

Organization

Established in 1993 by visionary collector Sewell C. Biggs, Biggs Museum of American Art (The Biggs) is in the capital city of the nation's first state, Dover, DE. Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, The Biggs preserves, advances, and celebrates the fine and decorative arts, encouraging greater public engagement with the cultural heritage of Delaware. It is a leading advocate for the importance of art and creativity in education and the daily life of its community. The Biggs Museum has garnered national recognition as one of the finest collections of American decorative and fine arts in the country, as it aspires to become one of the most prominent museums within the entire Mid-Atlantic region.

The Biggs' curated exhibits showcase the work of historical masterpieces alongside contemporary artists, creating a dialogue between the past and the present, and providing a nuanced perspective on American Art. The permanent collection features paintings, sculpture, silver, and furniture by artists such as the Peale Family and Hiram Powers; illustrations by N.C. Wyeth, Howard Pyle, and Frank E. Schoonover; modern and contemporary works by Peter Sculthorpe and several others. Within the past decade, the museum has significantly grown its collection to include a greater focus on works of and by women, persons of Hispanic, Latino, and Indigenous cultures, and artists of color and African ancestry.

Recent and upcoming exhibitions and events include "*The Wyeths: Three Generations*," February Free Sundays as part of Dover's citywide Black History Month celebration featuring "*The Biggs Museum Big Five*" works by Samuel Joseph Brown, Jr; "Big" Tom Burton; Elizabeth Catlett; Edward L. Loper, Sr.; Mickalene Thomas; "*Leaps & Bounds: Contemporary Black Artists*" with guest lecturer Dr. Lori Crawford, Professor of Art at Delaware State University; and *Rozeal: I Shall Not Want*, featuring Rozeal's contemporary paintings that blend traditional ukiyo-e print techniques with Japanese folklore, geisha, kabuki, and samurai imagery, infused with hip-hop reference and African American culture.

The Biggs ensures access to art for everyone, by providing a range of programs such as "Free Admission Biggs Weekends," and discounted access programs such as Art-Reach, Blue Star Museums, Museums for All, and Delaware Library Museum Pass. A diversity of educational programs and events for adults and children include Brunch & Artist Talks; an Art Lecture Series featuring guest speakers in partnership with the University of Delaware; Family Creative Studio events; and festivals & celebrations such as *Positively Dover African American Festival*; *Dover Comic-Con*; *Earth Day Workshop*; *Delaware Pride*; and The Biggs' *Juneteenth Celebration*. School programs range from school field trips, student exhibits, and the Adopt-An-Artwork program which provides local schools with crafted curriculum to accompany framed reproductions of selected works from The Biggs collection. The museum is positioned amidst the rich Mid-Atlantic cultural landscape and enjoys partnership and exchange opportunities with neighboring museums from the New York City Tri-State area to Philadelphia, and the Baltimore/Washington DC metropolitan area.

The Biggs is in a comprehensive growth mode, entering an exciting new renaissance phase. Its Board of Trustees recently approved a Building Master Plan that will significantly expand, enhance, and connect office and museum buildings which are centrally located in downtown Dover on "The Historic Dover Green." Creatively blending existing architecture with new architecture, the Master Plan features a community pavilion courtyard with a café and gift shop, enhanced public and visitor spaces, flexible exhibition halls, and a new entrance and expanded lobby. Renovations will add much-needed collection storage and workshop space; upgraded and expanded office and meeting space; and add education and visiting artist studios. With generous support from the Delaware State Legislature, The Biggs is completing a feasibility study and will embark on a capital campaign to fully implement this next phase of growth, greatly expanding its footprint and operations in downtown Dover. The Biggs Museum is planning for its long-term investment into opportunities for its life-long sustainability and aims to make Delaware a more artistically vibrant and attractive state for all its residents.

The Museum has a twenty-three-member Board of Trustees led by Kathy Dwyer Southern, a staff of 20 full and part-time employees, and consultants led by Marcia Dewitt serving as the interim Executive Director. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, The Biggs Museum reports a total revenue of \$2,353,232 with \$908,000 from contributed revenue. Total expenses were \$2,251,489.

Community

Dover is the capital city of Delaware and is located in the center of the state. It was founded in 1683 by William Penn and is one of the nation's oldest permanent settlements. "The Historic Dover Green" was the site of the ratification of the U.S. Constitution in 1787, making Delaware the "First State." Dover is among the 10 fastest-growing cities in Delaware for 2024. It has approved a downtown Dover Master Plan which has recently been fueled by a commitment of \$25M in state funds for major redevelopment initiatives. The vibrancy of "growth" in and around Dover is exciting and contagious.

Though one of the smallest states in the U.S., Delaware offers a robust and diverse physical, historical, economic, cultural, and educational landscape. With more than 60% of Fortune 500 companies incorporated in Delaware, commerce in the State contributes significantly to the state's economy. A hub for the financial services industry, with Wilmington serving as a major center for banking, asset management, and insurance, the State is also home to chemical industry giants, and healthcare and pharmaceutical companies. Delaware's technology sector is growing, fueled by startups, incubators, and research initiatives.

Dover's cultural assets feature The Biggs Museum of American Art, the Schwartz Center for the Arts, a variety of shops and boutiques featuring local artisan's work and regional cuisine. Dover's festivals, concerts, and cultural celebrations throughout the year include the Wine and Beer Festival, NASCAR race weekends, Old Dover Days, Spring and Summer Performing Arts Series, and 4th of July festivities on the Green, with the Delaware State Fair and Sea Witch Festival nearby. The City's hotels, restaurants, and entertainment venues support both tourism and business travelers. Dover's retail sector, healthcare facilities, Airforce Base, Delaware State University, and tourism sector contribute to the city's economic growth and vitality. Killens Pond State Park offers fishing, boating, and camping, while Silver Lake Park provides biking and scenic walking trails and birdwatching spots.

Delaware is well known for its pristine beaches along the Atlantic Ocean with Rehoboth, Dewey, and Bethany Beach of the popular destinations for sunbathing, swimming, surfing, kayaking, and other water sports. Numerous state parks offer hiking, birdwatching, camping, fishing along the Delaware Bayshore Byway, cycling trails like the Junction & Breakwater, and golfing at premier courses throughout the state.

Delaware's population of 1,032,000 represents 390,000 households. Dover is the second largest city in the state with a growing population of 39,000 that is 42% Black, 41% White, 9% Latino, 3% Asian, and 5% two or more races, with a median age of 38.2. Delaware is a tax-friendly state with a low-affordable cost of living.

visitdelaware.com; nps.gov; visitdelawarevillages.com; stacker.com; unbiased.com; census.gov.

Position Summary

The Executive Director will serve as the chief executive officer of the museum, providing comprehensive strategic leadership working in concert with the board and the staff in support of the museum's founding principles. They will ensure The Biggs achieves its vision and goals within the standards and best practices as an American Alliance of Museums accredited institution, including championing the next phase of expansion. The Executive Director will embrace DEAI and articulate a comprehensive and community-centered programmatic vision for the museum. They will be responsible for the oversight of all day-to-day operations including administration, resource development, financial management, programming, care of the collections, and ongoing community engagement. They will partner with and support the museum's talented and ambitious staff, maintain a close working relationship with the Board of Trustees, and build positive community relationships to increase visitation and revenue. They will champion fresh thinking and approaches to art; and seize opportunities to be creative, experimental, and innovative to meet people where they are. Reporting to the board, the Executive Director will be the voice of the museum and actively engaged in the community and across the museum field.

Roles and Responsibilities

Strategic Planning and Vision

- Guide the vision and design of a feasibility study and capital campaign planning to support the recently approved building expansion Master Plan, in partnership with the building and development committees of the Board and the museum's Deputy Director.
- Lead the development of the strategic interim and future staffing, capital, and facility maintenance plans, to

support institutional direction, facility expansion, and programming needs in collaboration with the board and internal and external stakeholders.

- Oversee and guide the vision for the expansion of the museum's collection in partnership with the Curatorial staff and the Board.
- Engage as an active voice in the arts sector, working in partnership with community organizations, other Delaware art institutions, and national partners in support of the work of the museum.
- Facilitate the vision and implementation of new philosophies, ideas, and approaches to exhibitions, collections, educational programs, and museum events to increase museum visitation and build the museum's brand.
- Embrace other strategic planning and vision responsibilities as needed.

Revenue Enhancement and Community Engagement

- Serve as an advocate and public spokesperson for the museum, implementing a cohesive, disciplined communications and public relations strategy that includes online marketing, social media, press releases, newsletters, and other communication tools to raise the museum's activities and brand throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.
- Leverage the networks of the board to maximize contributed revenue and partnership opportunities for the museum's annual operating and capital projects.
- Collaborate with the development committee of the board to establish fundraising expectations and ensure regular reporting in partnership with the board President, and the museum's Deputy Director.
- Provide strategy and leadership to the museum's revenue activities, including the implementation of earned revenue and fundraising plans, and activities including active member and donor cultivation.
- Assess and evaluate existing development programs and strategies to identify areas where fundraising can be strengthened.
- Oversee grant application calendar and work with museum staff to prepare and submit grant applications, monitoring compliance and reporting within grant parameters.
- Actively engage in community activities to represent the museum to civic and public leaders, educational and community organizations, and nonprofit partners and develop collaborative partnerships that increase both museum visibility and visitation and participation in its programs and events.
- Embrace other revenue enhancement and community engagement responsibilities as needed.

Financial Management and Operations

- Provide leadership and supervision of the museum leadership team, overseeing the day-to-day management of the museum staff, fostering a culture of open, inclusive communication that promotes a strong sense of community across the museum where colleagues feel empowered to do their best work, and model and support best practices.
- Assume primary responsibility for the preparation of a 3-year financial plan, and the annual financial budget and operating plans with the Deputy Director and chair of the finance committee, for board approval.
- Monitor the budget, presenting monthly to the finance committee in conjunction with the museum's CPA Accountant, establishing the appropriate internal controls for all financial matters of the institution.
- Assess the museum's financial performance and health providing the board with financial reports and related analysis quarterly, including compliance with annual audit requirements.
- Ensure proper standards of care for the permanent collections, as well as loaned items, based on professional standards and best practices as set forth by the American Alliance of Museums.
- Embrace other financial management and operations responsibilities as needed.

Governance and Board Relations

- Build and nurture a strong relationship with the board of trustees to facilitate and inspire them as enthusiastic and productive partners.
- Expand board membership, identifying expertise and skills needed to advance the museum's operations, in partnership with the Board chair and nominating committee.
- Ensure the efficient and timely development and distribution of agendas and reports and provide board members with information to help them reach decisions that advance the mission and goals of the museum.

- Facilitate the flow of all information and connection between the board and the museum staff.
- Support monthly board, executive committee, and other committee meetings, ensuring effective outcomes and contributions.
- Ensure strong governance, informed oversight, and board succession, in partnership with the Board President.
- Embrace other governance and board relations responsibilities as needed.

Traits and Characteristics

The Executive Director will be a visionary, versatile, and engaged leader who values interacting with a diverse array of museum patrons, community members, and elected officials. They will have the capacity to adapt to frequent change while maintaining focus on the organization’s vision, goals, and priorities. Establishing clear performance standards for themselves and their team, the Executive Director will identify and secure the resources needed to achieve results and hold themselves and the team accountable while providing clear guidance and decision-making. Driven by the pursuit of knowledge and open to innovation and new practices, the Executive Director will be knowledgeable of professional and ethical standards set forth by the American Alliance of Museums. Resourceful, and intellectually curious, the Executive Director will be an active advocate within the community and the entire Mid-Atlantic region; building relationships and partnerships that support the museum.

Other key competencies include:

- **Leadership and Teamwork** – The capacity to articulate a vision and create a sense of purpose and direction for internal and external stakeholders, build trust by demonstrating respect and integrity, and create an environment where team members are appreciated and supported, enabling their success.
- **Resiliency and Goal Orientation** – The demonstrated ability to overcome setbacks and develop and implement strategies to meet objectives while balancing timelines and desired outcomes.
- **Decision Making, Time and Priority Management** – The ability to systematically analyze information before making a timely decision with the aptitude to ascertain competing priorities, resolve difficulties, and maximize the use of time and resources to attain the desired outcomes.
- **Personal Accountability** – The willingness to self-evaluate and answer for personal actions and decisions, recognize and learn from mistakes, and listen and use feedback for personal improvement.

Qualifications

Senior-level management, demonstrating progressively responsible experience within an art museum or related cultural or educational institution is required. An advanced degree in a field that relates to the interpretation of the museum is preferred. Knowledge of American art or material culture and a commitment to visitor-centered programming is vital. The ideal candidate will bring strong business acumen and be an experienced relationship builder with a record of success in the design and implementation of annual operating and capital fundraising plans. Previous experience working with nonprofit boards, strategic planning, building projects, capital campaigns, and the effective management of human, physical, and financial resources is essential. A demonstrated commitment to and success in advancing diversity equity, inclusion, and accessibility is a must.

Compensation and Benefits

The Biggs Museum of American Art offers competitive compensation with an anticipated annual salary range of \$150,000 and \$180,000 with annual performance bonuses; a generous “cafeteria-style” benefits package including paid vacation, a 403(b) retirement program, and a professional development program.

Applications and Inquiries

To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments (electronic submissions preferred), please click [here](#) or visit artsconsulting.com/opensearches. For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, including the anticipated salary range, please contact:

Renée Danger-James, Vice President



1040 First Avenue, Suite 352
New York, New York 10022-2991
Tel (888) 234.4236 Ext. 212
Email Biggs@ArtsConsulting.com

The Biggs Museum of American Art is fully committed to diversity and inclusion as an integral part of who we are. As a non-profit board and staff who serve all our community, we commit to carrying forth this mission to educate and inspire the many beautiful people in the world. As we stand with you against racism in a spirit of compassion and respect, we strive to be the best museum we can be.