MSMS FOUNDATION

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hours: Full-time

Schedule: Most work hours will occur Monday through Friday between 8 AM and 5 PM; events or travel will require additional time outside of normal business hours.

Location: Within the state of Mississippi, with a regular presence at the Foundation's office in Columbus, MS (the MSMS campus and the Office Manager's location), on at least a weekly basis.

Position Overview:

The Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science (MSMS) Foundation seeks an Executive Director to lead the organization and drive its next phase of growth. Reporting directly to the MSMS Foundation Board, the Executive Director is responsible for the Foundation's fundraising, financial stewardship, and overall operations in support of the mission and vision of the state's only public residential high school devoted to advanced STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education.

Because the Board is composed of volunteers and is geographically distributed, the Executive Director operates with a high degree of autonomy and is expected to own outcomes with light Board oversight. This is a leadership role, not an entry-level fundraising position. Candidates with a connection to the school, such as alumni and their parents, are encouraged to apply.

The Opportunity:

The Foundation is well positioned to grow. It has an established database of past donors and an active social media presence. An Office Manager supports the organization by handling logistics, correspondence, and Board support, allowing the Executive Director to focus on donors, strategy, and leadership.

What the Foundation needs is the right leader to activate these assets: to deepen donor relationships, build a sustainable major-gifts program, and grow annual giving well beyond its current baseline. For the right person, this is a rare opportunity to take a well-resourced organization with strong fundamentals and meaningfully expand its impact on Mississippi's brightest students.

What We Do:

The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) established in 1989 to provide support for MSMS outside of state funding. MSMS was established in 1988 to enhance the science and math education of students from across Mississippi and from all walks of life. The school is unique among public schools in that it receives no funding from local tax revenues; all funding is through state allocation, grants, and support from the Foundation. The Foundation has grown substantially since 2008 and provides annual funding to the school for special projects, to enhance public STEM outreach, and to increase enrollment. The Foundation is managed by a board which includes alumni, current parents, parents of alumni, and MSMS administration and staff. More information about the MSMS Foundation can be viewed at www.msmsfoundation.com.

Who You Will Work With:

The Executive Director interfaces directly with members of the volunteer Foundation Board, which is located nationwide, primarily via email and phone. The Executive Director also coordinates with the MSMS administration and works directly with the Foundation's Office Manager, who is based in Columbus, MS.

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We Want to Meet You If You Are:

- A Self-Directed Leader – This is a high-freedom, high-accountability environment. You are comfortable owning results and operating independently with light Board oversight.
- An Experienced Fundraiser – You can design and implement a major-gifts program and grow annual giving through cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.
- A Strategic Builder – You can both design and implement the plans and systems that support sustainable, long-term growth.
- A Strong Communicator – You are a strong verbal and written communicator with an aptitude for using technology to engage donors and Board members across distance.

The role includes:

- Leading the Foundation's fundraising strategy, including major gifts, annual giving, corporate and foundation support, and campaigns, and communicating this plan for Board approval and support.
- Cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding donors through in-person meetings, phone calls, email, and social media.
- Setting and meeting annual fundraising goals in partnership with the Board, growing beyond the current baseline of approximately $350,000 annually.
- Overseeing the Foundation's finances and budget in coordination with the Board.
- Partnering with and reporting to the volunteer Board, preparing Board communications, and supporting Board meetings.
- Leveraging the existing donor database and social media footprint to engage and grow the donor base.
- Coordinating communication with the MSMS administration and, as relevant, members of the Mississippi Legislature.
- Ensuring full compliance with IRS and MSMS Foundation policies and procedures regarding records and expenses.
- Providing strategic direction and oversight for events such as MSMS Alumni Weekend.

First Year Priorities:

- Maintain the typical annual philanthropic revenue baseline of approximately $350,000.
- Build a documented major-gifts pipeline within the Foundation's CRM.
- Establish a sustainable donor-communication cadence across email and social media.
- Present a multi-year fundraising and growth plan to the Board for approval.
- Assist the Board in development of a new Strategic Plan.

Minimum qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree, or equivalent relevant experience.
- Demonstrable experience fundraising for a nonprofit or academic institution.
- Outstanding written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision.

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Preferred qualifications:

- 5+ years of demonstrable experience fundraising for a nonprofit or academic institution.
- Leadership or management experience, including budget responsibility.
- Experience in a small nonprofit and an understanding of all facets of nonprofit fundraising.
- Experience partnering with a volunteer board.
- A connection to MSMS as an alumnus or parent of an alumnus.

Compensation and Benefits:

The MSMS Foundation offers competitive compensation for a small nonprofit commensurate with experience. We will also be providing employer-sponsored health care as well as paid time off (PTO) and holidays.

Qualified applicants should email a PDF copy of their resume and cover letter to careers@msmsfoundation.com, with the subject line ED202609-L.

Applications are due by October 11, 2026.

The MSMS Foundation is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other status protected by law.