



rails-to-trails
conservancy

Vice President, Development and Communications
Washington, DC

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About Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) is a nonprofit organization that builds healthier places for healthier people by creating a nationwide network of trails from former railroad lines and connecting corridors.

With a national office located in Washington, DC and four field offices representing the West, Midwest, Northeast and Florida, RTC serves as the national voice for more than 200,000 members and supporters, 20,000 miles of rail-trail throughout the country, and more than 9,000 miles of potential rail-trails in the process of being built.

When RTC opened its doors February 1, 1986, there were fewer than 200 known rail-trails. Today, there are more than 1,600 preserved pathways that form the backbone of a growing trail system that span communities, regions, states and, indeed, the entire country.

RTC remains dedicated to the creation of a nationwide network of trails and committed to enhancing the health of America's environment, transportation, economy, neighborhoods and people—ensuring a better future made possible by trails and the connections they inspire.

To learn more about Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, please visit their website at: www.railstotrails.org.

Position Overview

An integral part of the four person management team of RTC, the Vice President, Development and Communications (VP) reports to the President and works in collaboration with the executive staff and the Board of Directors to lead RTC's fundraising and communications programs, including a \$7 million development program, online and offline marketing campaigns and initiatives, and public and media relations. The operating monies of the organization are raised from a well-diversified funding program, with 60 percent of funding coming from individual contributions in the form of membership, workplace giving and major gifts. The position is also responsible for collaborating with executive staff to secure foundation grants and corporate sponsorship.



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Key Responsibilities

- ▶ Participate in managing the organization as a member of RTC's executive staff.
- ▶ Develop and implement a multi-year strategy to achieve RTC's revenue goals by leading and supervising fundraising related to membership, workplace giving, major donors, corporate sponsors, foundations and planned giving. Particular attention will be devoted to continuing the growth of online fundraising, strengthening the major donor program, and working in partnership with other senior staff on foundation and corporate fundraising.
- ▶ Lead the development and communications staff and integrate their collective work into a seamless and effective marketing strategy.
- ▶ Supervise the work of the Director of Communications, who oversees organizational messaging (both online and in print), media activities and railstotrails.org, to ensure consistency of key organizational messaging and continue to build RTC brand awareness and loyalty.
- ▶ Supervise the work of the Director of Membership, who oversees RTC's direct mail and online membership fundraising programs.
- ▶ Travel to and work with the Field Offices to develop and implement place-based fundraising strategies in support of programmatic activities and cultivate existing or potential major donors.
- ▶ Work with the Director of TrailLink.com to develop strategic partnerships and integrated marketing campaigns to drive brand recognition and new member acquisition.
- ▶ Travel nationally for major donor cultivation and solicitation with the President, Board and/or Staff.
- ▶ Staff, train and support the Development and Governance Committees of the RTC Board of Directors.
- ▶ Set the overall communications strategy, including the balance between print and new media.
- ▶ Seek out partnerships with like-minded organizations to promote the RTC mission and branding.
- ▶ Manage the process of identifying new donors, following up with current donors and develop donor recognition programs.
- ▶ Manage the collection and maintenance of data on potential corporate and foundation grants and on individual donor prospects.
- ▶ Oversee and/or manage directly a variety of vendor relationships in both Development and Communications.
- ▶ Present plans and reports to management staff and Board on development and communication activities.
- ▶ Administer Policies and Procedures. Review and create departmental guidelines as needed. Perform organizational functions as required.
- ▶ Participate in Organizational Planning. Offer creative insight to the short and long term planning at RTC.

Expected Outcomes

- ▶ **Create a Comprehensive Development Plan.** During the first 90 days, prepare an analysis of the development function of the organization that includes the status of current development efforts and major challenges. Present a development plan in support of RTC's four year business

plan that includes benchmarks, recommendations, implementation strategies, financial expectations and critical target dates to the Board and Executive staff.

- ▶ **Create and execute a strategy for the Major Gift, Planned Giving, Corporate Sponsorship and Workplace Campaign Programs.** Review the current major donor program and develop strategies to attract new donors and improve retention of existing TrailBlazer (donors of \$1,000 and higher). Create Corporate giving incentives and opportunities. Manage and enhance the Workplace Giving Campaign, as implemented through EarthShare. Solicit, accept and acknowledge all gifts to the organization.
- ▶ **Develop and Oversee the Membership Program.** Work with the Director of Membership and consultants to develop compelling fundraising campaigns to improve retention and average gift. Support implementation of strategies to grow the overall membership through continued evolution and transformation of the direct mail program into an online giving program.
- ▶ **Oversee and Coordinate Foundation Grant Activity.** With the assistance of staff, craft and submit grant proposals to private funding sources. Establish relationships with foundation funders, maintain a calendar of due dates and deliverables to ensure prompt submission and follow-up reporting.
- ▶ **Develop and Oversee the Communications Effort.** Work with the Director of Communications to develop and implement a multi-year strategic communications plan that presents RTC's body of work in a compelling manner both in content and design; is repurposed for multiple audiences and distribution channels; is easily accessible/navigable across all channels; reinforces RTC's programmatic and fundraising efforts.

Ideal Experience

The Vice President should be high energy and entrepreneurial and should demonstrate a proven track record in building strong relationships with supporters and meeting fundraising goals. She/he will possess strong leadership skills that inspire trust, high performance and collaboration across the organization. She/he will have the ability to move between big picture strategy and day-to-day implementation. Strong analytical and quantitative skills are required. The ideal candidate will have a keen focus on measurable and metrics-driven marketing initiatives and return on investment for marketing campaigns. This leader will be a visionary with a strong general management mindset.

- ▶ Bachelor's degree.
- ▶ A minimum of 7 years progressive and effective fundraising experience.
- ▶ A demonstrated record of strong management and leadership skills.
- ▶ Personal communication skills necessary for effective face-to-face cultivation of donors and written communication skills necessary to create compelling fundraising materials.
- ▶ Preferred candidate is experienced with direct mail-driven membership programs, Convio and digital media and is conversant in mature (SEO, affiliate marketing, email) and emerging digital channels (social media, mobile).

Personal Characteristics

- ▶ Embrace with passion the mission of RTC.

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- ▶ Approach work with a collegial attitude.
- ▶ Be a high-level strategist as well as a grass-roots implementer.
- ▶ Respond to colleagues, community partners, donors and all related constituents with respect and graciousness.
- ▶ Cultivate internal and external talent through mentorship and leadership.
- ▶ Be a nimble leader among a staff of 35 professionals who is able to direct and take direction as needed.
- ▶ Knowledge of trails, the environment and/or bicycling through prior professional experience or strong personal commitment is an asset.
- ▶ The ability and confidence to ride a bicycle with donors is a major plus.
- ▶ Able to integrate and thrive in the creative and hard-working culture of RTC.

To Apply

Cover letter, resume and salary requirements should be sent to: resumes@deweykaye.com. **PLEASE REFERENCE # MH: #203-MH687 IN THE SUBJECT LINE.**

All first round interviews for the Vice President, Development and Communications will take place via telephone/video conference with Dewey & Kaye.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We welcome resumes from all qualified applicants.



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