



American Forest Foundation

VP, Strategic Communications

Washington, DC

Organization Overview:

The American Forest Foundation (AFF) is a \$10mm national organization with an endowment that recently reached \$120mm. The organization was chartered in 1981 with the purpose of encouraging the long-term sustainability of America's forests, restoring wildlife habitat and developing quality environmental education programs to assure that Americans today, and in the future, enjoy healthy, growing forests.

Today, AFF focuses on woodland conservation through their American Tree Farm System®, representing 90,000 family forest owners with more than 24 million acres, a variety of conservation projects throughout the country, development of ecosystem markets and environmental conservation through Project Learning Tree®-- training 30,000 teachers a year in 47 states.

AFF recently adopted a new set of three-year priorities that include: stemming the loss of America's woodlands, improving the management of America's woodlands and ensuring that educators and decision-makers understand and value America's woodlands.

Position Description:

Reporting to the President/CEO, the Vice President, Strategic Communications is responsible for the development, implementation, and management of strategies to communicate and support the Foundation's positions to various constituencies and audiences. They serve as a member of the Senior Management Team.

The VP, Strategic Communications will be responsible for oversight and leadership in the following areas:

Strategy Development and Implementation

- Develop and execute a vibrant and effective multi-channel communications plan and evaluate its impact on the intended audience(s)
- Research, design and implement communications and marketing strategies to reach targeted audiences

Marketing/Branding

- Ensure that AFF's website and the use of the internet effectively advances organizational goals

Public Relations for Policy Campaigns

- Serve as a key strategic leader on public relations/communications
- Train and deploy board, staff and volunteers as key message agents
- Serve as main liaison with PR agencies and supervise/evaluate their performance

Media Relations

- Facilitate effective relationships with key media contacts to facilitate a positive image for sustainable forestry, environmental education and AFF's priorities
- Develop and generate media coverage to ensure the organization's position is effectively communicated both internally and in the media

Leadership/Team Management

- Oversee a seasoned, competent team of three professionals
- Act as a collaborative member of the Senior Management Team

Other

- Work with development and program staff to proactively seek funding partners

Desired Background/Experience:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in communications, public relations or a related field.
- 10+ years of related experience required. Varied and broad experience is preferred over a narrow specialization.
- Experience managing projects and budgets up to \$1mm annually
- Experience with policy, education, and/or social marketing campaigns involving the promotion of ideas and values rather than products
- Proven track record of supporting advocacy campaigns in conjunction with government relations staff
- Prior experience in successfully branding an organization
- A record of making sound judgments about competing priorities and managing time and resources well
- Ability to think strategically, analyze critically, and translate ideas and insights into action through coherent plans
- Ability to foster a cooperative, team-oriented work environment
- Exceptional communication skills: a compelling writer, editor and presenter of ideas.

Desired Personal Attributes:

- Strategic thinker who can deliver focused and integrated work
- A client-service orientation
- Results-oriented with a keen understanding of the steps necessary to achieve goals on deadline and within budget
- Strong initiative, a self-starter with tenacity, resilience and high energy
- A firm commitment to working in a collaborative environment
- Personable and flexible with the ability to work under pressure
- Ability to interact with a wide variety of constituencies, including senior-level business, volunteer and community leaders
- Maintains strict confidentiality, and displays discretion and the ability to deal with sensitive issues in a professional manner
- Excellent judgment, tact, and integrity, especially when dealing with media, donors, board members, volunteers, and the public at large

Compensation and Benefits:

Compensation for the VP, Strategic Communications includes a competitive base salary commensurate with experience and an excellent package of employee and health benefits.

AFF has retained the services of SBR to conduct the search. Please send your resume, expression of interest and salary history to:

Kara Leppert, Partner
SBR Nonprofit Search
kleppert@thinkingahead.com

AFF is an EOE dedicated to workplace diversity.