The House of the Seven Gables
350 Years of Stories • 1668-2018

Position Guide

Executive Director

https://7gables.org/
POSITION: Executive Director
REPORTS TO: Board of Trustees
LOCATION: Salem, MA

MISSION

To be a welcoming, thriving, historic site and community resource that engages people of all backgrounds in our inclusive American story.

VISION

To preserve, share and continue the American story.

VALUES

We value Caroline Emmerton’s founding mission of preserving the legacy of our site to sustain our Settlement programs for local immigrants.

We value our designation as a National Historic Landmark and the preservation of our buildings, collections and gardens.

We value the literary legacy of Nathaniel Hawthorne.

We value being a center of and for the community.

We value education as a central tenet of our programming.

ABOUT THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES

The House of the Seven Gables in Salem, Mass. is comprised of seven historic structures and colonial revival gardens. In 1668, merchant and ship-owner John Turner built a house on Salem Harbor that was destined to become one of America’s most beloved historic homes. In 1910, Salem Philanthropist Caroline Emmerton restored the house and opened it to the public as a museum, using proceeds from ticket sales specifically to fund settlement work that benefited immigrant families. Over a century later, The House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association is dedicated to continuing Emmerton’s preservation, community enrichment and educational efforts.

Designated a National Historic Landmark District in 2007, The House of the Seven Gables is best known today as the setting of world-renowned American author Nathaniel Hawthorne’s 1851 novel. The campus is comprised of seven historic structures, ranging in age of construction from
1655 to c.1830. Of the seven buildings, five are opened to the public for tours, public programming, exhibit space, rentals and more. It includes the Seamans’ Visitor Center and a unique Museum Store. The three-season Colonial Revival Gardens have been maintained since 1924.

Professional staff welcome over 100,000 visitors annually for a remarkable journey that explores Salem’s robust maritime history, the site’s architectural gems and the literary legacy of Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Settlement house programming supports local immigrant families through:

- Classes that serve adult students striving to learn English and acquire citizenship, preparing them for oral interviews and supporting their naturalization applications. In 2020, over 170 students benefitted from Adult ESL and Citizenship Preparation classes.
- Stimulating, thoughtful, community-based conversations on immigration and immigration reform. In 2020, over 300 people participated in Community Conversations.
- Innovative programming developed to find and tell new stories. As one example, in 2020, 33 elementary school students participated in Caribbean Connections, a five-week summer enrichment program that aims to help Salem students and their families discover untold stories and hidden connections between Salem and the Caribbean.

With an annual budget of more than $2 million, the organization includes 19 full-time staff, 21 year-round and part-time staff, more than 50 seasonal staff and more than 100 volunteers and interns.

When the COVID pandemic began in March 2020, the staff quickly found ways to educate and engage online, including virtual programs. The Gables’ Virtual Field Trip package continued through 2021 and included a virtual tour of the mansion, Q&A and conversations with people from all over the country.

In 2020, The House of the Seven Gables completed a major archives processing project, funded by the National Endowment for Humanities CARES grant. This funding allowed the organization to save jobs and improve the long-term care of its unique archives. Also in 2020, the preservation team at The Gables completed important projects and necessary repairs to the National Historic Landmark District. Projects ranged from simple maintenance to planning and assessment for major projects in the future. For example, the Gables completed a professional HVAC assessment for the Turner-Ingersoll Mansion, a structural analysis of the Hooper-Hathaway House and began a comprehensive professional assessment of the fire and security systems, in addition to other critical infrastructure updates.

In 2020, the Gables was selected as one of 10 museums in the country to partner with the Sites of Conscience on an IMLS-funded community resiliency project that was planned throughout 2021 and will be implemented in 2022.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The House of the Seven Gables is an internationally known historic museum. The travel site TripAdvisor recently named it as the highest rated museum in Massachusetts. The Executive Director has the opportunity to work with a committed and well-organized Board of Trustees and
a passionate staff to use the brand, identity and reputation of The House of the Seven Gables to elevate the organization to the next level in all of its programs and activities.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Executive Director is responsible for the leadership and management of the organization including strategic direction, finances, fundraising, programs, staff, partnerships and external relations and reports to the Board of Trustees. The Executive Director is charged with achieving the mission and goals of the organization in a manner that is fiscally sound, responsive to effective practices in nonprofit management and reflects best practices for museum operations.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

The House of the Seven Gables is a unique and joyful place, and our next leader must be a steward who builds upon our success while growing and evolving for the future. The ideal candidate is a proven leader who understands the power of collaboration and has extensive experience and success leading high performing teams that foster a culture of excellence, from programming to facilities to the visitor experience. The skills and qualities we seek in the Executive Director of the Gables include:

Executive Leadership – The Executive Director will have the skills and competencies to provide oversight for the operational and financial management of a multi-faceted organization. The individual must be a strategic thinker and problem solver who creates a team environment, solving problems through a healthy and intentional reliance on staff and volunteers, and is committed to ongoing professional development of the staff. The candidate should have a keen understanding of their role as steward with extensive experience managing and overseeing long-term projects and initiatives. High integrity, sound judgment, humility and decision-making skills are essential to success in this role. Experience in partnering with an engaged governing board will be essential. This person will establish and maintain a climate of trust in all leadership and board-related matters and sustain a learning environment, encouraging active inquiry by the Board and staff in pursuit of organizational excellence.

Vision – The House of the Seven Gables seeks a leader who can work with the Board of Trustees, the staff and external stakeholders to develop a clear vision for the future of the organization. That vision will incorporate both the historical significance of The Gables and a commitment to social service and justice that is central to the Gables’ 110-year history as a settlement house. The Executive Director will build, and work with, a wide network of external supporters to promote that vision and make it a reality.

Financial Management – The Executive Director will have the financial expertise to effectively manage the organization’s budget, properly allocate its resources and forecast trends and changes. In leading an organization reliant on 100,000 visitors annually, the Executive Director will have the skills to navigate the new environment created by the COVID pandemic and help the organization identify new opportunities and resources to adapt to a changing landscape.

Fundraising – The Executive Director will have extensive experience working to build and cultivate a network of relationships and will show evidence of successful fundraising leadership that includes the acquisition of major gifts and grants from foundations, corporations, individuals
and the public sector at the local, state or national level. The next leader must value and engage fully in the successful development of a fundraising strategy for the next 10 years.

**Museum Oversight** – The Executive Director will oversee staff to ensure a quality visitor experience including walk-ins, tour groups, school and adult programs, lectures, on-site performances, the museum store and the website. Under the leadership of the Executive Director, The Gables will increase revenues by generating additional admissions and memberships as well as store and special event revenues. The new Executive Director should possess the interest in and ability to enhance the use of technology in the delivery of a first class educational and tour experience.

**Team Building and Mentoring** – The Executive Director will cultivate, develop and inspire a cohesive, high-performing team of staff and volunteers who embody the organizational values of collaboration, trust and respect for one another. The Executive Director will have the temperament and skills to continue the development of talented staff as well as a demonstrated ability to bring passion, vision, direction, business discipline and inspiration to the organization. The successful candidate will be a good listener and open to dialogue and critical conversations that lead to shared success. A management approach that is accessible, collaborative and empowering must be demonstrated, and balanced by results-oriented accountability. Guided by an authentic interest in hearing all voices, the Executive Director will be deeply committed to creating an engaging, joyful, respectful and inclusive work environment.

**Communication** – The Executive Director will be a persuasive and charismatic communicator who will serve as the key spokesperson for The Gables and can lead others, including staff, board members, donors, elected officials, corporate executives and others in actions that support the mission of The House of the Seven Gables. The Executive Director will eagerly and enthusiastically take on the role as the public face of The Gables and share the history and importance of the Museum and settlement program with a wide audience.

**Building Relationships** – The Executive Director will understand the importance of building on The Gables’ unique position to proactively increase the visibility and reputation of the organization. Politically savvy, the Executive Director will thrive in partnerships and successfully navigate the dynamics of the local and regional environment, particularly in relations with other museums, social service agencies, academic partners and in other public/private partnerships.

**CREDENTIALS**
- Bachelor’s degree is required. A Master’s degree in a related field is preferred.
- Minimum of seven years of successful management experience.
- Strong financial expertise in managing an organization’s budget and allocation of resources with the ability to forecast trends and changes.
- Demonstrated success in fundraising.
- Experience in working with a nonprofit Board of Directors.
- Passion for historical museums and their preservation, commitment to the value of The Gables’ settlement house programs and a commitment to the diverse population it serves is desired.

*The House of the Seven Gables is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes a diverse pool of candidates.*

To apply, please send a current resume and letter of introduction to Kittleman & Associates, LLC to [https://bit.ly/3KYbAqX](https://bit.ly/3KYbAqX) (click on the Apply button at the bottom of the page).