

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SPECIAL SPACES



Special Spaces Mission:

Changing Children's Lives One Bedroom at a Time.

Special Spaces has partnered with Spano Pratt Executive Search to identify their new National Executive Director. For a confidential conversation and to learn more about this opportunity, please contact Shelly Beaver or Lindsey Kriete.

Spano Pratt Executive Search Contacts:

Shelly Beaver, Executive Search Consultant
Sbeaver@spanopratt.com

Lindsey Kriete, Practice Director
lkriete@spanopratt.com

THE ORGANIZATION

Special Spaces, Inc., founded in 2004, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating dream bedroom makeovers for children battling cancer. The goal of Special Spaces is to provide these children with a special space where children sleep and rest and also play and thrive — a space to just to be a kid! A custom bedroom designed just for them. Special Spaces is a high-touch, high impact organization that measures success by the quality of the experience.

This effort is done with teams of dedicated volunteers, sponsors, community partners, and donated goods and/or services. Through its 10 chapters across 9 states, the organization transforms approximately 200 bedrooms a year into comforting, healing spaces where children can rest, recover, and dream. Special Spaces work is powered by a passionate network of volunteers who bring skill, creativity, and heart to each makeover.... One Child. One Room. One Day....at a time.



POSITION OVERVIEW

The National Executive Director serves as the chief executive of the entire Special Spaces, Inc. network of 10 chapters, providing strategic, operational, and mission-driven leadership to a growing, chapter-based business model dedicated to creating healing bedroom spaces for children with cancer.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the National Executive Director will lead the organization into its next phase by translating a unifying strategic framework into action, strengthening alignment across national leadership, local chapters, and the Board, while building the systems and infrastructure needed for sustainable growth. This leader will oversee day-to-day operations, ensure financial health, and enhance consistency and support across a decentralized network of chapters.

The National Executive Director will also expand national partnerships and fundraising efforts, while fostering strong relationships with chapter leaders, volunteers, donors, and partners. This is a unique opportunity for a mission-driven, operationally strong leader to team build and scale an organization delivering meaningful, immediate impact to children and families nationwide.



CORE RESPONSIBILITIES AS NATIONAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Leadership & Strategy

Provide visionary and operational leadership to advance Special Spaces' mission while strengthening alignment across a decentralized, chapter-based network.

- Translate the organization's strategic framework into clear priorities, goals, and measurable outcomes
- Lead short- and long-term planning, including growth strategy, chapter development, and organizational sustainability
- Define enterprise-wide standards and performance expectations and performance metrics to drive consistency and accountability across chapters
- Serve as a change leader, guiding the organization through continued evolution
- Foster a one team culture that balances national alignment with local chapter engagement

Fundraising & Development

Drive a comprehensive revenue strategy to sustain and expand the organization's impact at both the national and chapter levels.

- Develop and execute a national fundraising strategy, including corporate partnerships, major gifts, and philanthropic initiatives
- Personally engage in donor cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship, particularly with high-impact and national-level supporters
- Identify and expand national sponsorship opportunities that can scale across multiple markets
- Partner with chapters to strengthen local fundraising capacity and share best practices
- Oversee development operations, including donor systems, pipeline management, and performance tracking

Operations & Program Management

Ensure effective delivery of programs while building the infrastructure and support systems needed for a growing national organization.

- Oversee day-to-day operations, ensuring high-quality, mission-aligned program execution across all chapters
- Develop and implement standard operating procedures (SOPs) and a strengthened shared services model
- Monitor and evaluate program performance, chapter effectiveness, and impact metrics
- Support chapters at varying stages by providing tools, training, and operational guidance
- Identify opportunities to enhance family experience and long-term engagement

Financial Management

Ensure strong financial stewardship, transparency, and sustainability across the organization.

- Lead the annual budgeting process and oversee financial planning in alignment with strategic goals
- Monitor financial performance, including revenue, expenses, and cash flow, and adjust strategies as needed
- Evaluate and refine the revenue-sharing model to ensure clarity, equity, and value across chapters
- Ensure compliance with financial policies, controls, and regulatory requirements
- Partner with finance leadership and the Board to strengthen financial infrastructure and reporting

Communications & External Relations

Serve as the primary ambassador of Special Spaces, elevating its visibility, brand, and impact nationally.

- Communicate the organization's mission, vision, and impact to donors, partners, and the broader community
- Elevate and steward the organization's external presence and strategic partnerships with corporate, philanthropic, and community partners
- Represent Special Spaces through speaking engagements, media, and public forums
- Strengthen internal communications to ensure transparency and alignment across chapters and stakeholders
- Promote a compelling national brand narrative that supports growth and awareness

Board Relations

Partner closely with the Board of Directors to strengthen governance, engagement, and organizational accountability.

- Serve as a strategic partner to the Board, supporting Board development, governance, planning, and decision-making
- Prepare and deliver regular reports on organizational performance, financials, and strategic progress
- Assist in board development, including recruitment, onboarding, and committee engagement
- Leverage board members' expertise, networks, and resources to advance organizational priorities

Nearly
2,000
VOLUNTEERS
are estimated to complete
30,000+ HOURS
of service this year!



Changing Children's Lives One Bedroom at a Time



QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- + 10+ years of progressive leadership experience, including 5–7+ years in senior/executive roles, within nonprofit, mission-driven organizations is a plus
- + Demonstrated success translating strategy into execution, including setting goals, KPIs, and driving organizational alignment
- + Experience leading in decentralized, multi-site, or chapter-based environments
- + Experience building systems, processes, and infrastructure to support growth and consistency
- + Strong track record of fundraising success, including major gifts, corporate partnerships, and/or national sponsorships
- + Demonstrated financial acumen, including budgeting, forecasting, and financial oversight
- + Exceptional written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to engage and align diverse stakeholders
- + Proven success in relationship-building across boards, staff, volunteers, donors, and community partners
- + Experience partnering effectively with a Board of Directors, supporting Board development, governance and leveraging board engagement
- + Demonstrated ability to manage multiple priorities and lead through complexity, change, and growth



CORE COMPETENCIES & PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES FOR SUCCESS

Strategic & Operational Leadership

Ability to lead and scale a growing national nonprofit through strong business acumen, financial oversight, organizational structure, systems development, and long-term strategic planning while preserving the mission-centered culture of the organization. Adaptable, resourceful, and solutions-oriented with a builder mindset.

Communication, Collaboration & Relationship Building

Exceptional ability to communicate openly and transparently while building trust and alignment among chapters, board members, national leadership, donors, volunteers, families, and community partners across a federated organizational model.

Fundraising & External Engagement

Demonstrated success in fundraising, donor cultivation, corporate sponsorships, and brand visibility, with the ability to inspire philanthropic investment and elevate Special Spaces' national awareness and impact.

Mission-Driven & Compassionate Leadership

Deep passion for the mission and a genuine sense of empathy, humility, and service leadership, with the ability to connect authentically with children, families, volunteers, and stakeholders during emotionally sensitive situations.

Change Leadership & Organizational Development

Capacity to thoughtfully lead organizational evolution by implementing stronger systems, accountability, onboarding, consistency, and shared services while balancing growth with the organization's entrepreneurial and relationship-driven culture. Courageous and confident, with the ability to navigate ambiguity, complexity and tension.

Collaborative Team Building & Stakeholder Engagement

Ability to foster an inclusive, supportive, and team-oriented culture that values listening, shared decision-making, volunteer engagement, board partnership, and leveraging the strengths and perspectives of diverse chapters and stakeholders.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

A total compensation range of \$140,000 - \$175,000 is offered, along with a competitive benefits package.

Preference for the National Executive Director to be located near the main office in **southeastern Wisconsin** but not required. However, the National Executive Director must reside within the existing geographic footprint of Special Spaces chapters.

Location and Travel:

- 80% remote, 20% travel to chapter locations
- Some weeknight and weekend travel to Special Spaces events

To learn more about Special Spaces: <https://specialspaces.org/>

To follow Special Spaces: <https://www.facebook.com/SpecialSpaces>

To be considered for this opportunity, please submit a cover letter and resume to:

Shelly Beaver, Executive Search Consultant (sbeaver@spanopratt.com)

or Lindsey Kriete, Practice Director (lkriete@spanopratt.com), or apply online at www.spanopratt.com

