



ASSIST
SCHOLARS

ASSIST

Suffield, Connecticut

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Start Date: Summer 2025

assistscholars.org



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

MISSION

ASSIST creates life-changing opportunities for outstanding international scholars to learn from and contribute to the finest American independent secondary schools to promote mutual understanding, cultural interchange, and global citizenship.

OVERVIEW

For 56 years, ASSIST (American Secondary Schools for International Students and Teachers) has been a non-profit organization connecting high-performing international scholars with some of the finest American independent secondary schools for year-long scholarship programs. The overarching belief is that the establishment brings together future American leaders and future leaders of other nations, making a substantial contribution toward promoting understanding and tolerance of cultures, racial designations, and religious beliefs.

At this time, ASSIST seeks a Director of Development (DoD) to guide its ambitious fundraising programs. The Director of Development will be a talented advancement professional who is passionate about and committed to fulfilling the mission of this unique organization.

The next Director of Development for ASSIST will step in and immediately play a strategic and tactical role aimed at garnering additional voluntary support for ASSIST. Key to the successful candidate's performance will be their ability to mesh seamlessly with a small staff of 8 whose collective belief in the mission and reliance on teamwork drive the enterprise. There are no school buildings, teachers, or students to observe as part of the daily flow of work; rather, a true conviction in the value of international student exchange and an appreciation and understanding of independent schools will provide inspiration for the successful candidate.

The successful candidate will be a true self-starter charged with enhancing a growing annual fund, establishing program goals and metrics, coordinating alumni outreach and communications, and continuing to build a major gift program.

GIVING HIGHLIGHTS FY 2024

- \$472,000 raised through the ASSIST Fund
- 100% Board participation
- Donors gave a total of \$842,742 including gifts and pledges for all funds



Thus, the successful candidate is likely a development generalist, with a bent towards major gifts and a firm understanding of an annual fund, who has the confidence and experience to work effectively with an engaged Board of Directors and President and direct their fundraising efforts.

In sum, the practical experience is implicit, and the “fit” is crucial. ASSIST is like a small family business where people work hard, chip in when and where needed, and embrace good humor. For the development professional looking for a chance to lead a program and advance their career, this position is an opportunity to make one’s mark on behalf of a well-established program with a compelling mission and vision that serves Scholars from around the world, the ASSIST member schools here in the U.S., and the partner countries in which they work.

THE ORGANIZATION

History

ASSIST was founded in 1969 by the late Paul G. Sanderson, a visionary American educator among the first to conceive of the benefits of an international educational community for American independent secondary schools. ASSIST began with just 13 students, and in the four decades since has created an educational and cultural exchange program that continues to bring deserving and talented young men and women to study in the United States. Over time, programmatic advances and development have only strengthened ASSIST’s original mission: to discover, place, and support outstanding international students in American independent schools of stature.



Legacy

The legacy of ASSIST is long-lasting, creating connections among international achievers and their American peers, teachers, and host families. One goal of the program is to create a worldwide circle of future leaders, and ASSIST's breadth has allowed more than 6,000 students from 52 countries to develop leadership and cultural fluency. In a typical year, ASSIST recruits students from over 20 countries, including Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, Czech Republic, Moldova, Hungary, Poland, Republic of Georgia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania, Serbia, Slovakia, Austria, Turkey, Palestine, and Somaliland.

Schools and scholars alike benefit from participating in ASSIST; scholars are academically high-performing and are expected to be cultural ambassadors and strong contributors to their American school communities. Schools benefit from the diversity and unique experiences of the scholars, who enrich their communities. Each member school offers at least one scholarship to an ASSIST scholar, and many schools offer opportunities to help multiple scholars.

ASSIST depends on the generosity of donors to fund its programs. Donors have various opportunities to contribute, including Annual Fund giving, scholar sponsorship, matching corporate contribution, capital giving to the endowment, planned giving, and special projects—including the host family program, alumni receptions, orientation, country-specific sponsorship, and staff and operation support, among others. These programs have allowed ASSIST to maintain its commendable track record of delivering on promises and living its mission for 56 years. The development office tries to operate as leanly and efficiently as possible, making each budget dollar count.



MEMBER SCHOOLS

For over 50 years, the ASSIST family of member schools has been the foundation of the program. Each school offers at least one full scholarship to an ASSIST Scholar, and many schools offer opportunities to multiple ASSIST Scholars with partial scholarships. The generosity of each receiving school is matched by the strong contribution of each ASSIST Scholar.

ASSIST welcomes independent day and boarding schools that are full members of NAIS to apply for membership. Their close relationships with member schools are a hallmark of the program.

ASSIST member schools welcome future leaders from around the world into their school communities, and they join the network of ASSIST member schools across the nation, including such institutions as Albuquerque Academy, Chatham Hall, Deerfield, Girls Preparatory School, Andover, Exeter, St. Andrew's-DE, St. Paul's, Suffield Academy, Taft, Tower Hill, Western Reserve, and Woodberry Forest.



POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Director of Development (DoD) is a senior administrative position reporting to the President and is charged with directing and expanding the organization's maturing fundraising program, which includes the ASSIST Fund (annual fund), major gifts, sponsorships (financial aid), and planned giving. The DoD works closely with the President and the Board of Directors to establish funding strategies and objectives for the organization to accomplish its fundraising goals. In addition to their fundraising responsibilities, the DoD oversees projects relating to the Board of Directors, marketing and communications, and alumni relations. The DoD supervises the Development and Orientation Manager.

The successful candidate will have the ability to work in a hybrid schedule: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in the office in Suffield, Connecticut with the option to work remotely on Mondays and Fridays.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure that the ASSIST Fund continues to grow and meet the goals set in the strategic plan.
- Expand and coordinate fundraising, communication, and engagement with constituents in the United States and key international markets to ensure a consistent approach that serves the overall needs of the organization.
- Supervise the Development and Orientation Manager.
- Serve as the primary liaison to the Friends of ASSIST (FOA) in Germany to coordinate membership and donation strategies for FOA giving and the ASSIST Fund. Travel to Germany once per quarter for leadership meetings and solicitation visits.
- In collaboration with the President and the Board of Directors, work to identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward major gift prospects for annual gifts and sponsorships.
- Lead the strategy and execution of an alumni relations program to strengthen engagement, cultivate long-term relationships, and inspire increased alumni participation.
- Coordinate marketing efforts with the support of the Director of Marketing.
- Work with the Governance Committee to identify potential Board of Directors candidates.
- Manage, with the support of the Development and Orientation Manager, the DonorPerfect database.
- Plan special events appropriate to giving strategies.
- Create and deliver quarterly fundraising reports to the Board of Directors.
- Serve as staff liaison to the Development and Governance committees.
- Participate in the 5-day annual ASSIST Orientation program in August for the incoming Class of Scholars.



DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

ASSIST seeks a Director of Development who possesses proven leadership, communication, collaboration, entrepreneurial spirit, and interpersonal skills and can lead with imagination, vision, energy, and drive. The following qualities are recommended

- A bachelor's degree or equivalent is required.
- 8-10 years of fundraising experience, including with annual funds, major gifts, and capital campaigns, ideally in an independent school.
- Experience fundraising in international markets.
- Proven track record for developing tactical plans to meet a variety of metrics that include calls, visits, mailings, solicitations and meeting those goals on a monthly basis.
- Strong work ethic and success in meeting regular goals.
- Ability to conceptualize, plan, and cohesively integrate a full range of development programs.
- A firm believer in ASSIST's mission and values and the capacity to articulate its case for support.
- Contributor to the overall strategic planning of the organization.
- Excellent communication skills, both oral and written.
- Demonstrated experience with Donor Perfect software program.
- Proficient in Microsoft Word and Excel.
- A decisive and confident leader, embracing the organization's culture and mission.
- Highly professional team-player, with a strong sense of integrity and desire to collaborate effectively with colleagues, volunteers, and Board members.
- Experience managing and motivating other staff members.
- Experience in communications and/or alumni relations desirable.
- Ability to travel extensively in the U.S. and internationally.



TO APPLY

Location:

While ASSIST is based in Suffield, CT employees live throughout the surrounding region and enjoy a hybrid schedule: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in the office with the option to work remotely on Mondays and Fridays.

Compensation and Benefits:

Compensation and comprehensive benefits will be competitive and commensurate with experience and the local and national independent school market. Final salary will depend on several factors, including a candidate's qualifications, skills, competencies, and experience.

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultant in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position.
- A current résumé.
- A list of three professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

Jonathan Ball

Managing Associate: Advancement

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

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