

Director of External Affairs
Boston, Massachusetts**The Organization:**

Boston Debate League (BDL) is a non-profit organization that offers debate and argumentation programs for young people in Greater Boston, with a commitment to serving students of color and other students who have been denied these educational opportunities. We tailor our programs to address the educational inequities they experience, and strive to create inclusive learning communities where all participants are welcome and supported in achieving the transformative, lifelong benefits of debate.

BDL implements two core programs, each with a proven track record of success. The After-School Debate program builds debate teams open to all students who have the opportunity to develop their confidence, communication, and critical thinking skills through a competitive activity that engages young people in discussions about important real-world issues of policy and equity. The Debate-Inspired Classrooms program uses an instructional model adopted by schools and teachers across all content areas, inspired by the elements that make debate a powerful learning experience. Through the program, BDL offers teachers coaching, professional development, and tools that put student voice, argumentation, and collaboration at the center of the classroom. Results have consistently shown the positive impact of debate and debate-inspired instruction on students and classrooms. *BDL's long-term vision is that all young people in Boston are ENGAGED in critical discourse, INFORMED by evidence, and EMPOWERED to lead.*

More information can be found at www.bostondebate.org.

The Position:

The Director of External Affairs will support the mission of BDL by expanding the organization's robust and diverse network of active and engaged supporters and partners, strengthening its brand, growing and diversifying its financial resources, and working closely with the Executive Director to build and sustain an ambitious and collaborative organization. The Director of External Affairs will encourage and inspire individuals, corporations, organizations, and foundations to become advocates and champions of the BDL through financial giving, volunteer activity, strategic partnerships, and other engagement. The Director of External Affairs will drive strategy, coordinate efforts across their team and the organization, and personally cultivate and steward relationships with current and potential major individual donors, foundations, corporations, and organizations. If the Director of External Affairs is successful in their role, the organization will maintain robust and mutually beneficial relationships with partners and supporters, leading to broad and positive recognition in the community, the financial resources necessary to meet all programmatic and operational needs, and opportunities to connect students and teachers to powerful experiences and resources.

Key Opportunities:

The Director of External Affairs leads the External Affairs Team and is a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The Director of External Affairs reports to the Executive Director and directly supervises other

members of the External Affairs team, including the Senior Development Manager and the Senior Volunteer Manager. The Director of External Affairs will be responsible for and engaged in the following opportunities:

Strategic Partnerships

- Use creativity, strategy, and relationship-building skills to develop mutually beneficial partnerships that can support the vision, values, and priorities of the BDL, improve the quality of our programs, generate funding and resources for the BDL and our students and teachers, and increase the profile of the BDL community

Volunteer Engagement

- In collaboration with the Senior Volunteer Manager, develop a strategy to engage and retain hundreds of volunteers year-round, with a focus on recruiting and retaining a racially diverse community of volunteers
- Lead the development of key partnerships with corporations, membership organizations, and other communities of supporters
- In collaboration with the Senior Volunteer Manager and the program team, implement strategies for engaging with parents, families, and school communities

Fundraising and Supporter Cultivation

- Develop, steward, and sustain relationships with current and prospective donors and other stakeholders that support the BDL's mission, including individuals, foundations, corporations, and legislators
- Lead the development of the organization's fundraising strategy, focusing on how the staff and Board of Directors can work to sustain and grow a robust and diverse community of supporters; track progress against strategy, refining and adapting as needed; ensure revenue targets are met
- In collaboration with the Senior Development Manager, refine the infrastructure and systems to track external engagement, including financial reporting, prospect research, and donor/prospect record-keeping; prepare detailed reports of activity and progress toward goals for review by the Executive Director and Board of Directors on a regular basis

Senior Leadership and Strategic Vision

- Participate in the work of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and engage significantly in the implementation of the organization's strategic priorities
- Contribute productively to organization-wide strategic decision-making
- Act as liaison between the organization and a variety of external partners, including media
- Participate in Board meetings, cultivate relationships with Board members, and serve as the staff lead on the Board's External Affairs Committee
- Oversee the branding of BDL by developing our key messaging, creation of marketing collateral and communications that engage our key stakeholders and create awareness about BDL

Staff Supervision and Professional Development

- Foster a culture of support, collaboration, high standards, courage, flexibility, and openness among External Affairs Team
- Supervise External Affairs team members through check-ins and coaching; support each team member in setting performance review goals; conduct mid-year feedback conversations and end-of-year performance review conversations; support team members to reach personal and professional goals, and jointly, achieve the organization's external affairs objectives
- Facilitate cross-team collaboration on shared goals that authentically support program excellence

Organization-Wide Work

As a member of the BDL organization, the Director of External Affairs participates in staff meetings, contributes to organizational strategic planning, and fulfills a “support staff” role at two After-School Debate tournaments and at other key BDL events during the year. Like all BDL staff members, the Director of External Affairs is expected to engage in conversations related to the organization's values, which include Racial and Social Equity and Diversity and Inclusion, and support implementation of programming that ensures that these values are upheld.

The Ideal Candidate:

The Director of External Affairs is a creative, passionate, purpose-driven leader who loves to both think strategically and build relationship and community in support of that strategy. The ideal candidate will have a demonstrated history of success in building relationships, reaching ambitious goals, and creating systems, programs, or initiatives. They are inspired to be a part of an organization that supports young people in strengthening their voices and they have a passion for upholding the mission, vision, values, and commitment statement of the BDL. Although no one candidate will possess all of these qualities, the ideal candidate will bring many of the following personal and professional characteristics to the position:

- 7+ years of professional work experience in fundraising, relationship management, partnership development, external affairs, or similar experience. *BDL recognizes that fundraising leadership roles in nonprofits can be exclusionary due to the many inequities in wealth, access, opportunity, and bias that are prevalent in the nonprofit community and beyond. Therefore, we welcome relationship and partnership building experience from many backgrounds, not just traditional fundraising.*
- Sophisticated relationship building skills and the ability to clearly communicate the mission of the BDL and inspire others to action by demonstrating the organization's values, achievements, activities, and potential
- A proven record of achieving ambitious growth goals through excellent planning and implementation skills
- A track record of success in recruiting, building, and mentoring effective teams
- A demonstrated ability to work with Board members to provide strong support and inspire them to productive action
- Exceptional interpersonal and superior written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively in a changing environment

- A high level of organization, ability to prioritize tasks, attention to detail, and follow through
- Cultural competence, including the demonstrated ability to work effectively cross-culturally and to respect the beliefs, language, and cultures of the BDL community including students, coaches, volunteers, donors, and staff

Salary Range: Competitive salary commensurate with experience. Competitive benefits including health/dental and generous paid time off are provided.

To Apply:

Applications accepted on a rolling basis with interviews likely to begin in early August. The estimated start date for this position is September. This is a year-round position.

Confidential inquiries, nominations, referrals, and resumes with a detailed cover letter outlining how skills and experience demonstrate an ability to meet the challenges and opportunities of this position, should be forwarded in Word or PDF format to:

Kimberly Bartlett-Ra, Director of Operations
Boston Debate League
1542 Tremont Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02120
Kbartlett-ra@bostondebate.org

The Boston Debate League is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The BDL values having a diverse staff that reflects the experiences and backgrounds of the students and teachers it serves. For more information about the Boston Debate League, please visit <http://www.bostondebate.org>.

Why BDL?

The Boston Debate League is a great place to work. Our mission is inspiring and of urgent importance. Our community of staff, students, educators, volunteers, and supporters is vibrant, passionate, and engaged. Our core values of *Power of Young People*, *Analytic Discourse*, *Diversity and Inclusion*, *Racial and Social Equity*, and *Joy in Learning* guide the work we do and enrich our staff culture. BDL employees enjoy:

- Working for a mission-driven organization with passionate staff and an inspiring student, coach, teacher, and volunteer community
- Competitive salaries
- Generous benefits, including health (75% employer paid) and dental (50% employer paid) insurance, pre-tax commuter benefit, and ample paid time off, including office closure the week between Christmas and New Years
- A family-friendly and flexible work environment