



SHEPHERD

SCHOOL OF MUSIC AT RICE

Assistant Director of Development, Annual Fund

Houston, TX, United States

Job Description

Position Summary

Reporting to the Senior Director of Development, the Assistant Director provides leadership of and direction for the Shepherd School of Music's annual fund program, with emphasis on enhancing donor and volunteer participation, as well as on increasing total unrestricted dollars raised for the Shepherd School of Music. Through data-driven direct response campaigns, donor events, and management of a personal portfolio of donors and prospects, this position is an integral part of the development team and its goal to build a community of classical music enthusiasts and supporters. The Assistant Director is responsible for annual fund strategy, communications, solicitation, and execution in coordination with the Donor Relations Officer whose focus is on high-level donor engagement and stewardship events. The Assistant Director works collaboratively with the Shepherd School Marketing and Communications team to create targeted solicitation content for direct and e-marketing campaigns related to annual giving and serves as the primary liaison with the Rice (DAR) Annual Fund division. The Assistant Director will be responsible for soliciting leadership-level gifts from \$2,500 to \$99,000, with the goal of building a pipeline of major gifts. The Assistant Director will track and report on annual fundraising metrics, as well as donor relationships to inform meetings for current and prospective donors to engage with the Dean, Sr. Assistant Dean, and Sr. Director of Development.

The Shepherd School of Music at Rice University cultivates the mastery of musical performance, combining a conservatory experience with the educational opportunities of a leading research university. Guided by a belief that talent manifests along unique paths, The Shepherd School of Music limits its student body to 290 gifted young musicians. Each

music major is provided access to world class teachers dedicated to cultivating talent and professional success. The faculty at The Shepherd School is known for their individual instruction and for equipping musicians with the skills and experience necessary to develop their own esteemed careers. In just over four decades, The Shepherd School of Music has become a leading international music school, making it both one of the youngest and one of the most prestigious university-level programs in the country. A consistently highly ranked school of music, the Shepherd School is currently included in the top ten of the Niche list of best music schools in America. Alumni of The Shepherd School of Music go on to exceptional careers and include Pulitzer Prize and Grammy winners. They have debuted at Carnegie Hall, appeared with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and the Metropolitan Opera, and hold positions in orchestras and chamber music groups around the country and globe.

Ideal Candidate Statement:

The ideal candidate is an experienced fundraising professional with a proven ability to manage and grow successful annual fund campaigns. They excel at designing and executing data-driven strategies to drive donor engagement and increase unrestricted giving.

With a proactive and results-oriented approach, they enhance donor and volunteer participation while cultivating long-term relationships. Their expertise in annual fund management is complemented by strong donor relations, ensuring a personalized and positive donor experience. They are adept at managing direct response campaigns, overseeing a donor portfolio, soliciting leadership gifts, creating compelling communications, being able to understand the donor behavior and adjusting when needed and coordinating fundraising efforts with other departments.

This individual thrives in a collaborative team environment, is able to balance a diverse range of constituents with professionalism and is excited to play a key role in shaping the future of the Shepherd School as it nears its 50th anniversary.

Workplace Requirements

This is a full-time, benefits-eligible position, and the hiring salary starts at \$75,000, with the potential for a higher rate based on qualifications and experience. **Exempt (salaried) positions under [FLSA](#) are not eligible for overtime.*

This position is at The Shepherd School of Music. Weekly work hours will vary depending on performance and event schedules. *Per [Rice policy 440](#), work arrangements may be subject to change.*

Special Instructions to Applicants: *All interested applicants should attach a cover letter and a resume or curriculum vitae in the Supporting Documents section of the application. We suggest the documents be in a **PDF format** to avoid formatting issues.*

Apply on Rice University's website [HERE](#).

Minimum Requirements

- **Bachelor's Degree**
 - *In lieu of the education requirement, additional related experience, above and beyond what is required, on an equivalent year-for-year basis may be substituted*
- **Three years of professional experience at an institution of higher education or performing arts non-profit**
 - *In lieu of the experience requirement, additional related education, above and beyond what is required, on an equivalent year-for-year basis may be substituted*
- Valid Texas Driver's License (or ability to obtain within 30 days of employment) required with no more than three moving violations or at-fault accidents within the past 36 months and no convictions or deferred dispositions for Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) or Driving Under the Influence (DUI) within the past 5 years
- Skills
 - Ability to develop and initiate new strategies
 - Advanced problem-solving skills
 - Strong verbal and written communication skills
 - Ability to work well under pressure and manage projects simultaneously
 - Strong organizational and time management skills
 - Advanced knowledge of Microsoft Office suite, Google Workspace
 - Strong data analysis skills
 - Ability to work independently and as part of a team to meet expected deadlines and schedules
 - Adept at problem-solving, creating contingency plans, and handling issues when necessary
 - Strong client service orientation
 - Strong attention to detail and ability to quickly understand and remember details about alumni/donors and projects to which they are assigned

Preferences

- Five years of professional experience at an institution of higher education or performing arts non-profit; familiarity with classical music preferred
- Experience creating and managing large annual fund campaigns preferred
- Experience with fundraising in a higher education environment and the performing arts
- Experience collaborating with data managers and mailhouses
- Experience writing and editing
- Knowledge of development/donor database software, especially Tessitura and Blackbaud CRM

Essential Functions

- Responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive annual fund-giving strategy for the Shepherd School, in conjunction with the school's mission and marketing strategy and Rice University's strategic vision
- With a strong understanding of annual fund best practices, data analytics, reporting, and donor solicitation strategies, lead annual fund initiatives at the Shepherd School of Music with a goal of growing support for the Shepherd Society and increasing annual contributed revenue
- Create and execute all aspects of Shepherd School's annual fund communications and e-campaigns, including pulling data and crafting language for giving appeals
- Partner with the marketing and communications team on the execution of all annual fund campaign plans, including graphic design, web and social media, printer, and mail house coordination.
- Develop annual fund campaign themes, messaging, communications, solicitations, and visual assets in conjunction with the Director of Marketing and Communications and Development team
- Work with the Sr. Director of Development to establish benchmarks, track annual fund fundraising metrics, and regular reporting processes to measure results of all annual fund activities
- Produce and manage biweekly contributed revenue reports and provide analysis of results to evaluate success and inform strategies to increase effectiveness
- Working with the Sr. Director of Development, research, develop, and implement strategies to build Shepherd School annual giving to help secure financial support from new and renewing individuals and creating a pipeline of major gift prospects

- Manages a select portfolio of annual Shepherd Society donors in coordination with the Sr. Director of Development to ensure donor visits, cultivation, and stewardship goals are being met

Additional Functions

- Provides secondary support for Shepherd Society ticketing in Tessitura and coordinates information sharing with DAR data services as appropriate.
- Develop fundraising strategies and and execute special campaigns for Shepherd School activations during Rice's Family Weekend, Reunion, Giving Tuesday and Rice 24-Hour Annual Challenge
- Maintains regular contact outside the Shepherd School with donors, alumni, and friends of the school, in person, with follow-up by phone, and in writing
- Attend major Shepherd School concerts and private donor events on evenings and weekends as assigned, working closely with the Donor Relations Officer to facilitate and staff stewardship events.
- Establish Ambassador program to attract a younger demographic of patrons with an affinity for classical music to support audience development and the donor pipeline

Shepherd School of Music: <https://music.rice.edu/>

Rice University HR | Benefits: <https://knowledgecafe.rice.edu/benefits>

Rice Mission and Values: [Mission and Values | Rice University](#)

Rice University is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to diversity at all levels and considers for employment qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national or ethnic origin, genetic information, disability, or protected veteran status.

About Us

Boasting a 300-acre tree-lined campus in Houston, Rice University is ranked among the nation's top 20 universities by U.S. News & World Report. Rice has a 6-to-1 undergraduate student-to-faculty ratio, and a residential college system, which supports students intellectually, emotionally and culturally through social events, intramural sports, student plays, lectures series, courses and student government. Developing close-knit, diverse college communities is a strong campus tradition, which is why Rice is highly ranked for best quality of life and best value among private universities.