POSITION DESCRIPTION

FOR THE POSITION OF

CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER

WAMU 88.5
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY RADIO

2022
POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION
Chief Advancement Officer

ORGANIZATION
WAMU 88.5 American University Radio

REPORTS TO
Erika Pulley-Hayes | General Manager

LOCATION
Washington, D.C.

WEBSITE
wamu.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW
THE OPPORTUNITY AND EXPECTATIONS
CANDIDATE PROFILE
SEARCH TEAM
ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

A Storied National Public Radio and Media Presence

△ Leading public radio station for NPR news and information in the greater Washington, DC area with a devoted following in DC, Maryland, and Virginia
△ 60+ years as a trusted public news source in one of the world’s media capitals
△ Consistently ranks among country’s top stations in audience share and size
△ Award-winning programming ranging from national talk shows to local news and podcasts
△ Close, unique working relationship with NPR and American University (AU)
△ Owns DCist and seeking to expand its digital presence
△ 100+ employees, annual revenue of $35 million

A Station with a History of Impact

When WAMU 88.5 signed on the air in October 1961, it did so with a commitment to reporting the news. In those early years, WAMU was a small, primarily volunteer-run station that aired bluegrass music much of the day, interspersed with commercial-style headline news. Over the years, WAMU has evolved and its commitment and impact as a trusted source for news has increased exponentially.

WAMU became a charter member of NPR in 1971, airing its first national news program All Things Considered, along with a local show called Spirits Known and Unknown. Over the next few decades WAMU expanded its focus as a source for news, producing its own shows such as The Derek McGinty Show, The Diane Rehm Show, and Metro Connection, and airing major national news programs such as Morning Edition.

More recently, WAMU has emphasized accountability journalism: stories that help people understand the issues that shape Washington. This is the strong history on which WAMU is building — and on which it must build: a history founded on a civic duty to provide accurate, fair, honest, and thorough reporting; a history of providing journalism focused on issues and events that affect lives every day.
The Path Forward

Under new leadership, the vision for WAMU is to become an essential and trusted source of information that empowers civic and community engagement. To accomplish this, WAMU must become a stronger provider of broadcast and digital news and a major convener of inclusive conversations. WAMU is evolving from a radio station that provides news into a multifaceted media company integral to the quality of life for the more than six million residents who live in and around Washington, D.C. WAMU must serve as a defining force for what it means to be a Washingtonian.

Leadership

Erika Pulley-Hayes | General Manager

Erika Pulley-Hayes has been working in public media since 2005. She came to WAMU from Community Communications, Inc., in Orlando, Florida. As President and CEO, she managed two NPR member stations, WMFE in Orlando and WMFV in The Villages, and was responsible for all operations that support their local news and information service.

She previously served as Radio Vice President at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) where she provided strategic leadership to the public radio system by developing initiatives designed to drive innovation and enhance service. She has developed programs that have enabled dozens of stations to deliver fresh and relevant content across media platforms to local communities and national audiences. She was instrumental in CPB’s early journalism investments made in response to the demise of local newspapers and support of a more informed society. She was also responsible for developing the policies that govern CPB’s Community Service Grant program which, as public media’s largest funding source, supports over 400 organizations operating public radio stations nationwide.

Erika began her career at a Fortune 500 pharmaceutical company where she negotiated corporate agreements for commercial transactions, administered governance matters with the board of directors, and ensured political and regulatory compliance. Erika later managed legal operations of a small clinical research organization in Northern Virginia overseeing risk management, corporate housekeeping and commercial contracts generating approximately $40 million annually.

Erika serves on the boards of directors of NPR and Eastern Region Public Media. She is also a director of 826 National, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping students improve their expository and creative writing skills in nine cities across the United States. Erika holds an MBA and an MS in nonprofit management from the University of Maryland University College. She also holds a BA from William Paterson University in her home state of New Jersey.
THE OPPORTUNITY AND EXPECTATIONS

WAMU seeks a strategic, entrepreneurial, self-starter to serve as Chief Advancement Officer (CAO). At a time when public radio has never been more important, WAMU’s potential has never been greater. Under the visionary new leadership of General Manager Erika Pulley-Hayes, appointed in 2021, and with the support of American University, WAMU is embracing its role to provide unprecedented value and service to the region and to serve as a model for impact and innovation among its public media peers. By leading integrated marketing, communications, and revenue-generating efforts, the CAO will be a key figure in increasing the station’s ability to provide greater access and deliver more comprehensive and actionable information on issues most critical to Washingtonians.

Reporting directly to the WAMU General Manager, the CAO is responsible for planning, managing, and executing a comprehensive, diversified, and strategic advancement effort that sustains and grows the WAMU brand, civic and community engagement, and revenues. The CAO will lead a newly established, 20-person advancement team, including two direct reports, and collaborate with an outsourced corporate underwriting team, ensuring effective collaboration across teams to optimize results in all aspects of WAMU’s revenue cycles and streams. They will work closely with the General Manager to develop and execute a strategic, effective plan for marketing and fundraising spanning the areas of branding and engagement, development, and corporate underwriting.

The CAO will inspire a sophisticated staff and oversee a comprehensive philanthropic revenue program that includes a membership program with approximately 70,000 active donors; individual major giving, institutional giving, planned giving, and special events. As the organization transforms into a platform-agnostic media organization, the CAO will help drive digital innovation and integration in philanthropy, collaborating with stakeholders across the organization to develop and execute robust digital fundraising strategies. Capitalizing on WAMU’s presence in the region and beyond, the CAO will create strategies to significantly increase major and principal gifts from individual and institutional sources, bringing greater balance to WAMU’s revenue streams that have primarily been driven by membership and corporate underwriting to date. This individual will personally cultivate and manage a portfolio of leading major gift prospects. The CAO is responsible for maintaining and growing an overall revenue stream that has reached approximately $30 million annually, and they will be the principal leader of any future fundraising campaign efforts undertaken by WAMU.
A key objective for the CAO will be the ongoing integration of branding and fundraising related to the DCist local news platform with that of the broader WAMU. With a DCist monthly audience of 1.5 million and morning drivetime listenership that engages 1 out of every 6 Washingtonians, the full leveraging of this collective presence holds tremendous potential for WAMU.

The CAO will serve on WAMU’s executive team and as a valuable partner to the General Manager, a solutions-oriented leader who is highly supportive of fundraising. In close collaboration with the General Manager, the CAO will oversee the management of WAMU’s Board of Advisors. Supported by AU and the University’s Board of Trustees, the Board of Advisors provides strategic planning, financial acumen, major-gift fundraising, and connections to high-profile figures in the region and around the country to strengthen WAMU’s regional and national roles.

WAMU draws strength from being a part of AU and the bold vision it, too, is embarking on. AU fundraising is driven by the belief that the country needs active citizens engaged in building a stronger nation and world. WAMU shares that vision and call to action. The CAO will collaborate and coordinate fundraising activities with the AU Office of Development and Alumni Relations leadership and staff, as appropriate, to successfully build and grow WAMU’s revenue opportunity to its greatest potential.

The successful candidate will be an intellectually curious, broad thinker, with a demonstrated ability in securing major and principal gifts. This dynamic, ambitious, collaborative leader will drive and inspire a culture of philanthropy and collaboration internally and across AU.

**Principal Duties and Responsibilities**

Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the principal duties and responsibilities.

**Strategy and Planning** (estimated 20% of time)

- Create comprehensive annual and multi-year philanthropic revenue plans, which may include a future capital campaign, drawing from best practices in the modern media and fundraising landscape to increase membership to at least 110,000.

- Advise on the growth of digital philanthropic revenue. As a key priority, identify, develop, oversee, and analyze the execution of innovative digital strategies.

- Lead the development and execution of cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship strategies for existing and new major donors, expanding the pool of mid-level donors.
Work closely with the WAMU Director of Development to establish a moves management program to bring relevant donors through the funding pipeline to major and planned gifts.

Oversee creation of plans to fund major initiatives.

**Leadership and Management** (estimated at 40% of time)

- Actively participate with other senior advisors to lead increasingly prominent public media enterprises in a national and global capital.
- Serve as a key “brand ambassador,” communicating WAMU’s strategic vision and aspirations to external and internal stakeholders.
- Oversee hiring, training, management, and evaluation of a dynamic, innovative, high-performing, cohesive, and diverse advancement team and oversight of the outsourced business underwriting team. Promote professional growth of team members through continuing education, coaching, and mentoring. Motivate and inspire team members in the ongoing evolution of all aspects of the advancement program, ensuring clear expectations, accountability, and appropriate recognition of success. Set appropriate annual and long-term goals, monitoring progress on a regular basis in order to maximize staff performance.
- Plan and oversee the departmental budget.
- Collaborate with the AU Office of the Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations and university legal and financial staff, as needed.
- Collaborate with the national NPR Development Division to identify and optimize mutually beneficial opportunities for grassroots or major gift fundraising.
- Champion digital channels as a critical and growing source of philanthropic revenue.
- Oversee all facets of WAMU’s individual and institutional giving programs and staff. Provide strategic guidance and mentorship to development staff, as appropriate, in managing their portfolios of current and prospective donors, and corresponding initiatives for identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship thereof. Ensure alignment of major giving prospects with volunteer leadership opportunities, committees, activities, and/or events that are appropriate to their interests or potential interests.
- Develop and oversee prospect research activities, internally and in partnership with the AU Office of Development and Alumni Relations and NPR Development Division. Ensure ongoing evaluation of opportunities to deepen relationships with the existing donor base and appropriate integration of giving programs to facilitate progressive levels of donor engagement and philanthropy.
- Develop and oversee sophisticated stewardship programs to represent WAMU and AU positively and deepen relationships with supporters.
Collaborate with the Senior Director of Branding & Engagement to plan, promote, and execute an integrated and effective external engagement strategy. Ensure alignment across all messaging platforms to support increased engagement between WAMU and its various constituencies. Drive continual innovation in marketing and communications, including adoption of cutting-edge digital strategies to support and optimize initiatives. Ensure all communications comply with applicable university and government standards.

Ensure efficient planning and execution of special events, safeguarding return on investment and that events appropriately relate to donor discovery, cultivation, recognition, and/or solicitation of major gifts, collaborating with colleagues and Board members as appropriate.

Ensure the collection, analysis, and interpretation of market data to identify challenges and opportunities for growth and to inform evolving marketing activity.

**Fundraising (estimated at 30% of time)**

- Manage a portfolio of current and prospective donors at the highest levels of capacity, including individual and institutional sources, moving them through the stages of cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.

- Strategically partner with the General Manager and key university leaders to identify, recruit, and cultivate a dedicated WAMU Board of Advisors designed to provide strategic guidance and philanthropic support. Work closely with Board members to expand WAMU’s base of support.

- In collaboration with the WAMU advancement team, as well as with AU Office of Development and Alumni Relations, as necessary, create and promote effective cultivation, solicitation, or advocacy opportunities that involve the General Manager, Board of Advisors, AU leaders, or other senior stakeholders. Manage connections between prospective and current funders and these leaders, implementing strategic communications, preparing reports, briefings, and other materials in support of this involvement, and ensuring additional staffing, as necessary. Exercise sound judgment and efficiently communicate prospect strategies when involving administrative or volunteer leaders.

- Ensure coordination of fundraising activities with the General Manager, Chief Content Officer, and AU Office of Development and Alumni Relations leadership and staff, as appropriate.

- Pilot digitally driven fundraising campaigns and scale successful digital experiments.

**Other (estimated at 10% of time)**

- Other related duties.
CANDIDATE PROFILE

Professional Skills and Competencies

▲ Ten or more years of progressively responsible experience in nonprofit fundraising, including experience with the following: individual giving, institutional giving, major gifts, membership/annual giving, planned giving, capital campaign (planning, execution, closure), donor and board relations, stewardship, events, and development operations. Highly experienced in digital fundraising, with a forward-thinking, digitally savvy mindset. Demonstrated success in change management and in setting and achieving ambitious philanthropic goals.

▲ Knowledge of and fundamental adherence to the principles, ethics, and best practices of modern advancement, including the integration of corresponding functional areas and programs to engage stakeholders, cultivate interest and commitment, and diversify and grow the funding base.

▲ Demonstrated success in developing a strong and winning case for support, successful communications plan, and strategic, innovative fundraising plans, and executing those plans to grow fundraising and exceed goals. Demonstrated experience cultivating, training, building relationships with, and working in collaboration with executives, senior staff, and board/volunteer leaders on advancement-related activities, providing them with quality support and intelligence and increasing their comfort with and success in fundraising.

▲ Successful track record of personally identifying, cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major gifts from individual and institutional donors at the level of six to seven-figures and greater.

▲ Proven ability to build, manage, evaluate, and develop a diverse team of advancement professionals and contribute to the ongoing fostering of a high-functioning, results-oriented, multiracial/multicultural workforce. Agility in handling both strategic and day-to-day functions. Track record of managing programs, staff resources, and budgets judiciously and resourcefully, while maintaining clear goals and metrics, shared accountability, and an ethos of continuous improvement.

▲ Demonstrated ability in planning and executing integrated, strategic marketing and communications in support of achieving constituency engagement, fundraising, event, programmatic, branding, or other organizational goals. Experience identifying and coaching project spokespeople. A functional understanding of how to effectively leverage various communication mediums and distribution channels for optimal exposure and impact.

▲ Strong facilitator and coordinator skills with outstanding leadership abilities and interpersonal skills; must have credibility, good judgment, integrity, a commitment to DEI, and the ability to inspire trust and motivate others.

▲ Demonstrated ability to integrate data into decision-making and strategy development.

▲ Working knowledge of modern data management practices and innovations that can streamline and integrate advancement processes.

▲ A forward thinker with a track record of utilizing new methods of constituent engagement and connectivity.
Additional Personal Characteristics

▲ Passion for WAMU’s mission, high-quality journalism, and the broader public media landscape.

▲ Unimpeachable integrity and commitment to the highest standards of professionalism; mature judgment in handling sensitive information. Values-driven, committed to personal and professional development. Leads by example and with humility. Elevates organizational goals and values beyond personal gain, ensuring efforts are mission-focused and quality driven.

▲ Emotionally intelligent leader, with the interpersonal skills to develop and sustain impactful relationships with an array of diverse stakeholders and constituencies, including sophisticated, high-level civic, cultural, and corporate leaders in a major metropolitan area. Culturally competent with respect to issues such as racial, cultural, religious, sexual, and gender identity. A sense of humor and perspective, and a penchant for transparency, consultation, and collaboration.

▲ Excellent interpersonal, written, and verbal communications skills, with the capability to serve as a highly visible and public-facing ambassador of WAMU. Demonstrated negotiation and persuasion skills.

▲ An energetic self-starter who is adept at planning, prioritizing, organizing, and following through. Demonstrates strong analytical and reasoning abilities.

WAMU Diversity Statement

WAMU is committed to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace – one that better represents the region – and is committed to reflecting and amplifying the experiences of our local communities accurately and fairly. To do so, we are actively focused on improving our culture, adapting how we go about our work and holding ourselves accountable. We are actively implementing the recommendations of our Workplace Culture Task Force. Click here to review recommendations from our Workplace Culture Taskforce. WAMU welcomes our members, listeners and readers to follow our work and join us in this effort.

Compensation

The annual salary for the role is currently anticipated to range from $220,000 to $240,000, commensurate with experience.

American University offers a competitive benefits package, including a 200% matching retirement plan, tuition benefits for full-time staff and their families, several leadership development certificates, and has been recognized by the American Heart Association as a fit-friendly worksite. Click here to learn about AU’s unique benefit options.
American University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution that operates in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The university does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), age, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, personal appearance, gender identity and expression, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, veteran status, an individual’s genetic information or any other bases under federal or local laws (collectively “Protected Bases”) in its programs and activities.

SEARCH TEAM - DIVERSIFIED SEARCH GROUP

WAMU and American University have retained the DSG Fundraising & Advancement Practice of the Diversified Search Group to assist in this confidential search process. Inquiries, nominations, and applications (current resumes and cover letters) may be submitted via the following link – https://talent-profile.diversifiedsearchgroup.com/search/v2/19034, or directed to one or more members of the search team:

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