

Explore ASHEVILLE

JOB TITLE: Director of Public Information and Community Engagement

REPORTS TO: President & CEO

SUPERVISES: No

DEPARTMENT: Public Affairs

FLSA STATUS: Exempt

ABOUT EXPLORE ASHEVILLE: Our team helps to create and sustain a vibrant tourism economy by attracting overnight visitors and expanding the customer base for local businesses. We work on behalf of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) to support local tourism partners including attractions, lodging, food and beverage, retail, recreation and the arts.

Nestled in the highest mountains in the East, Asheville is a hip, artsy destination with Southern flare and a welcoming nature. A vibrant, eclectic downtown featuring art galleries, farm-to-table and independent restaurants and a thriving music scene beckons visitors and residents. America's favorite scenic byway, the Blue Ridge Parkway winds its way through Asheville to Mount Mitchell, the highest peak in the East, about 20 miles northeast. Biltmore Estate, America's largest home is located here. With surprises around every corner – from a spontaneous drum circle, avant-garde theater, brew pubs, chocolate lounges, art that inspires the soul, to lush mountain peaks with biking trails, hikes, zip lines and whitewater, Asheville is a destination with a style and rhythm all its own.

With over three decades of focused promotion, Asheville has become a top destination for travel, earning Lonely Planet's 2017 #1 Best in the US Destination designation, among many accolades. Explore Asheville promotes the destination through out-of-market advertising and other marketing, public relations and sales initiatives, resulting in approximately 3.8 million overnight leisure visitors each year and a tourism economy that generates \$3 billion of annual economic activity in Buncombe County. The success of the tourism sector has been a big part of the economic vitality of Asheville, fostering new businesses of all kinds — including many new hotels that will generate additional customers, jobs, and millions of dollars of property and sales taxes.

We value teamwork, excellence and camaraderie. Qualified candidates are invited to apply to join our accomplished and dedicated team.

THE POSITION:

This is a newly created position for Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau (Explore Asheville). Under the direction of the President & CEO, the Director of Public Information and Community Engagement will establish and maintain cooperative relationships with the public as well as local media. The Director serves as Explore Asheville's spokesperson, handles the distribution of all local news releases and works with BCTDA Members and staff to present a positive and professional image. The Director has a variety of job duties with written and verbal communication serving as the basis for all s/he does.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

- Serves as the official liaison through which accurate information can be obtained by mail, e-mail or phone requests in compliance with the North Carolina Public Information Act.
- Promotes and maintains a relationship of mutual cooperation and respect with all media in support of their efforts to provide accurate information to the residents and visitors of Western North Carolina.
- Develops communications that promote an appreciation for the public benefits of tourism development.
- Attends community meetings to gain an appreciation for community issues and priorities.
- Contributes content to a proactive website consisting of a variety of information, programs, and services available for media and public review.
- Supports the Public Affairs team in the development and implementation of partner engagement.
- Produces printed and video material about the organization for dissemination to the public.
- Has a clear understanding of and assures that Explore Asheville, as both a governmental authority and a 501(c)6 nonprofit, is compliant with all governmental regulations, especially in regard to transparency and public information sharing.
- Expected to conduct assigned areas of responsibility with a high degree of professionalism and independence, receiving instruction only on matters involving significant departures from established policy.
- Able to work occasional long hours on an irregular schedule, especially when Explore Asheville is impacted by publicized situations or incidents.
- Oversees and ensures adequate internal controls on all Explore Asheville public information strategies and tasks.
- Other duties as assigned by the President & CEO.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- A bachelor's degree in marketing, public relations or a relevant field is required. A master's degree is preferred.
- Minimum of ten-years in communications and public relations with a preference toward experience in the public realm.
- Proficiency using the Microsoft suite including Word, Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint.
- Must be legally authorized to work in the United States without sponsorship.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Experience organizing special events such as news conferences and awards ceremonies.
- Working knowledge of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.
- Familiarity and understanding of the Buncombe County tourism industry.

JOB KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS/ABILITIES:

- A natural, innate ability to face the public and media, in a professional manner, often under trying circumstances.
- Thoughtful, curious and detail driven with a desire to teach and support others.
- Strong written and verbal communications skills with the ability to take complicated and sometimes emotionally charged information and articulate it into understandable concepts and presentations.
- An absolute self-starter.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively across all internal departments in order to achieve shared objectives.
- Strategic thinker.
- Capable of managing both time and priorities in a fast-paced environment with multiple-deadlines and frequent interruptions.
- Commitment to delivering time sensitive results and a proven ability to manage projects to successful completion.
- Excellent organizational, project management, analytical, presentation and technical skills.

CONTACT WITH OTHERS:

First and foremost, this position serves as Explore Asheville's primary contact for the public and local media. Internal contacts include the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority board, the Tourism Management Information Plan (TMIP) committees, the Tourism Product Development Fund committee and all Explore Asheville staff. External contacts include the BCTDA's agencies of record, public officials, elected officials, tourism industry partners, Explore Asheville's legal representatives and others in the community and beyond. All contacts are for the purpose of promoting the BCTDA and Explore Asheville and require tact, courtesy and professional decorum.

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA AND INFORMATION:

This position will have access to management discussions, inter-departmental memos, database files, and partner/member information and business inquiries. If a request for any of this information or other organizational material deemed sensitive is made by an outside individual or organization, such a request should be brought to the attention of the President & CEO, who is the only staff person authorized to release such material.

TRAVEL:

Some local travel, generally within Buncombe County, is required, but not extensive. The potential for national travel to conferences and educational seminars is a possibility. Must have a valid driver's license and own or have access to an automobile when needed.

ENVIRONMENT:

A background check and drug screening is required as a final condition of employment for all applicants.

JOIN THE TEAM!

Submit the following two attachments to Glenn Cox at gcox@ExploreAsheville.com in .pdf format.

1. Resume
2. Cover Letter describing your communications and public relations experience and how that experience best fits the needs of Explore Asheville.

No phone calls or drop-offs.