

**FAMILY CONNECTIONS**  
**Executive Director**

***Family Connections is seeking an effective and energetic leader who will set the stage for the organization to grow by increasing individual funding, enhancing community awareness, and strengthening operations.***

Family Connections knows that a healthy, positive family dynamic is key to a child's success. That is why Family Connections is a family learning community focused on discovery and growth for children *and* their parents/caregivers. What began in 1993 as a grassroots effort modeled on co-op preschools has evolved into a uniquely comprehensive, bi-lingual, parent-child education center in which parents and children attend programs together, learn together, and grow together – from cradle to college. Their *Parent Participation Preschool* provides enriching early learning experiences for birth-to-five year olds, resulting in children who arrive at kindergarten academically and socially ready to learn. At the same time, their *Parent Leadership Curriculum* and in depth family case management helps parents confidently and successfully embrace their role as their child's first teacher, most influential role model, and best advocate. After preschool, the *Young Scholars* program sustains positive family dynamics from kindergarten through high school so that Family Connections' graduates and their families have the tools to become the drivers of their own success and leaders in their extended communities.

Family Connections' track record of success stems from three research-based principles embraced by their founders nearly 25 years ago: (1) Parent involvement in a child's education is consistently, positively associated with a child's academic performance; (2) Without high-quality learning experiences and healthy relationships, at-risk children are less likely to grow into accomplished students, successful workers, and engaged citizens; (3) Babies are born learning, and for at-risk children, the achievement gap can be seen as early as at the of age nine months. Starting early, and involving parents throughout the process, can prevent the achievement gap of children of low-income families from ever taking root.

Family Connections currently operates in East Palo Alto, East Menlo Park, and Redwood City serving approximately 600 individuals per year. The organization has eight full-time, and eight part-time staff with an annual operating budget of approximately \$1.5M. Of that, approximately 55% is received from individual gifts and annual special events, 35% from government grants and contracts, and 10% from foundations.

Family Connections seeks to deepen its impact with the children and families it serves and increase the scale of its work. Through a comprehensive strategic planning process started in 2015, the board has identified five goals it wishes to achieve in the next five years: strengthening program quality; expanding operational capacity for growth; scaling and integrating the Young Scholars Program; developing a sustainability plan; and investing in facilities to support a high-quality program. By achieving these goals, it will continue to demonstrate its quality and sustainability in the field and will be positioned to grow its programs and reach in the community.

To that end, Family Connections is seeking an Executive Director who is a skilled fundraiser with strategic and organization sensibilities. The ED will provide leadership and rigor to help Family

Connections make progress towards achieving its goals by increasing individual and major donor giving, enhancing awareness, and strengthening operations.

## **ABOUT THE ROLE**

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will oversee the organization's fundraising, marketing, operations, finances and programs. S/he will ensure the delivery of high-quality programs while leading the organization into its next phase of growth with more structured systems and processes.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### LEADERSHIP & VISION

- In collaboration with the Board and staff, develop, update and implement the organization's strategic plan.
- Understand and keep abreast of the needs of low-income families and their children within the organization's service area; maintain a strong knowledge of significant trends and developments in early childhood education, K-12 student and parent needs and overall family dynamics.
- Strengthen the organization's infrastructure and organizational capacity to sustain and improve operational efficiency.

### FUNDRAISING

- Work with the Board and Director of Development to set fundraising goals and strategies to continue growing the funding base, which includes government, foundation and individual donors in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.
- Personally drive donor cultivation, stewardship and direct solicitations; seek to broaden fundraising activities in sophistication and scope as the organization's work evolves.
- Ensure successful adherence to grant and restricted giving agreements.

### COMMUNITY RELATIONS, VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Increase awareness of Family Connections' mission, programs and program effectiveness in the community and among funders and stakeholders; promote the organization as the preeminent provider and thought-leader for parent participation education programs for children of low-income families.
- Represent the organization before public agencies, foundation boards, funders, community partners, local school districts and other key organizations.
- Ensure Family Connections has clear and consistent marketing strategies and communications that further the mission.

### GENERAL MANAGEMENT, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

- Develop and support a culture and work environment that attracts, retains, and motivates a diverse and effective staff.
- Oversee recruitment, retention, and evaluation of staff; regularly review job duties and compensation and benefits to benchmark the organization against other Bay Area non-profits.
- Ensure that the day-to-day operations are professionally and efficiently organized to ensure compliance with agency contracts and relevant employment laws.
- With the Director of Finance, lead the budget and financial plans process; be accountable for the organization's adherence to a sustainable financial plan based on the

budget; oversee internal and external financial controls; prepare financial and operating reports for the board and stakeholders.

- Ensure facilities are maintained and operated to provide a safe, high-quality environment; ensure the stability of facilities' usage; remain attuned to the real estate community for potential new site/space availability.
- Improve how technology can be used in ways that benefit productivity and make the organization more efficient.

#### PROGRAM AND SERVICES

- Ensure the programs and services achieve the mission and purpose of Family Connections.
- Work with the programming staff to continuously evaluate and improve the quality and impact of programs; review to determine that they are financially sustainable.
- Encourage the experimentation and piloting of new innovative programs and services.

#### BOARD RELATIONS

- Secure the Board's trust and confidence; provide timely and concise communications on critical matters and financial and fundraising assessments; make clear and sound recommendations for Board action.
- With the Board Chair, coordinate the efforts of various committees and task forces, develop Board meeting agendas, schedules and retreats; attend Board meetings.
- Provide support and act as a liaison between the board, staff, and external stakeholders.
- Assist the Board in identifying and recruiting new Board members.

### **IDEAL EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The Executive Director should have the following experiences and qualifications:

- Strong leadership skills; knowledge of non-profit best practices; direct experience evolving operations from early-stage to the next phase of growth with more structured systems and processes.
- Proven managerial and operational effectiveness in organizations or departments of similarly sized budgets and staff; financial and budgeting experience in the not-for-profit, public or private sectors.
- A successful track record in attracting financial support from individuals, foundations, businesses, and/or government sources; demonstrated results in personally cultivating and sustaining donors; experience managing funds from public agencies.
- Human resources knowledge; adept at staff training and development, motivating, support and problem solving.
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills; a confident public speaker and presenter; the ability to work effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Thoughtful and strategic approach to building organizations and programs to address community needs.
- A minimum of a bachelor's degree. Experience in education or human services sector would be a plus.

### **PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

- An entrepreneurial spirit and balanced risk-taker; one with imagination who can see the possibilities of serving people more effectively through innovative programs and services.

- Sets the bar high for him/herself and the team; a “doer” with a willingness to work hands-on without micromanaging; a high energy level, upbeat personality; values and appreciates hard work and commitment.
- Results-oriented; adept at planning, prioritizing, organizing and following through.
- Straight-forward, transparent, listens well and provides feedback when and where appropriate, and imparts trust and integrity; open to different points of view.
- Flexible, but with strong time management and prioritization skills.
- A high level of emotional intelligence; committed to developing staff and treating them with respect and kindness.
- An individual possessing patience and a sense of humor, who is able to maintain balance and perspective.

To apply, nominate others or for further information, please contact:

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