Job / Position Title: **Special Events Manager**
Department: Development
Supervisor: Director of Philanthropy & Special Events
Status & Classification: Full-Time, Exempt
Date: November 2026

Together, we create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses. From our humble beginnings with one boy's wish to be a police officer, we have evolved to be one of the world's leading children's charities, serving children in every community in the United States and its territories. With the help of generous donors and 500+ regional volunteers, Make-A-Wish Texas Gulf Coast and Louisiana grants more than 600 children's wishes each year.

Position Summary:

The Special Events Manager is responsible for the fundraising and operational success of key special events for Make-A-Wish Texas Gulf Coast & Louisiana. This role combines event fundraising, auction strategy, sponsorship development, donor stewardship, and event execution to create exceptional experiences that generate significant revenue and strengthen relationships with donors, sponsors, volunteers, and wish families.

The Special Events Manager will play a lead role in the planning and execution of Wish Ball, with direct ownership of the silent and live auction, raffle, and other assigned revenue-generating activities. The manager will also spearhead internal event logistics for the chapter's Clay Shoot and Trees of Joy events, coordinating staff, vendors, volunteers, timelines, budgets, and operational workstreams to ensure seamless execution.

The role carries direct revenue responsibility generating $350,000 in annual revenue through auction procurement, gala sponsorship, individual donations, and external fundraisers.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Wish Ball

- Lead the overall silent and live auction strategy, from procurement through fulfillment.
- Identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward auction donors and prospects.
- Develop compelling auction packages and experiences that maximize both mission engagement and revenue.
- Build and maintain a strategic procurement pipeline, including renewals of prior auction donors and acquisition of new donors.
- Partner with volunteers, board members, event committees, and staff to expand procurement opportunities.
- Track fair-market value, in-kind contributions, restrictions, donor information, expiration dates, and fulfillment requirements.
- Analyze auction performance after each event and use results to improve package selection, pricing, placement, and future solicitation.
- Manage post-event donor acknowledgment and purchaser fulfillment.
- Partner with Development leadership on event sponsorship solicitation, renewals, upgrades, and new business development.
- Work closely with Communications on event collateral, auction descriptions, sponsor recognition, and other event materials.
- Coordinate with staff to incorporate wish families and mission moments throughout the guest experience.
- Support vendor coordination, check requests, payments, event timelines, and other event-production responsibilities.
- Participate in weekly Wish Ball planning meetings and ensure assigned milestones remain on schedule.

Shoot for the Stars Clay Tournament

- Serve as the internal event logistics lead for the “Shoot for the Stars” Clay Tournament.
- Develop and manage the master event timeline and internal project plan.
- Coordinate staff responsibilities and ensure deadlines and deliverables are clearly assigned.
- Manage venue/course relationships and event-related vendors.
- Coordinate registration, signage, food and beverage, volunteer needs, auction/raffle activities, sponsor activation, awards, and day-of logistics.
- Lead internal event meetings and communicate progress, risks, and outstanding needs.
- Develop and manage raffle opportunities and other assigned event-day revenue streams.
- Solicit assigned event sponsors and work collaboratively with the Development team to identify and secure new corporate partners.
- Manage expenses and identify in-kind opportunities that improve the event's net revenue.
- Coordinate day-of staffing and serve as a primary event decision-maker.

Trees of Joy

- Spearhead the internal planning and logistics for Trees of Joy, working across Development, Mission Delivery, Community Engagement, Communications, Operations, volunteers, and chapter leadership.
- Develop and manage the master project plan, timeline, and run of show.
- Coordinate venue logistics, floorplans, décor, signage, power, audiovisual needs, food and beverage, registration, and event supplies.
- Establish clear staff workstreams and accountability for all major event components.
- Coordinate sponsor arrival, check-in, tree decorating, sponsor activation, and event-day experience.
- Partner with Mission Delivery and Community Engagement to ensure a thoughtful and seamless experience for wish children and families.
- Coordinate volunteer assignments and day-of staffing.
- Oversee tree staging, packaging, loading, and delivery logistics.
- Manage vendors, expenses, in-kind support, and operational needs.
- Lead event-day troubleshooting and ensure teams understand escalation and decision-making protocols.
- Conduct a post-event debrief and document lessons learned and recommendations for the following year.

Additional Event and Chapter Support

- Provide planning, logistical, fundraising, and day-of support for additional events, campaigns, and initiatives as developed by the Development team and chapter leadership.
- Anticipate the evolving needs of the chapter and proactively identify opportunities to strengthen departmental and chapter-wide event execution.
- Collaborate across departments to support emerging priorities, special projects, and mission-related events that advance the chapter’s strategic and fundraising goals.
- Maintain flexibility in responsibilities and perform other duties as assigned based on the needs of the organization.

Knowledge, Skills, and Qualifications

- Passion for the Make-A-Wish mission and commitment to serving children and families.
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent combination of education and relevant experience.
- 3+ years of experience in nonprofit fundraising, special events, donor relations, corporate partnerships, hospitality, sales, or related work.
- Strong project and event management skills, with the ability to manage multiple priorities, stakeholders, and competing deadlines in a fast-paced environment.
- Demonstrated ability to generate revenue through sponsorships, sales, fundraising, donor solicitation, or related-activities.
- Excellent written, verbal, presentation, public speaking, organizational, and interpersonal communication skills.
- Ability to develop and maintain strong professional relationships with corporate partners, donors, vendors, volunteers, and community leaders.
- Exceptional attention to detail while maintaining focus on broader event, revenue, and organizational objectives.
- Strong customer service skills and professionalism when representing Make-A-Wish internally and externally.

- Ability to exercise discretion, maintain confidentiality, and demonstrate sound judgment and personal integrity.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office suite; experience with OneCause; experience with Salesforce or a comparable CRM strongly preferred. Experience with Canva a plus.
- Willingness and ability to work occasional evenings and weekends.
- Adhere to all Make-A-Wish® America performance standards and Make-A-Wish® Texas Gulf Coast and Louisiana policies and procedures.

Physical Requirements

- Physical agility to push/pull, squat, twist, turn, bend, stoop and to reach overhead.
- Regular attendance is an essential function of the job. Reasonable accommodation may be made to assist individuals with disabilities to perform essential job functions.
- Must possess a valid driver's license, maintain a driving record in good standing, and be able to operate a vehicle for work-related travel as needed.

Working Conditions

This position will be based in the Make-A-Wish Stafford office. The position requires the individual to work in an office environment in a shared office space. Incumbent must be willing to work some nights/weekends and travel up to 25% within the territory.

We offer a comprehensive benefits package including 100% employer paid for healthcare, dental, and vision insurance; basic life insurance; short-term and long-term disability. Medical coverage for employee's family members is available through company policy.

After one year of service, employees become eligible to participate in a company 401(k) retirement savings plan, with an employer match.

We offer full-time employees a hybrid work schedule, beginning with one remote day per week, moving to two remote days per week after six months. Our chapter provides generous paid time off, as well as 14-16 paid holidays in a calendar year, including a week near the end of December.

Join Our Team of Inspired People Transforming Lives

We are more than a great place to volunteer—our work is life changing. We are an inclusive and diverse group of people who, through a mosaic of backgrounds, thoughts and experiences are united in purposeful work. We are fueled and guided by our values - values that are represented in the inspired people we work with and the transformational work we do every day.

We respect and ensure equal opportunity, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, perceived disability and other legally protected characteristics.

**NOTE TO APPLICANTS

All applications much be submitted via our ADP Career Center. Please make sure to submit your application via the portal.