



ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF PHILANTHROPY/DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

[MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC](#)

NEW YORK, NEW YORK



Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Manhattan School of Music in the search for an Associate Vice President of Philanthropy/Director of Development.

Working in close collaboration with the Vice President for Philanthropy, the Associate Vice President of Philanthropy/Director of Development will oversee the day-to-day management of the Office of Philanthropy, including planning, managing, and executing individual, institutional, annual, planned, and parent and alumni giving as well as high-profile special events, donor stewardship, and database management. The Associate Vice President of Philanthropy/Director of Development will be a highly organized advancement professional with a proven history of meeting fundraising goals. The Associate Vice President will possess the superior people management and communication and writing skills needed to secure support from new funders, broaden and deepen relationships with current funders, and motivate a high performing team.

Manhattan School of Music (MSM) is one of the world's foremost conservatories for classical music, jazz, and musical theatre. For more than 100 years, MSM has upheld a tradition of excellence in music education, from its beginnings as a small settlement house music program to its current state as an internationally renowned music conservatory.

MSM is deeply committed to excellence in education, performance, and creative activity; to the humanity of the School's environment; to preparing all students to find their success; and to the cultural enrichment of the larger community. The School inspires and empowers highly talented individuals to realize their potential and takes full advantage of New York City's abundant learning and performance opportunities, preparing immensely talented students to be accomplished and passionate performers, composers and teachers, and imaginative, effective contributors to the arts and society.

From its beginnings as a small settlement music school to its current incarnation as a top, international conservatory, MSM has upheld a tradition of excellence in professional music education. The School was founded in 1918 by pianist and philanthropist, Janet Daniels Schenck. Then called the Neighborhood Music School, it was located on Manhattan's East Harlem and tasked with bringing high-quality musical training to immigrant communities. By re-establishing the musical communities that had existed in these immigrants' home countries, Schenck hoped to further the nascent cause of American music. To that end, the School developed its resources to educate the complete musician.

Under the leadership of Dr. James Gandre, who assumed the Presidency in 2013, MSM has experienced remarkable growth and record enrollment. The curriculum has been thoughtfully and strategically expanded, including the city's first conservatory-based degree program in Musical Theatre.

The School's historic campus has been transformed, including a sweeping renovation of Neidorff-Karpati Hall, its mainstage. Now home to more than 1,000 college students from over 50 countries and nearly every U.S. state, with a Precollege Division numbering another 535, and a teaching-artist faculty that is second to none—Manhattan School of Music is a thriving international community of artists.

As the School continues to grow and innovate, the journey that Janet Daniels Schenck began a century ago endures and evolves, with a singular commitment to excellence and leadership in music, the arts, and the wider cultural community at the heart of the School's mission.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Associate Vice President of Philanthropy/Director of Development will report to the Vice President for Philanthropy, Susan Madden. The Assistant Vice President will oversee a team of five staff including three direct reports, the Director of the Annual Fund, Director of Institutional Giving, and Director of Special Events and Donor Stewardship.

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Thank you very much for your interest in working in the Office of Philanthropy at Manhattan School of Music. When I came to MSM just over six years ago, I was struck by the fact that when asked to describe what is special about the School, so many faculty, staff, alumni, and donors all used the same word: "nurturing." Indeed, MSM is renowned for its supportive learning environment, which enables gifted young classical, jazz, and musical theatre artists—who hail from more than 50 countries across the globe—to reach their full potential and to join the distinguished ranks of our alumni, a celebrated international "company" of world-renowned instrumentalists, singers, composers, conductors, and artistic and civic leaders.

The impressive achievements of our alumni speak to the exemplary music education MSM provides. They include Tony, Grammy, and Pulitzer Prize winners, as well as Avery Fisher, MacArthur, and Guggenheim Fellows. Our graduates perform on the stages of the world's great concert and opera houses, are members of important international orchestras, executives at leading arts organizations, and serve as faculty members training the next generation of performing artists. To use a boxing metaphor, for a small school of just over 1,000 students, MSM punches above its weight class!

The nurturing spirit of the School starts at the top with the caring and inspiring leadership of President Jim Gandre, without a doubt, the best boss I've had in a 30+ year career in fundraising. Jim's kindness, positivity, and equanimity have helped this 104-year-old institution achieve new heights and greater recognition globally. Under his tenure, our Morningside Heights campus has been transformed by \$40 million in capital improvements, most notably, the complete renovation of our Neidorff-Karpati Hall, an art deco jewel. Innovative new programs include the Global Conservatoire, a digital learning environment, and soon to launch, a fully online Degree Completion Program.

One of the things I love best about working at MSM is being surrounded by talented musicians from every corner of the globe. Each year, our students, faculty, and guest artists bring to thrilling life more than 1,100 concerts and performances—fully staged operas and musical theatre productions, symphony orchestra concerts, jazz festivals, and more. They bring their all to the stage, and the quality of these productions is simply extraordinary.

Over the past six years, working closely with Jim and the Board of Trustees, the Office of Philanthropy has had tremendous success, increasing the Annual Fund by 57%, growing gala revenue by 50%, tripling foundation giving, and creating new donor groups and stewardship events to increase support. In 2024, we launched the Second Century campaign to build the School's modest \$35 million endowment.

We're off to a promising start having raised \$6 million for the campaign last year. We seek to increase our endowment to \$50 million over the next few years.

With the launch of the Second Century campaign, we are expanding our Philanthropy staff with a new Associate Vice President of Philanthropy/Director of Development position. I am looking to partner with someone as passionate about institution building as I am. You are an experienced generalist who understands all aspects of fundraising: annual fund, gala events, and foundation and government grants, a strong writer and a strong leader who enjoys managing our team of five dedicated professionals.

Working together, we can ensure that this wonderful century-old institution continues to thrive and will educate gifted young musicians for generations to come. I love what I do, and I very much look forward to hearing from you if this has inspired you to reach out.

—Susan Madden, Vice President for Philanthropy

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Associate Vice President of Philanthropy/Director of Development will

- oversee all day-to-day management of the Office of Philanthropy, including individual giving, crafting and executing strategies for successful year-end appeals, special giving days, print and digital appeals, on-site solicitations, the Virtuoso patron program, and giving for annual scholarships;
- research, identify, and steward high-capacity donor prospects, including music lovers and performing arts patrons, attendees at MSM concerts and performances, and College and Precollege alumni and parents, utilizing wealth assessment tools (iWave, and Donor Search) and cultivation and stewardship events to broaden the donor base and increase support from current funders;
- working with the Director of Special Events and Donor Stewardship, execute well-designed, strategic, and effective fundraising events, including the flagship Annual Gala in The Rainbow Room, as well as monthly cultivation and stewardship events for donors and prospects, including members of the Virtuoso Society patron program;
- working with the Director of Institutional Giving, manage foundation, corporate, and government grants, ensure the renewal of existing institutional donors, primarily foundations, through the timely submission of well-crafted, well-targeted proposals, grant applications, and reports as well as letters of inquiry, and endeavor to increase support from existing donors as well as identify and secure new institutional funding;
- oversee parent and alumni giving and increase financial support from and deepen engagement with College and Precollege alumni and parents;
- oversee planned giving, including the execution of an annual luncheon for the Galaxy Society (planned giving donors) and quarterly emails that include profiles of donors who have remembered the School in their estate plans, strategically identify and steward alumni and others who are likely candidates for planned gifts;
- oversee the creation of regular reports for the President and for quarterly meetings of the Board of Trustees' Committee on Philanthropy, which track fundraising progress and brief MSM's

President, Board members, Vice President for Philanthropy, and other senior staff as needed and prior to meetings with important donors and prospects;

- serve as a liaison to the International Advisory Board, comprised of international cultural and business leaders engaged in connecting MSM to the wide world of music-making and education, and help to identify new IAB members and organize two IAB meetings annually;
- mentor, manage, and retain a highly motivated philanthropy team that strives to achieve ambitious goals that further the mission of the School; and
- oversee database management (Raiser's Edge NXT).

LEADERSHIP

Susan Madden

Vice President for Philanthropy

Susan Madden is Manhattan School of Music's Vice President for Philanthropy. A creative and imaginative fundraiser, she has overseen a 57% increase in the School's annual fund and has expanded the School's donor base and profile across New York City's philanthropic landscape since she began at the School in 2018. Her successes include a 50% increase in gala revenue, a tripling of foundation giving, the launch of new donor groups, and high-profile donor stewardship events. She has created compelling new development materials, including a biennial report; worked with the President and trustees to secure more than \$17 million for the endowment; and raised support for a new student lounge and other campus improvements.

Previously, Susan spent nearly a decade as Vice President of Development and then Senior Vice President for External Affairs at the Museum of the City of New York, where she helped raise \$97 million for a capital campaign and \$17 million to create *New York at Its Core*, a multimedia exhibition on New York's 400-year history. Before joining the Museum, she led a \$7 million annual fundraising effort for Bette Midler's New York Restoration Project, including securing major gifts from Target, Goldman Sachs, and the Tiffany & Co. Foundation, among others, to renew community gardens citywide. She has also held senior development posts at the New York Philharmonic, Paley Center for Media, and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Susan earned a Master of Arts in American Civilization from the University of Pennsylvania and a Bachelor of Arts in English, summa cum laude, from LeMoyne College.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Manhattan School of Music seeks an Associate Vice President of Philanthropy/Director of Development with

- a deep belief in the mission of MSM—a commitment to excellence in education, performance, and creative activity; to the humanity of the School's environment; to preparing all its students to find their success; and to the cultural enrichment of the larger community;
- experience across the breadth of advancement functions, including individual giving, special events, institutional giving (primarily foundation grants), annual, planned, parent, and alumni giving, donor stewardship, and database management;
- excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including superior writing skills, meticulous attention to detail, and an ability to create compelling cases for support across platforms;
- superior people management skills, including an ability to develop enduring and productive relationships across a broad range of external partners as well as retain, mentor, and manage staff in a manner that contributes to a 'best in class' philanthropy program;
- an entrepreneurial spirit and an ability to identify and secure new funding;

- an ability to work collegially and effectively with internal and external constituents, including trustees, International Advisory Board members, and other donors, including College and Precollege Alumni and Parents, prospects, faculty, and staff;
- familiarity with the philanthropic landscape of New York City;
- an understanding of trends and best practices in philanthropy and nonprofit accounting; and
- fluency with Microsoft Office Suite and an understanding of Raiser's Edge NXT.

A bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and experience and at least eight years of nonprofit fundraising experience, particularly in higher education, the arts, or culture, is preferred for this position. Manhattan School of Music will consider candidates with a broad range of backgrounds.

SALARY, BENEFITS, AND CULTURE

The salary range for this position is \$140,000 to \$180,000 annually. Manhattan School of Music offers a comprehensive package of benefits. The School is one of the premier private music conservatories in the world, with nearly 250 faculty members and 120 staff members dedicated to shaping over 1,000 students from more than 50 countries into world-class musicians. The School offers a rewarding work experience at its campus set in an academic and cultural center in one of the world's greatest cities. Manhattan School of Music is an educational institution valuing diversity and the rich variety of thought and experience it brings to the School. MSM strives towards building a culture of inclusiveness by supporting the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce and by promoting an environment free from discrimination where all people are recognized and rewarded on the basis of individual performance.

Equal employment and equal educational opportunity have been and will continue to be fundamental principles at Manhattan School of Music, where employment and enrollment are based upon personal capabilities and qualifications without discrimination or harassment because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, the status of being transgender, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship or veteran status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law. Manhattan School of Music does not permit retaliation against individuals who oppose a discriminatory practice or participate in an investigation.

LOCATION

This position is in New York City.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Manhattan School of Music as well as the responsibilities and qualifications presented in the prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit:

[Associate Vice President of Philanthropy/Director of Development, Manhattan School of Music.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Steven Wallace:

[stevenwallace@aspenleadershipgroup.com.](mailto:stevenwallace@aspenleadershipgroup.com)

All inquiries will be held in confidence.