



President and Chief Executive Officer
Riley Children's Foundation
Indianapolis, Indiana

THE SEARCH

Riley Children's Foundation (RCF) seeks a visionary and proven executive leader to serve as its next president and chief executive officer (CEO) and advance RCF's vision that all children have equitable access to exceptional health care. RCF is the designated fundraising organization for Riley Children's Health (RCH) and its affiliated pediatric programs at Indiana University (IU) School of Medicine, the largest medical school in the United States. RCH is Indiana's only comprehensive pediatric research hospital, and is nationally recognized in all 11 pediatric specialties ranked by *U.S. News & World Report*. It is also part of the IU Health System, which maintains a close and unique partnership with IU School of Medicine. The foundation's mission is to improve children's health by fundraising to support the greatest opportunities and address the most pressing challenges in pediatric health care.

The next CEO will join RCF at an exciting moment. The foundation celebrated a recent centennial milestone, introduced a six-year strategic plan resulting in a comprehensive campaign, and welcomed new RCH president [David Biggerstaff](#) in February 2025. As the foundation makes a significant investment in its next century, RCF aspires to grow its deep and historic base of community and state-wide support, while garnering broader philanthropic investment at major, principal, and transformational giving levels. This includes expanding support beyond its Indiana base. The next CEO will realize these aspirations, leveraging RCF's powerful brand to mobilize and inspire teams and donors to grow the funding, support, partnerships, and overall operational capabilities to deepen the impact and services Riley can provide. The CEO will bring complex and sophisticated executive leadership, core business acumen, and frontline fundraising experience to manage and direct all aspects of RCF as a stand-alone foundation. This leader will demonstrate a track record of past success building and growing high-performing enterprises, including direct work with boards and the successful recruitment and responsible growth of teams through strategic investments in talent.

The CEO will report directly to RCF's board of governors (board) and partner closely with key leaders across RCH, IU School of Medicine, and IU Health. Leading a growing 70-person team, the CEO will continue raising sights for a foundation committed to forward momentum. Since 2022, RCF has achieved three of the four most successful fundraising years in foundation history, raising a record \$74 million in one year. Success for the next CEO will be defined, in large part, by their ability to continue sustainably elevating annual fundraising production. To achieve such growth, the CEO must lead and inspire the team to meet aggressive goals and develop strategies to educate and engage all members of the Riley community and its partners—faculty, staff, grateful families, friends, volunteers, and senior administrators—in philanthropic efforts. The ideal candidate should be an advocate for children's health, rallying donors, board members, clinical and academic partners, and the community so that all children may reach their optimal health and quality of life. The ability to innovate and adapt to an ever-changing landscape is necessary, as philanthropy continues to professionalize and evolve based on donors' expectations and the changing health care industry.

The ideal candidate will be a self-starter who uses an innovative and inclusive approach to building and guiding a program, and who reaches out to a broad community to forge collaborative partnerships. The CEO will have at least 15 years of senior-level management experience in a complex, matrixed organization—ideally at the intersections of academic medicine, fundraising, and health systems. This leader will have a strong track record of success personally cultivating and stewarding principal and transformational gifts with exceptional interpersonal skills. As a leader, the CEO will be responsible for motivating a complex team and engaging other key leaders in the fundraising process, bringing a personal commitment and ability to compellingly articulate RCF's distinct mission, vision, and values.

RCF has retained Jack Gorman of the national executive search firm, Isaacson, Miller, to assist in this important recruitment. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT RILEY CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

Based in Indianapolis, Riley Children's Foundation (RCF) is committed to improving the health and well-being of all children in Indiana through philanthropic leadership in support of RCH and its related research programs. As the designated fundraising partner to RCH, the foundation strives to ensure children have access to exceptional health care by funding pediatric research, education, and care.

RCF raises support for groundbreaking pediatric research and other programs, including new treatments and cures for a wide variety of childhood illnesses including: cancer, heart defects, neurological disorders, asthma, cystic fibrosis, and diabetes. Funding priorities include patient care programs, pediatric research, youth behavioral health, family support programs (including Child Life and Social Work). In addition to raising money for the hospital, RCF funds Camp Riley, which provides life-changing experiences to more than 200 children with physical disabilities each summer, and the James Whitcomb Riley Museum Home.

RCF's current funding priorities include:

- Respond to the youth mental health crisis
- Recruit and retain the best and brightest
- Pioneer research advancements
- Expand access to Riley expertise
- Support the entire family

In Fiscal Year 2024, the foundation's 70-person staff raised \$74.3 million across community giving, corporate and foundation relations, major gifts, planned gifts, and principal/transformational gifts. As of June 30, 2024, RCF's endowment was valued at more than \$424 million.

Leadership

RCF Board of Governors

The board of governors is the primary governing board of RCF and has responsibility for the organization's endowment. Members of the board of governors provide strategic leadership in relation to investments, granting policies, auditing financials, and fundraising, among other responsibilities. The board charts the course for the organization through strategic planning, has hiring authority and oversight of the CEO, and is the final authority on critical matters related to legal decisions, ethics and the nonprofit's scope and priorities.

The board is chaired by **Cory Martinson, MD**. Dr. Martinson is from Indianapolis, and is a graduate of Bucknell University. She completed her doctorate in medicine at the University of Chicago, Pritzker School of Medicine in 2005. Her pediatric residency was completed at Boston Children's Hospital (Harvard affiliate). She spent the first part of her career in pediatrics working as a pediatric hospitalist at Boston Children's Hospital before making the move to primary care. She is Board Certified in Pediatrics.

RILEY CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Riley Children's Health is the only children's hospital in Indiana nationally ranked by *U.S. News & World Report*, earning national recognition in all 11 pediatric specialties. This includes three programs in the top 10 nationally: Urology (fifth), Pulmonology and Lung Surgery (seventh), and Nephrology (tenth). Through enduring collaborations with the [Indiana University School of Medicine](#), [Indiana University School of Nursing](#) and [Indiana University School of Health and Human Sciences](#), RCH is one of the top 10 sites in the United States for pediatric health research, drawing millions of dollars in biomedical research investments each year. The enterprise also advances health care for children with a significant ongoing commitment to recruiting and training the next generation of pediatric physicians, scientists and health care providers.

Leadership

David Biggerstaff

President, Riley Children's Health

Longtime health care executive and pediatric hospital leader David Biggerstaff was named president of Riley Children's Health on February 2, 2025. Biggerstaff previously served as chief operating officer for Intermountain Health's Saint Joseph Hospital in Denver, Colorado. Prior to that, Biggerstaff held leadership roles at top children's hospitals including Children's Hospital Colorado in Aurora and Children's Medical Center of Dallas in Texas.

With nearly 30 years as a health care administrator, Biggerstaff brings a wealth of experience and a strong record of accomplishments. He is a seasoned professional with extensive history in both adult and pediatric academic medical centers, as well as community-based programs and facilities.

Biggerstaff holds a master's degree in health care administration from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, and completed an administrative residency at INTEGRIS Health in Oklahoma City. He has a bachelor's degree in business administration with an emphasis in accounting from Oklahoma State University.

D. Wade Clapp, MD

Chair of Pediatrics, Indiana University School of Medicine

Physician-in-Chief, Riley Children's Health

D. Wade Clapp, M.D., is the Richard L. Schreiner Distinguished Professor and Chairman, Department of Pediatrics. He is also Physician-in-Chief for RCH and Professor; Microbiology & Immunology/Biochemistry & Molecular Biology. Dr. Clapp was named Chair of Pediatrics in September 2009. He is a physician/scientist with an active NIH grant supported laboratory focusing on identifying therapeutic targets for orphan cancers, particularly Rasopathies and pediatric sarcomas. His laboratory is active in the generation and use of genetically engineered murine models that closely recapitulate the spontaneous development of human tumors. Together with his collaborators, he is active in preclinical to phase 1-2 clinical trials. He is also active in physician-scientist training and building diversity scholars programs from high school to faculty. Dr. Clapp is a member of several scientific, honorary, and specialty focused societies including the Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs, American Society of Hematology, American Association of Cancer Research, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National Academy of Medicine.

Research and Innovation

The Child Health Research Institute serves as an umbrella for all pediatric research affiliated with Riley. This new, cross-specialty institute builds on the Department of Pediatrics' longstanding leadership in children's health research and expands to include researchers from the array of departments and programs serving children, including surgery, psychiatry, neurology, neurosurgery and others.

The Child Health Research Institute includes multiples arms:

Discovery begins inside the [Herman B Wells Center for Pediatric Research](#), where hundreds of graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and scientists analyze data and run basic science experiments to explore the most basic questions in children's health and move discoveries forward through translational research.

Ideas gain traction when they reach a second tier of innovation designed specifically for working with children—the [Children's Clinical Research Center](#). Here, Riley research physicians meet with children and families who are eager to participate in approved clinical trials. The Children's Clinical Research Center is an advanced facility, conveniently located on the Riley Children's Health campus where children have access to treatments that go beyond today's standard care.

Riley's third layer of discovery—[Children's Health Services Research](#)—is a catalyst for making medical discoveries work for children. Experts find best practices that lead to better outcomes in the real world, develop information technology designed to help physicians, and share knowledge that protects the health of the world's most vulnerable children.

PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO)

The CEO will play a pivotal role in advancing RCF's vision, mission, and values, and ensuring its long-term sustainable growth. Reporting directly to the foundation's board of governors, the CEO will build and lead the implementation of a comprehensive, best-practices enterprise that strengthens existing support and engages new investment from a growing base of supporters. The CEO will communicate a compelling case for support, creating an open environment that inspires and motivates constituencies to share a common vision. As the chief spokesperson and face of RCF, the CEO must possess the ability to balance political, business, operational, and collaborative relationships within RCF and RCH, as well as among key partners, including IU Health and the Indiana University School of Medicine.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE CEO

- Set the overall strategy and direction for the foundation, assessing the effectiveness and growth potential of the existing operation; serve as architect and builder of a strategic enterprise that will broaden and strengthen outreach efforts and provide philanthropic support that is sustainable, impactful, and in keeping with the vision and mission of RCF.

- Craft and implement a comprehensive, multi-year fundraising strategy that will drive philanthropic support for institutional priorities to sustainably higher levels; inspire and challenge the Riley community to meet increasing annual fundraising goals through the current campaign and beyond.
- Seize upon opportunities to broaden and strengthen the foundation's outreach and donor and partner activities. Provide strategic leadership to build upon and advance a cohesive, comprehensive, and highly collaborative program that will leverage the strengths and assets of Riley Children's Health and Foundation, and maximize near- and long-term gains.
- Guide and support administrative and clinical leadership, physicians, board members, and key volunteers in their roles as ambassadors and fundraisers. Serve as coach, mentor, and strategist in cultivating and soliciting transformative gifts. Ensure that key leaders are well-briefed and that their time spent is highly productive and personally rewarding.
- Cultivate strong working relationships with administrative and academic and clinical leadership, physicians, staff, and key volunteers across Riley and its partners. Ensure that RCF is seen as a collaborative, proactive, trustworthy, and responsive partner able to professionally address both opportunities and concerns.
- Personally manage a select portfolio of principal and transformational gift prospects and donors, and ensure that timely steps are taken toward solicitation.
- Set clear direction and priorities for a comprehensive team of approximately 70 professionals across the foundation. Promote excellence through well-defined and measurable goals that maximize fundraising revenue; inspire, empower, and motivate staff through active communication and delegation, placing staff members' work within the context of RCF's strategic priorities and mission.
- Assess the growth potential of the existing team, utilizing foundation resources to ensure all functions are fully staffed to reflect the goals and opportunities of RCF. Actively hire, mentor, and train a high-quality staff that is prepared to meet the ongoing challenges and aspirational goals of the RCF. Provide frequent opportunities for professional learning and growth; emphasize retention as a means of increasing the capacity, stability, and expertise of the team.
- Maintain a leadership style that is open, fluid and support of staff concerns and needs; foster a work environment that recognizes and rewards performance, supports new ideas and data-informed risk-taking, builds confidence, and encourages interaction and teamwork. Celebrate current achievements and set clear expectations for future success.
- Understand, reflect, and promote the culture, vision, and values of RCF. Lead with integrity, collegiality, and excellence through every component of the work.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The CEO will bring many, if not all, of the following professional qualifications, skills, and experiences:

- At least 15 years of relevant leadership experience in complex development programs recognized for their strength and effectiveness, preferably in health care or academic medicine. A demonstrated commitment to the highest standards of professionalism and best practices across all internal and external functions.
- A strategic, visionary, and forward-thinking approach for contributing to the growth and evolution of a fundraising enterprise in a rapid-change environment; the ability to work effectively with a broad range of constituents, providing strong support, inspiring them to action, and making the experience rewarding.
- Experience building upon an existing development program, including individual and institutional philanthropy and campaign leadership, resulting in a transformative increase in philanthropic revenue for an organization.
- Success in increasing the effectiveness of a development program and its staff through building and implementing strategic plans, and establishing objectives and performance standards.
- A proven track record of success in personally cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding principal and transformational gifts from individuals, foundations, and corporations. A high level of comfort and effectiveness working with high-net-worth individuals and corporate business leaders.
- Proven leadership, and effective board, volunteer, and staff management skills. A team builder who will empower and motivate staff while providing the support and advocacy they need. A track record of recruiting and developing exceptional people.
- Superior communication skills, both oral and written. The ability to communicate effectively to a large and diverse audience, including senior administrators, board members, donors, prospects, colleagues, staff, physicians, and other hospital and partner employees.
- A self-starter with a sense of urgency, a clear set of priorities, and the ability to adapt to and lead through changing circumstances in an environment where working across boundaries and leveraging strengths are necessary. A creative approach to problem solving, and strong critical thinking and analytical skills. A high level of energy, self-confidence, optimism, and the ability to function at peak levels in a high expectation environment are essential.
- Superior interpersonal and listening skills; the credibility, sound judgment, humility, sophistication, and capacity to engage, inspire, and persuade physicians, hospital administrators, board members, volunteers, donors, prospects, and staff, both within the hospital system and beyond. The ability to make the appropriate connections among members of these groups and to nurture strong and long-lasting individual and institutional relationships.

- Demonstrated knowledge of development best practices including all aspects of fundraising and development operations, including principles, concepts, and techniques. A demonstrated commitment to learning of new industry trends and innovations, adapting to and incorporating fresh ideas and approaches as appropriate.
- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred.

LOCATION

This position is based in Indianapolis, Indiana.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and resumes should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller [website](#).

Jack Gorman, Partner
Grace Zakim, Managing Associate
Lisa Clayton, Senior Search Coordinator

Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of Riley Children's Foundation to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, age, disability, leave status, marital status, citizenship, national origin, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law. Riley Children's Foundation prohibits any such discrimination or harassment