

ASTEP: Artists Striving to End Poverty

Executive Director

New York, New York

Background

ASTEP was conceived in 2006 by Broadway Musical Director Mary-Mitchell Campbell and Juilliard students to transform the lives of youth using the most powerful tool they had: their art.

Today, ASTEP connects performing and visual artists with young people who can benefit from arts education and offers leadership training for those seeking to change the world through art. By awakening imaginations and fostering creativity, ASTEP supports young people to develop agency through the arts—to develop the ability to imagine new futures and possibilities and gain the skills and strength to achieve them.

ASTEP partners with schools and community organizations to create after-school and summer programming that use the arts as a vehicle to teach youth the social emotional skills they need to be the best versions of themselves, celebrates their strengths, and builds up their unique areas for growth.

Programs in New York, Miami, India, and South Africa provide a bridge between artists and youth with limited or no access to the arts and serve youth affected by the justice system, incarceration, gun violence, homelessness, immigration status, systemic poverty, and HIV/AIDS, and generational poverty.

ASTEP's Teaching Artists are highly successful Broadway performers, professional artists, or students and faculty from schools such as Juilliard, offering a variety of disciplines such as dance, visual art, music, and drama. Combining a passion for the arts and an ability to use artistic tools to teach life skills, they become trusted mentors to their students.

ASTEP is a growing organization with an engaged board and staff and a fun, informal, and forward-thinking internal culture. During the pandemic, leadership has undertaken a significant re-visioning effort. In furtherance of their mission, the organization has reinvested in becoming an ever more inclusive, responsive, and representative organization, and evolved their programs during this unprecedented time to meet the moment.

Among other advances, ASTEP has expanded the organizational vision to reach more young people, is transitioning from recruiting volunteer Training Artists to a fully paid model and is taking steps to ensure that individuals with relevant experience to the communities they serve, in all levels of the organization, are compensated fairly for creating value for those communities.

ASTEP'S COMMITMENT TO ANTIRACISM AND ANTI-OPPRESSION

ASTEP began its anti-racism journey long before the summer of 2020 and expects to continue it long after. We engage in both formal (training, consultancies) and informal practices (book clubs, shared leadership models) to continue to interrogate supremacist behavior in ourselves and our organization. We are committed to seeking staff members and Teaching Artists who are representative of the communities we serve; therefore, cultivating a sense of belonging across diverse populations is crucial to our success.

You can learn more about ASTEP online at: www.astepp.org

Position

Following a long and successful tenure of its founder as professional leader, ASTEP is seeking a strong manager of both people and systems as its next Executive Director to provide strategic vision and operationalize ASTEP's goal to make a broader social impact through the arts. Building on extensive prior thinking and data, the Executive Director

will create a multi-year strategic plan in collaboration with the board that outlines where ASTEP is headed and the path to get there.

Because ASTEP is intentionally re-envisioning itself, this is an exciting opportunity for a leader with big, mission-aligned ideas. The Executive Director will oversee the shift to a new organizational identity, both internally and externally, drive the national expansion of ASTEP's programs and partnerships, and build out the internal infrastructure to support them.

ASTEP is in a solid financial position with a budget that has recently topped the \$1M threshold for funders. The Executive Director will be responsible for capitalizing on that opportunity by managing the current budget, setting financial priorities, and raising the funds to fuel ASTEP's growth. Working closely with the board and founder, the Executive Director will lead efforts to grow the fundraising base, including grants and gifts from foundations, corporations, and major donors.

Responsibilities

Strategic Vision and Leadership:

- Provide strategic vision for ASTEP in service of its mission and lead the organization into its next phase of development, growth, and impact.
- Lead the ASTEP staff and community through transformation, growth and beyond with transparency and positivity; ensure the team feels connected to ASTEP's priorities and are kept abreast of decisions made at the senior leadership level.
- Ensure that ASTEP's vision, values, brand, and strategic priorities are evident and consistent in every aspect of the organization, including its staff and programs.
- Drive ongoing discussion and experimentation that encourages innovation and pushes boundaries in making a wider social impact through art.

- Provide inspirational leadership, direction, and supervision to a high-performance team, including five direct reports; foster a culture of accountability, collaboration, and experimentation that embraces change and ensures team members feel appreciated and have equal access to opportunity.
- Attract, hire, retain and promote qualified professionals; empower staff through active communication, professional development, and delegation.

External Relations and Resource Development:

- Act as the primary driver in grant and donor cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship, engaging the founder strategically in the process.
- Build out a comprehensive development team to assist in developing new funding sources and deepening connections with current donors.
- Serve as a key spokesperson of ASTEP's vision, values, programs, challenges, and achievements. In addition to the founder, represent the organization and promote coalition building and collaboration with other community organizations, businesses, and partners.
- Ensure ASTEP's external communications efforts promote the public visibility of its expanded mission and enhance revenue from all sources.
- Cultivate a strong and transparent working relationship with the Board of Directors and promote engagement in strategic planning and resource development; support the board in the identification and recruitment of new board members with an emphasis on diversification; keep the board informed of all organizational matters.

Finance and Operations:

- Administer the day-to-day function of the organization including structure, policies, and procedures, and grant reporting and compliance.
- Oversee the financial status of the organization; set financial priorities that support the needs of the program and staff; manage the budget and ensure that revenues and expenditures are consistent with the budget approved by the Board.
- Direct the development, refinement, implementation, and articulation of organizational offerings that reflect the mission, create revenue opportunities, and change lives.
- Create systems and processes that facilitate donor tracking, data collection, and promote consistency throughout the organization.

Qualifications

- Nonprofit management experience, ideally at the executive level, and a demonstrated ability to develop and implement strategic plans, manage organizational finances, create earned revenue streams, and undertake successful fundraising.
- An appreciation for and understanding of the lived experiences of program participants; a commitment to communities historically impacted by inequity.
- Demonstrated track record of growing an organization and building an internal infrastructure to support a mission; experience with change management.
- Financially savvy with the ability to set clear priorities, delegate, and guide investment in people and systems.
- A collaborative leader who seeks synergy with the founder, board, and staff to work together toward a shared vision; comfortable both soliciting input from others and making decisions quickly, effectively, and confidently.
- Excellent manager and developer of talent; ability to smooth ruffled feathers, work with strong personalities, and give people the freedom to run with ideas.

- Bold, risk taker willing to challenge the status quo while respecting organizational learnings and history.
- Dynamic relationship builder who displays a sincere interest in each staff and board member, donor, teaching artist and community member, and engages others in ASTEPS values and mission.
- Equity mindset that welcomes and encourages a diversity of opinions and viewpoints while prioritizing voices and perspectives from the young people and communities whom ASTEP serves.

Compensation

Salary range of \$110,000 - \$125,000 commensurate with experience, plus benefits.

This position description is based upon material provided by Artists Striving to End Poverty, an equal opportunity employer. ASTEP especially welcomes applications from people of the global majority—including Black, Asian, Indigenous, and People of Color.

Debbie Katz
Search Specialist
dkatz@drgsearch.com

To apply to this position please visit -

<http://drgsearch.com/current-searches/?rpid=0HhcW2nMbT8>

