



Chief Operating Officer

Reports to: Executive Director

Supervisory Duties: Marketing and Communications team, the Donor Experiences team (Suites, Events, Hospitality, and Stewardship), and administrative team.

Overview

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) partners with the Executive Director to define and execute the vision, operational strategy, and goals of the Foundation, while overseeing internal operations that align with and support its mission.

Reporting directly to the Executive Director, the COO collaborates closely with the Foundation Trustees and Athletics to ensure operational excellence and both short-term and long-term financial sustainability. As a key member of the VAF Executive Team, the COO will work in close partnership with senior unit leaders across the organization and across university Grounds.

Responsibilities

- Work in partnership with the Executive Director and VAF Executive Team to drive operational improvements across internal and external units, supporting both the immediate needs and long-term goals of the Foundation.
- Analyze and evaluate existing operations and logistics practices to identify ways in which VAF can continue to improve efficiency and elevate operations to maximize resources
- Collaborate with and support the Marketing & Communications and Donor Experience teams by providing strategic guidance that enhances operational effectiveness and aligns with organizational goals and priorities
- In collaboration with the Executive Director, provide leadership and guidance to the Marketing and Communications team to manage the VAF's external voice and public perception
- Provide leadership and guidance to the Donor Experiences team to design and execute strategies to deliver high quality stewardship for donors at all levels, first class premium hospitality experiences, and events for donors locally and across the country
- Work with partners across Grounds to identify strategic opportunities to capitalize on big moments and collaborate to engage our donors and drive support for the VAF
- Oversee the strategic planning and delivery of communications and stewardship initiatives to enhance engagement with donors and prospects
- Partner with the CFO to develop the annual budget, meet financial targets, and implement improved budgeting and reporting practices that enhance operational efficiency, ensure fiscal accountability, and promote transparency across all areas of the organization
- In partnership with the CFO, utilize data analytics to evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of stewardship strategies, donor experiences, and marketing campaigns; develop dashboards and reporting tools to drive performance transparency.
- Cultivate a positive and collaborative work environment both internally among team members and externally with others on Grounds
- Help champion a culture of performance excellence and continuous improvement across all teams, setting clear benchmarks for success, building leadership capacity, and fostering an environment where creativity, accountability, and inclusion drive measurable impact.
- Develop and execute strategies to identify, cultivate, and solicit gift-in-kind contributions in support of the Foundation's mission and strategic priorities
- Provide oversight of the courtesy car program, including coordination with dealership partners and internal stakeholders
- Coordinate donor travel programs for select away, neutral-site, and post-season competitions
- Represent VAF at University and Athletic Department meetings as assigned by the Executive Director

- Coordinate with University and Athletics staff, VAF colleagues, donors, guests, and other stakeholders during sports and major events held in premium seating areas
- Coordinate VAF staff responsibilities and coverage on home football, men's basketball, and baseball game days, plus other home contests as needed
- Provide leadership to the administrative assistant(s) team and manage VAF office operations and donor customer service
- Serve as a strategic architect for operational innovation by identifying and implementing emerging technologies, operational systems, and donor engagement tools that enhance efficiency, personalize experiences, and position VAF at the forefront of modern athletic fundraising.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of and commitment to the mission, values, and strategic goals of VAF
- Committed to teamwork and a positive workplace culture by fostering cooperation, trust, mutual respect, and a strong commitment to equal opportunity and inclusive practices
- Serve as a strategic thought partner to the Executive Director and leadership team in navigating the evolving landscape of collegiate athletics, ensuring VAF's strategies adapt and thrive to new realities in a dynamic external environment.
- Maintains consistent office presence during business hours, travels, and works nights and weekends as needed
- Demonstrates high ethical standards, including honesty, integrity, fairness, loyalty, and sincerity in all actions.
- Performs additional responsibilities as assigned by the Executive Director

Qualifications

- Minimum of ten years of progressive leadership experience in athletic fundraising or a non-profit environment
- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree preferred
- Proven ability to build, develop, and lead high-performing teams
- Strategic and organized approach to operations, with openness to innovation and new perspectives
- Successful track record in leading collaborative project management and strategic planning efforts across functions
- Skilled in setting and achieving individual and team goals through close collaboration with staff
- Strong interpersonal skills with a genuine commitment to cultivating and sustaining relationships with internal and external stakeholders
- Exceptional attention to detail, with the ability to manage multiple priorities simultaneously
- Demonstrated initiative, creativity, and self-motivation, a proactive problem solver
- Effective communicator with the ability to delegate, supervise, and set clear expectations
- Highly organized with a proven ability to execute complex plans and deliver results
- Enthusiastic and service-oriented, with a deep commitment to the University of Virginia and the mission of the Virginia Athletics Foundation
- Strong mentoring and leadership skills, with a collaborative and team-first mindset

Desired Characteristics

- Strong leadership skills and the ability to approach business in a clear and organized manner while maintaining an open mind for new and innovative ideas
- Ability to effectively maintain relationships and work with internal and external constituencies, including excellent interpersonal and public communication skills, including effective messaging to multiple and diverse audiences
- Dedication to teamwork, a positive attitude, and demonstrated behavior that promotes cooperation, builds trust, and instills a commitment to excellence
- Evidence of successfully presenting to and interacting with governing boards
- Goal-oriented (metrics-driven)
- Demonstrated initiative in seizing opportunities, a self-starter
- Ability to maintain poise in interactions with university administration, VAF Board of Trustees, community leaders, donors, and co-workers

- Ability to prioritize and organize complex projects and plans to deliver results
- Proven record of accomplishment that demonstrates initiative, creativity, and interpersonal skills, preferably in a university setting
- Enjoy interacting with people with a proven ability to develop relationships.
- Commitment to service
- Demonstrated passion and enthusiasm for the University of Virginia and the mission of VAF
- Strong organizational, leadership, and mentoring skills
- Database management (Paciolan)
- Strategic Planning
- Donor and constituent service

Benefits*

- Annual salaried position – compensation commensurate with experience
- Annual performance-based incentive plan – aligned with team and organizational goals
- Generous paid time off – including paid personal leave, paid sick leave, and 12 paid holidays
- Comprehensive insurance coverage – health, dental, life, and long-term disability
- 401(k) retirement plan – with employer contributions
- On-site parking
- UVA Football and Basketball season tickets – for employee and eligible family members
- Family pass for UVA regular season home Olympic sports events
- Recreation pass – access to all UVA recreation facilities

*Benefits are subject to change.

At the Virginia Athletics Foundation (VAF), we are committed to attracting, developing, and retaining a diverse and talented staff. We value and respect the unique perspectives, backgrounds, and identities of every team member. Together, we strive to foster an inclusive, equitable, and welcoming work environment—one that enables us to best serve our diverse community of donors, student-athletes, alumni, and friends of UVA Athletics.

All full-time VAF employees operate in an in-office work environment.

If interested in applying, please call us at 434.982.5555 or submit your resume to kmiller@virginia.edu.