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BLOEDEL  
RESERVE

**Position Guide**

***Director of Development & Campaign***

***Seattle/Bainbridge Island, WA***





# BLOEDEL RESERVE

**POSITION:** Director of Development & Campaign

**REPORTS TO:** Executive Director

**LOCATION:** Bainbridge Island, WA (Seattle Area)

## **FOUNDER'S VISION**

To provide refreshment and tranquility in the presence of natural beauty.

## **MISSION**

To enrich peoples' lives through a premier public garden of natural and designed Pacific Northwest landscapes.

## **BLOEDEL HISTORY**

Prentice Bloedel was a conservation pioneer, innovator of the timber industry, and an early advocate of the positive effects of nature on human well-being. After retiring from the timber business in 1951, Prentice and his wife Virginia purchased the property that is now the Bloedel Reserve. Over the next thirty years, with the help of noted landscape architects and designers, including Thomas Church, Richard Haag, Fujitaro Kubota, and Iain Robertson, they developed several unique landscape experiences woven through native Pacific Northwest forest. Later in life, the Bloedel's decided to gift the Reserve to the community and established a nonprofit to support its operations. In 1988, the Reserve opened to the public as a 150-acre public garden and forest preserve.

Mr. Bloedel was deeply interested in the relationship between people and the natural world and the power of landscape to evoke emotions ranging from tranquility to exhilaration. Some believe that due to his early schooling with its studies steeped in nature and his bout with polio as a young man, Mr. Bloedel may have been ahead of his time in his understanding of the therapeutic power of gardens and landscape. He sought out nature for a place of reflection and solace. He said, "Nature can do without man, but man cannot do without nature."

## **ABOUT BLOEDEL RESERVE**

Set on 150 acres on Bainbridge Island, a short 30 minute ferry ride from downtown Seattle, the Bloedel Reserve is a unique collection of gardens, nature preserve, and architecture. The Reserve's most renowned space is the Japanese Garden, twice named one of the top ten Japanese Gardens in the United States. The Reserve also includes the Glen, featuring over 200 different rhododendrons; the Moss Garden with over 40 species of moss blanketing the ground; the Bird Marsh, a place of tranquility and nesting for birds and dragonflies; and the Woodlands of cedar, hemlock and fir. The Reserve is also home to several significant buildings, including the prior Bloedel Residence, the Japanese Guest House, the Sheep Sheds, the Virginia Merrill Bloedel Education Center, and the Gate House.



The Bloedels founded the Reserve with a generous gift that established an original endowment to fund its operations. After operating for twenty-two years on a reservation-only attendance system, the Reserve began actively welcoming the community in 2010 and has since seen a significant increase in attendance, community involvement, and philanthropy.

Since 2010, increased public participation and diversified revenue have supported growth throughout the organization. The Japanese Garden, Waterfall Overlook & Stream, and portions of the Glen have been renovated and a comprehensive plant collections verification and cataloging project is underway. The Japanese Guest House and first floor of the Bloedel Residence have been renovated and enhanced, and several maintenance vehicles have been added to the fleet, including a truck and two tractors – the first replacements in 25 years.

Bloedel has also increased community outreach with new programs including the Holiday Village (2010), the Squash Hunt (2011), Speidel Sculpture Exhibit (2013), The Bard at Bloedel (2014), and the Poetry Exhibit (2015). Newly launched mission-driven public programs include the Artist / Scholar in Residence and the Strolls for Well-Being. Several years ago, in an effort to educate and train the next generation of horticulturists, Bloedel developed horticultural internship programs for High School and College students.

Recent accomplishments have been fueled by a rise in philanthropy and revenue. Bloedel has now successfully completed a five-year transition from a private foundation to a public charity. During this time, they have established the Bloedel Society, a major donor program that has doubled since 2010, successfully raised \$2.6 million to endow the Executive Director's position, increased net proceeds from the annual Garden Party fundraiser (the signature gala event on Bainbridge Island) from approximately \$20K in 2009 to over \$550K, and increased grants & contributions threefold.





During the same period, attendance has increased from 25,000 to 60,000. The Gift Shop debuted in 2011 and has provided both revenue and a desired guest amenity. The organizational operating budget has grown from \$1.4 million in 2009 to \$3.3 million in 2017 and the proportion of the budget funded by philanthropy has increased from 12% to 42%.

Recent planning efforts have included the Reserve's first strategic plan (2010), carrying capacity study (2013), Master Plan (2014), Horticulture Peer Review (2014), Heritage Landscape Report (2015), the Capital Campaign Study (2016), and the Landscape Character Defining Features project (2017). A strategic increase in the Board from 12 to 28 also included developing new standing Committees for Grounds, Facilities and Rules, Governance, & Nominations. In 2014, the Reserve welcomed a prestigious Horticulture Peer Review group to provide feedback on its landscape experiences. In the report, The Peers

commended the Reserve's superior grounds maintenance standards, referring to the Reserve as "a masterpiece" and recognizing it among the finest, most unique garden experiences in the world.

Along with these organizational planning efforts, numerous projects have been undertaken to modernize several aspects of operations. Since 2010, staff has increased from 21 to 37, new departments have been created (Volunteers & Guest Services, Marketing & Programs, Philanthropy, and Finance), and a strong leadership team formed. An increased focus on Volunteers has led to the program more than doubling from 70 to 180.

### **THE OPPORTUNITY**

The Bloedel Reserve is a regional "masterpiece" with national ambition. Connecting people to nature has been in the Reserve's DNA from moment one and is the core essence of the organization. To ensure the Reserve reaches its fullest potential in fulfilling its mission, leadership has charted an ambitious path to allow more people to benefit from the Bloedel experience in the way it was intended.

The Bloedel Reserve aims to inspire people to create connections in nature by providing a comfortable, consistently high quality, and unified experience from entry through exit for more visitors. This will be possible by aligning the inspiring quality of the landscape experiences with the infrastructure and facilities necessary to provide that experience to a broader visiting public. A Master Plan has been developed that outlines the investments that will be necessary in the gardens and grounds, facilities and infrastructure, programming, and operations, and a Capital Campaign preparedness study has identified the first phase of projects that will be pursued.

The Master Plan primarily examined the facility changes required to elevate the Reserve to its next stage of operations. The final document was the result of a two and a half year study with active participation by Trustees, Staff, Volunteers, the community, neighbors, and docents. Major goals of the twenty-five year Master Plan include:

- Preserve and enhance the pristine experience of the landscape and expand paths to include new landscape experiences.
- Minimize interruption of guests from entry through exit by locating the physical plant, operations, and management of the Reserve outside the public experience.
- Restore and refine existing facilities to provide more inspirational, educational, and recreational experiences for guests.

The Director of Development & Campaign will have the opportunity to develop and lead the comprehensive development and campaign effort to continue Bloedel's significant philanthropic growth with a specific emphasis on the first phase of the Master Plan. To date, Bloedel has secured \$15.25M of their \$25M comprehensive campaign goal (inclusive of capital, annual, and legacy gifts). In 2017, the master plan and campaign projects that were completed include new parking and plantings at the entrance of the Reserve and new Finance and Business offices. In 2018, the restoration of the Bird Marsh and Meadow will begin, along with the Gatehouse renovation and New Cut Flower Workshop, the first project of the new Environmental Horticulture Center at Bloedel. Continuing the trajectory of this effort will be the key priority for the Director, and afford him/her the opportunity to work closely with the ED, the Board, and key volunteers and contributors on issues of critical importance for the organization as it furthers its national reputation and leadership.

### **POSITION SUMMARY**

The Director of Development & Campaign will support and advance the Reserve mission by providing leadership and support for all resource development, membership and campaign initiatives. This will include creating, planning and implementing successful initiatives in major gifts, planned giving, annual giving and membership programs in partnership with the Reserve's Executive Director, staff and board members. This position will foster a vibrant culture of philanthropy to assure strategies, systems, and procedures are advanced to support a highly effective fundraising and membership development enterprise. The Position will also be charged with leading strategy for the capital campaign effort to achieve Phase One of the Master Plan.

### **Responsibilities**

- Creates and implements strategic philanthropy and membership development plans to support annual and multi-year institutional vision and goals.
- Creates, develops, and supports strategies for the identification, solicitation, cultivation, stewardship, and growth of major gift donors. Maintains a donor portfolio and helps develop portfolios for ED and other partners.
- Gains consensus on and creates compelling philanthropic cases for support aligned with institutional vision and goals.

- Provides support for expanding all facets of the donor base by creating development initiatives that further the organization's mission and brand.
- Ensures attainment of the organizations' fund development and membership activities by providing professional support for the selection, development, motivation, and evaluation of human resources for both professional and support staff.
- Builds the skills, knowledge, and abilities of the professional and support staff in the areas of major and principal gifts, events, donor relations, corporate partnerships, affinity groups, partnerships, membership fulfillment and stewardship.
- Assures effective planning processes are established for strategy development, goal setting, reporting, metrics, and evaluation of results.
- Monitors and informs the ED of The Reserve on the condition of The Reserve fund development and membership programs and all important factors influencing it.
- Works as part of the Reserve's leadership team building effective, collaborative relationships to advance philanthropy and membership development.
- Exercises expertise in evaluating and realigning structure and processes needed to meet objectives.
- Oversees and recommends budgets for development and membership programs of The Reserve.
- Represents The Reserve in speaking engagements at internal and external events as appropriate.
- Develops creative strategies for identifying and engaging diverse constituencies critical to the Reserve fundraising goals.
- Brings progressive thinking and understanding of philanthropic trends and best practices in donor-centered fundraising.



## **CANDIDATE PROFILE**

We seek a proven leader with a demonstrated ability to elevate a nonprofit institution into a charity of choice, increasing and sustaining a higher level of philanthropy, awareness and enthusiasm within the community. The successful candidate will be a strong, collaborative leader and strategic thinker capable of harnessing the strengths of internal and external team members (Board, Staff, Volunteers). Key requirements include a significant fundraising background or leadership experience raising money on behalf of a nonprofit institution as well as management expertise leading Board, staff, and volunteers in a strong philanthropic culture.

The person we seek is a self-starter who actively pursues, cultivates and enjoys building and maintaining strong donor relationships and internal alliances. Given the abundant culture of philanthropy in the Pacific Northwest, we seek a person who makes people comfortable and is genuine in his or her engagement. Established philanthropic networks in the Seattle region would be advantageous. This person must be able to engender trust and empathy and relate to donors in a highly professional, honest and caring manner.

Capital campaign experience, preferably with campaigns of similar size (~\$25M), is required. Knowledge of gardens and cultural institutions is preferred and the ability and capacity to understand the patron experience of individuals and members of public gardens and nature organizations is essential. Experience with a small to medium sized organization and growing departments is preferred.

Working with board members and philanthropy allies in creating appropriate avenues for their participation in fundraising is needed. A proven and consistent track record of successfully soliciting major gifts is required. We seek an exceptional communicator, in written and spoken word, externally and internally. Ideal candidates will possess traits conducive to the culture and values of Bloedel's workplace: personable, good humored, collaborative, flexible, and dedicated to excellence. Good facilitation and organizing skills are critical in working effectively with others in administrative and volunteer roles.

An undergraduate degree from a college or university is required; a graduate degree is preferred. Evidence of continuing education through conferences, seminars and workshops in fundraising techniques would be a plus.

To apply, please submit a current resume and letter of introduction to Kittleman & Associates, LLC at <https://www.kittlemansearch.com/bloedel-reserve/>

For more information about Bloedel Reserve, visit <http://bloedelreserve.org/>