



Down Syndrome Achievement Centers
educate. inspire. believe.

National Events Director – National Office

Founded in 2003, GiGi's Playhouse Inc.'s mission is to change the way the world views Down syndrome and send a global message of acceptance for all. We profoundly change lives through national campaigns, educational programs, and by empowering individuals with Down syndrome, their families, and the community. All programs are free and are therapeutic or educational in nature. Each one of our programs is designed to work on specific skill development, including speech and language, literacy, socialization, and fine and gross motor skills. GiGi's Playhouse currently has over 50 locations across North America and growing by several locations annually.

Job Description:

Fundraising events have historically made up approximately 50% of the revenues for GiGi's Playhouse nationwide, representing roughly \$8mm in aggregate. This person's role is two-fold, both leading national events, and coaching for success on local events.

The Special Events Director has three core areas of responsibility:

- **Signature National Events:** Critical point person who is leading, planning, and implementing the 3 large signature fundraising events for the GiGi's Playhouse National Office, including the Gala, GiGiFIT Acceptance Challenge 5k/Walk, Golf Outing and other events as they are developed. These events have a multi-year history and need to grow each year and be replicable.
- **Playhouse Events:** Coaching and guidance on event strategies, processes, and best practices for 50+ Playhouses across the US, representing over 150 local events.

This position has these key goals:

- Maximize attendance, revenue, and impact for fundraising events.
- Ensure an outstanding guest experience.
- Expertly manage timelines and project plans such that there is a smooth flow of activities throughout the year, with minimal strain on supporting volunteers, committee members and staff.

Essential Job Functions:

- Signature Event Strategy
 - Collaborate with the Development team and with members of the Leadership Team and the Executive Board to gather learnings from past events in order to maximize guest experience and funding opportunities.
 - Document the vision for the event to ensure alignment and to share with the various Event Committees.
 - Deliver events that exceed guest expectations
 - Ensure each event's revenue goals align with the funding strategies for the events.
- Event Planning and Execution
 - Build, modify and manage detailed 12-month timeline of all activities and workflows for each signature event, with the support of the Development Coordinator
 - Effectively delegate through clearly defined positions, responsibilities and expectations for each person who has a role in the project plan. Hold all accountable to their roles.
 - Establish regular communications with accountable individuals and all stakeholders including accurate and up-to-date event plans, activities, and benchmarks.

- Work closely with the Marketing team to request and coordinate necessary branding, print, and mailing assets for all signature events, as well as the event day PowerPoint presentations.
- Optimize the event expense budget by ensuring the use of in-kind donations.
- Masterfully manage all logistics for the Signature events, including execution of a fully vetted and detailed run of show for each minute of the event.
- Coordinate with all speakers and day-of players etc., to ensure a smooth-running event; conduct a dry run with all speakers and other key players in advance of each Signature event.
- Build successful relationships with sponsors, attendees, and volunteers for the purposes of promoting and facilitating additional donation and partnership opportunities and ensuring continued involvement.
- Event Committees and Volunteers
 - Secure volunteer Event Chairs, volunteer Event Committee members, and other event volunteers for all Signature Events
 - Leverage co-chairs to avoid burnout and to ensure thorough documentation and clear accountabilities for all actions, so that the plans can be easily picked up by the next Event Chair.
 - Support the Event Chairs by helping to manage the committees and associated meetings; prepare event committee meeting agendas; record and distribute meeting minutes.
 - Work with committee members and other accountable parties to ensure activities align with the revenue and attendance goals. Adjust strategies as needed in order to achieve goals.
 - Cultivate a strategic team environment among committee members and volunteers, recognizing volunteer strengths and taking ownership and responsibility for the development of volunteers through communication, training, and positive reinforcement, including volunteers on the day of the event.
 - Ensure event staffing levels are appropriate to meet the needs of each event, and ensure the event workload is largely carried by the Development team, Event Committee, and volunteers, without leaning heavily on other staff members.
- Relationships with Venues, Contracted Resources, and Talent
 - Negotiate and manage all event contracts (e.g., venues, security, entertainment, auctioneer, insurance, etc.). Review all event invoices for payment and gain approval from the VP Development & Partnerships for all significant event expenses.
 - Manage relationships with all talent and any contracted resources to ensure they have the information they need to maximize success in their role; hold all contractors accountable to their expectations.
 - Ensure proper acknowledgements and recognition for contracted resources and talent.
- Event Support for Playhouses
 - Act as first responder to all new Campaign/Event tickets, consulting with Playhouse staff on the specifics in the forms, including walking through the vision for the event, the technical requirements request, event insurance needs, etc.
 - Guide and counsel Playhouse teams on best practices and inspiration for their local events, through the gathering and dissemination of best practices.
 - Execute monthly Event calls with the entire Playhouse network.
 - Process all liquor liability and event insurance requests with outside insurance broker, ensure receipt of insurance certificates in advance of all events.

Reports to: VP Development & Partnerships at GiGi's Playhouse, Inc.

Work Location and Hours: Job is located in Hoffman Estates, IL. Work schedule includes heavy weekend work during the week of each Signature event.

Qualifications

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- **Education and/or Experience:** At least ten years special event experience in the non-profit sector, with a track record of generating annual event revenues in excess of \$500,000. Experience with 360-degree responsibility for executing galas, walks/runs, golf outings, and similar events that have met or exceeded fundraising goals and have demonstrated excellence in event planning. Bachelor's degree preferred.
- **Computer Skills:** To perform this job successfully, an individual should be very comfortable using a broad array of programs, including advanced proficiency in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams, and OneNote). Ability to work proficiently in (or quickly learn) a database program (Salesforce) to manage contacts and run reports.
- **Physical Demands:** The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit and talk or hear. Specific vision abilities required by this job include ability to adjust focus.

GiGi's Playhouse Core Values: GiGi's challenges all staff and volunteers to embody the following core values:

- **Enthusiasm:** Bringing positive, high energy to our work.
- **Best of All:** Always looking to improve in all that we do. Challenge yourself every day.
- **Get It Done:** Making things happen and blasting through barriers when needed; figure it out.
- **Believe:** Believe in ourselves, believe in our mission, believe we can achieve all that we set out to achieve.
- **Locally Concerned, Enterprise Minded:** To best serve our local communities, we share our location's best practices and have the humility to leverage the collective learnings from across the GiGi's network.