



U.S Dream Academy

Position Description

Position Title Center Director	FLSA Status Exempt	Last Revision Date: May 2017
Office Location/Department	Location Field	Reports to: National Program Director

About U. S Dream Academy

Founded in 1998, U.S. Dream Academy’s vision is to break the cycle of intergenerational incarceration that affects society’s most vulnerable children and youth through an approach that emphasizes academic instruction and values-based character-building. The organization targets second grade through high school students, and seeks to intervene at critical points in their education before it is too late to provide the necessary support. U.S. Dream Academy has served over 9,000 students to date in neighborhoods that are high risk to include high crime rates, high levels of poverty, and little access to high quality academic support. The organization currently operates in seven (7) cities including: Washington, D.C.; Baltimore, MD; Philadelphia, PA; Houston, TX; Orlando, FL; Indianapolis, IN, and Salt Lake, UT. Due to the widespread demand for its program, U.S. Dream Academy is committed to expanding its reach to serve many more students than it currently serves and recognizes that it will need to build infrastructure and capacity in order to support this future growth. For more information, please visit: www.usdreamacademy.com.

Basic Function

As a member of U.S. Dream Academy’s Shared Leadership team, the Center Director is an inspirational leader and strong manager that reports to the National Program Director. The Center Director plays a critical role in collaborating with the National Office in leading and operating the Learning Centers as Dream Academy continues to enhance its quality programming and build capacity to succeed as a larger organization that affects 40 – 80 students each year. The successful candidate will be a hands-on and participative manager and will lead and develop an internal team of up to 5 staff and 60 volunteers, as well as establish and grow external contacts in the following areas: city, school district, school administration, corporate partners, community groups, teachers, and parents. This is a tremendous opportunity for a leader and manager to maximize and strengthen a well-respected, high impact organization. Candidates will have experience of final responsibility for the quality and content of all programming, community impact, and reporting for their center, and will have preferably overseen education afterschool programs. In addition, the following qualifications are sought in ideal candidates:

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Knowledge of current trends in youth development; ideally with the factors affecting children with a family history of incarceration.
- A successful track record in establishing and building relationships with families, schools, community organizations, and corporate partners.
- Ability to understand and utilize business management concepts (strategic management; budget creation, and monitoring, etc.) and marketing principles.
- Proven track record and competence in risk management to ensure protection of personnel, participants, volunteers, (CPR, first aid, etc.) and property of Dream Academy.
- Technology savvy with experience working with online curriculums and database management.
- A successful track record in setting priorities; organization and problem solving skills which support and enable sound decision making, particularly while working in high risk communities.
- Excellent communication and relationship building skills with an ability to prioritize, negotiate, and work with a variety of internal and external stakeholders.
- An accessible and flexible management style that inspires trust and confidence; a multi-tasker with the ability to wear many hats in a fast-paced environment.
- Strong commitment to developing, recruiting, hiring, developing, and retaining a diverse team in a multi-cultural environment.
- Personal qualities of integrity, credibility, and dedication to the mission of U.S. Dream Academy.

Principle Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership

- As the key position and local spokesperson for the Dream Academy, provide vision and inspiration to staff, mentors, volunteers, and students.
- Develop and implement annual Center Action Plans which include budgeting and programmatic planning. In conjunction with the National Office, oversee purchases and review expenditure plans and program implementation. Monitor progress and keep National Office abreast of the significant changes in status.
- Be an active member in the Shared Leadership Team of Center Directors throughout our national program. This includes a commitment to continuous quality improvement for every Learning Center.
- In conjunction with the National Office identify, attract, and retain a high performing US Dream Academy Learning Center team. This includes the professional development of each staff person to ensure high motivation and strong commitment to continuous improvement.
- Be prepared to engage in new and unanticipated challenges to further the ongoing needs of the Center and the US Dream Academy as a whole.

Direct Program Services

- Participate in helping to expand the Dream Academy program and help to grow the program in the city and local area.
- Ensure the Center successfully implements and engages students in the prescribed academic instructions and values-based learning within the US Dream Academy curriculum; the three pillars of Skill Building, Character Building and Dream Building.
- Create and maintain an engaging and safe environment that nurtures positive youth development.
- Maintain the support and supervision to educate employees on the services, tools, policies, and procedures to consistently implement prescribed curriculum.
- Maintain a visible, consistent, and participatory role during the daily operations of the Center.
- If applicable, plan and implement summer enrichment programs and offsite activities or field trips such as museums, zoos, etc.
- If applicable, oversee the implementation of the Center's mentoring program.
- As needed, pilot or develop and implement supplemental curriculums to enhance programmatic offerings of the Center.

Management and Administration

- Develop strong partnerships with school day teachers, principals, and staff where we are co-located to partner on student achievement.
- Ensure that recruitment and management of staff are consistent with U. S. Dream Academy policies and that Center staff are mentored to performance as highly functional teams. This includes appropriate periodic employee feedback and timely completion of the bi-annual review for submission to the National Office.
- Oversee administrative functions as well as facilitate efficient and consistent operations as the organization scales to a larger operation.
 1. Administrative – review new applications for students and mentors, curriculum plans, purchasing supplies and snacks, review expenditures and budget to actual performance, etc.
 2. Reporting / database/ file maintenance – includes establishment and maintenance of a filing system for all Dream Academy documentation, entry of appropriate information into Salesforce.com database, and the compilation and reporting of the required information to the National Office and interested parties.
 3. Physical plant considerations – includes upkeep of clean, safe, secure, and welcoming environment. In addition, the establishment and maintenance of appropriate emergency response (CPR/ first aid) and evacuation procedures.
- Work closely and transparently with all external partners including third-party vendors and consultants.

Community Development

- Ensure the collection of report cards, school day attendance, and standardized test scores every quarter/semester based on school schedule frequency.
- Ensure the targeted student, mentor, and volunteer participation by engaging in consistent and timely communication and participation with community, civic organizations, corporations, and churches with the ultimate goal to create and foster effective partnerships.
- Communicate with city, school district, parents, teachers, and guardians to inform and raise the visibility of the needs of youth at-risk served by the Dream Academy.
- Successfully plan, develop, and host the Center's outreach events to engage parents and guardians of Dream Academy students including the Parent's Night and Fulfilled Family Initiatives.
- In conjunction with the National Office, participate in local fundraising and public relations initiatives.
- In conjunction with the National Office, provide updates, photographs, and local stories to be published on Centers' websites and in national communications materials; e.g. newsletters and annual reports to donors and interested parties.
- As needed, connect Dream Academy families with available community resources.

Competencies (Pillars) of the Dream Academy

- **Skill-building:** Academic failure has been shown to be the most important predictor of future incarceration. The core components for this pillar are assistance with homework and online learning.
- **Character-building:** Students utilize the Education in Human Values curriculum, a universal, values-based program that lays the foundation for students to understand and apply the five fundamental values of peace, love, truth, right action, and non-violence in their lives.
- **Dream-building:** Helps students to broaden their understanding of what their options and opportunities are, while eliminating the possibility of incarceration from their framework of reference.

Position Competencies

To perform the job successfully, the Center Director should embrace and support U.S Dream Academy's organizational concept, vision, mission, strategy, culture, objectives, and priorities by demonstrating the following competencies:

- **Attendance/Punctuality** - Is consistently at work and arrives to work on time; ensures work responsibilities are covered when absent; and arrives at meetings and appointments on time.

- **Professionalism** - Approaches others in a tactful manner; reacts well under pressure; accepts responsibility for own actions; follows through on commitments; and measures self against standard of excellence.
- **Honesty and Integrity** – Exhibits honesty and strong moral principles; shows integrity in all aspects of performance; shows honesty and truthfulness in day to day actions; shows respect and sensitivity for cultural differences; treats others with respect and consideration regardless of their status or position; and upholds organizational values.
- **Organizational Support** - Follows Dream Academy policies and procedures; responds to management direction; completes administrative tasks correctly and on time; and conserves organizational resources.
- **Teamwork** - Balances team and individual responsibilities; gives and welcomes feedback; and places the success of the team above own interests.
- **Problem Solving** - Identifies and resolves problems in a timely manner; gathers and analyzes information skillfully; develops alternative solutions; works well in group problem solving situations; uses reason even when dealing with emotional topics; and exhibits sound and accurate judgment.
- **Safety and Security** - Observes safety and security procedures within the mentoring setting; reports potentially unsafe conditions; and promotes a harassment-free environment.
- **Creativity and Innovation** - Promotes the creativity and innovation that flow from a diverse and learning professional team.
- **Continuous Improvement** - Be in an on-going state of self-assessment and improvement to continually refine self, systems, processes, policies and proven best practices, and grow towards maximum potential.
- **Interpersonal Skills** - Establishes and maintains cooperative, constructive, and cooperative interpersonal relationships with staff, peers, higher-level managers, and external stakeholders to accomplish the organization’s mission.
- **Flexibility** - Flexible and open to new ideas and adapts to changing work situations and priorities.
- **Technology** - Demonstrates an ability to select and implement the appropriate technology and tools used in managing sales and business development efforts.
- **Conflict Management** - Appropriately addresses and minimizes confrontations, disagreements, complaints, and grievances and resolves them in a constructive manner.
- **Attention to Detail** - Pays attention to detail and is exceptional with formatting documents and presentations. Proofreads, edits, spell checks documents, and ensures flow of content is grammatically correct.
- **Manage Competing Priorities** - Manages own time and organization resources to ensure efficiencies, deliverables are completed within agreed upon timelines, and multiple tasks are properly prioritized and managed successfully.
- **Adaptability** - Maintains flexibility and effectiveness when experiencing major changes in work tasks, deliverables, structures, processes, policies, and procedures.

Job Requirements

- Must be passionate about youth development; and support and work with youth in high risk communities and their families.
- Must have personal transportation with non-suspended driver's license.
- Must have experience working with pre-teens and/ or teens.
- Must have outstanding interpersonal and communication skills and be able to effectively communicate in a public forum, with a diverse population; and be able to effectively communicate with competence and passion about the mentor/volunteer program.
- Flexible and able to work the hours necessary to complete all assignments according to agreed upon timelines; and can demonstrate leadership ability when an assignment or deliverable needs to be renegotiated.
- Organized, efficient, and able to successfully function in a fast paced and demanding work environment supporting multiple key staff.
- Exceptional ability to write clearly, effectively, and informatively; demonstrating accuracy and thoroughness.
- Understand issues surrounding incarceration and the impact on families.
- Working knowledge of “best practices” in the field of Standards of Mentoring, mentoring programs, volunteer management, and youth development.
- Able to effectively manage competing demands, multiple tasks/projects, and meet deadlines on time and within budget.
- Ability to skillfully create and present PowerPoint presentations using MS Office applications, database, and spreadsheet software.
- Proficient in internet navigation and social networking technology.
- Proficient in data collection, data entry, and documentation.
- Possess critical thinking skills to analyze and proactively question and offer recommendations.
- Demonstrate professionalism, political savvy, and skills to ensure that all tasks and deliverables are completed in an efficient, timely, and high quality manner.

Education and Experience

- Minimum completion of an undergraduate study, ideally with concentration in education, social work, or psychology.
- At least 5 years of overall professional experience; ideally 2+ years working with youth at-risk.

Language Skills

- Ability to read, analyze, and interpret documents such as policies, procedure manuals, and research a variety of information.
- Ability to speak effectively and present information.

- Ability to prepare and present routine reports and correspondence.
- Ability to respond to common inquiries or complaints.

Work Environment and Physical Demands

The work environment and physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this position. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of the job. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally required to stand, walk, sit, lift, use hands to finger dexterity, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls, teach with hands and arms, climb stairs, balance, stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl, talk, and hear.

- Required to sit and/or stand for long periods of time.
- Intermittent physical activity including bending, reaching, standing, climbing stairs, kneeling, and/or stooping.

Specific vision abilities required by the job include close vision, distance vision; color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus. Lifting twenty-five (25) pounds or greater is standard for this position.

Supervisory Responsibilities

Yes.

Employer's Rights

This position description provides a general overview and may not list all the duties of the job. You may be asked by your supervisor to perform other duties related to your position and based upon organization priorities. You will be evaluated in large part based upon your performance of the deliverables and tasks listed in this position description.

The employer retains the right to revise this position description at any time. The position description is not a contract for employment; either you or the employer may terminate employment at any time, for any reason. The purpose of this position description is to provide you with a clear idea of the role and responsibilities for this position.

The employee is expected to adhere to all company policies and to act as a role model in the adherence to company policies and procedures.

I have received, reviewed, and understand the contents of this position description.

PRINT NAME: _____

DATE: _____



SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____