



Position Profile

President & Chief Executive Officer
Aquarium of Niagara | Niagara Falls, NY

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President & Chief Executive Officer, Aquarium of Niagara

701 Whirlpool Street, Niagara Falls, NY 14301

Our Mission: With our community and partners, we celebrate our natural wonders and inspire people to make a difference for aquatic life.

Our Vision: To be a destination of choice where all are welcome and motivated to join as a driving force for aquatic life.

Our Core Values:

- **Passion:** Our passion for our work keeps us going; it drives us to become even better, exceeding expectations every day.
- **Transparency:** To us, transparency means that all of us share an understanding of our decisions and our actions. We value the trust our organization has placed in us and respect the confidence.
- **Empathy:** Empathy helps us understand others' feelings and emotions. It helps us embrace another's point of view no matter how different our backgrounds or our culture, building stronger bonds and leading to better problem solving.
- **Diversity:** We not only recognize our differences, we value them. We're building a culture of inclusion and believe that our diversity makes us stronger and better.
- **Collaboration:** Collaboration adds value to our work; by working together, we learn from each other and build on our strengths. True collaboration means negotiating, compromising, and most of all valuing another's point of view.



Position Overview

The Niagara Aquarium Foundation (Aquarium of Niagara) is currently seeking qualified candidates to serve as its next President and Chief Executive Officer. This position reports to the Board of Trustees and serves as the senior executive of the organization, with responsibility for the overall performance and planning of the facility. The Aquarium is a private not-for-profit organization that operates with a \$5 million annual operating budget and welcomes over 200,000 visitors on an annual basis.

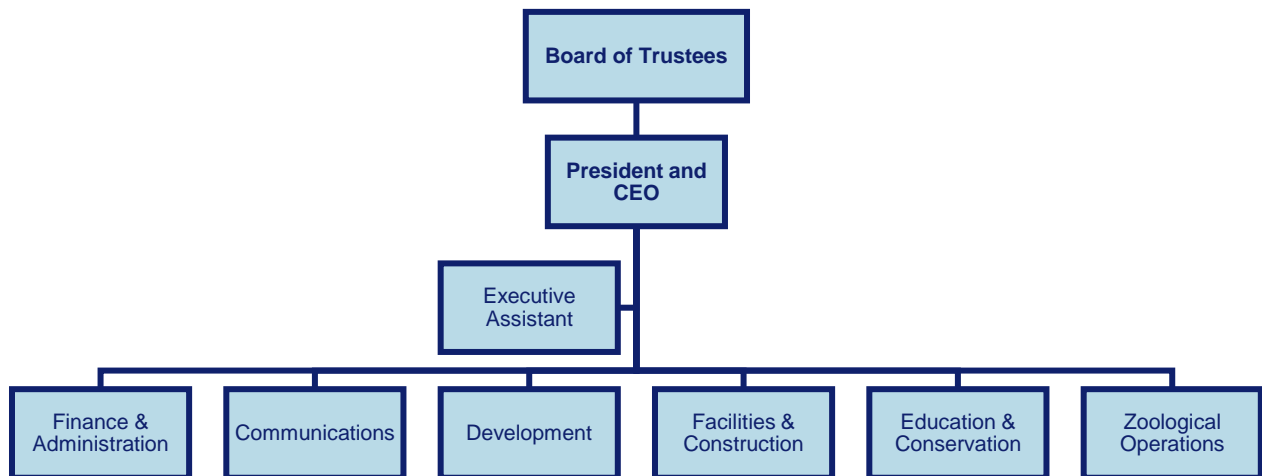
The President and CEO will provide executive leadership over the development of plans, policies and strategy to fulfil the vision of a multi-site campus. In 2022, the Aquarium of Niagara announced an agreement with New York State Parks to fully renovate and operate a 5,000 square foot building that historically served the region as a geological museum. The project, entitled “Great Lakes 360”, is fully funded, and currently under construction. Completion is anticipated for April 2024, with a public opening anticipated in June 2024. The completed project will be distinguished with fifteen living exhibits, a dedicated classroom space, and rooftop event venue. The site’s interpretive program will emphasize wildlife native to the Great Lakes and Niagara River region, which will bolster the Aquarium’s position as a regional leader in environmental education.



In July 2023, the Aquarium of Niagara was named the preferred developer for a series of properties at the southern end of its existing parcel by USA Niagara Development Corporation, a subsidiary of Empire State Development. While conceptual development for this project is underway, the incoming President and CEO will lead the continued growth and advancement of master planning process.

Supervisory Responsibility

This role directly oversees the Aquarium’s senior leadership team, and a paid staff of approximately 70 full and part time employees.



Essential Responsibilities

- Serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the Niagara Aquarium Foundation, with responsibility for personnel, resources, and strategic direction.
- Actively participate in meetings, interactions, and relationship management with local, state, and federal elected officials and appointees.
- Oversee the planning and implementation of the Aquarium's mission, policies, strategic planning, operations, and master planning.
- Serve as a principal spokesperson among public figures, media, and key entities.
- Support zoological leadership in the maintenance, creation, and replacement of exhibits with a focus on variety, creativity, and feasibility.
- Maintain the Aquarium's accreditation status with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums and become an active contributor of the Association.
- In conjunction with the Vice President of Finance and Administration, develop an annual budget for approval by the Board of Trustees; ensure that funds are allocated appropriately and accurately to meet present needs and future potential of the Aquarium of Niagara.
- Provide resource development by expanding the donor base and fostering positive relations with existing and prospective donors.
- Identify strategic opportunities and take actions to raise the visibility, reputation, and profitability of the Aquarium of Niagara.
- Engage the community by regularly attending external events, supporting initiatives, and recognizing the importance of authentic engagement.
- Emphasize a positive culture that facilitates the recruitment and development of high-performing team members.
- Support the Board of Trustees in its governance role through engagement and a transparent communication philosophy.

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

The Board of Trustees recognizes that no one candidate will bring every desired qualification, however the following offers a summary of desired skills and abilities.

- Bachelor's degree or higher in business management, tourism, project management, hospitality, or related field; or equivalent experience – advanced degree preferred.
- Minimum of 5-7 years of demonstrated leadership experience as a senior manager/director or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Experience cultivating major gifts, while also identifying and connecting with potential supporters.
- Energetic and transformational leadership style with a passion for aquatic life.
- Natural ability to act as a catalyst and inspire action in others.
- Crisis management experience with a strong safety background.
- Valid New York State driver's license, or ability to acquire one.
- Socially dynamic and confident in large groups with an ability to multi-task, work independently and/or within a team, pays attention to detail and meet deadlines.
- Strong skills using MS Office and other various computer systems.
- Exhibits excellent analytical, decision-making, and problem-solving skills with independence.
- Utilizes excellent verbal/written communication skills using diplomacy and discretion to communicate effectively.

Working Conditions

- Potential exposures encountered, such as hazardous materials, loud noise, or weather exposure.

- Essential physical requirements, such as climbing, standing, stooping, or typing.
- Physical effort/lifting, such as sedentary - up to 50 pounds.
- May require working weekends, nights, or be on-call as a regular part of the job.

Western New York Living

The Aquarium of Niagara is located adjacent to the Niagara Falls State Park, less than a mile from the downtown district. The Western New York region, which spans across the Buffalo-Niagara community, offers a unique experience characterized by a blend of vibrant urban centers, picturesque natural landscapes, and a strong sense of community.

Characteristics of Western New York include:

- **Dynamic Culture:** Western New York is home to a rich cultural scene with theaters, art galleries, museums, and music venues, with an array of dining options, from trendy restaurants to local eateries serving famous Buffalo wings and other regional specialties.
- **Affordable Cost of Living:** One of the notable advantages of living in Western New York is the relatively affordable cost of living compared to major metropolitan areas like New York City. Housing, transportation, and daily expenses tend to be more budget-friendly, allowing for a comfortable lifestyle.
- **Natural Beauty:** Western New York boasts breathtaking natural beauty and scenic shorelines. Outdoor enthusiasts will find ample opportunities for hiking, boating, fishing, and camping, both within the cities' proximity and in nearby rural areas.
- **Sports and Recreation:** Sports play a significant role in the region's identity. Western New York is passionate about its sports teams, including the NFL's Buffalo Bills and the NHL's Buffalo Sabres. There are also minor league baseball teams, college sports events, and numerous recreational facilities for various activities, including skiing and snowboarding in the winter.
- **Four Seasons:** Residents of Western New York experience all four distinct seasons. Summers are generally warm and sunny, with plenty of outdoor festivals and events. Fall brings stunning foliage and a chance to enjoy apple picking and pumpkin farms. Winters can be cold, with snowfall providing opportunities for winter sports. Spring brings blossoming flowers and a renewed sense of energy.
- **Strong Community Spirit:** The people of Western New York are known for their friendliness and strong community ties. You'll find numerous local festivals, parades, and events that bring people together. The region also has a reputation for being welcoming and supportive, offering a sense of belonging to newcomers.
- **Education and Healthcare:** Western New York is home to several esteemed educational institutions and also offers quality healthcare facilities, with nationally recognized medical centers and research institutions.

Living in Western New York provides a balanced blend of urban amenities, natural beauty, affordability, and a welcoming community spirit. It's a region that offers a high quality of life and a range of recreational, cultural, and professional opportunities for residents.

Accreditation

The Aquarium of Niagara is proudly accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA), and the International Marine Animal Trainers' Association (IMATA).

Compensation and Benefits

The estimated base salary range for this role is estimated to be \$165,000-\$185,000 with a generous benefit package. This salary range represents the Aquarium's good faith and reasonable estimate of the possible salary range.

How to Apply & Contact Information

The Aquarium of Niagara welcomes people from all walks of life into our team and strongly encourage people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, veterans, and people with disabilities to apply.

The Niagara Aquarium Foundation Board of Trustees has retained Career Partners International Buffalo-Niagara to lead this search. To express interest in this role please submit your resume and cover letter to MaryEllen Carlo at mecarlo@cpibn.com.

Be sure to include Aquarium of Niagara President and Chief Executive Officer in the subject line of any correspondences. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

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www.aquariumofniagara.org

