: www.woodland-school.org

About Woodland School: Defining Strengths and Future Needs

Though located in the affluent venture capital corridor of Sand Hill Road in Palo Alto, Woodland serves a parent body that is more economically diverse than that of many area independent schools. Many are first-generation independent school families paying tuition out of current income. The school community is open, accepting, and close-knit – with parents eagerly participating as volunteers.

The school does not, however, have a strong tradition of voluntary giving as an expectation for either trustees or parents. A newly constituted Parents Association, with a mission of “improving communication, transparency, and inclusiveness,” is engaged in building relationships and friend-raising. The leaders of that group are looking forward

to the arrival of a professional Director of Development who can help the group to move into the fundraising role that is more typical in well-established independent schools.



Finance and Development

Woodland operates with a balanced budget and a keen understanding of the need to keep the school as affordable as possible for the families it serves. Its tuition levels place the school between the costs of local parochial schools and the other independent schools in its area. Over the past three years, the Head and Admissions Director have increased enrollment from 219 to 257, in part by expanding the financial aid budget substantially.

Among the school’s most pressing financial challenges is the need to increase faculty compensation, which ranks at about the 50th percentile nationally but in the lowest quartile locally. To address that issue, the school’s leadership hopes to increase Annual Giving significantly, with a goal of generating \$500,000 from that source within the next three years.

A more long-range challenge relates to the school’s facilities, which are leased from the local school district at an annual cost of \$650,000. With the lease set to expire in July 2012, the school is considering options that include a long-term lease extension or the purchase of a new site. Woodland does not yet have an endowment, so a major capital campaign would be required to achieve the latter goal.

The buildings are well maintained and quite spacious given the average class size at Woodland. There is a small library, a computer room, and a heavily used multi-purpose room. Should Woodland remain in the leased facilities, it will need to determine whether to raise money to build a much-needed gym. The school has an excellent soccer field and access to an adjacent community center for other activities. Woodland has invested in some technological upgrades but, particularly given its Silicon Valley location, will need to continue allocating resources to technology modernization. This, too, may constitute a long-range fundraising need.

The Board

Once as small as four members, the Woodland Board of Trustees has expanded to nine members toward the Head’s eventual goal of 12 to 14. While very committed to the school, the Board has not been particularly focused on fundraising. Trustees are very supportive of the new Head, however, and eager to provide him with the resources – including a new Director of Development – necessary to move the school forward. Board members also recognize that their roles will change substantially as the culture of giving is introduced, first at the Board level and ultimately throughout the school community. A Development Committee of the Board is newly constituted, and will work to define the respective roles of the Head, Board, and Development Director.

Opportunities & Challenges Awaiting Woodland's First Development Director

Why is this position so appealing?

- The opportunity to create and lead a new fundraising operation and to work in multiple areas of advancement, including marketing, PR and brand building; strategic planning; and office management.
- The opportunity to move an organization from good to great.
- The opportunity to work in a small, caring, supportive, diverse, and family-oriented community that prides itself on strong relationships.
- A great product to sell: successful students, happy parents, and relatively little staff turnover.
- A beautiful setting and a great location – close to Stanford, San Jose, and San Francisco.
- A competitive salary and 100% employee tuition remission.

Among the specific tasks and challenges awaiting the new Director of Development are the following:

- To work with the Head of School, the entire Board, and the newly constituted Development Committee to generate a fundraising vision and plan covering both short-term needs and the long-term financial sustainability of the school.
- To provide, directly or indirectly, fundraising training for Board members.
- To build upon the existing volunteer spirit among parents by also building a “culture of giving” among all of the school’s constituencies over the next two to three years.
- To work with the new Parents Association to further its goals of improved communication, transparency, and inclusiveness.
- To work with the Business Manager on developing a long-range compensation plan and to seek funds to support increased compensation.
- To create a database from what is now a small and scattered set of alumni records.
- To market the school both to the internal constituency of parents and to the broader community – developing a much stronger local “brand.”

Who Should Apply: Qualities & Qualifications

The ideal candidate will offer all or most of the following professional attributes:

- At least five years of development office experience, ideally in an independent school, with exposure to all key facets of fundraising.
- Excellent communication skills.
- The ability to manage upward and across in order to work effectively with the Head, Board, and Parents Association.
- Strategic planning and change management skills.
- Knowledge of and orientation to marketing.
- Ability and willingness to manage all facets of a well-run development operation, including database development, research, and recordkeeping.
- Tech savvy, including knowledge of social networking venues.
- A strong professional network.
- A solid grasp of budgets and financial management.
- Familiarity with K-8 independent schools.

In addition, he or she will possess most or all of the following personal qualities:

- An outgoing, friendly, warm nature.
- A family-oriented person who genuinely enjoys children.
- A team builder.
- Insightful and intuitive.
- Patient and tactful.
- Able to relate well to a parent body that is young, professionally sophisticated, and diverse.
- Comfortable “making the ask.”
- Practical, cheerful, and willing to do the mundane, hands-on work required of all in a lean organization.
- Eager to be fully involved in the life of the school.

Application Requirements & Process

Applicants should submit by **Monday, February 1, 2010**, the following:

- *A cover letter explaining why they are particularly interested in and qualified for this position.*
- *A current résumé.*
- *A writing sample and/or other supporting material that would be useful to the Search Committee.*
- *The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of three references. (We will obtain permission from candidates before contacting references.)*

This information should be sent, preferably via email attachment, to:

searches@wickenden.com

Or via mail to:

**Peter Thorp
Senior Associate
Wickenden Associates
1000 Herrontown Road
Princeton, NJ 08540**

After an initial review of applicants, the Search Committee will select semifinalists, who will be interviewed in late February, possibly at the NAIS Annual Conference in San Francisco from February 24-26. Finalists (and their spouses, if applicable) will then be invited to the school for a more comprehensive series of interviews with representatives of the school's constituencies. Wickenden Associates will keep all applicants informed of their status throughout the process.

Ideally, a final selection will be made by March. The successful candidate will become the Director of Development in July of 2009. Prospective candidates seeking more information about this opportunity or the search process are invited to call Wickenden Associates at 609-683-1355.