

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS FOR THE ARTS

EXECUTIVE SEARCH • PLANNING • ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

POSITION PROFILE **Managing Director** **Goodspeed Musicals** **East Haddam, CT**

OPPORTUNITY

Goodspeed Musicals (Goodspeed) seeks an accomplished, inspiring, and inclusive arts leader to help guide this storied organization into a vibrant next chapter. For over 60 years, Goodspeed has been celebrated as a premier international home for musical theatre, producing a wide range of reimagined classics and countless new works that invigorate and expand the art form. Exceptional leaders with a strong track record managing complex arts organizations will thrive at Goodspeed; experience guiding strategic organizational change and hands-on successes in fundraising, financial management, and staff stewardship will be particularly relevant. This position reports directly to the Board of Directors and serves as the company's co-leader, working in close collaboration with the Artistic Director.

BACKGROUND

Goodspeed Musicals was established in 1963 as a professional musical theatre in the historic Goodspeed Opera House, on the banks of the Connecticut River in East Haddam, CT. Since then, Goodspeed has gained worldwide recognition as an essential part of the American Musical Theatre, having created three of Broadway's longest running musicals -- *Annie*, *Man of La Mancha*, and *Shenandoah* -- and has been recognized with two Special Tony Awards. Goodspeed has produced over 800 musicals, 21 of which have moved on to Broadway, and is known for its world-class productions of the classic repertoire as well as its deep commitment to new work. Each year, Goodspeed welcomes nearly 100,000 audience members from Connecticut as well as across the country and internationally.

Goodspeed's mission is to *"share the joy of musical theatre; to delight, inspire, and challenge audiences; to nurture creators; and to build and support a broad, diverse, and inclusive community."*

Current Environment

Goodspeed currently operates on an annual budget of approximately \$14.5 million, which supports over 80 full-time staff members and 150+ professional artists each year. Revenue is split 60%

earned and 40% contributed. Goodspeed's annual operating budget also relies each year on proceeds from its \$20M endowment, established in part from its financial participation in *Annie* as well as a variety of other public and private sources.

Goodspeed's mainstage productions take place in the Goodspeed Opera House, a 398-seat Victorian jewelbox theater listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Norma Terris Theater, a 235-seat flexible, contemporary proscenium space, is located in nearby Chester, CT, and is home to Goodspeed's developmental productions of new work. Goodspeed is committed to the values of inclusion, diversity, equity, and access (IDEA), which has helped to lead efforts with audience building, staff hiring, and Board engagement. Read more about those efforts [here](#).

Goodspeed recently announced the launch of the first phase of a multi-step capital campaign designed to improve access, centralize staff offices, and significantly renovate, expand, and restore the landmark interior of the Opera House building, creating a more welcoming audience experience. This first phase, which is fully funded at \$3.2M, will upgrade exterior accessibility at the Opera House and its surrounding parking.

In addition to its theaters, Goodspeed has an extensive physical plant of 37 properties in East Haddam that house its operations, including several rehearsal studios and educational classroom spaces; the Stillman Production Facility, home to large and well-equipped scenic, paint, and props shops; the Barrington Costume Center, a collection of more than 600,000 theatrical garments and accessories; a costume shop; the Scherer Library of Musical Theatre, one of the most extensive musical theater research collections in the country; the Artists' Village, a series of 120 fully-furnished bedrooms and studio apartments for visiting artists across multiple buildings; plus other housing and accessory buildings. Goodspeed also owns Gelston House, a restaurant and inn adjacent to the Opera House, operated by an outside vendor.

Programming

The Goodspeed production season runs April through December and includes four mainstage productions of new musicals and reimagined classics at the Goodspeed Opera House and three developmental productions at the Terris. Mainstage productions typically run 8-10 weeks and Terris productions generally run four weeks, engaging 100,000 audience members annually. Notable recent productions at the Opera House include new musicals *Anne of Green Gables*, *Summer Stock*, and *The 12*, and revivals of *42nd Street* and *South Pacific*. Developmental productions at the Terris Theater have included *Private Jones* written and directed by Marshall Paillet and featuring a company of deaf, hearing, and hard of hearing actors and creators; *A Complicated Woman* by Jonathan Brielle and Ianne Fields Steward involving a fully gender-diverse company; and Darko Tresnjak and Oran Eldor's mad-dash musical comedy *Ask for the Moon*.

In addition to its core programming series, Goodspeed offers extensive developmental programs:

- **The Johnny Mercer Foundation Writers Grove**, a four-week residency program for musical theatre writers each winter, supporting 15-20 creative projects and 30+ creatives

with one- to two-week writing residencies.

- **The Festival of New Musicals**, an immersive weekend of new musical readings plus public seminars on trends and issues in musical theatre development and production, which has been a staple of Goodspeed's off-season programs for 20 years.
- **GoodWorks**, a commissioning program to support the creation and development of new musicals that will resonate with and inspire audiences.

Goodspeed has been instrumental in developing and premiering countless celebrated musicals, including *Annie*, *Man of LaMancha*, *Shenandoah*, *All Shook Up*, and *13*.

Education and engagement programming is central to Goodspeed's mission, and features:

- The Arts Education Collaboration, which provides 1000 students from the region with in-depth introductions to the art of creating and experiencing theatre.
- Partnerships with many local and regional organizations to provide sensory-friendly performances, open captioning, ASL-interpreted performances, and other resources that further its commitment to accessibility and inclusion.
- The Pay What You Can Initiative, where audience members can choose their ticket price for multiple performances of each production.
- The Public Library ticket checkout initiative, operated in conjunction with the East Haddam and Chester town libraries.

Leadership

Goodspeed's 30-member Board of Directors is drawn from the greater Connecticut and New York City metro regions, and includes business and non-profit leaders, philanthropists and community volunteers, and artists and theatre professionals. Hila Rosen serves as the current President and Jef Wolter as Chair. [Donna Lynn Hilton](#), Goodspeed's Artistic Director, has been associated with the organization for 35 years and has served in her current role since 2021. She is widely respected and deeply involved in the musical theatre field and serves as Goodspeed's lead curator and artistic producer. Multiple key staff members have long tenures with the organization and several have joined within the past few years, lending a mix of deep internal expertise and outside perspectives to operations and decision-making.

East Haddam and Chester, CT

Goodspeed is located in two small towns in Connecticut's Middlesex County, on the east and west banks of the Connecticut River. Approximately 25 miles from Hartford and roughly equidistant to New York City and Boston, East Haddam and Chester are part of the larger Lower Connecticut River Valley Planning Region (LCRVPR), which also includes the city of Middletown and several other towns. Its rural character and charming historic towns have made it a destination for visitors and second home owners, as well as a place that many longtime residents have called home for generations. Nearby Middletown is home to Wesleyan University, and several other academic institutions are an easy drive away in Hartford, New Haven, and beyond. The LCRVPR is home to approximately 175,000 people, and its five largest ethnic groups are White (Non-Hispanic) (87%), Hispanic or Latino (8%), Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) (6%), Asian (Non-Hispanic)

(4%), and Mixed Race/Multiracial (Non-Hispanic) (2%). (Source: [census.gov](https://www.census.gov)) Click [here](#) and [here](#) for more information.

ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

The next Managing Director will join Goodspeed at a moment when the organization looks to chart its next chapter of sustainability. Among many assets, the Managing Director's work will be supported by the following:

- A strong national reputation and long-standing legacy of creating musical theatre experiences of the highest caliber.
- An extensive portfolio of real estate holdings that facilitate programming and operations.
- A committed Board of Directors, talented staff, and network of professional artists.
- A substantial endowment.
- An evolving audience demographic that encompasses past loyal audiences with new attendees.

Along with managing these assets, the next Managing Director will be able to move the organization forward, in concert with the Artistic Director, senior staff, and Board of Directors, in addressing challenges including:

- Determining the right artistic and producing model for Goodspeed.
- Mobilizing Goodspeed's current constituents for support while engaging a new generation of theatergoers.
- Developing a long-term plan for facilities management and upgrade.
- Updating internal systems and processes for maximum efficiency and support.
- Creating cohesive and collaborative communication and work culture across staff working in different locations.
- Managing with clarity and compassion the ongoing transition of a legacy organization within an ever-changing field.

POSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Reporting to the Board of Directors, Goodspeed's Managing Director will serve as an equal co-leader with the Artistic Director. The Managing Director will understand how to move decisions forward while actively seeking and considering the input of others, with an emphasis on deep collaboration with the Artistic Director, senior staff, and the Board of Directors. The primary roles and responsibilities of the Managing Director are these:

Financial Oversight and Planning

As the chief financial steward of Goodspeed's business affairs, the Managing Director will:

- Ensure that financial reporting is timely, useful, and functional for Goodspeed's stakeholders, including its Board, staff, and key supporters.
- Lead the timely development of realistic operational and capital budgeting plans to ensure the theatre's operations are sustainable, lessening annual reliance on the Endowment.
- Serve as the key point of contact for budget management for all staff while working closely with Goodspeed's Finance Committee.

Resource Development and Philanthropy

Resource development will be a major part of the new Managing Director's portfolio. Employing a data-based approach, the Managing Director will:

- Serve as a major gifts leader for Goodspeed, developing and nurturing deeply impactful philanthropic relationships with individuals, foundations, and corporations.
- Help lead the strategy and execution of capital campaigns.
- Seek out new opportunities to utilize Goodspeed's many assets including, but not limited to, its real estate holdings and production capabilities.
- Provide leadership to the essential effort to expand and diversify Goodspeed's audience.
- Work across the organization to set realistic but challenging revenue goals.

Management and Administration

As Goodspeed's top administrative executive, the Managing Director will:

- Provide decisive leadership for all administrative functions, policies, and procedures.
- Provide perspective on new management practices and infrastructure changes in order to create an efficient and respectful culture.
- Create an open, transparent, and supportive relationship with the Board of Directors.
- Enthusiastically engage in the civic and cultural life of East Haddam, the region, and the state as a key Goodspeed ambassador.
- Represent Goodspeed to the national theatre community, developing networks with other LORT theaters and producers.
- Review and evaluate staff and staff structure on a regular basis, encourage professional development, and set an "open door" tone by being an accessible and present leader.
- Provide clear, timely, and ongoing communication with the Goodspeed staff and Board of Directors.
- Ensure that Goodspeed's workplace is equitable, inclusive, and accessible and is attractive for long-term commitments by talented administrative staff.
- Ensure that Goodspeed maintains strong relations with affiliated organizations, including industry unions and agencies, leading negotiations in applicable contracts and ensuring compliance.
- Bring a strategic and entrepreneurial approach to new opportunities.
- Lead all staff members in working collaboratively and in support of each other to achieve the best for Goodspeed and the communities it serves.
- Work closely with the Board, Artistic Director, and senior staff to advance Goodspeed's IDEA values throughout all operational areas.

Characteristics and Traits

Goodspeed is also seeking the following characteristics and traits in its new Managing Director:

- A love of musical theatre and the people who make it.
- An understanding of and experience with the non-profit performing arts ecosystem.
- A strong communicator, able to build clear systems and make hard decisions, with

awareness of their impact on individuals and the organization as a whole.

- A collaborative spirit. Someone who gains energy working with groups and breaking down silos.
- A calm and measured approach to leadership.
- A generous spirit, someone who is warm and welcoming in their demeanor, and is eager to take part in the community life of the region.
- A sense of humor and joy.

COMPENSATION AND START DATE

The annual salary range for the Managing Director starts at \$240,000 and includes a full benefit package including a 403(b) plan, medical/dental/vision coverage, and health care reimbursement and dependent care reimbursement accounts.

Goodspeed has engaged Management Consultants for the Arts to facilitate this search; Thomas Pearson and Shruti Adhar are leading the search. The hiring decision will be made by a search committee of Goodspeed's board and staff. They hope to make a final decision by late winter 2025, with the new Managing Director onsite as soon as possible thereafter.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates should submit the following items for consideration:

- A current resumé
- Cover letter (no more than 1 ½ pages)
- Four professional references
- Salary expectation

The cover letter should describe your background and your approach to leadership, and could also address:

1. What is it about this role and Goodspeed that excites you?
2. What in your background makes you a compelling candidate for Goodspeed?
3. In your experience, how do you approach the balancing act required between artistic excellence, prudent financial stewardship, and a people-centered approach to organizational leadership?

All documents should have the candidate's name as part of the file name. Submissions should be made through Management Consultants for the Arts's website at:

<https://mcaonline.com/searches/managing-director-goodspeed>

Management Consultants for the Arts, Inc

www.MCAonline.com

Phone: 203-353-0722

Questions about this search may be submitted to info@MCAonline.com

With "Goodspeed Managing Director Search" in the subject line.