



[www.camla.org](http://www.camla.org)

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

### **ORGANIZATION**

The mission of the Chinese American Museum (CAM) is to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of America's diverse heritage by researching, preserving, and sharing the history, rich cultural legacy, and continuing contributions of Chinese Americans. CAM's objectives are to present exhibits on Chinese Americans illustrating their rich culture and heritage, define and interpret their role in establishing the California community, provide educational programs to the visiting public and schools, collect and curate historical to contemporary arts, documents, images, and artifacts, and serve as a research center on the 150-year Chinese American experience in California.

Housed in the historic Garnier Building, symbolically the oldest and last surviving structure of Los Angeles' original Chinatown, the 7,200 square foot Museum embodies both a cultural and physical link to the past and a promising point of entry for the city's multicultural future. Opened on December 18, 2003 after 20 years of dedicated community and civic leadership and support, CAM's presence at El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, a 44-acre public park honored as the city's "birthplace" as well as the site of original Chinatown, heralds a rebirth of important city architecture.

The site reflects the vibrant development of an immigrant history that began over 150 years ago in America, specifically when the first major Chinese settlement was documented in Los Angeles in the 1860s. As a visual symbol of new and emerging traditions, CAM is proud to serve as an active-learning institution dedicated to researching, preserving and sharing the stories, experiences and contributions of Chinese Americans in the United States through quality exhibitions, programs, events, publications and workshops.

The Museum annually serves 45,000 individuals, including 10,000 K-12 students from local school districts, 80% of whom are from the Los Angeles Unified School District. Most of CAM's audiences are from Los Angeles County including ethnically diverse and low-income communities such as Chinatown, East Los Angeles, and Boyle Heights. CAM's programming provides cross-cultural interactions with audiences consisting of 40% Asian Pacific American, 35% Latino, 8% African-American, 12% Caucasian, and 5% other.

The Museum is jointly developed and operated through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Friends of the Chinese American Museum (FCAM) and El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument (El Pueblo), a department of the City of Los Angeles. FCAM and El Pueblo together plan and manage the Museum's short-term and long-term projects including programming, daily maintenance, and expansion. FCAM's staff works with The City's El Pueblo's History Department, Property Management and Special Events Department to plan, develop, execute, and promote exhibitions, CAM public events, and long-term facility plans. Annually, the staffs from FCAM and El Pueblo produce the Lantern Festival which attracts audiences of about 15,000 to experience Chinese crafts and performing arts to celebrate the Chinese New Year. This event is one of the most popular cultural activities in El Pueblo and reflects the collaborative nature of this government and nonprofit partnership to advance the missions of both entities.

Formed as a legal entity in 1987, FCAM is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that generates interest and participation, acquires and conserves artifacts, conducts research, plans building and exhibition designs, conducts community outreach, and raises funds in support of the Museum. It has the capacity to grow to a 27-member Board of Directors and currently has a full-time staff of about 7 and an operating budget of \$1.4 million.

FCAM has been successful in raising support from individuals, corporations, foundations and state agencies to fund exhibitions, collections management, operations, and capital growth. In the past 20 months it has been awarded two prestigious Institute of Library and Museum Services (IMLS) grants towards its programmatic vibrancy. In addition to its permanent exhibits, CAM is home to changing exhibits, including *Breaking Ground: Chinese American Architects: Chinese American Architects 1945-1980*, which is part of the *Pacific Standard Time* series of activities coordinated by The Getty Foundation. Work is currently underway for the expansion of the Chinese American Museum (CAM) to complete the renovation of the second floor of the historic Garnier Building. This is the first expansion since CAM's opening in 2003 and it will add 7,000 square feet of new space for educational programming, permanent and changing interpretive exhibitions, and the preservation of art and artifacts. This phase of the expansion will open in May 2012 with discussions about additional growth underway.

## **POSITION SUMMARY**

The Executive Director reports to the Friends of the Chinese American Museum Board of Directors and serves as the primary interface in collaborating with El Pueblo leadership and City of Los Angeles staff to operate the Chinese American Museum. The Executive Director works closely with the FCAM Board of Directors, Advisory Board, and other volunteers to identify, cultivate and steward major donors and others who can help advance the impact of CAM's mission, vision, and values in a diverse multi-cultural community. The position is responsible for the daily operations of the Museum and the long-term development and execution of the Museum's strategic plan, policies, and goals within the context of a city-owned facility. Overall responsibilities also include visionary leadership, consensus building management, operational effectiveness, and achieving targeted financial objectives. The Executive Director is also accountable for short- and long-term planning and monitoring the Museum's ongoing performance that support its stated major objectives.

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Vision and Strategic Leadership**

The Executive Director guides the Board, staff and other stakeholders to ensure that the organization's vision and strategic plan remain current, relevant, and responsive to the changing landscape of the diverse community in which CAM exists, including to:

- Develop, implement, oversee, and update the strategic plan, which encompasses its various business plan, organization plan, and retail operations.
- Provide leadership and opportunities for internal and external stakeholders to be exposed to new trends and ideas in fields of relevance.
- Embrace and maintain an atmosphere of knowledge sharing among audiences, donors, volunteers, community, board and staff.
- Identify and forge partnerships with other community-based organizations whose mission, vision, and values are complementary to those of CAM.
- Foster effective collaborative relationships with the El Pueblo General Manager (or designee) and other elected and appointed officials of the City of Los Angeles to advance FCAM's mission, vision, and strategic plan and that ensures mutually beneficial obligations between the parties are achieved.
- Guide the Museum's ongoing physical expansion and community engagement process to ensure its programmatic and financial success.

### **Museology and Collections**

The Executive Director will direct staff in acquiring, presenting, and preserving the Museum's city-owned collection and in developing an overall "story" that attracts, excites, educates, and holds the attention of members, donors, students, and other attendees in order to increase the visibility and impact of the Museum. This includes working with the community to explore new ways of presenting the Museum's collection and of expanding its educational mission to a wider range of national and international audiences and to:

- Ensure the development and maintenance of a focused collections policy using strategic acquisitions and deaccessioning to keep the Museum in the forefront of the field.
- Ascertain that the Museum has systems, policies and resources in place to ensure the timely and workmanlike restoration, secure storage, effective and compelling display, and prudent and efficient tracking and management of its collections.
- Provide leadership and encouragement for the Museum's continued and expanded use of innovative and engaging display, presentation and interpretation techniques that appeal to a new generation of Museum-goers.
- Identify and cultivate potential collection donors with Board and community leadership and staff.
- Ensure that the Education Department develops and maintains a comprehensive program of events, educational programs and curricula that is responsive to the needs of a changing clientele.
- Perform periodic evaluations to ensure that Museum programs have continued relevance and contribution to its legacy.

### **Institutional Growth and Advancement**

The Executive Director serves as the chief spokesperson for the Museum and represents its interests to the public and embraces a leadership role in the broader community in which the Chinese American culture exists in order to:

- Ensure that comprehensive and effective funding programs exist to promote the Museum's activities and increase the financial support available for its operations.
- Build, develop, and execute a comprehensive public awareness program to create a measurable increase in the stature and visibility of CAM in the local, regional, national, and international community.
- Provide personal leadership in the Museum's fundraising efforts, working closely with the Board of Directors and staff.
- Develop a comprehensive annual fundraising plan and personally identify, cultivate and solicit major donors, including foundation grant opportunities.
- Energize the Board's participation in the Museum's fundraising and outreach efforts to increase capital and annual fund donations.
- Devise and implement an effective strategy with Board leadership to recruit new Board members.
- Create outreach programs to constituencies that encourage attendance, membership and further involvement in the life of the Museum.
- Grow CAM membership and increase revenue from all available earned and contributed sources.
- Act as the public voice of CAM in all cultural, social, political, and educational matters in which the organization has a significant interest.

### **Administrative, Financial, and Operations Management**

The Executive Director has ultimate responsibility and accountability for the leadership and financial planning, guiding and mentoring an effective senior management team, and efficiently and effectively operating the Museum in order to:

- Identify and initiate change as needed to maintain a vital and efficient organization,
- Oversee the implementation of annual plans for the Museum, incorporating progress toward strategic and financial goals.
- Provide regular reports to the City/El Pueblo as to the operations, management, planning, exhibitions and events, acquisitions, budget and fundraising.
- Manage the recruitment, employment, and supervision of a variety of human resources, including paid staff, contractors, consultants, and volunteers.
- Encourage and facilitate ongoing professional development of staff.
- Set and maintain high standards for staff performance, along with a system of metrics to ensure accountability.
- Establish sound human resource policies and practices, including effective communications channels, mentoring, and retention strategies.
- Maintain a positive, professional environment that attracts, retains, motivates, and supports a diverse staff of highly qualified, team-oriented personnel.

- Oversee the negotiation of all contracts and agreements, prepare official correspondence, and execute legal documents in consultation with Board leadership as needed.
- Ensure that the buildings and grounds of the Museum are maintained in a manner that preserves asset, historical value, and welcoming environment for diverse audiences.
- Develop the agenda for the Board meetings in conjunction with the Board President, report on organizational progress and challenges, and maintain effective communication between Board and staff.
- Ensure sound financial practices, including realistic budgeting, prudent management of financial resources, and employment of the Museum's assets for the most effective long-term fulfillment of its mission.

### **TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The Executive Director must possess a well-rounded array of competencies that sets her/him apart from others in the field as a results-oriented visionary leader with the ability to establish, pursue, and reach goals. Leading candidates will have excellent interpersonal skills, imagination, entrepreneurial spirit, and a passion for historical perspectives positioned within contemporary themes. This will require an individual with a strong tendency towards team building, consensus-oriented management, effective decision making, strategic thinking and tactical pragmatic implementation. The Executive Director will be a model of integrity that is energetic, inspiring, accessible, committed, and flexible as a leader and team player in the organization and the community.

The Executive Director must embrace CAM's unique mission and special character and be sensitive to and supportive of the needs of its diverse constituencies including members, donors, Board, staff, volunteers, and community leaders among others. The successful candidate will be a mature, experienced team player who can help distill ideas, clarify issues and have intellectual depth and museological know-how. She/he should value knowledge and the ability to communicate the intellectual and emotional messages of CAM, as well as the educational impact of the Museum both internally and externally.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

A bachelor's degree is required and an advanced degree or equivalent experience preferred in museums, historic homes, cultural preservation organizations, or other related fields. The successful candidate will have a minimum 7-10 years of senior level experience and well-developed organizational, financial, and project management skills. Experience working with Boards of Directors, interacting with prospective donors, collaborating with other organizations, communicating in a multi-cultural environment, community visibility, and success in supporting fundraising activities are all highly valued. Competency and comfort with all typical computer applications and equipment (MS Office and Outlook) is expected.

### **COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

Competitive compensation with a basic benefits package that is currently undergoing an upgrade review for all employees.

### **APPLICATIONS AND INQUIRIES**

Please submit a letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments to:

Bruce D. Thibodeau, President  
 Arts Consulting Group, Inc.  
 8581 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 406  
 Los Angeles, CA 90069-4120  
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*Friends of the Chinese American Museum is an equal opportunity employer.*