



Better Way Foundation
Executive Director
June 2022

The Foundation

Better Way Foundation (BWF) is a family foundation, rooted in catholic social values, that invests in systemic, holistic, and evidence-based approaches that support the positive development of all children. Through grants and investments, BWF partners with families in Indian Country to build a future where child well-being contributes to strong families and communities. BWF's support for innovative, collaborative, and culturally-grounded early childhood development (ECD) practices, building and nurturing a network of Catholic schools in Indian Country, limited international grant making, and deploying mission-related investments have generated high social return.

In addition, BWF is committed to Impact Investing that aligns with its mission of value in the Indigenous community. It provides educational opportunity, economic opportunity, and supports environmental causes. In total, BWF provides \$2M of funding annually.

Better Way Foundation's Values:

- We see grantees as partners and believe in cultivating and fostering collaborations and networks to catalyze innovation and change.
- We are particularly interested in supporting faith-based partners but remain open to a variety of partners who share our vision, mission, and values.
- With education as the core, we are interested in supporting holistic approaches to change and empowerment.
- We prefer approaches to social change that are or can become evidence-based – reflected in measurable changes in quantitative and qualitative indicators.
- We believe that cultivating strong leadership is essential for building capacity that leads to long-term sustainability and systemic change.
- We believe that the work generated by our partners should be shared with the broader community to help inform, educate, and catalyze change.
- We have a commitment to good stewardship of our foundation's resources. We expect the same commitment of our partners.

The Better Way Foundation is one of five independent family foundations founded by Gerald and Henrietta Rauenhorst. BWF operates under the GHR umbrella and leverages shared services of GHR. Since 2016, BWF has invested significant resources to support Indigenous early childhood development in Minnesota, New Mexico, Arizona, and South Dakota. BWF has also been the primary financial support of the American Indian Catholic Schools Network (AICSN), which seeks to build the capacity of network schools to deliver culturally relevant education to the communities they serve.

For more information, please visit BWF's website at www.betterwayfoundation.org.

Position Summary

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director is responsible for leading the organization in a manner consistent with its mission, vision, and values, and doing so in a fiscally responsible and ethically sound manner.

The Executive Director leads the full cycle of the grantmaking process, including the development of programs and initiatives as well as evaluation strategies.

Reports to: Board of Directors
Direct Reports: Mercedes Plendl, Program Manager
Other Key Relationships: Kate Seng, Managing Director, GHR Foundation
Indigenous Early Childhood Development Partners
American Indian Catholic Schools Network
Position Location: Minneapolis, Minnesota

Key Responsibilities

Organization Leadership

- Represent Better Way Foundation in the community and in the communities/with partners the foundation serves.
- Develop and implement evaluation measures to illustrate the impact that BWF is having with partners.
- Communicate results to community, partners, and board members.
- Establish roles and responsibilities for staff and work with GHR Foundation to establish strategy for shared services.
- Lead Impact Investing Task Force.

Governance

- Work collaboratively with the board of directors to affirm the mission of the foundation and execute on the strategic plan to achieve it.
- Recruit, onboard, and develop new board members.
- Provide educational opportunities for board members on best practices in philanthropy, governance, and program issues of interest to the board.
- Provide transparent reporting to board of directors at established board and committee meetings, and as requested.
- Annual evaluation of the board's work.

Budget and Finance

- Understanding of nonprofit financial management, including budgeting, planning, GAAP, and investments. Work collaboratively with finance on annual audit and 990 preparation and filings.
- Establish foundation annual budget, grants budget and calendar, and strategic investment process.
- Impact investing (mission-related and program-related) – e.g. understanding how to align Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) investments with BWF's mission, prioritizing Certified Native CDFIs. Conduct financial due diligence in advance of investing.

Community Relationship Building/Public Relations

- Build and nurture relationships with partners and prospective partners. Proactively identify prospective partners.
- Increase awareness of and advocacy for BWF's work in Indigenous Early Child Development.
- Act as the public speaker and public relations representative of BWF in ways that strengthen its profile, brand and reputation in the communities it serves.

Leadership Competencies

As a leader at BWF, this person is expected to demonstrate the following leadership competencies:

Visionary Leadership: Develops a clear, focused and inspiring vision for the future. Models excellence and galvanizes other to embrace the vision and the strategy.

Cultural Competence: Demonstrates highly developed subject matter knowledge and thought leadership in this domain. Stays abreast of trends in the field, and appropriately disseminates knowledge throughout the organization.

Activates Change: Highly adaptable and able to quickly assess situations and determine how to move objectives forward. Actively breaks down barriers to change while communicating and reinforcing the objective in ways that help people understand and embrace it.

Dynamic, Inspirational Communication Skills: Advocates effectively and concisely in written and verbal communication, tailoring messages to various audiences, providing the right amount of detail, explaining ideas and data as needed. Builds support for ideas and initiatives across key stakeholders. Is effective in a variety of formal and informal presentation settings: one-on-one, small and large groups, and external constituencies. Inspires and motivates entire units around a shared vision and creates milestones and symbols to rally support. Decisive, clear and transparent.

Fosters Collaboration and Teamwork: Creates an environment that supports collaboration by facilitating dialogue, communication and coordination across all parts of the organization. Builds an intentional, empathetic and cohesive culture that aligns agendas and unites the team and creates strong morale and spirit. Shares wins and successes and empowers people to take responsibility for their work. Creates a feeling of belonging, models positivity, collegiality and the highest level of integrity.

Interpersonal Effectiveness: Possesses a high level of insight and keen awareness of self and others. Demonstrates the ability to connect with and influence individuals at all levels. Builds positive, authentic relationships. Ability to apply creativity to the process of developing mutually beneficial relationships and trust. Cultivates an active network of relationships inside and outside the organization. Is an excellent listener and values learning from others. Is a deep and empathetic listener to the ideas, experiences, viewpoints, and perspectives of others.

Models Credibility: Consistently lives the organization's core values and principles. Follows through on commitments and holds others accountable for same. Builds trust and models a high level of integrity. Promotes and maintains an open and respectful environment.

Strategic Acumen: Understands the market, identifies trends and drives the organization to create comprehensive, competitive and breakthrough strategies. Prioritizes strategically, leading the organization to pursue and capitalize on the best opportunities.

Ideal Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate will be a creative, hands-on, entrepreneurial leader, with the ability to execute on big ideas. S/he will establish rapport and positive working relationships with the board of directors and, at all times be sensitive to the intent and opinions of the benefactors.

The ideal candidate possesses skills and experiences that include the following:

1. BA degree, advanced degree preferred.
2. 15+ years of relevant philanthropy-related experience, including with a grant-making organization.
3. Senior level experience in grant making and impact evaluation.
4. Demonstrated experience working with a nonprofit board of directors; strong understanding of nonprofit governance.
5. Strong work ethic with a high degree of energy and passion regarding early childhood development, ideally in the Indigenous community.
6. Demonstrated success in establishing relationships with individuals and organizations of influence including community partners, IECD partners, and the AICSN.
7. Commitment to and experience with developing programs; able to take a general topic of interest and develop an initiative/program with focus that fits foundation board interests and values.
8. Understanding of international grantmaking preferred.
9. Strong written and oral communication skills, with an emphasis on listening to understand.
10. Impactful and influential public speaker, comfortable serving as an organizational spokesperson.
11. High impact and low ego orientation with strong commitment to team and mission. Roll up sleeves attitude and willing and able to engage and take on relevant work at all levels of the organization. Ability to manage the complexity of multiple priorities.
12. Proven leadership and relevant relationship management experience.
13. Passion, integrity, positive attitude, mission-driven and self-directed.
14. Clear demonstration of honesty and integrity, and the highest ethical standards are assumed.

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