

## Vice President of Public Policy Washington, D.C.

### The Search:

John van Hengel founded the first food bank in 1967 with a truckload of produce gleaned from Arizona farm fields and citrus groves. His idea grew into a nationwide network of food banks that converts food industry leftovers into meals for the poor. By helping to establish the organization that would become Feeding America (formerly named America's Second Harvest) in 1979, this soup kitchen volunteer from Wisconsin helped to create the largest domestic hunger-relief organization in the United States.

Today, Feeding America continues to honor and fulfill van Hengel's anti-hunger legacy. More than 200 food banks and food-rescue organizations comprise a cohesive network that includes all fifty states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, distributing donated food and grocery products through more than 61,000 charitable agencies operating more than 94,000 programs such as food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters and after-school programs.

Despite a 30-year legacy of fighting hunger, America's Second Harvest had been confronted with low awareness among the general public, and a broader misunderstanding of domestic hunger. Knowing that true, monumental progress can be made when the public is fully engaged in our cause, America's Second Harvest changed its name to Feeding America in September 2008. This new name best conveys its altruistic mission – providing food to Americans living with hunger – and is supported through expansive public outreach campaigns that raise awareness of domestic hunger.



Feeding America has evolved from a grass roots operation of small, local food banks and agencies into one of the most sophisticated organizations for food distribution in the world. To continue implementing its core mission of ending hunger, America's public policy staff works with legislators – conducting research, testifying at hearings and advocating for changes in public attitudes and laws that support their network and their mission to eradicate hunger.

Today, Feeding America is seeking an experienced **Vice President of Public Policy** to manage and lead the organization's seven-person Washington, D.C. office: a dynamic, highly effective, and vital branch of their organization. Reporting to the Senior Vice President of Government Relations & Public Policy, the Vice President of Public Policy is responsible for directing the analysis, development, and promotion of administrative and legislative policies that advance the mission of Feeding America and its network. As a member of the government relations team, the Vice President of Public Policy works closely with the Senior Vice President and the Chicago-based Vice President of Government Relations & Advocacy

to establish a strategic agenda that strengthens and expands the federal food safety net, and fosters effective collaborations between the public and private sectors.

The ideal candidate is fully committed to the goal of creating a hunger-free America. He/she is highly knowledgeable about public policy, government affairs, research and/or legislation with the ability to lead and manage a small staff. The Vice President of Public Policy must have experience working with Congress, federal agencies and other organizations focused on anti-hunger issues. Knowledge and understanding of US Food program, school nutrition programs and anti-hunger programs are a plus.

This is an exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic, passionate individual who has a desire to help this highly regarded organization bring greater public awareness to the often-overlooked problem of hunger in America.

### **Organizational Overview**

Since its founding, Feeding America has been a national leader in providing food assistance to hungry Americans. Each year, the Feeding America network provides food to more than 37 million low-income people facing hunger in the United States, including more than 14 million children and 3 million seniors. Feeding America's network secures and distributes more than 2.6 billion pounds of food and grocery products annually. Approximately 80 percent of all food banks in the country are part of the Feeding America Network. The majority of food distributed comes from private supply however a portion does come from government resources.



The Roosevelt Institute recently honored Vicki B. Escarra, President and Chief Executive Officer of Feeding America. Since joining the organization in 2006, she has led the organization through the most ambitious period of growth in its history, charting a course to feeding more Americans in need than ever before. Escarra has established a new strategic plan for the organization, which will guide all of Feeding America's efforts through 2012 and sets a vision for providing food assistance to more than 1 million people each year.

With a budget of over \$100 million for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2009 and a staff approaching 200 people in its Chicago based national office, Feeding America is frequently recognized for innovation and excellence in a number of operational categories. Several of its many accolades include:

- Named one of the best 100 charities in America by *Worth Magazine*.
- Charity Navigator, a guide to the financial health of charities, has ranked Feeding America very highly because of its fundraising efficiency.
- 2009 winner in category of Corporate/Nonprofit Partnerships for: Feeding America - Pound for Pound Challenge in partnership with Biggest Loser, General Mills and Subway.
- 2009 - James Beard Foundation Humanitarian of the Year Award.
- Listed as one of the 200 largest charities by Forbes Magazine.
- Recognized for making the network a gateway into nutrition programs.



### **Key Responsibilities:**

The Vice President of Public Policy will manage and lead the Feeding America's seven-person Washington, D.C. office: a dynamic highly effective and vital branch of the organization. Reporting to the Senior Vice President of Government Relations & Public Policy, the Vice President is responsible for directing the analysis, development, and promotion of administrative and legislative policies that advances the mission of Feeding America and its network. As a member of the government relations team, the Vice President of Public Policy works closely with the Senior Vice President and the Chicago-based Vice President of Government Relations & Advocacy. Together, they will establish a strategic policy agenda that strengthens and expands the federal food safety net and fosters effective collaborations between the public and private sectors.

The primary duties of the Vice President of Public Policy include the following areas of responsibility:

- Direct the Washington DC office
- Direct or assist, as needed, in the strategic development and implementation of organizational priorities relating to public policy, legislative issues and research relating to the organization's identified outcomes
- Represent Feeding America at public policy forums, hearings, and similar initiatives and coordinate organization and Member participation in and support for favorable governmental policy.
- Provide support and regular communication to Members on federal policies
- Assist Members with regional and state policies and programs.
- Monitor and direct the lobbying of federal, state and local governments regarding policies/regulations affecting Members, agencies and low-income people served.
- Actively collaborate with the Members and other organizations on the issues of hunger, public education and awareness.
- Secure food and funds resources available for food banks through federal, regional and state agencies.
- Coordinate resources and research on issues of domestic hunger, public policy and related topics for Feeding America public policy initiatives, publications, and public education activity.
- Thoroughly understand Feeding America, its mission and policies, culture, values, history, key stakeholders and the programs and initiatives they support, including: Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Work on tax issues related to the donation of food products, work with federal agencies that oversee food issues, including USDA, FEMA and HUD.
- Integrate with the research department to coordinate resources and research on issues of domestic hunger, public policy and related topics for public policy initiatives, publications and public education activity.

- Serve as staff liaison to task forces, committees, and other projects as assigned by the SVP.
- Ensure a supportive environment within the Public Policy department that promotes employee professional and personal growth.
- Travel approximately four days per month.

### **Ideal Experience**

- 12 years' experience desirable in public policy, government affairs, research and/or legislation with 6 years in management
- Ability to lead and manage a small staff.
- Proven track record of working with Congress, federal agencies and other organizations focused on anti-hunger issues.
- Experience working with the government relationship offices of corporate donors.
- Knowledge and understanding of US Food and nutrition program, food Banks, school nutrition programs, etc.
- Familiarity with anti-hunger issues and efforts to reduce or Eliminate poverty.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Superb organizational skills combined with the ability to diplomatically prioritize multiple demands in a timely manner.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office applications.
- Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred.



### **Personal Characteristics**

- Committed to organizational mission of ending hunger.
- Strong problem solving and negotiating skills.
- Outgoing, straightforward and self-possessed; one who shares information readily, listens as well as gives advice and respects the abilities of others.
- Decisive and resourceful with the ability to anticipate and act on events and opportunities in an appropriate manner, which may advance the work of Feeding America.
- An effective communicator who brings a special blend of tact, political and diplomatic savvy to the position.
- A team player who is creative, energetic and willing to work hands-on.
- Aptitude to meet challenges presented by the changing political, social and economic landscape and opportunities that will advance Feeding America's mission/values.

### **To Apply**

Questions, resumes and CVs should be sent to: [search@driconsulting.com](mailto:search@driconsulting.com). All first round interviews for the Vice President of Public Policy will take place with Development Resources, *inc.*: 1601 N. Kent Street, Suite 1200, Arlington, VA 22209, (703) 294-6684.

Feeding America is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Feeding America encourages applications from qualified persons of every race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, and disability.

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Feeding America is being assisted in this recruitment by Development Resources *inc.* All resumes and questions should be sent to [search@driconsulting.com](mailto:search@driconsulting.com)