



# Opportunity Profile

Executive Search for:  
**Chief Executive Officer**



## **Chief Executive Officer**

Make-A-Wish® Iowa

[www.iowa.wish.org](http://www.iowa.wish.org)

Des Moines, IA Area

### **About Make-A-Wish® Iowa**

Make-A-Wish® Iowa (MAW IA) is headquartered in Urbandale, Iowa. The chapter is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit serving the entire state, one of 60 chapters in the country chartered and networked by Make-A-Wish® America headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona. It enjoys a powerful brand, name recognition and an enormously appealing mission: "Together we create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses."

The Iowa Chapter was founded in 1985 and in 2020 celebrated its 35th anniversary. It has a stellar reputation in the communities they serve, a budget of \$4 million, with no debt, about 9 months of operating reserve, and a staff of 16. Proudly, the organization plans to grant 180 wishes statewide this year. Its programs are delivered by approximately 350 volunteers across the state, and it is governed by a volunteer board of 17. Staff, board, families, and volunteers all report high levels of satisfaction in annual assessments.

The chapter has seen tremendous growth for the past five years utilizing sound strategy and focused fundraising efforts, growing income and program services annually. It is funded entirely by donations and has no tax-based revenue. For more information on programs, please see our Web site at [www.iowa.wish.org](http://www.iowa.wish.org) .

The challenges that await the next leader include initiatives to provide stronger geographical outreach across the state, building on the momentum of revenue growth to provide more stable reserves and endowment growth, building an increasingly strategic and influential board, growing a stable major gifts effort, increasing the number of corporate/individual donors for revenue diversity, and continued focus on identifying every eligible child in Iowa who deserves their one true wish.

Des Moines, Iowa and its surrounding communities, is an extraordinary location for individuals who enjoy outdoor recreation in all seasons; who value a community that is safe, clean, and supportive of families and children; and boasts vibrant arts, music, and cultural events. For more information on the area please refer to: [www.dsmpartnership.com](http://www.dsmpartnership.com)

## **OPPORTUNITY OVERVIEW**

The Iowa chapter of one of the nation's most recognized nonprofits seeks a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to successfully guide the chapter into the future. The organization serves kids and families at a time of dire need—when they are in the midst of a critical illness. With a dedicated staff, a strong board, and an engaged volunteer force, the selected candidate will be well positioned to make a significant statewide impact. This is an ideal position for a highly relational, empathetic and driven leader with a track record of achievement and impact.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS**

The ideal candidate will have the relevant experience and skills to effectively carry out the key accountabilities of the position which include: Strategy and Execution, Team Leadership and Management, Board Engagement, Financial Oversight, Funding and Development, Operational Excellence, and Brand Ambassadorship.

### **Funding and Development**

Oversee the execution of and play a key role in the fundraising and development plan to sustain and grow the impact of the organization, by creating and strengthening key community partnerships. Play an active role in key "asks" to accelerate sponsorships, increasing major gifts, and guiding diversified strategies for raising money.

### **Team Leadership and Management**

Foster a culture that ensures high levels of engagement, retention, growth, and performance through investing, empowering, and leading the team of staff and volunteers.

### **Board Engagement**

Recruit, retain, and engage an effective Board of Directors and provide the resources and support to ensure they are appropriately informed, properly equipped to govern the organization, and optimally engaged in utilizing strengths to advance the mission.

### **Brand Ambassador**

Represent the organization through effective outreach and engagement to build trust, protect brand integrity, increase collaboration, inspire action, build passion for the mission both internally and externally, and increase statewide brand awareness.

### **Strategy and Execution**

Ensure the co-creation and execution of a clear and actionable strategy to make significant and measurable progress to achieve the vision.

## **Financial Oversight**

Ensure sustainable growth by providing strong financial oversight, internal controls, P & L management, setting and holding team accountable to financial goals, transparency with staff and board as appropriate, and staying 100% compliant with all applicable rules and regulations.

## **Operational Excellence**

Provide operational oversight to ensure staff and volunteers have the systems, processes, support, and inspiration to consistently provide a transformative wish experience for every eligible child and family.

## **IS THIS ROLE THE RIGHT FIT FOR YOU?**

**The Board of Directors sees the ideal candidate for the position matching as many aspects as possible in the bullets below:**

- Passion for and commitment to Make-A-Wish® Iowa's mission.
- Executive or management experience at a respected nonprofit or public institution, or significant nonprofit experience developed through voluntary service in the sector.
- Demonstrated results in major gift cultivation and solicitation and working knowledge of fundraising principles as they impact an organization that raises 100 percent of its funding from private sources.
- Exceptional leadership and communication skills, including a proven track record in leading and growing organizations.
- Has worked closely and positively with governing/fundraising boards and effectively developed and strengthened those boards.
- Is a consensus builder, team builder, and a coach when working with paid and unpaid staff.
- Attracts and retains top talent and builds strong and enduring relationships.
- Possesses working knowledge of the legal, fiscal and regulatory environment in which a nonprofit operates.
- Strong business and budget management skills.
- Strategic thinker who can also plan and execute short-term objectives in pursuit of a long-term vision and create action plans that yield results.
- Has personal ethics and integrity that reflect positively on the mission and the organization; is a passionate and convincing champion for the mission; is involved in and respected in the community; and understands the local cultures.
- Is able to navigate enthusiastically and collegially in the network that comprises the national organization.
- Local relationships and knowledge of Iowa strongly preferred.
- Bachelor's degree required, with an advanced degree preferred.

If you can develop a talented and dedicated staff, create a compelling vision for the future, and have a fiscally-sound management approach, this position may be a fit for you. While previous nonprofit CEO experience is highly desirable, individuals with a strong record of performance are encouraged to apply.

## **COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

Make-A-Wish® Iowa offers the following benefit package for this position:

- Competitive salary based on experience
- Medical, vision, and dental insurance
- 401K contributions
- Life Insurance
- Short- and long-term disability
- Flexible Spending Account
- 9 Paid holidays
- Paid time off (PTO)
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

## **The Search:**

[Sagency](#), an executive search and leadership consulting firm, has been retained by Make-A-Wish® Iowa to conduct this search for their next Chief Executive Officer. Sagency consultants will review and evaluate all interested parties to help the search committee review a final group for consideration.

The search will be conducted in a professional manner and all potential candidates will be given consideration by the search firm and Make-A-Wish® Iowa. Candidate conversations and information will be handled with great discretion and confidentiality. Sagency and Make-A-Wish® Iowa are equal opportunity employers.

If after reading this Opportunity Profile, you sense that your experience, skills, and passion are a good match for Make-A-Wish® Iowa and this role, we would like to engage with you. Please read below for the first part of the application and selection process.

## **The First Five Steps of the Application and Selection Process:**

**Step 1:** Interested candidates complete the online application which can be found at <https://bit.ly/38ycj1g>

- Upload your resume and cover letter
- The online application will be posted until the position is filled.

**Step 2:** A Sagency Executive Search Consultant may schedule an initial phone call with qualified applicants.

**Step 3:** A Sagency Executive Search Consultant will schedule a 60-minute interview with specific candidates.

**Step 4:** If you are selected and choose to move on to interviews with the search committee, you will be asked to complete an online assessment.

**Step 5:** First round interviews with the Make-A-Wish® Iowa search committee.

Please contact Mike Meagher at 701.388.0650 or [mike@sagencytalent.com](mailto:mike@sagencytalent.com) or Tami Kilzer at 701.371.3324 or [tami@sagencytalent.com](mailto:tami@sagencytalent.com) with any questions or inquiries. Thank you for your time and your interest in this role.