



Kansas City Scholars (KC Scholars) Executive Director

Kansas City, Missouri

Organization Overview

The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation (“Kauffman Foundation”) was established in the mid-1960s by the late entrepreneur and philanthropist Ewing Marion Kauffman. Based in Kansas City, Missouri, the Kauffman Foundation is among the thirty largest foundations in the United States with an asset base of approximately \$2 billion. In keeping with its founder’s wishes, the Foundation focuses its grant making, operations, and research and policy on two areas: advancing entrepreneurship and improving the education of children and youth. While striving to have national impact and global reach, the Foundation is deeply committed to Kansas City, as evidenced by work on initiatives that reach into neighborhoods and enrich the community and quality of life in the region. For more information about the Foundation, please visit the website at www.kauffman.org.

The Kauffman Foundation’s reach and impact would not be possible without its vast social network of grantees, partners, experts, and practitioners. The Foundation helps cultivate these relationships by playing the role of convener, bringing together local, national, and world leaders to share innovative thinking and engage in dialog related to entrepreneurship and education.

About the Foundation’s Education Work

The Kauffman Foundation’s education work supports the overall goal of more Kansas City children accessing high-quality education options and opportunities. To achieve this, we invest in schools, programs, and research to support the development of teachers and leaders, quality public schools, and education innovations. These investments help ensure more children enter kindergarten ready to learn, more students are attending high-quality public schools, and more students are accessing and attaining postsecondary credentials.

By demonstrating positive results for students in Kansas City, the Foundation’s work is relevant, applicable and transportable to other cities. We learn from our efforts, the activities of others, and bring together networks of individuals and organizations committed to exploring how to best serve students in cities across the country.

About Kansas City Scholars (KC Scholars)

Kansas City Scholars is a postsecondary attainment scholarship and student supports program currently under development through a community-engaged planning process that is being facilitated by the Kauffman Foundation and in consultation with the National College Access Network. The program is being incubated by and currently resides at the Kauffman Foundation and will then become an independent 501(c)(3) (estimated by July 2017) located in the Kansas City community.

The scholarship program will serve traditional students, adult learners that are returning to college, and participants in a college savings match program. Students and adults who are low- and moderate-income and residing in six counties in Kansas and Missouri in the Kansas City region will be eligible to apply. KC Scholars will award 500 new scholarships annually and once fully scaled in 2022, will have at least 2,000 students in the program annually. The overarching program goals are to:

- 1) Increase postsecondary educational attainment in the greater Kansas City area;
- 2) Increase economic independence for individuals;
- 3) Improve workforce quality and quantity in the Kansas City region;
- 4) Increase participation in community activities; and
- 5) Achieve a 75% degree or credit-bearing credential completion rate.

KC Scholars is a community-engaged program. Over 70 community members have been involved in the program planning process and community involvement will continue on an Implementation Committee (July 2016 – June 2017) and ultimately, a Board of Directors for the independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Financial support for the program will also be shared across the community, with the Kauffman Foundation investment needing to be matched by other external funds.

KC Scholars is projected to have 10 staff members, all on-boarding at various times during 2016 and 2017 to coincide with public launch on September 28, 2016 and then the first application and award cycle in spring 2017.

KC Scholars will have partnership agreements with college advisement and support programs (four organizations) and with 17 postsecondary institutions at the time of launch. The overall budget for the program is estimated at \$15M per year, once fully scaled.

Position Summary

Hired in time to participate in the program launch and implementation, the Executive Director will guide KC Scholars through to become an independent 501(c)(3). Initially, the Executive Director will report to the Director or Postsecondary Initiatives within the Education department at the Kauffman Foundation, but will ultimately report to the KC Scholars Board of Directors. The Executive Director will build a talented staff team, set the vision for the strategic growth of the organization, and serve as the public face of KC Scholars, cultivating a wide variety of relationships with external stakeholders.

This is a unique opportunity for an entrepreneurial leader to grow the KC Scholars program into a major driver of change among students and adult learners in the Kansas City Metro region. Upon stepping into this role, the Executive Director will benefit from the extensive network of relationships and support that the Kauffman Foundation has built through the community-engaged planning process, and the Executive Director will have the opportunity to establish a dynamic staff team who can carry out the organization's mission and vision.

Key Responsibilities

The Executive Director's specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

Visionary Leadership and Strategy

- Work in tandem with the Director of Postsecondary Initiatives and the Implementation Committee on the remaining stages of KC Scholars program planning and implementation, and later, with the Board of Directors on the strategic path of the organization

- Lead strategic planning and program improvement activities, coordinating with the Board of Directors to engage their expertise in leading KC Scholars to achieve its intended impact
- Manage the Board of Directors, with responsibility for scheduling meetings, co-creating agendas, assisting with logistics, staffing committees, ensuring an annual audit, etc.

External Collaboration, Partnership, and Support

- Lead collaborative efforts to create and execute a fundraising strategy that will ensure the sustainability of KC Scholars
- Act as the public face of KC scholars, widely and frequently engaging external stakeholders with careful attention to managing these relationships and building Metro-wide awareness of KC Scholars
- Partner with the Director of Development to identify and cultivate both prospective funders and scholarship programs that may be aligned with KC Scholars

Organizational Management and Administration

- Hire, train, supervise, and develop staff, and establish all necessary human resources infrastructure (e.g. employee handbook, personnel policies, evaluation systems, etc.)
- Develop and manage the budget and forecasts for the program, with initial support from the Kauffman Foundation while the program is being incubated
- Partner with the Kauffman Foundation on its comprehensive plan for evaluation of KC Scholars; manage ongoing evaluation and program improvement activities in order to ensure that KC Scholars is achieving its intended impact
- Prepare and present quarterly/term and annual reports to demonstrate program outcomes

Qualifications

Professional and Educational Experience

- Minimum 8 years of progressively responsible leadership experience in an education-related or nonprofit field, with successful experience managing complex programs and proactively developing new initiatives and/or solutions
- Ideally direct professional experience in college access and/or scholarship programs, demonstrating an understanding of college access, persistence, and completion issues and challenges, particularly for low- and middle-income students, including first-generation and underrepresented students and returning adult learners
- Prior success in engaging diverse groups of stakeholders, including communication with external partners representing a range of interests and partnership with a Board of Directors or similar formal advisory body
- Extensive experience in budget creation and oversight, with a background in managing multi-million dollar programs and/or organizations with multiple funders and complete understanding of balance sheets, income statements, and budgets
- Proven record of excellence in hiring, training, and managing staff teams
- Past experience in cultivating and managing relationships with donors, funders, and/or partners
- Proficiency in program evaluation and data tracking to monitor and illustrate program impact
- Experience working with sophisticated and comprehensive software platforms and proficiency with Microsoft Office (Outlook, Word, Excel, Power Point)
- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree preferred

Personal Characteristics

- Keen sense of strategic vision and a fast learner who can adapt to new contexts and develop creative effective approaches to achieving desired goal
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and communication skills, with the ability to foster strong relationships with external partners and supporters as well as all internal team members
- Personal values that encompass the highest standards of honesty, confidentiality, integrity, loyalty, and professional ethics
- Excellent organizational and project management skills, with the ability to calmly and competently manage multiple and concurrent projects and demands through effective prioritization and delegation
- Strong problem-solver who combines analytical skills, decision-making abilities, and sound professional judgment
- Ability to work successfully toward desired goals while operating in a sometimes ambiguous environment
- Deep commitment to increasing college access, persistence, and completion among low- and middle-income students, including first-generation and underrepresented students and returning adult learners
- Ability to travel frequently in the six-county service region of KC Scholars, with occasional other business travel outside of the region

To Apply

Please upload a resume and thoughtful cover letter, outlining how your skills and experience meet the qualifications of the position and stating how you heard about this opportunity, both in Word format, addressed to:

Beth Tankersley Bankhead

Application link:

http://commongoodcareers.force.com/careers/ts2_Register?jobId=a0K1600000hR1TqEAK&tSource

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Compensation

A competitive compensation package, including base salary and an outstanding benefits package will correspond to the experience level, credentials, and personal characteristics of the candidate.

While the KC Scholars program is at the Kauffman Foundation, the Executive Director position will be a limited-term, full-time exempt employee with Kauffman Foundation salary and benefits provided by the Foundation. After KC Scholars transitions to being a separate 501(c)(3) organization, the Executive Director will no longer be a Kauffman Foundation position eligible Kauffman Foundation salary and benefits. The Executive Director position will transition to the KC Scholars nonprofit agency with salary and benefits defined by the nonprofit agency's guidelines.

Non-Discrimination

The Kauffman Foundation firmly supports the principle and philosophy of equal opportunity for all individuals, regardless of age, race, gender, creed, national origin, disability, veteran status or any other protected category pursuant to applicable federal, state or local law.

About Commongood Careers

The Kauffman Foundation has partnered with Commongood Careers to conduct the search for a Kansas City Scholars ED. Commongood Careers is a mission-driven search firm that supports the hiring needs of high-impact nonprofits. With an approach that leverages robust talent networks, recruitment and search management expertise, and a deep understanding of our clients' missions and cultures, we help organizations secure the talent they need to create greater social impact. Since our founding in 2005, Commongood Careers has led more than 700 searches at 275 organizations in 33 states, making us one of the most experienced and dedicated nonprofit search firms in the country. [Learn more about nonprofit job opportunities at Commongood Careers.](#)