



Valley Forge Educational Services

**Director of Development and Major Gifts
Valley Forge Educational Services
Malvern, PA**

<https://www.vfes.net/>

THE INSTITUTION

Valley Forge Educational Services (VFES) offers educational, social-recreational, and employment-based programs for individuals with special needs. The hallmark of their programs is the collaborative and holistic approach to each child, adolescent, and adult, recognizing their unique abilities and needs through team efforts. Individuals of all ages come to learn, share, appreciate, and respect one another while developing skills necessary for success. VFES is committed to helping students and adult participants develop a strong sense of self-worth to realize their value as contributing members of their communities.

Valley Forge Educational Services (VFES) is located on a 28-acre campus in the wooded countryside of Chester County, in the town of Malvern, Pennsylvania. The campus provides students and staff a calm and peaceful environment where they can achieve their academic goals, socialize with friends, and practice daily living skills.

The VFES campus consists of a number academic and clinical services buildings including several school buildings within The Vanguard School program; The Milton Brutton Elementary School building, The Richard D. Mierley Upper School building (houses Middle and High Schools), The Vanguard Transition Center, a state-of-the-art therapy gym, activities center, cafeteria, industrial- and fine-arts workshops, and administrative offices. The campus also contains an attractive central courtyard, play structures, a PACE course, fitness trail, and athletic fields.

Programs

The Vanguard School

The Vanguard School provides comprehensive special education services in a highly personalized setting by emphasizing and integrating an academic environment with a high degree of socialization programming and sensory integration. The school explores and implements individualized approaches along with evidence-based curriculum to foster significant educational and social accomplishments in its students. The Vanguard School's innovative K-12 and post-secondary education is a hallmark of the school's learning-for-life philosophy and has resulted in measurable success for graduates.

Adult and Recreation Services

Adult and Recreation Services (ARS) offers employment, social, and recreational programming for adults with unique abilities, 18 years and older. Adult and Recreation Services programs vary in purpose, format, and length and build on participants' interests to help them succeed, learn, and grow. The largest program under ARS is Customized Workforce Solutions (CWS). CWS provides employment-related services to adults with disabilities. The program focuses on person-centered support and training to help job seekers attain their employment goals. The process helps adults define their goals, understand their skills, and discover their vocational interests and work preferences. While most CWS services take place in the participants' home communities, some informational meetings, career assessments, and special events take place on the VFES campus. Vocational Immersion Program (VIP) is a vocational based service offered over 4 weeks in the summer. It is for younger adults, ages 17 to 24, who would benefit from learning how to navigate the soft skills of seeking employment and experience an 'immersion' into a work experience for 3 weeks, including a residential component the last week of the program. Additionally, ARS focuses on helping adults with unique abilities navigate social and recreational activities. From the development of social and daily living skills to experiencing opportunities to have fun and make new friends, programs of Adult & Recreation Services maximize each participant's potential. Social and recreational programs include day and overnight camp, respite retreats, employment readiness program, and social events.

For additional information, please visit their website at <https://www.vfes.net/>.

THE POSITION

Reporting to the Executive Director, the Director of Development and Major Gifts is responsible for setting the strategy for all aspects of fundraising at VFES, building lasting relationships with donors, and overall attainment of key fundraising goals. The Director is responsible for philanthropic activities, notably the design, development, and execution of fundraising-related efforts that successfully maintain current donors and build new relationships.

The Director will manage a Development team by setting clear objectives, providing regular feedback, and encouraging open and ongoing communication both within the Development office and with other key departments. The Director will support Board level committees and collaborate with other senior leaders to advance the mission of the VFES by identifying, attracting, and securing revenue in support of the organization's financial sustainability. The Director will focus on developing a major gifts program, strengthening program infrastructure, and utilizing data to plan, coordinate, execute, and analyze development efforts.

Specific Responsibilities

Strategic Management

- Work with the Executive Director, Development staff, Development Committee, and the Board of Trustees to establish and implement a cohesive and forward-looking fundraising strategy that is aligned with the strategic plan, fosters a community-wide culture of philanthropy, and provides a revenue stream that significantly contributes to the financial sustainability of VFES.
- Work closely with the Executive Director to plan, establish, and track fundraising goals aimed at supporting strategic and organizational priorities. Develop, implement, and facilitate short- and long-range development plans to meet goals and strengthen and grow VFES fundraising efforts.
- Nurture and maintain a highly collaborative relationship with the Executive Director, Board Chair, and individual Board and Development Committee members, supporting them in all of their

fundraising responsibilities and accompanying them on donor visits when appropriate.

- Demonstrate competency in each of the VFES core values: Communication and Listening, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Ethics, Professionalism, and Teamwork.
- Comply with all organizational policies and procedures including those stated in the VFES Policies & Procedures manual and additional verbal and written communications provided to staff members.
- Maintain a professional, confidential, and ethical relationship with all constituents (administrators, colleagues, faculty, parents, students, and others).
- Attend and actively participate in staff meetings, in-service activities, training, and other meetings as required.

Fundraising

- Lead all aspects of VFES's fundraising efforts, including donor identification, cultivation and solicitation; management of the annual appeal; cultivation of major and planned gifts; building the foundation for future capital campaign efforts; constituent and community-wide relationship development and stewardship; and major event planning and execution.
- Work closely with the Assistant Director of Development and Major Gifts and Development Coordinator to plan, oversee, and evaluate various fundraising initiatives, including the major gifts program, annual appeal, corporate and foundation relations, special campaigns and events, and grant submissions.
- Develop and manage an integrated plan for the annual appeal to increase donor engagement through solicitations, direct mail appeals, giving societies, and digital appeals.
- Contribute to the success of the major gifts program by cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major donors through personal visits and various communication channels. Facilitate major donor meetings with Executive Director, CFO, and Board members and provide donor strategies and communications materials.
- Collaborate with the Assistant Director of Development and Major Gifts and Director of Marketing & Communications to develop tailored major gift communications, solicitations, and case statements.
- Oversee all grant submissions managed by the Development Coordinator so that proposals are accurate, well-written, and submitted and reported in a timely manner. In addition, lead all federal and state agency grant submissions (e.g., PDE, PCCD) in coordination with VFES Leadership.
- Oversee the accuracy of all daily, monthly, and fiscal year end development financial reports and ensure they are aligned with Business Office donation records. Develop and manage annual Development budget.
- Oversee the donor database system managed by the Development Coordinator to ensure donor contact information, donations, and gifts are accurately recorded and promptly acknowledged.

Board Relations

- Work closely with members of the Board of Trustees to lead and facilitate a sub-committee of the Board directed at ongoing major gifts cultivation and Trustee fundraising efforts.
- Serve as staff support for the Development Committee of the Board of Trustees. Set and maintain high quality standards for the enlistment and stewardship of board and volunteer leadership in the development program.

- Manage donor relationships up to the Executive Director/Board members. Utilize Executive Director and Board members to develop relationships with key donors.
- Track and issue written reports to the Board of Trustees on identification, cultivation, and closing of gifts and update progress in meeting and donation performance targets relating to annual performance goals.
- Play critical role on Development Committee by providing plans and progress in meeting quarterly and annual development targets.

THE CANDIDATE

The Director of Development and Major Gifts must have an understanding of and passion for the mission of Valley Forge Educational Services and a commitment to the individuals and families it serves. The ideal candidate is an experienced fundraising strategist and relationship builder with a history of innovation in fundraising and donor development. The ability to effectively articulate specific fundraising goals and motivate and manage a team to achieve those goals will be essential to the success of the incoming Director of Development and Major Gifts. The Director will be responsible for identifying, researching, and spearheading the implementation of a diverse and multifaceted fundraising program to support VFES's strategic vision, cultivating a culture of giving and gratitude across all constituencies.

Qualifications

- Demonstrated ability to foster an understanding and acceptance of people with special needs.
- Minimum of 10 years of experience in nonprofit fundraising, philanthropy, and donor development.
- Visionary and strategic planning capabilities to be applied toward developing the infrastructure for an innovative fundraising program and the leadership necessary to ensure its successful implementation.
- Demonstrated success and knowledge to all facets of development, including annual giving, major gifts, planned giving, grants, corporate and foundation relations, events, capital campaigns, and data management and analysis.
- A record of accomplishment in securing major gifts generating \$1 million plus in annual revenue from individual, corporate, and foundation donors for existing or new programs and/or building improvements.
- Demonstrated success in soliciting gifts from individuals, meeting annual fund goals, enlisting sponsorships, and planning special events.
- Ability to engage the Executive Director, Board members, volunteers, and others in cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship activities.
- Possess superior communication and presentation skills to express, orally and in writing, VFES's mission, vision, and goals with clarity, passion, and persuasion.
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail. Ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously with tight deadlines.
- Ability to work in a fast-paced, goal-oriented environment.
- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to establish and maintain collaborative working relationships with all constituents including donors, staff, board members, students, parents, and community leaders.
- Strong working knowledge of Microsoft Office applications, development database software, and online databases for prospect information. Experience with Abila fundraising database a plus.
- Preferred knowledge of special education and programs for individuals with special needs.

- Bachelor's degree in business administration, nonprofit administration, marketing, or a related field; Master's degree preferred. Additional certification from fundraising or philanthropic professional organizations a plus.
- Ability to travel and work occasional evening and weekend hours for meetings and special events.

For inquiries, nominations, and applications please contact:

Tara Sweeney, Partner

610-924-9100 • tsweeney@lambertassoc.com



Leaders in Executive Search for Nonprofit Organizations

Lambert & Associates

222 S Manoa Road, Suite 201 • Havertown, PA 19083 • 610-924-9100

www.lambertassoc.com