



## **Leadership Profile**

Executive Director

ForwARd Arkansas

Little Rock, Arkansas

*Working for Equity, Innovation and Opportunity in Education*

**[ForwARdArkansas.org](http://ForwARdArkansas.org)**

## About ForwARd Arkansas

ForwARd Arkansas is a public-private partnership established in 2014 by the Arkansas State Board of Education, the Walton Family Foundation and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation. ForwARd is a mission-driven organization committed to dramatically improving student achievement, closing the achievement gap and making Arkansas a leading state in education.

Our vision is that every student graduates from high school prepared for success in college and the workplace. We accelerate progress towards that vision by leveraging state, federal and private resources to support community-level innovations that can be scaled statewide through smart public policy. We partner with parents, educators, philanthropy, government, business leaders and community residents – together we are transforming Arkansas’ educational system. For more information on ForwARd Arkansas, please visit [www.forwardarkansas.org](http://www.forwardarkansas.org).



## Position Description

As the needs of communities, educators and students across the state continue to evolve, the next Executive Director of ForwARd can anticipate a multifaceted mandate. As a champion for education equity and closing the achievement gap, the Executive Director will:

### 1. Lead with bold vision and strategic acumen.

- Engage with a strong Board and staff and lead development of vision, strategy and innovation.
- Inspire fresh approaches to current and emerging challenges and develop clear strategic direction.
- Anticipate trends and opportunities, initiate and lead catalytic change to drive progress towards educational equity in Arkansas.
- Inspire confidence with staff, partners and the larger community.
- Champion the spirit and substance of the organization to ensure that the foundational principles of equity and inclusion are embedded in every aspect of the work – both internally and externally.

**2. Develop and implement a diversified funding strategy to support growth and sustainable impact.**

- Serve as an advocate for the mission of ForwARd, persistently attracting the necessary resources and creatively developing supportive relationships.
- Inspire confidence with existing funders and partners.
- Create the infrastructure within ForwARd to support a sophisticated development function and engage the full staff team in building a culture of philanthropy within the organization.
- Build an expanded and diversified funding portfolio that includes grants, major donors and fee for service – a well-rounded business plan.

**3. Leverage ForwARd’s reputation and convening power for maximum impact.**

- Foster a culture of innovation to increase ForwARd’s visibility and impact.
- Develop a strategy to increase ForwARd’s presence with partnerships and philanthropy across the state of Arkansas.
- Continue to convene a diverse cross-section of stakeholders to develop strategies to systemically promote educational equity in our schools and communities.

**4. Deepen and expand the marketing/communications strategy.**

- Streamline ForwARd’s messaging to drive consistency and elevate the impact of the work.
- Leverage multiple communications mediums to expand ForwARd’s presence with all relevant stakeholders, current and potential.
- Serve as a thought leader in addressing topics relevant to ForwARd’s work among partners, stakeholders, funders and the media in Arkansas and nationally.



**5. Lead the team and organizational development.**

- Have significant executive experience and a track record of building and sustaining high performance organizations.
- Drive accountability and results through an empowered staff with clear goals and responsibilities that align the entire organization with agreed-upon objectives.
- Ensure ongoing programmatic excellence and rigorous program evaluation.
- Recruit and develop talent and build a culture of shared values, aspirations, and high standards of accountability.
- Ensure efficient operations and organizational effectiveness through sound fiscal practices, foster attention to internal resource allocation and the highest legal, ethical, and professional standards.

## Desired Skills and Qualifications

### KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES REQUIRED

- Commitment to ForwARd's mission of improving student achievement in Arkansas
- Boldness, self-confidence and humility – mission over ego
- Strengths in leading strategy, innovation, partnerships and building and sustaining a high performing organization
- Substantial record of leadership and accomplishment in education equity with experience as a compelling, strategic leader with unshakable commitment to driving change that transforms education in Arkansas so that students develop the knowledge and skills to succeed in school, college, career and life
- Experience in strategic planning, ability to navigate between big-picture strategy and highly detailed implementation activities
- Ability to form and lead a successful team
- Skill in coordinating complex projects with many stakeholders
- Extraordinarily well-organized, timely, dependable, resourceful
- Strong ability to prioritize, communicate with others and take initiative
- Strong oral presentation skills, including experience preparing for and facilitating meetings with participants from diverse backgrounds and perspectives
- Comfortable leading interactions with and respected by state-level elected officials and policymakers
- Significant interest and experience in community engagement
- Willingness to serve as the public face of ForwARd
- Experience in education and knowledge of the local Arkansas context preferred
- Resourceful and innovative with a can-do attitude

### QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree preferred
- Ten to fifteen years of experience, preferred in education
- Five or more years of executive leadership
- Demonstrated record of strategic planning
- Skilled fundraiser
- Experience overseeing marketing and communications efforts

## Application Process and Timeline

Interested applicants should submit a cover letter detailing your interest in the position and relevant experiences, along with your resume to [info@forwardarkansas.org](mailto:info@forwardarkansas.org).

Applications will be accepted through February 28, 2020.