Executive Director

July 2022
The Opportunity:

The Board of Trustees of Cornelia Connelly Center (CCC) in New York City is conducting a national search for a new Executive Director who will assume the position on July 1, 2022. The Executive Director will embody the mission and values of the Center which are grounded in the educational philosophy and spirituality of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus (SHCJ) and dedicated to educating young women of conscience and action.

CCC seeks an experienced, dynamic and inspiring leader to advance the Connelly Center’s unique mission of empowering under-resourced girls to realize their full potential from middle school through college and beyond. Students enter CCC’s joyful and holistic program in the 4th or 5th grade at Connelly Middle School (CMS), continue on as CMS graduates in the Graduate Support Program (GSP) and matriculate to and graduate from college in GSP 2.0, receiving financial, academic and social-emotional support from 4th grade through college graduation.

With the sponsorship of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, CCC was founded in 1993 by Connie Bush and Mary Claire Ryan along with Kathleen Roney, SHCJ. Connelly Middle School (CMS) consists of a Lower School (grades 4 and 5) and an Upper School (grades 6 through 8), totaling almost 100 girls. The student population is primarily Latina and mixed-race. Most students hail from the lower East Side of Manhattan but all five boroughs are represented. True to its mission, the school focuses on accelerating student learning towards grade level work and beyond, tailoring curriculum to ensure that the girls are successful in high school and wherever their aspirations take them. Individual attention is prioritized by faculty and staff, with each class having two teachers and twenty students or less. The girls have the freedom to be their best selves and develop confidence as they learn and grow.

After graduating from CMS, the alumnae remain a part of the Connelly Center family through the Graduate Support Program which provides high schoolers with academic, financial, and emotional support. The girls have access to a quiet place to study and can attend monthly workshops on stress, time management, professionalism and the college process. Following their high school graduation, CMS alumnae are invited to participate in GSP 2.0 which allows alumnae to remain connected to CCC. Participants are provided with a small stipend to assist with book expenses, incidentals and travel to and from home as well as guidance and support in academics and finding campus resources. Many of the graduates are first generation college students, and GSP 2.0 allows the girls to fulfill their potential in college.
Over the past 27 years, the results have been impressive. Ninety-eight percent of CCC alumnae graduate from high school, compared to 75% across NYC, and pursue higher education and graduate from college at rates far exceeding their New York City and national peers. Over 60% of CCC alumnae graduate from college, nearly four times the national average for low-income students.

CCC has been featured on PBS MetroFocus! More information about CCC and a link to the MetroFocus segment can be found at connellycenter.org.

**Expectations for the Executive Director**

Cornelia Connelly Center’s Executive Director inspires a love and passion for CCC’s mission with everyone they meet; the ED is as much an evangelist for the mission as a leader of the organization. The Executive Director ensures the strategic effectiveness of the CCC’s signature educational programs; leads successful fundraising, cultivating relationships that continually strengthen CCC’s extended community; and guides the senior staff team to collaborate and excel in administration of all programs and support functions. The Executive Director is accountable to the Board of Trustees.

A new five-year strategic plan is in the process of being finalized by the Board of Trustees. Some of the strategic priorities for the next five years include: ensure that CCC continues to fulfil its mission and has the financial resources to do so; continue to strengthen the CMS curriculum; effectively communicate its mission and impact to ensure that CCC attracts and enrolls new 4th and 5th grade students from all over New York City and maintain a robust enrollment as well as develop new supporters and major donors; create new five-year plans for the Graduate Support and GSP 2.0 programs; and ensure CCC has the facilities and location necessary to fulfill its mission well into the future.

Responsibilities of the role include but are not limited to:

- **Leadership in partnership:** The Executive Director works in partnership with the Board of Trustees to ensure strong organizational governance and leadership and to develop and execute strategy that accomplishes the Center’s mission. With a positive, optimistic, energetic leadership style, the Executive Director collaborates with the administrators and faculty to further goals and appropriately involves them in problem-solving and decision-making. The Executive Director is responsible for the execution and overall management of the Center’s strategic plan and $2.5 million budget.
• **Program and community**: Cornelia Connelly Center is a unique educational community that focuses on educating under-resourced girls. The Executive Director embraces and articulates this mission, working closely with senior staff to shape programs that further it. He or she sets the tone for the Center as a joyful setting for learning and growth for all students, alumnae, faculty and staff.

• **Advancement**: This is a key, broadly defined responsibility, with particular focus on fundraising: CCC is more than a school and unlike most independent schools, CCC is not tuition driven; it relies on donors to fund its operating budget every year. The Executive Director leads efforts to sustain the vitality and viability of the Center, building relationships with all constituencies including individual and institutional donors, alumnae, parents, the Network of Holy Child Schools and the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, the NativityMiguel Coalition, the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS) and the larger community of educational, neighborhood, and civic institutions in New York City and beyond.

• **Management**: The Executive Director leads a diversified team of senior staff that includes the Connelly Middle School Head of School, Director of Finance, Advancement Director, Graduate Support Program Director and Operations Manager. The Executive Director is responsible for overseeing effective financial, facility, operational and program management and for attracting, retaining, developing and evaluating qualified senior faculty and staff.

• **Holy Child Identity and Network**: The Center is sponsored by the Society of the Holy Child Jesus as an independent Catholic school that draws its inspiration from the spirituality and educational principles of Cornelia Connelly, who founded the SHCJ. The Executive Director will ensure that this rich spiritual tradition animates the life of the Center, infusing its programs with the shared goals of the Holy Child Network of Schools and actively representing the Center and its unique mission within the Network.
Preferred Attributes and Experiences

The Board of Trustees of CCC seek an accomplished leader of absolute integrity who is passionate about CCC’s mission, willing to create a culture of strong character and high expectations while promoting joy and excellence in teaching and learning as seen in the educational philosophy of Cornelia Connelly.

Candidates must demonstrate most, if not all, of the following critical competencies:

- Strong judgment, adaptability, a cool head in moments of crisis, a knack for bringing out the best in people and the ability to pursue a challenging mission with creativity and joy;
- Relationship builder—ability to inspire others to become passionate about CCC’s mission;
- Promote collaboration and transparency, respects the perspectives and views of others, yet is decisive when necessary;
- Promote a culture of dignity, kindness, compassion and inclusion;
- Possess cultural awareness and sensitivity; the ability to communicate as effectively with students, alumnae and parents as with Trustees, donors, faculty and staff, community organizations, educational associations and organizations, etc.; fluency in Spanish a plus;
- Dedicated to continuous improvement in all aspects of the organization and to professional development;
- Highly skilled fundraiser with demonstrated ability and willingness to ask for major gifts;
- Disciplined, process-driven, and solutions oriented;
- A servant leader, leading by example, with an optimistic, positive, can-do attitude;
- Accessible and approachable, being a visible presence.

Candidates should demonstrate the following executive leadership and management abilities and credentials:

- A record of working well with an active Board of Trustees;
- Over 10 years experience in a senior leadership role at a nonprofit institution; experience in a school setting with an ability to motivate an outstanding faculty preferred;
- Experience working with and motivating a diversified senior leadership team to define and achieve common goals;
- Understanding of the fundamentals of business, economics, marketing and admissions of independent schools;
- Ability to delegate effectively and ensure accountability;
- Superior organizational management skills, including strong competence in overseeing financial and operational matters;
- Clear, consistent, and timely communication skills—listening, speaking, and writing;
- Aptitude for marketing and public relations; commitment to being visible and to making connections with the greater community in order to enhance CCC’s image and reputation;
- Aptitude for understanding technology’s role in supporting programming and operations.

Information on the Search Process and Calendar

A search is underway to identify a new Executive Director by November 2021, who will assume the position on July 1, 2022.

Please direct all inquiries, applications, and nominations in confidence to either Chris Arnold (carnold@edu-directions.com) or Risa Oganesoff Heersche (rheersche@edu-directions.com).

Electronic submission of credentials is required.
Candidates should submit:

- A cover letter explaining their interest in the Cornelia Connelly Center
- A resume
- The names, email addresses, and telephone numbers of five references (References will not be contacted without first checking with the candidate.)

Cornelia Connelly Center is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and seeks a diverse and broad spectrum of qualified candidates.

**Search Calendar**

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<td>September 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semifinalist interviews</td>
<td>October 23 &amp; 24</td>
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<td>Finalist interviews</td>
<td>Week of November 8</td>
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*The Search Committee will start considering applications on August 1.