

WENDT CENTER FOR LOSS AND HEALING

Director of Development & Communications

Are you an experienced, action-oriented leader seeking a new challenge? Do you thrive in a dynamic environment where you can drive strategic initiatives while staying responsive to emerging needs?

The Wendt Center for Loss and Healing is celebrating 50 years of transformative impact—and we're looking for a visionary Director of Development & Communications to help shape our future. In this key role, you will have the opportunity to lead during a pivotal moment and make a lasting impact in a growing community-based organization.

Salary Range: \$115,000–\$145,000 per year with comprehensive benefits

Location: Washington, D.C. – Flexible Hybrid Work Model

Role Type: Full-time, Exempt

Reports to: Executive Director

Supervises: Manager of Institutional Giving, Development & Communications Associate, and part-time Volunteer Coordinator.

Jessye Kass Consulting has been retained to conduct this search.

About Us

At the Wendt Center for Loss and Healing, we believe that healing from life's most challenging moments is not only possible—it's a journey we embark on together. For 50 years, our community-based organization has provided compassionate support, innovative programs, and a safe space for those navigating grief, loss, and trauma.

Our Purpose:

We offer a pathway to healing.

Our Values:

- **Healing:** We believe that healing from life's worst moments is possible.
- **Kindness:** We express kindness to all; caring and compassion are at the heart of all we do.
- **Collaboration:** We practice collaboration and teamwork, recognizing that none of us can do it alone.

- **Learning:** We strive to be lifelong learners, actively seeking opportunities to expand our personal and professional knowledge.

Position Overview:

The Director of Development & Communications is a strategic leader and innovator who will oversee efforts to secure the resources necessary to support and expand Wendt Center programs, services, and operations. This includes leading strategic planning for development and communications while maintaining flexibility to address immediate needs. The role requires expertise in capital campaigns, innovative approaches to fundraising, and a commitment to advancing the Wendt Center's mission.

The Wendt Center is a \$5.5 million organization poised for significant growth and impact, making this an exciting opportunity for a leader ready to help shape its future.

Key Responsibilities:

Development/Fundraising (50%)

- Create and implement annual development plans to sustainably grow organizational revenue through individual giving, planned giving, foundation and government grants, corporate sponsorships, and fundraising events.
- Develop and lead innovative strategies for capital campaigns, ensuring alignment with organizational goals and community needs.
- Build and manage a major gifts program, engaging individual and corporate donors through tailored cultivation and solicitation strategies.
- Partner with the Benefit Committee and Development & Communications Associate to enhance fundraising strategies for the annual gala, raising at least \$500,000 in gross revenue.
- Lead strategy and execution of direct response campaigns, including annual appeals and online giving, to increase donor acquisition and retention.
- Cultivate and expand new donor communities, including recurring giving and planned giving programs, to diversify revenue streams.
- Lead and mentor the Development and Communications team, fostering a high-performance culture that values collaboration and accountability.

Communications & External Relations (30%)

- Design and oversee a multi-channel communications strategy to engage key stakeholders, including donors, community partners, volunteers, program participants, staff, and government officials.
- Ensure the integration of messaging and branding across all external and internal communications.
- Lead executive communications, including crisis management and organizational reputation management.
- Partner with the Senior Leadership Team to develop and execute marketing strategies for Wendt Center programs.
- Oversee and develop compelling content for newsletters, social media, and annual reports, ensuring alignment with strategic goals.

- Identify and pursue opportunities for innovative program development and funding.

Organizational Leadership & Strategic Planning (15%)

- Actively contribute to the Senior Leadership Team, participating in the development and implementation of the Wendt Center's strategic plan.
- Prepare and manage the Development & Communications department budget.
- Support and engage the Board of Directors in fundraising, development planning, and fostering a culture of philanthropy.
- Collaborate with leadership to set and achieve long-term revenue goals, ensuring alignment with the strategic plan.

Special Projects & Innovation (5%)

- Lead initiatives to commemorate the Wendt Center's 50th anniversary, highlighting its legacy and impact.
- Introduce innovative donor engagement initiatives, leveraging technology and data analytics to strengthen relationships and measure success.
- Explore and implement innovative fundraising and communication strategies to position the organization as a leader in the field.

Qualifications:

We are seeking a passionate, innovative leader with a **proven track record in development and communications**. We value diverse experiences and encourage candidates who have demonstrated success—even through non-traditional pathways—to apply.

We Will Need:

- **Fundraising Expertise:** Proven success in major gift fundraising, capital campaigns, creative donor engagement strategies, and innovative development techniques.
- **Strategic Vision:** Strong track record in strategic planning and execution for development and communications.
- **Organization Excellence:** Exceptional time management skills and the ability to balance strategic priorities with responsiveness to immediate needs.
- **Communication Skills:** Outstanding organizational and communication skills, including the ability to convey complex ideas persuasively.
- **Team Mentorship:** Experience in mentoring and leading high-performing teams in a collaborative, accountability-driven environment.
- **Passion for Impact:** A deep commitment to community-based, mission-driven work and a genuine passion for advancing the Wendt Center's vision of healing and transformation.

We Imagine the Right Candidate Will Also Have:

- 7-10 years of fundraising experience and 2-5 years of leadership experience
- Demonstrable experience managing comprehensive annual development plans, including donor acquisition and retention.

- Experience in brand development and strengthening an organization's brand across all communications.
- Experience with email marketing platforms, SEO strategies, and innovative digital approaches to enhance visibility/engagement
- Familiarity with Raiser's Edge or similar donor database systems.

Note: While formal education can enhance qualifications, we value skills and experience that demonstrate the ability to excel in this role. We strongly encourage candidates from diverse backgrounds, or those who may not meet every listed qualification but have the tenacity, drive, and relevant skills, to apply.

What We Offer

- **Competitive Salary:** \$115,000–\$145,000 per year, commensurate with experience.
- **Comprehensive Benefits:** Health and life insurance, plus a 403(b) retirement plan.
- **Generous Time Off:** Paid holidays, vacation, and sick days—including a special week off at the end of the year.
- **Flexible Work Environment:** A flexible, hybrid work schedule that supports both remote work and in-person collaboration.
- **Professional Growth:** Generous annual stipend for professional development.
- **A Transformative Opportunity:** Join a mission-driven organization at a milestone moment, making a lasting impact on our community.

What to Expect:

- Screening Interviews will be conducted by Jessye Kass Consulting beginning the week of February 10
- 2nd Round Interviews via Zoom with Wendt Center staff will (ideally) begin in early March
- Candidate assessments will be assigned for top candidates in early to mid March
- Final interviews will be in late March / early April
- Offer letters late March / early April

How to Apply:

We have retained Jessye Kass Consulting to assist with this search. To apply, [please fill out this application](#). In lieu of a cover letter, this form will ask you a few short-answer questions and screening questions, and then have you attach a resume. **Priority for applications received by Sunday, March, 2nd.**

1. Share an example of a fundraising success story. What were you responsible for and what was the outcome?
2. How do you envision leveraging your experiences to support the growth of the Wendt Center for Loss & Healing?

3. Elaborate on your experience managing and empowering teams. What methods do you implement to support successful teams?
4. Is there anything else you would like to share that will help us understand your interest, qualifications, or resume? (optional)

If you have any accessibility needs, questions, or issues with the application, please email: Jessye Kass, jessye@jessyekassconsulting.com for support.

The Wendt Center for Loss and Healing is an equal employment opportunity employer and is committed to maintaining a non-discriminatory work environment. We do not discriminate on any protected basis, including race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation.