

EXECUTIVE SEARCH



DIRECTOR OF ANNUAL GIVING & DIRECT RESPONSE

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Client: American Friends of Magen David Adom

Role: Director of Annual Giving and Direct Response

Location: New York, NY (Hybrid)

Reports To: Chief Marketing Officer

Website: afmda.org



SITUATION OVERVIEW:

Aspen Leadership Group, a ZRG company, has been engaged to recruit a **Director of Annual Giving and Direct Response** for American Friends of Magen David Adom.

ABOUT AMERICAN FRIENDS OF MAGEN DAVID ADOM:

American Friends of Magen David Adom (AFMDA) is a partner in the vital work Magen David Adom (MDA) does every day for Israel's 9.2 million population by funding a wide variety of emergency vehicles, a new national blood center, critically needed medical supplies, and rigorous EMT training. AFMDA is one of the fastest-growing Jewish nonprofit organizations in the US.

In the United States, disaster relief, ambulance, and blood services are handled by an array of organizations. In Israel, there's one organization that does it all - Magen David Adom.

As Israel's official representative to the International Red Cross, Magen David Adom's role precludes it from accepting governmental support for its general operations. Because of this arrangement, MDA relies on support from donors, including those from the United States, to keep its dispatch systems, training, and equipment the best in the world.

MDA has a staff of over 39,000 EMTs, paramedics, and first-aid providers (about 90% of them volunteers), many with extensive experience responding to bombings, rocket attacks, and other mass-casualty emergencies — and who also participate in more than 425 live-action drills every year.



While ambulances and Medicycles are Magen David Adom's most visible asset, EMTs and paramedics depend on a staggering array of training, equipment, and supplies to prepare for and address every type of medical emergency imaginable. MDA built a state-of-the-art underground National Blood Center to safeguard Israel's vital blood supply. It opened in 2022 with the dedication of the Marcus National Blood Services Center, the world's first underground and shielded blood bank and processing center. Also housed in the Marcus Center is MDA's Sussman Family Foundation Human Milk Bank, which provides breast milk to premature babies with urgent medical needs, thereby dramatically increasing their chances of survival. Groundbreaking in its concept, design, engineering, and functionality, the Marcus Center was constructed at a cost of \$135M, funded almost entirely by AFMDA. From ambulances and blood services to disaster relief and paramedic training, AFMDA ensures that MDA has the tools to save lives every day.

POSITION:

The **Director of Annual Giving and Direct Response** will lead and oversee the direct response activities for American Friends of Magen David Adom, which raises funds and awareness for Magen David Adom, Israel's emergency services system. AFMDA's robust multi-channel direct marketing effort is a significant revenue stream, leveraging direct mail, email, and digital to acquire, renew, reactivate, and upgrade donors. The Director will develop data-driven strategies to grow revenue and response rates across all individual-giving segments (prospects, active donors, lapsed donors, monthly/recurring donors, and mid-level). The Director will manage vendors that develop and implement direct-response strategies for Jewish and Christian audiences in the U.S.

The Director will also develop and implement the marketing strategy for planned giving in partnership with AFMDA's Director of Planned Giving. Responsibilities will include overseeing the execution and optimization of performance-driven campaigns across both digital and traditional channels; reviewing and editing all direct response and planned giving vehicles; and working with the data and fundraising teams to manage direct response data issues and logistics.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

DIRECT RESPONSE

Working with direct response vendors and AFMDA staff, the **Director of Annual Giving and Direct Response** will

- oversee audience-specific direct mail and email donor appeal and acquisition campaigns, develop strategies for donor acquisition, renewal, reactivation, and upgrades;
- maintain quality control over messaging, design, and data integrity;
- lead content and campaign approval;
- monitor campaign performance and KPIs, including conversion rates and ROI;
- develop an audience segmentation strategy, and oversee CRM health;

- manage contracts and vendor relationships while ensuring cost-efficiency;
- analyze and report on campaign performance to senior leadership and the Board; and
- collaborate with data, finance, marketing, and fundraising staff as needed.

ANNUAL AND PLANNED GIVING

In partnership with the Director of Planned Giving, the **Director of Annual Giving and Direct Response** will

- develop the annual marketing plan for planned gifts: bequests, charitable gift annuities, event/webinar promotion, IRA rollovers, donor-advised funds, etc;
- run integrated planned giving campaigns across mail, email, and social media;
- write or edit planned giving campaign collateral for print and digital communications;
- manage printing of mailings and mailing lists;
- use data to optimize campaign performance and identify growth opportunities; and
- make content recommendations for the planned giving website and newsletter.

QUALIFICATIONS:

American Friends of Magen David Adom seeks a **Director of Annual Giving and Direct Response** with

- a commitment to the mission of the American Friends of Magen David Adom – to provide philanthropic support to Magen David Adom, Israel's emergency services system;
- familiarity with the American Jewish community and passion for Israel;
- experience in annual campaign management, including year-end, special appeals, emergency campaigns, and sustainer programs;
- proficiency in direct response metrics, performance analysis, and reporting;
- strong experience with CRM systems and marketing platforms;
- experience managing agencies/vendors, contracts, production schedules, and budgets;
- excellent project management skills and an ability to manage multiple campaigns and deadlines;
- strong communication and cross-functional collaboration skills;
- an analytical mindset, with experience in A/B testing and data-driven decision making; and
- excellent writing and editing proficiency.

A bachelor's degree in marketing, communications, or business, with at least nine years of progressively responsible nonprofit direct response fundraising and marketing is required for this position.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS:

The **Director of Annual Giving and Direct Response** will report to the Chief Marketing Officer.

FROM THE CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER:

Working for a humanitarian organization like AFMDA is deeply meaningful to me. No matter what is happening politically in the world, our mission remains constant: protecting, saving, and giving life. Magen David Adom is Israel's national emergency medical services system, responding to anyone in need of care. Our focus is saving lives, all lives. MDA's medics reflect the diversity of the communities they serve, united by shared humanitarian principles and a belief in the value of every life.

This role is ideal for someone who strongly believes in Israel and understands how essential emergency medical services are, both in times of war and in everyday life. EMS is a basic need for everyone in Israel, yet it receives fewer government resources than other national emergency services. As a result, Magen David Adom relies heavily on philanthropy, especially from the U.S., to close the gap and ensure help is available when it is needed most.

You will join a collaborative, mission-driven marketing team that works together, shares ideas, supports one another, and has a shared sense of purpose. You will also interact with our development professionals to better understand our donor base. This position is well suited for a marketer who recognizes that direct mail and digital fundraising campaigns are most effective when they are thoughtfully connected and integrated to drive engagement and results. You will build on a strong foundation, including an approximately \$7 million digital philanthropy program and \$6 million generated through direct mail.

The direct mail program is both sophisticated and highly active. Each year, we conduct six acquisition mailings. We also send five core appeals annually, with several including follow-up mailings, resulting in a total of eight appeal mailings per year. Key appeals, such as the Annual Appeal, Jewish New Year appeal, and End-of-Year appeal, are segmented for low-, mid-, and high-level donors, with tailored packages for each audience. During times of war or emergency, scheduled appeals may be replaced with urgent digital or mail outreach to ensure timely and relevant communication.

AFMDA also operates a robust Planned Giving direct response program managed in-house. This includes three annual mailings to approximately 65,000 donors that focus on charitable gift annuities and bequests, each supported by targeted email follow-ups.

What resonates most deeply with our donors is clarity of impact. Supporters see how ambulances, blood services, and lifesaving equipment are deployed, and the real difference their gifts make. This role requires someone who can communicate meaningfully with both longtime supporters and new prospects, ensuring every donor feels valued, informed, and inspired to stay connected.

As an emergency-focused organization, the pace can be fast and the work highly responsive to current events. It is very hands-on, purpose-driven work that links generosity directly to lives

saved, and offers the rare opportunity to know, every day, that what you do makes a real difference. The revenue generated through direct mail and digital fundraising, and the pipeline it builds for future major and planned gifts, is a cornerstone of AFMDA's long-term strategy as we look ahead to celebrating Magen David Adom's centennial year in 2030.

Join us in helping keep Israel safe, secure, and healthy, and in doing work that makes a tangible, life-saving difference every single day.

— Jeffrey Sussman, Chief Marketing Officer

SALARY & BENEFITS:

The salary range for this position is \$125,000 to \$150,000. American Friends of Magen David Adom offers a comprehensive package of benefits, including medical insurance, employer-paid dental, vision, disability, and life insurance, and generous paid time off.

AMFDA also offers a 403(b) retirement plan with 6% employer contribution after one year of employment.

LOCATION:

New York City offers a dynamic mix of culture, commerce, and creativity. It's a leading center for industries like finance, media, fashion, and technology, attracting ambitious professionals from around the world. The city's five boroughs – Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, The Bronx, and Staten Island – each have their own distinct identity. NYC's cultural fabric is woven from its immigrant roots, making it one of the most linguistically and ethnically diverse cities in the world.

Its culinary scene is legendary, with everything from Michelin-starred dining to iconic street food. NYC is deeply passionate about the arts, with world-class museums, theaters, and music venues enriching everyday life. Green spaces like Central Park offer peaceful escapes, and seasonal festivals and outdoor events keep the city buzzing year-round. Public transportation via the subway and buses makes it one of the most accessible cities in the world, and walkability is a major perk for residents and visitors alike.



This position is eligible for a hybrid work schedule with two work-from-home days.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

American Friends of Magen David Adom will consider candidates with a broad range of backgrounds. If you are excited about this role and feel that you can contribute to AFMDA, but your experience does not exactly align with every qualification listed above, we encourage you to apply.

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of American Friends of Magen David Adom and the responsibilities and competencies presented in the position prospectus. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit: [Director of Annual Giving and Direct Response, American Friends of Magen David Adom](#).

ABOUT ZRG PARTNERS:

ZRG is a global talent advisory firm that is changing the way companies find, hire, and manage talent through its data-driven approach to executive and professional search. The company's digital Zi platform combines talent intelligence, candidate insights, and process improvement to dramatically deliver executive searches quicker and with proven better results.

ABOUT ASPEN LEADERSHIP GROUP:

Aspen Leadership Group (ALG) supports exceptional careers in the nonprofit sector, recruiting presidents, executive directors, and chief advancement officers and helping them recruit, train, and inspire high-performing teams. The company's search services and leadership consulting focus on building teams that enable an organization to engage all its potential donors and volunteers and to drive unprecedented fundraising results.



Julie Lugo

Principal

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Serving in the nonprofit sector for more than 23 years, Julie brings over a decade of executive search experience, specializing in senior-level retained searches for mission-driven organizations. She has successfully led C-suite and Director-level placements across a wide range of nonprofit sectors. Known for her strategic approach and relationship-driven style, Julie has a deep understanding of the complexities of the search process. She has a proven track record of building credible and influential relationships with senior executives, as well as implementing effective business development strategies that have expanded both her client portfolio and impact. Julie's expertise lies in helping organizations strengthen their leadership and infrastructure to achieve both immediate and long-term goals. She is honored to continue serving the community through her work with Aspen Leadership Group.

Before transitioning to executive search, Julie spent 12 years as a frontline fundraising professional with a variety of Southern California organizations, including San Diego Zoo Global and the American Heart Association. Her dual expertise in fundraising and executive recruitment gives her a unique perspective on the sector's needs, allowing her to make highly tailored and successful placements.

Active in the nonprofit community, Julie has served on the AFP National Philanthropy Day Committees in Orange County and San Diego. Raised in a family dedicated to service, Julie's work is grounded in a deep commitment to strengthening and elevating the human services sector.

She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a focus on the public sector, a Professional Certificate in Fundraising, and earned her Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) credential.

Originally from the UK, Julie has lived in Southern California for the past 24 years and currently resides in San Diego.