Stepping Stones Project
Position Available: Executive Director
San Francisco Bay Area

“This is the phase of life in which most contemporary people get stuck – and the phase in which most need the greatest support. Adolescence holds the key to our becoming fully human.” - Bill Plotkin

Stepping Stones Project (SSP) is celebrating its 15th year as a 501(c)(3) organization serving youth and families in the Bay Area. SSP’s mission is to guide and support youth and families across the threshold from childhood into healthy adolescence. Stepping Stones Project is unique in providing long term mentoring for middle school youth.

SSP seeks a new Executive Director who is a passionate, committed and self-motivated leader whose life purpose is deeply aligned with our mission and values. SSP is rooted in mentoring adolescent youth and rites of passage work. The ED will work with the Board, staff, youth leaders, consultants, and elder volunteers to help execute specified goals of the strategic plan as prioritized and outlined by the Board. This includes the development and execution of funding strategies to augment the tuition-based programs offered by SSP. The SSP finance, administrative, and program staff will report to the ED. The ED will report to the SSP Board of Directors. The ED position is full time, and is supported by four part time staff, training consultants, and an actively engaged Board of Directors. The ED will also work to implement a united vision for SSP’s future as a member of SSP’s “All Council”, a non-hierarchic representation of stakeholders from across the organization. Programmatically, we employ two “leaders” on a part-time basis for each youth group. Presently we have between 18 and 20 youth groups averaging 6-8 youth in each group.

The ED will use his or her development and fund raising experience to lead the diversification of the revenue strategy and to provide sustainable support for SSP programs. SSP’s budget is approximately $400,000 for 2017 (Dec. 31st fiscal year). Approximately 60% of revenues are provided by tuition from the youth groups. The ED role will have a primary focus of financial development, reaching out to other allied organizations, foundations, schools, private donors, and other potential funding sources. The ED is the primary “public face” of the organization, although others within the organization also carry the program messaging to parents, youth, and other organizations. The ED will have strong management skills and experience to ensure sound operational oversight and quality assurance for existing SSP programs.

Desired skills and experience
The successful candidate will have a strong cross-section of the following skills and experience. The new ED will:

• be comfortable in creating and communicating the SSP rites of passage story to potential funding sources, staff, employees, and parents. We seek a confident and inspiring public speaker who is able to weave the SSP rites of passage story with depth and heart.

• possess exceptional listening skills and be able to dialogue with respect.
o demonstrate a successful track record (two years minimum) in fundraising with a nonprofit. The new ED will work with the Board finance committee and Board members to achieve non-tuition revenues of approximately $150,000 annually.

o have past success in applying for and receiving grants. An aggressive fundraising strategy will begin shortly after the new ED begins in late August to early September.

o have contacts in the foundation or funding world, including potential individual donor prospects ($1,000+) and or/donor partners or key influencers who can open doors for SSP.

o skillfully be able to navigate and communicate an awareness of youth and adult differences based on race, class, lifestyle choices, and gender consciousness.

o have a strong understanding of the needs of youth, (and parents and guardians) who are experiencing and entering the developmental stage of adolescence.

o demonstrate a proven ability to multi-task and manage multiple ongoing projects with critical timelines.

o show excellence in communication skills inclusive of capacity for clarity, empathy, mirroring skills, and socio-emotional tools. Due to the nature of our program, skill in communicating with parents, group leaders, and other staff and clients regarding sensitive issues is a must.

o benefit from having direct experience working with an active, engaged Board of Directors.

o have strong experience providing guidance to and managing part-time staff, consultants and volunteers.

o need to engage both hierarchical and consensus-based decision making. Financially and administratively SSP must operate hierarchically. Programmatically, SSP reflects more of a “circle” organization with a strong cultural center. The ED will need to be sensitive to consulting appropriately with the various “councils” within SSP as part of his/her decision making.

o exhibit professional maturity, judgment and decisiveness to motivate fellow staff and volunteers, and inspire confidence among program and donor prospects.

o be proficient with communications platforms including Internet search engines, social media platforms, Microsoft Office applications, etc.

o have some personal experience with rites of passage, coming of age programs, and/or socio-emotional development processes.

We are looking for a candidate that has all or most of the skill sets described above. If you are just now beginning your nonprofit career, we suggest you volunteer with SSP to learn more about our mission and culture, rather than apply for the Executive Director position. We wish you well in your search, but we do need an Executive Director with most of the above skills and experiences.
Responsibilities and Priorities

Development and Fundraising - 50%
● Create and execute new fundraising campaign strategies.

Coming of Age Program Management - 15%
● Oversight of program delivery by working with the program manager to ensure that program quality and feedback systems are maintained and or enhanced.
● Oversight of the coordination and tracking the main administrative details of the organization

Administrative/Finance – 15%

Board/staff management and training – 20%
● Track progress and report to Board of Directors during Board meetings (each month).
● Oversight of staff and leader training to ensure quality of training programs.

Salary and Benefits
The initial salary range for this position is between $75,000 and $85,000 based on experience, qualifications, and verifiable salary history. This is a full-time position where the candidate will work both from the Pt. Richmond office and from home. An ability to participate in frequent evening and weekend activities is required. The expected start date for the ED will range between August 21st to September 5th of 2017. Benefits include: three (3) paid weeks of vacation, 5 days sick leave, and a health care stipend.

To Apply
● Please send your resume, updated contact information, and cover letter to us by Wednesday, July 19th to:

   jobs@steppingstonesproject.org

● Please carefully reference why you feel you are uniquely qualified to apply. Also please list 3 references with their affiliations to you. We will not make any reference calls without your permission and only after the 1st interviews are completed.
● Include in the Subject: “Stepping Stones Project ED Search”

Responses
We will acknowledge receipt of your resume. Please DO NOT call us, but do take the time to review our website: www.steppingstonesproject.org
We will let you know at each stage if you are going to receive an initial phone interview, or later an in-person interview. The in-person interview will be conducted by SSP staff, Board Members, and other organizational stakeholders. We will keep you informed as the process proceeds.

You may email sspadmin@steppingstonesproject.org if you have not heard from us by August 1st (in case there has been a tracking error).

The deadline for submitting your application is firm. We must receive your resume and cover letter by Wednesday, July 19, at 5:00 p.m. PDT.

**About Stepping Stones Project**

Stepping Stones Project was founded in 1999, and formally became a registered non-profit in 2002. The middle school “coming of age” program began as a collaboration between youth workers at Spirit Rock Meditation Center’s Teen Program and other notable independent rites of passage facilitators and mentors. Today, many of the original program leaders and mentors are prominent figures in rites of passage work in the Bay Area. Some program youth graduates continue to meet well into high school and beyond.

The founder of Stepping Stones Project worked with the program from 1999 to 2007. In 2008, the Stepping Stones Board became actively involved in order to implement a stronger financial foundation for the organization. For several years, the Board was actively involved in the operational administration of Stepping Stones Project. By 2010, a stronger and more robust program foundation was created. In late 2014, the Board re-committed to the full time Executive Director position.

The present Executive Director position is now available due to a recent resignation for medical reasons. Under the guidance of the new Executive Director the primary goal is to strengthen SSP’s financial position by diversifying financial income streams. The result will be a growing and sustainable program model that reaches a wide audience of parents, youth, and aspiring mentors in diverse communities in the Bay Area. The ED will be supported by the Board of Directors in the primary fund raising goals of the organization. For more detailed information about Stepping Stones Project please see www.steppingstonesproject.org.