



POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MUDDY SNEAKERS
North Carolina

Career Opportunity

Muddy Sneakers, a North Carolina-based environmental education organization, seeks a passionate, experienced nonprofit youth environmental leader to serve as its next Executive Director. The ideal candidate is a builder and entrepreneurial leader with a proven, successful fundraising track record and expertise in creating and implementing an organization's strategic plan. This experienced full-time Executive Director will provide strategic, operational, financial, revenue generation and external leadership ensuring that Muddy Sneakers achieves measurable educational impact while operating within a sustainable financial model.

Mission: Muddy Sneakers' mission is to awaken in children a deeply felt connection with the natural world - one that inspires curiosity, stimulates learning, and brings new life to classroom performance.

Reporting Structure: The Executive Director reports to a board of nine directors and leads six direct reports including Chief of Staff & Operations, Director of Development, Executive Administrator & Human Resources Manager, Bookkeeper, Mountains Program Manager, and Piedmont Program Manager.

Total Staff and Budget: 14 staff members and an annual budget of \$1.1 million.

Salary: The salary is commensurate with experience and starts in the \$120,000 range.

Benefits: Benefits include a medical plan, a 3% 401K match, long-term disability, 20 vacation days, 13 paid holidays plus the last week of December, and a cell phone stipend.

Working Environment/Location: Remote/Hybrid (must be visible at programming events and attend some NC General Assembly sessions in person as well as donor and partner meetings).

Key Responsibilities of the Executive Director

The Executive Director must possess the talent to listen, lead, and communicate effectively to build strong relationships with multiple constituencies, including the board, staff, donors, partners, public school systems, government officials, public land partners, and other community leaders.

Strategic Leadership & Governance

- **Vision, Mission, and Strategy Development:** Working with the board, staff, clients, and key stakeholders, create and implement a strategic plan that includes measurable goals and outcomes.
- **Board Engagement:** Continue to cultivate a healthy board-staff connection and support the recruitment and diversification of the board.
- **Program quality, evaluation, and student safety:** Working with the Program Director, ensure programs are safe, educationally rigorous, aligned with North Carolina science standards, responsive to school partners, and evaluated using meaningful student, teacher, operational, and financial measures.

External Relations & Fundraising

- **Resource Development:** In partnership with the board and development staff, drive fundraising initiatives. Maintain an active portfolio of major donors, institutional funders, corporate partners, and public-sector relationships; participate directly in cultivation, solicitation, stewardship, and grant strategy.
- **Government funding and public accountability:** Continue to build relationships with elected officials and advocate at the state legislative level and the Department of Public Instruction for funding. Maintain productive, nonpartisan relationships with state agencies, legislators, local governments, and public education partners; overseeing compliance, reporting, and stewardship associated with government appropriations and public grants in tandem with the Director of Development and Finance Director.
- **School and land-partner relationships:** Ensure the organization maintains durable partnerships with school districts, principals, teachers, outdoor sites, colleges, municipalities, and land-management agencies.

Financial Management & Operations

- **Fiscal Management:** Oversee finance systems to ensure that income is managed wisely to serve the organization's goals, and that systems and staff are in place to accurately monitor, assess, and manage financial health.
- **Technology and organizational systems:** Ensure that technology, data systems, internal controls, documentation, and workflows support a distributed organization. This is especially important with regional staff, hybrid work, seasonal employees, school data, and field operations.
- **Strengthen risk management and compliance:** Oversee organizational risk management, including legal compliance, insurance, youth safety, financial controls, cybersecurity, and emergency preparedness.

Human Resources & Culture

- **Human Resources Management:** Maintain strong internal leadership built on teamwork and collaborative decision-making with an emphasis on staff leadership development activities that upgrade employee skills, motivate performance, and promote staff retention and morale.
- **Equity and Values Alignment:** Apply best practices in equitable leadership and management: translating equity and inclusion into plans for staff recruitment, development, retention, and strategy. Lead efforts to operationalize organizational values and navigate complexities in today's environment.
- **Staff Culture:** Practice an inclusive leadership style to empower, develop, recruit, and retain an expanding staff and instructor base, and systematize effective internal communications and workflows.

The Ideal Candidate Profile

Qualifications & Strengths

The ideal candidate will have demonstrated knowledge of and passion for environmental education and youth programs, alongside a successful record of nonprofit senior leadership, working with a board of directors, managing staff, fundraising, and interacting with the NC General Assembly. The ideal candidate will possess the following qualifications:

- Five years plus experience as a nonprofit Executive Director or senior nonprofit leader.
- Dynamic, visionary, high-level strategic thinker with the ability to collaborate with board and staff to envision and convey the organization's strategic future to partners, donors, and communities across the state.
- Excellence in organizational management and time management with the ability to recruit, coach, motivate and inspire staff to continue to develop a high-performing team.
- Strong fiscal management expertise and experience creating and monitoring budgets in partnership with board committees.
- Experience identifying and soliciting funding from individuals, corporations, foundations, and government entities at the federal, state, and local levels in tandem with board members and the Development Director.
- Environmental or experiential education: Outdoor, youth-serving, or field-based programming preferred.
- Strong written and oral communication skills; a persuasive and passionate communicator with excellent interpersonal skills and ability to speak confidently in public forums.
- Confident, patient, and compassionate resilience creating a sense of inclusion and connection for all people.
- Ability to travel throughout North Carolina working remotely and attending in-person meetings with staff, donors, partners, programming, and events.
- Must live in NC; Triangle/Triad area preferred.
- Bachelor's Degree or comparable work experience; master's degree and/or doctorate preferred.
- Strong alignment to the mission, vision, and core values.

About Muddy Sneakers

Muddy Sneakers is an outdoor science education program that serves second- through fifth-grade students attending public schools across the state of North Carolina. Through their innovative programming, students explore the essential science standards set by the NC Department of Public Instruction using hands-on, experiential outdoor learning.

With a vision for continued regional growth and additional field offices, Muddy Sneakers is primed to serve more students across North Carolina while prioritizing organizational sustainability as it enters its 19th year. The organization has 9-person full-time and 5-person part-time staff and a \$1.1M annual budget.

Want to know more? Visit www.muddysneakers.org.

How To Apply

Join the Muddy Sneakers team and play a critical role in shaping its future while driving impactful learning for students.

To apply, click on the link for this position at <https://jobs.armstrongmcguire.com/>. You will see instructions for uploading your compelling cover letter, resume, and salary requirements. Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Muddy Sneakers as well as the stated responsibilities and qualifications.

Please provide all requested information to be considered. In case of any technical problems, contact talent@armstrongmcguire.com. **No phone calls, please, and no applications will be accepted by email or directly from third-party posting sites.**

Muddy Sneakers, Inc. is an equal-opportunity employer. We prohibit discrimination and harassment of any kind based on race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other protected characteristic as outlined by federal, state, or local laws. This policy applies to all employment practices within our organization, including hiring, recruiting, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, leave of absence, compensation, benefits, training, and apprenticeship. Muddy Sneakers, Inc. makes hiring decisions based solely on qualifications, merit, and business needs at the time.

About Armstrong McGuire

Armstrong McGuire is a national executive search, fundraising, and strategic advising firm that believes in unlocking the potential of nonprofit leaders and the communities they serve. Founded in 2004, our diverse team of advisors work with clients and leaders to align strategy, optimize operations, build capacity, and lead nationwide searches that bring supremely talented individuals to high-impact organizations. Learn more about our services in talent acquisition, fundraising counsel, and strategic planning. [Armstrong McGuire](#)