

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Public Relations Manager

Name of Organization: Universal School, (www.universalschool.org)

Location of Position: Bridgeview, IL

Type of Organization: PreK-12 Education

Reports To: Principal

Status: Full-time (Exempt)

General Description

The Public Relations Manager (“Manager”) is responsible for Universal School’s general outreach and engagement efforts to the various stakeholders and potential supporters, carefully designed to cultivate more targeted, meaningful, and impactful relationships. The most important stakeholder categories are Alumni, potential students and their parents; as such, the Manager will design, create and implement the school’s outreach programs to Alumni and potential students and their parents. The Manager coordinates all aspects of the outreach programs and events from conceptual pre-planning through post-event follow up and evaluation.

The Manager reports to and receives administrative direction from the Principal and working closely with other members of the administrative team. The Manager will have a strong commitment to supporting the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of Universal, and will actively participate in school sponsored activities and programs.

History, Purpose, Direction of Organization

Universal School is a leading private, Independent Islamic school which has been transforming the lives of young men and women and their communities since 1989. Situated in the heart of the Southwest Suburbs of Chicago, Universal, serves students from the entirety of the Chicago land area and northwest Indiana. Many families relocate to Illinois specifically to enroll their children at Universal School. Universal has had three expansions since its inception and is embarking on its fourth expansion adding a state of the art sportsplex. The school also continues to innovate in its curriculum and programs while ensuring that its students acquire the necessary knowledge of Islam and the Arabic language and are inculcated with Islamic values that enable them to be positive contributing American citizens while proudly living their faith.

The School has a diverse student population, with current enrollment at of 683 students. Despite a relatively young 30-year history, Universal has over 800 alumni attending Universities all across the United States.

First Year Objectives

1. Increase number of alumni who volunteer, promote and donate to the school by 100, half of whom should be new donors.
2. Recruit 100 new students to the school who otherwise wouldn't enroll
3. Increase number of business and organizations sponsorship of the school and its program by 10.
4. Increase school positive exposure to community at large and stakeholders specifically by increasing number of visits to the school web site and social media pages, and school events by at least 20%

Education and Experience

Bachelor's degree in Public Relations or related fields, as well as professional training and successful experience in the field of Public Relation will be considered in lieu of education

Specific Skills

1. Represents Universal School in a positive manner internally and to the broader community.
2. Able to formulate and articulate a clear vision and direction.
3. Passionate about their work and driven for success.
4. Exceptional listener, with strong written and verbal communication skills.
5. Experience with mass dissemination of information in both print and electronic forms, as well as social media strategies.
6. Strong computer skills and knowledge of database research and maintenance.
7. Experience in recruiting, training, and effectively directing parents, staff, students and other volunteers to ensure they understand and align to event goals.
8. Ability to work well individually or as part of larger team.
9. Collaborative, inclusive, and transparent, while fostering positive working relationships.
10. Operates with honesty and integrity and treats others with respect.
11. Operates in a confidential and professional manner, especially as it relates to high-level alumni and/or donors.
12. Excellent organizational skills, with a strong attention to detail.
13. Ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously.
14. Skilled in negotiation and conflict resolution with the ability to handle difficult situations with tact.
15. Ability to make sound decisions and/or recommendations within and outside the department.

Specific Responsibilities

1) Public Relations

- a) Build meaningful positive and productive relationships with key alumni, donors, families of potential students supporters, and businesses.
- b) Establish and coordinate the production of a newsletter both in print and electronic format targeted at the school community and potential families and sponsors.
- c) Coordinate with the Principal and event chair, if applicable, to set the theme, strategy, and financial goals for each event.
- d) Create, coordinate and monitor the event timeline to ensure deadlines are met. Track and monitor against the overall plan. Hold all involved accountable for the goals.
- e) Oversee the budget for each event, including all revenue and expense expectations related to the event.
- f) Create a marketing plan to appropriately promote and advertise the event. Determine use of save-the-date cards, invitations, and all other marketing and advertising pre-event. Provide expectations for all post-event communications.
- g) Manage all communications with external providers, performers, and artists, including the execution of contracts. Obtain biographies & program content, tech rider, promotional materials, etc.
- h) Provide event updates, as requested by the Principal or the President of the Board, detailing expectations on attendance, sponsorships, marketing campaigns, etc.
- i) Coordinate with the Chairman, and others, to secure sponsorships, underwriters, auction items, entertainment, advertisers or any other donations to support the event.
- j) Oversee the capture of the funds and donor information for recognition purposes.
- k) Create and execute an attendee development plan for the event, utilizing past event information, mailing lists, etc.
- l) Engage faculty, staff, and other volunteers to assist with the execution of the event. Designate roles and responsibilities as appropriate.
- m) Provide pre-event oversight of security, entertainment, facilities, housekeeping, and catering.
- n) Prepare a recap report (i.e., attendees, sponsorships, gifts-in-kind, general feedback) utilizing input from the event team, with an eye toward potential improvements for future events.
- o) Ensure all attendee, donors and participant information is properly tracked in the stakeholder database, and all correspondences (i.e., acknowledgements, tax statements) are sent.
- p) Provide regular reports and communication to administration and board.

2) Recruitment

- a) Work under the direction of the principal to provide tours to prospective families and students.
- b) Manage and coordinate community workshops and recruitment efforts.
- c) Coordinate and implement various recruitment programs and marketing strategies for admission programs and special events relating to targeted community members and under-represented groups in the fulfillment of recruitment efforts.

- d) Create and distribute resource materials for student recruitment and retention programs.
- 3) Donor and Business Sponsorship
- a) Serve as staff liaison to the business and community organizations, exploring opportunities for mutual benefit and support between Universal and these businesses and organizations.
 - b) Engage in direct contact and solicitation of select alumni, donors, and businesses via face-to-face, phone, email and social media. Conduct personal cultivation and solicitation visits to advance alumni, and business giving.
 - c) Support the Board Chairman regarding targeted steward programs and donor maintenance activities, from concept to implementation.
- 4) Alumni
- a) Devise a comprehensive alumni relations program to draw alumni closer to and build affinity with Universal School.
 - b) Serve as staff liaison to the Alumni Association, providing vision and guidance in its oversight of reunions and regional receptions.
 - c) Work with the Alumni Association to assume ownership of various alumni events over time (i.e., sports events attendance, alumni awards, and student engagement).
 - d) Maintain regular print and electronic communication with alumni to provide updates on other alumni, as well as overall initiatives.
 - e) Coordinate with various faculty and staff (i.e., Admissions, Academics, Athletics, IT) to host events on campus that support alumni relations.
 - f) Support activities and develop a culture within the present student body which prepares individuals to be active and engaged alumni upon completion of their time as Universal students.
 - g) Engage alumni for volunteer and networking opportunities, to gain feedback on the school's strategic direction and to benefit from longer-term financial support.
 - h) Coordinate and implement, in partnership with the Chairman of the Board, specific annual fundraising plans for reunion year classes (if any) and the broader alumni community
 - i) Develop and execute innovative strategies to increase alumni participation and giving to the annual fund
 - j) Be responsible for the personal solicitation of at least 50 new alumni prospects each year
 - k) Develop and execute engaging on and off campus alumni events and programming, including stewardship events, networking events, and area receptions
 - l) Develop young alumni programming for seniors and college-age alumni
 - m) Recruit and train a volunteer Alumni representative for each graduating class and form the student alumni outreach group to assist with alumni solicitations and thank you calls
 - n) Promote and manage Universal's social media alumni networks, e-newsletters, and other communication
 - o) Provide alumni news and photographs for social media and the school newsletter
 - p) Research and profile the background of all alumni.

- q) Develop a wide variety of ways to communicate with all alumni, including via the Internet and the school admission and graduation data.
- r) Select and train the alumni to assist the admissions' office network for prospective families and students.
- s) Continually evaluate all alumni programming for ongoing improvement and growth.

Evaluation

The Manager will meet with the Principal at the beginning of each fiscal year to establish goals and objectives, as well as develop a schedule of activities for the year. Mid-year and at the end of each fiscal year, the President, using input from other partners in the school, will review the Manager's progress toward the overall plan.