The Opportunity:

Tower Hill Botanic Garden (THBG) is a leading cultural institution in Central Massachusetts and the only year-round public botanic garden in New England. Featuring 17 distinct gardens, two indoor conservatories, miles of woodland trails, and much more, THBG provides over 150,000 visitors annually an opportunity to relax, learn, and connect with the natural world.

Guided by its rich history, THBG’s vision is to not only become a must-see destination for all, but a collection of people and plants that can make a difference beyond its boundaries. Through collaboration with others, Tower Hill will develop and disseminate plant-based solutions to societal issues and lead efforts to build a better world with plants and people. With strong strategic leadership and philanthropic giving, Tower Hill is on track to realize this vision.

At this time of unprecedented growth, THBG seeks an energetic and accomplished development leader to join its senior leadership team as its Chief Development Officer (CDO). Reporting to the Chief Executive Officer, Grace Elton, the CDO will set the long-term vision and direction for the development program and team. The CDO will
join the organization in the middle of an ambitious multimillion-dollar comprehensive campaign, Growing Boldly, and will be critical to ensuring its success and for the planning and execution of future initiatives. S/He will develop new outreach and fundraising strategies to expand the donor base while continuing to advance relationships with existing prospects and donors, including Trustees, in order to increase engagement and philanthropic contributions to THBG.

With an entrepreneurial and creative approach, the CDO will bring professional expertise and best practices to the department and team. The successful candidate will be a highly motivated, proactive, and strategic thinker with a proven track record in securing major gifts. As a visible member of the community, the CDO must have professional acumen and strong communication skills to successfully engage various groups and constituencies. The ability to thrive in a nimble environment, collaborate, and develop relationships internally and externally to successfully build and grow THBG’s fundraising program to its greatest potential is fundamental.

Overview

The Worcester County Horticultural Society was formed in 1842 as a nonprofit educational organization with the purpose of advancing the sciences and encouraging and improving the practice of horticulture. Its rich and colorful history, starting with the fruit and flower show that inspired its incorporation, saw growth and successes as years passed, along with shifts and changes through cultural and social periods. In 1983, the Society’s focus moved towards cultivating gardens, which led to the creation of the botanic garden at Tower Hill Farm in Boylston, MA, in 1986.

Today, Tower Hill Botanic Garden features a four-season display of the finest plants for cultivation in New England. Carefully planned gardens and collections of ornamental, edible, and native plants, plus trails that enhance the natural features of this beautiful 171-acre property and a robust program and event schedule, make Tower Hill a must-see destination.
Tower Hill continues to inspire visitors by building upon its exceptional displays and horticulturally significant plant collections. It also seeks to build on its past success of engaging children with plants to cultivate lifelong appreciation for horticulture and stewardship of the environment. Through enhanced educational offerings and experiential learning opportunities, an increasing number of children and young families are visiting the garden and discovering their personal connection to nature. In 2017 alone, over 10,000 youth and adults participated in THBG’s free and fee-based educational programs. Partnerships with community-based organizations, like the Worcester Refugee Assistance Project, as well as Tower Hill’s outreach program, the Worcester Tree Initiative, allow Tower Hill to expand its impact beyond the garden’s physical footprint. THBG is also a premiere destination for hosting private events including weddings and corporate meetings, with different garden experiences offered for attendees each season.

The Campaign for Tower Hill: Growing Boldly

Tower Hill’s ongoing master plan lays out a 30-year vision for the development of Tower Hill’s property, including the addition of gardens, improved infrastructure, enhancements to accessibility, expanded space for education, and an extension of the trail network. The first phase of this new plan involves the construction of the Ramble, a new children’s and family garden, while addressing the infrastructure improvements most essential to accommodate growth and provide the best possible visitor experience.

In September 2017, the Board of Trustees officially voted to launch Growing Boldly, THBG’s multimillion-dollar comprehensive campaign with a goal of $26 million. The campaign will focus on essential infrastructure projects that will alleviate the significant constraints on capacity currently compromising the guest experience and hampering THBG’s ability to accommodate its growing audience. These projects include:

- **The Ramble:** Tower Hill’s new 1.5-acre children and family garden, the Ramble, provides an opportunity to connect youth with nature through hands-on exploration. Designed by internationally renowned landscape architect W. Gary Smith, working alongside landscape architects Ryan Associates of Waltham, Massachusetts, the goal is to develop a beautiful and distinct garden that promotes well-being, inspires learning and discovery, and heightens appreciation for the importance of plants and horticulture. Educational programming is being developed to leverage the garden’s unique features and diverse plantings to emphasize STEAM principles (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math), and teach children about the value of plants in our ecosystem.
- **A welcoming entrance and arrival garden**: A significant new display statement will be created at the entrance of Tower Hill to improve visibility from the road. The renovated entry will feature enhanced native plantings and a new gate.

- **An engaging entry experience**: The enriched entry experience will guide visitors to the new parking gardens before entering the Stoddard Education and Visitors center to check in on foot via ADA accessible walkways.

- **An environmentally friendly “parking garden”**: Increased from 240 to over 550 spaces, the parking lot will feature attractive and horticulturally diverse “bio-swales,” structures that will serve to capture and filter surface water runoff. The bio-swales, planted with herbaceous and woody plants, will be installed between parking bays. This “parking garden” will be unique in the region and will provide a model for how parking lots can be both highly attractive and environmentally friendly. Twelve ADA spaces and gently sloping ramps will also ensure a high degree of accessibility throughout the main lot. Charging stations for electric vehicles will be added.

- **Enhancement of a historic allée**: Pliny’s Allée, will serve as the main avenue of access to the Ramble. To accommodate foot traffic to the Ramble, and to be ADA compliant, a raised boardwalk will be installed along the allée of stately oaks.

The Campaign’s other priorities include the acquisition of adjacent land (already accomplished), securing additional funds for the Tower Hill endowment, and the realization of a sustained increase in unrestricted philanthropic support for the Garden’s operative budget.

In 2019, Tower Hill welcomed over 160,000 visitors, a number that is projected to grow substantially, especially upon the opening of the Ramble. Along with the increase in visitation, Tower Hill’s operating budget has been growing steadily. Unrestricted contributed revenue accounts for approximately 25% of the budget (up from 19% in 2014). The endowment has recovered from the losses of 2008 and has grown to over $20 million as of December 31, 2019.

Tower Hill completed its last formal capital campaign in 2011, having raised in excess of $17 million.
The Role

The Chief Development Officer is responsible for:

- All operating and restricted (capital, program, and endowment) fundraising and gift processing operations;
- Membership operations;
- Staffing the Board of Trustees Development Committee and Core Campaign Committee, as well as supporting the Governance Committee with research on potential Trustee nominees;
- Holding direct reports and divisions accountable for meeting budgetary, mission, and Strategic Plan goals; and
- Integrating operations of the Institutional Advancement Department into the mission and goals of the Garden as a whole.

Leadership and Interpersonal Relations:

- Serves on the THBG’s senior leadership team, participating in short- and long-range planning and expansion;
- Embraces THBG’s commitment to excellence in guest services, integrating work of the Advancement department with the efforts of all other departments;
- Works with Board of Trustees and as assigned staff lead for permanent and ad hoc committees;
- Determines annual departmental budget needs, authorizes Board-approved budget expenditures, and manages the approved operating budget of the Advancement department;
- Establishes relationships with allied organizations and individuals in the region and nationally;
- Makes presentations to media when requested or as necessary and appropriate; and
- Performs other duties as assigned by the CEO.

Supervision and Training:

- Interviews, assesses, screens, and hires candidates for identified positions in Advancement;
- Supervises, nurtures, encourages, assesses, and counsels staff and volunteers;
- Fosters teamwork and mentors staff by modeling best practices alongside them; and
- Empowers staff by granting authority and autonomy whenever possible.
Education and Experience:

- Five to 10 years of experience in a nonprofit environment in a leadership or management position.
- Demonstrated personal success in the cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of major donors (both individual and institutional), including at the seven-figure level;
- Demonstrated knowledge of philanthropic and membership fundraising and operations, as well as nonprofit management and finances including restricted and unrestricted funds, endowments, and investments;
- A thorough knowledge of best practices in fundraising and experience in developing and executing strategic fundraising plans;
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience with planned giving and annual fundraising;
- Experience working with Boards of Directors or Trustees;
- Demonstrated experience in using and managing data bases in Raiser’s Edge, or similar CRM, and standard office software, such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Outlook;
- Ability to build strong relationships, capable of interacting with opinion leaders, donors, and support staff, and proven expertise in working effectively and collaboratively with a diverse range of constituents;
- Strong interpersonal, written, and oral communication skills; and
- Must be a well-organized, seasoned, successful, and empathetic leader.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Collaborate closely with the CEO, Senior Management Team, and the Development Committee of the Board of Trustees to prepare and implement multi-year plans with annual objectives and regular reports;
- Develop and implement strategies to identify, cultivate, and steward new funding sources;
- Implement workable, practical, and sustainable systems that enhance productivity in all areas of Tower Hill's Institutional Advancement department;
- Work with the CEO to support the Board of Trustees and other leadership volunteers, staff development and related subcommittees, and participate in the identification, cultivation, training, and mentoring of new Trustees;
- Staff and provide support to the CEO and Trustees in fundraising, and attend fundraising and donor cultivation events as necessary;
- Develop and manage capital/comprehensive campaigns, the membership program, grant writing, annual fund, and all other fundraising programs and activities;
- Remain current on laws, policies, procedures, new ideas, and collateral relevant to fundraising and communications, and provide leadership in these areas on the Senior Leadership Team; and
• Develop the Institutional Advancement budget and be responsible for Board-approved revenue and expenditures.

The Chief Development Officer position is salaried and exempt from overtime. The standard work schedule for this position is Monday-Friday. However, the schedule may be flexible to suit the needs of the organization and may at times involve weekend or evening hours. While the work is generally performed inside, the CDO may be asked to assist with event management in outdoor roles.

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy:

Tower Hill is an equal opportunity employer. Tower Hill Botanic Garden believes diversity in nature promotes a healthy, vigorous garden. Tower Hill believes that diversity among staff promotes a healthy work environment and a vigorous organization. Tower Hill recruits, employs, trains, compensates, and promotes regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, veteran status, and other protected status as required by applicable law. Tower Hill believes in diversity of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, national origin, ability, and all the other traits that make us unique.

Background Checks:

Prior to submitting your resume for this position, please read it over for accuracy. Lindauer does verify academic credentials for its candidates, and our clients frequently conduct background checks prior to finalizing an offer.

Leadership

Grace Elton
Chief Executive Officer

Grace Elton is CEO of Tower Hill Botanic Garden, a 171-acre garden in Boylston, MA. Elton has a strong public horticulture background with experience at premier gardens in the United States and United Kingdom. While Elton served as its director of horticulture, the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond, VA, garnered national recognition from USA Today as a top 10 botanical garden and achieved the National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. She also served as horticulture supervisor and adjunct professor at the 118-acre Ambler Arboretum of Temple University in Ambler, PA. As a recipient of the prestigious Martin McLaren Horticulture Scholar award, presented by the Garden Club of America, Elton studied botanic garden education, practical horticulture, and landscape design in England at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Royal Horticulture Society Rosemoor, the Eden Project, and the Chelsea Physic Garden, and in Scotland at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh. Elton has a Master of Science in public horticulture with a certificate in museum studies from the Longwood Graduate Program, University of
Delaware. Her Bachelor of Science degree is in environmental horticulture with a public gardens management specialization from University of Florida. She serves on the Board of Directors of the American Public Gardens Association (APGA) and as a member of the Longwood Visiting Committee. Elton was honored as a “Top 40 Under 40” for Richmond, VA’s Style Weekly Magazine in 2013 and “Top 40 Under 40” for Worcester, MA’s Worcester Business Journal in 2018. Elton was also chosen for the 2019 Distinguished Young Alumni Award from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources of the University of Delaware.

James Karadimos
President, Worcester County Horticultural Society

James Karadimos has been president of the Worcester County Horticultural Society for four years. A podiatrist by trade with degrees from University of Pennsylvania and Ohio College of Medicine, Karadimos has been on the Board of Trustees for eight years, also serving as chairperson of development and as vice president. His tenure includes a dramatic increase in admissions, memberships, and philanthropy at Tower Hill Botanic Garden. Karadimos is particularly proud of helping Tower Hill embrace its future potential, of providing leadership stability, and of helping successfully navigate transformational change as the organization flourishes.

Dix Leeson

Dix Leeson is a retired senior development professional, having raised leadership gifts for Wheaton College (MA), Harvard Business School, Babson College, and Boston University from 1996 to 2016. This passion reflects both the benefits received from his own education and conviction that enduring organizations must not only have wise leadership and committed volunteers but also strong financial support. Prior to full-time fundraising and reflecting a lifelong interest in ecosystems, Leeson obtained a Master’s degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. Following this, he spent a decade practicing land-use planning and habitat preservation with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Nature Conservancy.

Leeson’s volunteer work has included serving on search committees for senior pastors at church, nominating committees at the New England Wildflower Society and Cuttyhunk Historical Society, as a Trustee for the Judge Baker Children’s Center, and as founding Chair of the Cuttyhunk Island (MA) Long-Range Planning Committee. Leeson and his wife Roxy live in Natick, MA, and have two daughters and three grandchildren nearby. He happily assists his wife’s ambitious gardening efforts and helps keep the small community on Cuttyhunk Island sustainable.
To learn more, call 617-262-1102 or send nominations or cover letter and resume to: Donna Russell, Senior Consultant at drussell@LindauerGlobal.com or Lisa Abair Vuona, Vice President at lvuona@LindauerGlobal.com.

All inquiries will be held in confidence.