



Urban Harvest

Food Access Director

Urban Harvest is searching for an outstanding individual who is a self-starter, strategic-thinker who is committed to creating a more equitable and inclusive food system. This individual will have experience in policy making, working with leaders in underserved communities, and reporting and utilizing program metrics. We invite applications and nominations for candidates with the skills, characteristics, and experience described below.

Organization Overview

The mission of Urban Harvest is to cultivate thriving communities through gardening and access to local, healthy food. Our work addresses urban hunger, good nutrition, community and family development, sustainability, and economic development, and teaches individuals how to feed themselves through their own gardens and farms. Urban Harvest staff and volunteers address these issues by promoting farmers' markets, providing gardening education for all ages, and supporting a network of community and school gardens throughout the greater Houston area. These projects improve food access and promote local food sources while helping families and individuals work productively, sustainably, and creatively on the land.

Urban Harvest is supported by a hardworking staff of 10, a dedicated 12-person Board of Directors, a network of thousands of volunteers, and many individuals, families, foundations, community partners and businesses. Our programs create exciting, sustainable avenues for intergenerational interactions, connecting family and individual growers of all ages to the neighborhood, food, land, and people of the local area. Together, we are growing healthier, more sustainable homes and families in and around Houston.

Job Description

Urban Harvest is hiring a Food Access Director to lead the organization's food access initiatives. This position will oversee Urban Harvest's food access programming and staff including Double Up Houston, the Northeast Community Farmers Market, and the soon-to-launch Mobile Market. The Food Access Director will lead this nascent program in order to increase access to fresh, local food throughout the Houston region in a sustainable, equitable, and strategic way. These efforts will create lasting resources that tackle Houston's pervasive food insecurity. The Food Access Director will work with program directors, Double Up markets and farm stands, policy makers, community leaders, and regional partners to achieve strategic goals across the Houston area broadly and priority communities specifically. Our priority communities are Northeast Houston (Kashmere, Trinity, Houston Gardens, and surrounding neighborhoods), Third Ward, Sunnyside, and the East End. The ideal candidate will be passionate about Urban Harvest's mission, have a policy background, and have experience building relationships with decision makers and community members. This candidate should know about the local food system and our region's disparities, including food insecurity. Specifically, the Food Access Director has the following responsibilities:

- Oversee, coordinate, and mentor Food Access programming and staff
- Expand and consolidate current programming to achieve greater impacts
- Lead Double Up Houston Steering Committee
- Shepherd the Northeast Community Farmers Market and Advisory Committee to be increasingly community-driven and community-owned
- Participate in Double Up Texas collaborations

- Maintain knowledge of SNAP legislation, and other relevant legislation at the local, state and federal level
- Seek out and foster effective relationships with cross-sector partners to enhance programming, i.e. healthcare institutions, CDCs, etc.
- Ensure programmatic alignment with Urban Harvest's strategic plan
- Represent Urban Harvest at coalition meetings
- Implement national best practices for food access
- Collaborate with program directors to ensure organizational efficiencies, sharing of knowledge and expertise, and coordination of activities in order to create holistic, community-based interventions
- Improve quality and cultural competency of Urban Harvest programming by providing community feedback
- Manage program outcomes to support decision making

Desired Characteristics

1. Policy planning and knowledge of political entities and officeholders in the Houston area
2. Experience managing staff and program budget
3. Ability to utilize metrics, research, mapping data, and community feedback to inform program design and activities
4. Well-organized, can handle multiple tasks, self-starter with ability to initiate new relationships and collaborations
5. The ability to effectively identify and communicate issues and challenges in a timely way.
6. A good listener and a creative problem solver who is savvy, patient, collaborative, and able to reconcile divergent points of view.
7. Personal qualities of commitment, integrity, and sensitivity to the needs of others
8. While this individual does not need to know about gardening and seasonal food in the Houston area, they are expected to have an interest in learning
9. A genuine passion for and deep personal commitment to Urban Harvest's mission

Compensation

The salary for this position will be commensurate with experience and qualifications. The compensation will include a competitive benefits package.

To Apply

Please send resume and cover letter to Libby Kennedy, libby@urbanharvest.org, by July 27, 2020.