

# HARRIS RAND LUSK

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## Chief Development Officer, North America Youth Renewal Fund / Darca Schools Job Description

### Background

Israel presently faces one of the largest and fastest growing gaps in educational achievement between rich and poor. The *Darca* network of schools provides Israeli high school students in lower-income areas an enriched and efficient educational system comparable to that available to the wealthy. *Darca's* graduation rates have dramatically increased, helping bring solutions to ending Israel's educational crisis. *Darca* serves more than 15,000 high school students living in Israel's marginal communities. Like a charter school network in the United States, *Darca* improves schools not only by managing them more effectively, but also by creating excellence through innovation in curriculum and teaching methods.

*Darca* schools emphasize academic achievement and the values of tolerance, democracy, and active participation in national and community life. With an annual budget equivalent to more than 100 million US dollars, the *Darca* network today includes 30 widely dispersed schools, from Kiryat Shmona in the north all the way to the Arava in the far south. Among these institutions are religious and non-religious high schools, a Druze school, an Arab school, and several all-girl schools. *Darca* also operates two innovative English Learning Centers where Jewish and Arab students study together.

### Position

The US-fundraising arm for *Darca*, **Youth Renewal Fund (YRF)**, seeks a proven, dynamic, and inspiring fundraiser with superior relationship skills and demonstrated success in building a national fundraising program to become its first **Chief Development Officer, North America (CDO)**. Reporting directly to the Israel-based CEO, the successful candidate will build upon YRF's existing fundraising program to develop new markets for philanthropic support, including Los Angeles, Miami, San Francisco, Detroit, Chicago with a goal to raise significantly more funding for *Darca*.

The CDO will collaborate and work strategically with the existing team in the US, led by the SVP, as well as many of their peers within *Darca* schools in Israel. The CDO will work in partnership with the existing team in order to maximize the joint efforts of the organization.

This new role presents a unique and compelling leadership opportunity to be a principal architect of a development program that strengthens Israel's schools, communities, and educational landscape. The successful candidate must have an authentic passion for the

mission, demonstrated success as an engaging fundraiser and be a highly articulate communicator skilled at making a compelling case for support.

The CDO will plan, coordinate, and ensure implementation of strategies to develop new donors and contributions. The successful candidate will create an organization-wide culture of philanthropy and a development structure that reflects the values of the organization, while positioning it for success. The CDO will research prospective donors, and develop relationships through face-to-face solicitations, organization of cultivation and fundraising events, educational projects, as well as stewardship of lay leadership.

The leadership seeks a candidate with an entrepreneurial approach who can thrive in a fast-paced environment creating both the development of a strategy and the execution of plans simultaneously.

### **Key Responsibilities**

- Work with the CEO, SVP, Board, and other professionals to lead, develop and implement a North American development strategy to increase the depth and breadth of foundation, individual and institutional support
- Refine and implement a strategic development plan for major donor prospects and a pipeline of smaller and mid-level donors using effective prospect research
- Manage a personal portfolio of prospective major and geographically diverse donors (individual and foundation); maintain and deepen existing donor relationships through regular cultivation, communication, stewardship, and solicitation
- Develop a balanced funding mix of donor sources and solicitation programs tailored to the needs of the organization that will enable it to attract, retain and motivate new donors
- Identify and promote YRF and *Darca* to new audiences and prospects to generate interest and support for the organization at all levels within new and existing markets
- Develop new markets and areas where the organization is unknown, and create new arenas for fundraising
- Continue efforts and help markets grow in LA and Miami where YRF and *Darca* already have a presence
- Create and support a culture of philanthropy that engages the CEO, SVP, Board, and other professionals, and fosters a collaborative, organization-wide team approach to development
- Work closely with the marketing team on all development-related marketing materials and communications, including foundation and corporate proposals
- Ensure the design and maintenance of donor and prospect records, gift management systems, informational reports, and metrics and performance measures to guide development goals and efforts
- Design and implement cultivation, acknowledgment, and recognition programs

- Participate in identifying and recruiting new prospective lay leaders and committee members
- Maintain a flexible leadership style that empowers staff through active communication and teamwork

### **Qualifications**

This position requires a talented, entrepreneurial advancement professional, preferably with a national reach, who will relish the opportunity to participate in a startup culture, shape and implement a new organization's development strategy, and be part of a vibrant, collaborative leadership team.

The successful candidate for this position will bring:

- 7-10 years of fundraising, or related work experience with demonstrated major gift solicitation results
- Demonstrated experience in implementing and managing a successful, comprehensive fund development program and infrastructure, and preparing an annual development work plan and calendar to achieve goals
- Strong collaborative nature and skills as well as the ability to successfully take initiative and work independently as needed. Ability to work on a team, be a thought partner and contributor to all fundraising efforts in order to reach goals
- Proven success in identifying and securing new five-figure+ foundation grants
- Strong history of generating increased funds from individual donors and annual appeals through a coordinated, strategic approach; knowledge of planned giving and experience with online fundraising preferred
- Experience using and measuring best practices in major gift and pipeline development
- Ability to learn the details of an organization's substantive work and apply that knowledge in drafting successful fundraising solicitations
- Demonstrated success in conducting initial outreach to prospective foundations/donors, arranging for and successfully preparing organizational leadership to meet with prospective donors/foundations
- Excellent interpersonal and relationship-building skills
- Strategic and nuanced thinking capable of creating innovative ways to effectively engage new donor audiences
- Well-honed oral and written communications as well as public presentation skills
- Ability to multi-task, prioritize, and learn quickly
- Detail-oriented, organized, enthusiastic and energetic, with great judgement and a sense of humor
- Deep understanding of the North American Jewish philanthropic landscape and demonstrated commitment to advancing Israel and the Jewish community
- A strong work ethic, ability to maintain and model high personal and professional standards, as well as an outgoing and positive personality

- Successful experience as the partner to a CEO, senior professionals and board
- Ability to manage complex relationships with outstanding diplomatic, negotiation and ambassadorial skills
- Commitment to organizational mission and knowledge of or desire to learn the field
- Ability to travel extensively

An attractive and competitive package, commensurate with level of experience is available.

For more information about *Darca* schools, visit <http://darca.org.il/en/homepage/> and Youth Renewal Fund, visit [www.youthrenewalfund.org](http://www.youthrenewalfund.org)

**To Apply**

Youth Renewal Fund has retained the services of Harris Rand Lusk to conduct this search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed in confidence to:

Debbie Farrell, Senior Director of Leadership and Development  
Harris Rand Lusk  
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New York, NY 10168  
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*Please put **YRF** in the subject line of your emailed application*