Position Description, Member – Board of Directors

HISTORY

Make-A-Wish® America was founded in 1980. It all began because of a 7-year-old boy named Chris. A small group of people in Phoenix, Arizona helped him live his one true wish - to be a police officer. Since then, Make-A-Wish has grown into one of the world's best recognized and most respected charities. We are the largest and most professional wish granting organization in the world, with 62 chapters in the US and more than 300,000 wishes granted worldwide.

In 1985, Make-A-Wish® North Dakota was born, and Christopher was our first wish kid. The seven-year-old was presented with a VCR by the founders of the chapter - Diane Weickert, an AT&T telephone operator, and Kevin Reitz and Jerry Novacek, both local insurance agents as well as Arlene Nelson, local banker at the time. Christopher, who had cancer, loved to watch movies. He was able to do so in the Peds playroom until health problems made it necessary for him to stay in his personal room. Along with the VCR, Make-A-Wish representatives arranged for him to obtain any movie of his choosing, compliments of Videoland. Thus, Christopher could watch his movies anytime!

We count our accomplishments in the smiles of the children whose wishes have been granted.

Today, Make-A-Wish North Dakota is one of the chapters that allows Make-A-Wish to serve every community in the nation. With a small but mighty staff and over 150 volunteers, the chapter has granted more than 850 wishes since its inception.

Together, we create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.
ROLE DEFINITION

Serve as a member of the governing leadership of Make-A-Wish North Dakota: ensure that we fulfill the promise of our mission; act in a fiduciary role to maintain the financial health of the organization; and lead the growth and development of the North Dakota chapter.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Be passionate about the life-changing mission of Make-A-Wish.
- Establish annual and long-term wish granting goals and plans in partnership with the President and CEO and program services staff to ensure the greatest reach and quality in wish fulfillment.
- Monitor and assess wish granting efforts in context to expected strategy, costs, and goal achievement throughout the year.
- Develop, approve and monitor an annual budget and fiscal plan for the chapter, making necessary adjustments during the year, based upon available resources and goals of the organization.
- Monitor and assesses fundraising efforts in context to expected strategy and goal achievement throughout the year.
- Set the pace of the annual fundraising campaign through significant and timely financial support of the chapter’s mission, making Make-A-Wish North Dakota a principal philanthropic commitment.
- Develop annual and long-term fundraising goals and plans in partnership with the President and CEO and development staff.
- Partner with staff to identify, cultivate, solicit and steward potential corporate, foundation and major gift individual donors.
- Secure additional “leveraged” volunteer leadership to further enable the accomplishment of key fundraising and programmatic efforts of the chapter.
- Operate in context to policies, guidelines and performance standards of Make-A-Wish America and our North Dakota chapter.
- Hire, evaluate and partner with chapter President and CEO to optimize organizational functioning and achievement.


BOARD CRITERIA

**Attendance**
- Directors are expected to attend six semi-monthly Board meetings. Special meetings are scheduled only as required. The time commitment of Directors will be respected and valued.
- Given the geography of our chapter, meetings are primarily held via teleconference or videoconference, with at least one face-to-face meeting split between the principal office location in Fargo and outside of Fargo.

**Giving**
- Personally lead by example in generously supporting the mission of Make-A-Wish North Dakota. The chapter asks that all Directors annually contribute a gift that is “personally meaningful and commensurate with their means.”

**Development/Fundraising**
- Support chapter fundraising efforts/activities during the year. All Directors are expected to raise, with the help of the development staff, cash and/or in-kind donations.

**Financial**
- Approve and monitor the budget of the Chapter and the fiscal position of the organization.
- Monitor and assess wish granting efforts in context to expected strategy, in-kind donations, costs and goal achievement.

**Activities/Involvement**
- Participate or chair at least one Committee and serve on Chapter Task Forces or Work Groups, as appropriate.
- Leverage community and corporate contacts on behalf of the chapter.
- Proactively solicit and gain support on behalf of the chapter.
- Serve as an ambassador and spokesperson for Make-A-Wish to enhance the organization's public standing.
- Recruit others to become actively engaged in the Make-A-Wish organization.
- Participate as a wish granter one time within first 3-year term.

**Mission and By-Laws**
- Each member is expected to understand the chapter’s Mission, Vision and Values and our chapter by-laws and to respect the confidentiality of matters to which he or she may be privy.

**Individual Obligations**
- Be passionate about the life-changing mission of Make-A-Wish.
- Ensure the chapter’s positive public image is maintained.
- Maintain the highest ethical integrity and avoid any conflicts of interest.

- Commit to Board engagement, and if unable to fulfill, immediately notify the Board Chair in writing. **Composition**
- The Board will be composed of a minimum of 12 Directors, including the Board officers.
- Each Director’s term is for three years, with Directors being eligible for re-election to an additional three year term, at the recommendation of the Board Chair and Board Development Committee. After a one year leave, each member is eligible for another two terms of three years upon Board recommendation. No director shall serve more than 12 years in aggregate.
- Membership on the Board is targeted for highly placed community/corporate leaders willing to offer their expertise, leveraged connections, experience, and financial support on behalf of Make-A-Wish.
- Nominations are recommended for approval to the Board by the Board Development Committee.
- All Board members MUST have a criminal background check completed prior to service and every three years thereafter and sign and adhere to an annual Conflict of Interest and Ethics Statement. Individual Board members who perform accounting functions or serve as a signatory must also comply with a credit check every three years.
This is an uncompensated role. All other time and expenses associated with the Make-A-Wish North Dakota chapter are given gratis by the Board Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

May I visit the organization to observe a program firsthand? You may visit our office in Fargo and talk with our team. The majority of the program occurs out in the community, across the state. The best way to see the program first hand is to attend Wish Granter training and then participate in the granting of a wish.

Does the organization have a strategic plan that is reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis? Yes. The Board sets the strategic direction to frame three-year goals for the organization and also goals for the Board. The staff develops annual operating plans of work to accomplish the strategic goals.

Is the financial condition of the organization sound? Yes. Reserves vary at different times of the year, but our chapter is fiscally healthy and our recent audits and IRS 990 can be found on our website.

Are the organization’s clients or constituencies satisfied with the organization? Wish families complete evaluations after their wish is granted. Families are extremely satisfied with Make-A-Wish. We are always seeking opportunities to improve and strive toward excellence in all we do. We welcome the gift of feedback!

Does the organization have directors and officers liability coverage? Yes, we have D & O through Brown & Brown Insurance, who insures all Make-A-Wish chapters. The sub-limit for the chapter is $3,000,000.

What role will I play in soliciting donors? Face-to-Face Solicitation could involve doing a team solicitation with someone else, soliciting own personal contacts, determining the gift amount to ask for from personal contacts, going to groups and making presentations, or soliciting people you do not know yet. However, thanking our existing donors is the most important role and request of the Board.
Is the Board satisfied with the performance of the executive staff? Yes, the Board chair reviews the President and CEO each year and reports to the Board on her performance. Billi Jo Zielinski has been our President and CEO since October of 2013 and has already played a significant role in improving operations and statewide awareness. Read more about Billi Jo and all of the staff at: [http://northdakota.wish.org/about-us/our-chapter/our-people](http://northdakota.wish.org/about-us/our-chapter/our-people)

How do Board members and staff typically work with each other? The Board and the staff each have separate goals. The Board works on their own goals and performs a periodic self-assessment with the support of the President and CEO. Much of the communication is done by e-mail and phone.

What information can be found on the chapter website?

These are just a few of the pages we suggest to prospective Board members:

Tell me some stories about wishes. [http://northdakota.wish.org/wishes/wish-stories](http://northdakota.wish.org/wishes/wish-stories)

How are children referred? [http://northdakota.wish.org/refer-a-child](http://northdakota.wish.org/refer-a-child)

How can the public help make wishes come true? [http://northdakota.wish.org/ways-to-help](http://northdakota.wish.org/ways-to-help)


Are there descriptions of Board committees as well as task group functions and responsibilities? Each standing committee has a charter. We establish task groups as needed and Board members select up to 40 hours of out of boardroom support annually based on their own skill sets and interests.

ALL Board members have a Leadership role in our special events. Our internal events, those run by staff with the help of volunteers, are mission-centered celebrations of wishes. Wish Families share stories about the impact of the wish. Fund raising activities generally include a raffle, silent auction and Fund-A-Wish. Read more about our events at: [http://northdakota.wish.org/news-and-events/calendar-of-events](http://northdakota.wish.org/news-and-events/calendar-of-events)
MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

Every Eligible Child’s Wish Can Come True

Looking back on our history, Make-A-Wish has established itself as a leading children’s nonprofit organization. We continue to grant more wishes each year. But our work is not done, in fact, it is just beginning. Our mission, vision and values are intended to provide a foundation for the future. We must use them to create a long-term roadmap for success together to ensure that our vision is met. We must be looking at tomorrow today. We will use the mission, vision and values to shape our culture and provide a basis for how we will work together and how decisions will be made.

MISSION: A mission or purpose is a precise description of what an organization does. It should describe the business the organization is in. It is a definition of “why” the organization exists currently.

Together, we create life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.

VISION: A vision is an energizing picture of what the leadership of an organization wants to become based on a view of the future.

We are dedicated to making every eligible child’s wish come true.

VALUES: Our values communicate to all Make-A-Wish stakeholders how we expect to conduct ourselves in our day-to-day business activities. In addition, our values are the foundation of our culture and will provide a basis for how decisions are to be made.

CHILD FOCUS – We always put wish kids first.

INTEGRITY – We are honest, transparent and respectful.

IMPACT – We deliver life-changing work.

INNOVATION – We are bold, imaginative and creative.

COMMUNITY – We are a diverse group of people working together towards a common goal.
PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY

Successful Board members answer “yes” to each of the following questions:

- Am I committed to and passionate about the mission of the organization?
- Can I contribute the time necessary to be an effective and engaged Board member?
- Am I comfortable with the approach and tone of the organization's fundraising efforts?
- Can I contribute financial support consistent with the organization's expectations of Board members and with my own means and priorities?
- Can I place the organization's purposes and interests above my own professional and personal interests when making decisions as a Board member?

Thank you for your consideration. Directors play a vital role in helping us achieve our mission to grant wishes to children like Grace pictured below. Won't you join us?

Interested individuals should contact:
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