



Senior Director of Development, DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center
Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation
Houston, Texas

THE SEARCH

Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation (HMHF or the Foundation) – the dedicated fundraising arm and philanthropic engine of Houston Methodist – seeks a strategic and entrepreneurial **Senior Director of Development** to expertly lead fundraising efforts for the **DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center**.

Among Houston Methodist's six multidisciplinary Centers of Excellence, the DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center stands as an international leader in cardiovascular care. Named in honor of pioneering cardiovascular surgeon Dr. Michael E. DeBakey, the Center has transformed the diagnosis and treatment of heart and vascular disease through groundbreaking innovation, world-renowned clinicians, and a commitment to advancing research and education. Ranked No. 10 nationally for Cardiology, Heart & Vascular Surgery by *U.S. News & World Report*, DeBakey combines nationally recognized physicians specializing in complex heart and vascular conditions with some of the most advanced cardiac imaging, surgical, and interventional technologies available.

As Houston Methodist continues to expand its impact in patient care, research, and education, philanthropy has become an increasingly important catalyst for innovation and growth. The Senior Director of Development for the DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center will lead fundraising efforts for one of the institution's most distinguished clinical enterprises, partnering with visionary physician leaders, grateful patients and families, and philanthropic champions to secure transformational support that advances the Center's mission and reinforces Houston Methodist's position among the nation's leading academic medical centers. This opportunity becomes available at a uniquely exciting moment as Houston Methodist embarks on its third comprehensive fundraising campaign with a target goal to raise more than \$1.25 billion over ten years.

Reporting to Josh Thiel, Associate Chief Development Officer, the Senior Director will lead fundraising for the DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center, advancing philanthropic support and donor engagement for this prominent clinical area amid Houston Methodist's current comprehensive campaign and beyond. This leader will work in close partnership with DeBakey's co-chairs and effectively liaise with division and physician leaders to champion the Center's funding priorities and align philanthropic strategy with institutional goals. The Senior Director will initially oversee one frontline fundraiser, with opportunity to hire another over time, while personally managing a portfolio of major gift prospects and donors, with an

emphasis on expanding the major gift pipeline and securing transformational philanthropy. As a collaborative member of the Foundation, the Senior Director will also partner closely with fellow frontline fundraisers, donor relations stewardship colleagues, and Foundation leadership while exemplifying Houston Methodist's core values and commitment to excellence.

The ideal candidate will bring at least five years of successful frontline fundraising experience, preferably within a complex research university or academic medical center. This individual will demonstrate a deep understanding of fundraising best practices and a proven ability to build and sustain a robust major gifts pipeline. The successful candidate will have a track record of cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding six- and seven-figure gifts and will be adept at leveraging data, metrics, and technology to inform strategy and drive results. Critical to success will be the credibility, maturity, and sophistication to build trusted relationships with clinician leaders, physicians, hospital executives, and volunteer leaders. With oversight for a growing team, the Senior Director will also bring a demonstrated ability – or clear potential – to mentor, develop, and inspire frontline fundraisers while fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability, and high performance.

Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation has engaged Rachel Ellenport of Isaacson, Miller to assist with this important search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be sent in strict confidence to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT HOUSTON METHODIST

[The Houston Methodist Hospital System](#) comprises seven network hospitals serving the Greater Houston area. Its flagship, Houston Methodist Hospital, is located in the Texas Medical Center and like many of its network peers is recognized as a leader in cutting-edge research, education, disease prevention, and compassionate treatment of all healthcare needs. Houston Methodist Hospital was named to *U.S. News & World Report's* "[Honor Roll](#)" (best hospitals in the country) for the 10th time and is the No. 1 hospital in Texas, marking the 15th consecutive year at the top. It is also ranked 10th on *Forbes'* "[America's Best Large Employers](#)" list for 2026, making it one of the top-ranked healthcare organization in the nation with this distinction and marking the third year Houston Methodist has received this prestigious recognition.

Houston Methodist's I CARE values are the core principles that guide the organization's patient care, employee culture, and community service. These values include: Integrity, Compassion, Accountability, Respect, and Excellence.

DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center

[Houston Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center](#) is the culmination of a long tradition of innovation in cardiovascular care. Dr. Michael E. DeBakey, for whom the center is named, was a pioneer in the field of modern cardiac medicine. In addition to establishing the surgical treatment of stroke and inventing the Dacron graft using his wife's sewing machine, Dr. DeBakey performed many groundbreaking procedures, including the first:

- Successful removal of a blockage in the carotid artery
- Aortocoronary artery bypass
- Multi-organ transplant of a heart, one lung, and both kidneys from one donor to four recipients

Carrying on the spirit of Dr. DeBakey's example, the Center's doctors in multiple locations throughout the Greater Houston area continue to advance how heart disease is treated today through innovative [research](#) and [clinical trials](#), as well as more than 6,225 cardiovascular surgeries annually. The DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center is led by [Dr. Alan B. Lumsden](#), Chair of the Department of Cardiovascular Surgery, and [Dr. William A. Zoghbi](#), Chair of the Department of Cardiology.

FOUNDATION & FUNDRAISING OVERVIEW

[The Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation](#) helps to accomplish institutional priorities through fundraising, gift management, and stewardship. Since fundraising began at Houston Methodist in 2003, the Foundation has raised more than \$1.3 billion, increased the endowment to more than \$795 million, and supported the creation of more than 160 endowed chairs for faculty physicians, researchers, and key leaders. This has included two campaigns (\$212 million raised between 2003 to 2012, and \$518 million raised from 2013 to 2020). In 2025, Houston Methodist began the quiet phase of its third comprehensive campaign, with a working goal to raise more than \$1.25 billion over ten years. In preparation for this groundbreaking endeavor, the Foundation has strategically grown to now consist of nearly 100 staff members.

In Fiscal Year 2025, the Foundation raised a total of \$121.4 million. More than 4,300 gifts were made by nearly 3,500 unique donors; 90 percent were individuals, and the remainder were foundations, corporations, and corporate foundations. On average annually, fundraising for heart and vascular priorities has range from \$3 million to \$5 million which is anticipated to grow significantly and sustainably to \$10 million to \$15 million amid the current comprehensive campaign.

ROLE OF THE SENIOR DIRECTOR

Reporting to Josh Thiel, Associate Chief Development Officer, the Senior Director of Development will direct the fundraising efforts for the DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center. As Houston Methodist embarks on a transformative comprehensive campaign, the Senior Director will drive philanthropic growth for DeBakey and cultivate strong relationships with the Center's leadership and physicians, as well as with Foundation leadership and colleagues. The ideal candidate will bring significant frontline fundraising experience, a track record of securing six- and seven-figure gifts, strong leadership and team development skills, and the ability to devise and execute fundraising strategies for one of Houston Methodist's most prominent Centers of Excellence.

MAJOR FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Expertly guide the fundraising strategy for the DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center. Oversee related campaign activities for DeBakey and assist with philanthropic priority-setting in close collaboration with Center and Foundation leadership.
- Identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward major gift (\$100,000+) commitments and manage a portfolio of high-level donors.
- Develop and execute innovative strategies for major gift solicitations, donor recognition, and stewardship.
- Strengthen and expand DeBakey's major gifts pipeline with a strong focus on discovery and qualification work.
- Lead, grow, and mentor a small team of one to two fundraisers, and establish performance metrics.
- Partner with Foundation leadership, ensuring alignment with the DeBakey Center co-chairs, to determine annual fundraising targets.
- Engage DeBakey physicians as key partners in the donor lifecycle, equipping and supporting them to play meaningful roles in prospect identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship efforts.
- Cultivate strong relationships with Foundation peers, administrators, faculty, and staff across the hospital system.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will demonstrate many, if not all, of the following skills and competencies:

- A minimum of five years of progressive fundraising experience, preferably in an academic medical center environment or complex research university setting. Direct management experience of frontline fundraisers is a plus.
- A proven track record of success in personally cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major gifts from individual donors.
- Knowledge of best practices in all key areas of fundraising, including donor qualification, discovery, and strategic planning.

- Strong leadership and decision-making skills, as well as the instinct and ability to develop recommendations and strategies for fundraising success that are consistent with the overall strategic plan and priorities of the Foundation.
- The credibility, maturity, and sound judgment required to effectively engage and leverage hospital leadership, physicians, volunteers, and other key constituents in the cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of key prospects and donors.
- A diplomatic and collaborative demeanor coupled with the political savvy to navigate a highly complex institution.
- Demonstrated experience utilizing data and metrics to inform fundraising strategy, along with impeccable attention to detail and superb follow-through.
- Superior written and oral communication skills with the ability to succinctly communicate a vision and process to senior leaders and other key audiences.
- Creativity, flexibility, a high level of responsiveness, and the ability to work effectively in a fast-paced environment.

LOCATION

[Houston, Texas](#) is a vibrant and diverse city known for its blend of world-class attractions and bustling economy. As the fourth most populous city in the nation and the largest in the southern U.S., Houston is a dynamic hub of culture and innovation. The city boasts a thriving arts scene, with outstanding performing and visual arts venues, and a globally recognized dining scene. Its economy thrives on a wide range of industries, including energy, aerospace, manufacturing, life sciences, and technology.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: [Senior Director of Development, DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center, Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation](#)

Rachel Ellenport, Partner
Nicole Poe, Managing Associate
Noa Boonin, Senior Associate
Megan Gorman, Managing Search Coordinator
Isaacson, Miller

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Methodist Hospital on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, status as a protected veteran, or other characteristics protected by law.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Houston Methodist Hospital. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by Houston Methodist Hospital would supersede any conflicting information in this document.

ADDENDUM: LEADERSHIP PROFILES

Alan B. Lumsden, MD

Walter W. Fondren III Presidential Distinguished Chair, DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center Chair, Department of Cardiovascular Surgery

Dr. Alan B. Lumsden's academic career began in 1989 at Emory University where he completed his postdoctoral training and served as a Collaborative Scientist in the Division of Pathobiology and Immunology at the renowned Yerkes Primate Center. He remained at Emory for several years, rising to the rank of Associate Professor and Chief of the Division of Vascular Surgery. In 2002, Dr. Lumsden joined the faculty at the Baylor College of Medicine as a Professor and Chief of the Division of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy. He assumed his current positions at Houston Methodist in 2008.

Dr. Lumsden has developed an international reputation as a leader in the field of endovascular surgery. He has clinical and research expertise in stent graft treatment of thoracic and abdominal aortic aneurysms, stenting and endarterectomy in carotid arterial disease, renovascular hypertension, aortoiliac occlusive disease, mesenteric vascular and minimally invasive therapy in venous disease. Dr. Lumsden also conducts FDA-mandated training for surgeons nationwide in a carotid stenting simulator housed at the Houston Methodist DeBakey Heart and Vascular Center.

William A. Zoghbi, MD, MACC, FAHA, FASE

Elkins Family Distinguished Chair, DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center Chair, Department of Cardiology

Dr. William A. Zoghbi is the Elkins Family Distinguished Chair in Cardiac Health, Chair of the Department of Cardiology at Houston Methodist DeBakey Heart and Vascular Center, and Professor of Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College and the Houston Methodist Academic Institute. From 1985 to 2005, he served on the faculty of Baylor College of Medicine and was the John S. Dunn Professor of Medicine. In 2005, Dr. Zoghbi joined the Houston Methodist Specialty Physician Group and established the hospital's Cardiovascular Imaging Institute, a unique entity where all cardiovascular imaging modalities are integrated for enhanced patient care, education, and research.

As an internationally renowned cardiologist and researcher, Dr. Zoghbi has dedicated his career to advancements in clinical cardiology, enhancing non-invasive approaches to assess and managing cardiac disease through cardiovascular imaging. His areas of expertise include valvular heart disease, coronary artery disease and heart failure, emphasizing a patient-centered approach to medicine and general cardiology. Throughout his career, he has been active in the American College of Cardiology (ACC), American Society of Echocardiography (ASE), and the American Heart Association. In 2008 and 2012, he served as president of the ASE and ACC, respectively. In 2013, the ACC honored Dr. Zoghbi as a Master of the American College of Cardiology.

Flynn A. Andrizzi, PhD**President and CEO, Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation**

Flynn Andrizzi has been a national leader in philanthropy for nearly three decades. Andrizzi joined the Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation as President and CEO in January 2024. Before joining the Foundation, Andrizzi served as the President of Hoag Hospital Foundation (Hoag) for nearly 14 years where he significantly elevated annual philanthropic support to more than \$100 million each year. He also led the launch of Hoag's first ever comprehensive campaign. Before joining Hoag in 2010, Andrizzi served as Senior Vice President and Chief Development Officer at the University of Iowa Foundation. Prior to that, he was the Vice President for Institutional Advancement at Thomas Jefferson University, as well as having held top fundraising positions at the University of Utah.

Andrizzi is a graduate of the University of Utah, earning a BS, MPA, and PhD in educational leadership and administration.

Michelle Oster**Vice President and Senior Chief Development Officer, Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation**

An accomplished and strategic advancement leader, Michelle Oster joined Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation as Vice President and Senior Chief Development Officer in January 2025. In this role, Oster leads and contributes to the vision, priorities, and strategy of all fundraising programs at the Foundation and partners closely with HMHF and hospital leadership as the Foundation significantly scales amid the public launch of the largest comprehensive campaign in institutional history. Prior to HMHF, Oster spent nearly nine years at the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association, ultimately as Associate Vice President and Managing Director for Wisconsin Medicine.

Oster holds a BS from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Josh Thiel**Associate Chief Development Officer, Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation**

Josh Thiel joined Houston Methodist Hospital Foundation in January 2020. As Associate Chief Development Officer, Thiel manages a team of fundraisers and leads fundraising for the priorities of the Houston Methodist Academic Institute, the DeBakey Heart and Vascular Center, and the Underwood Center for Digestive Health and Center for Infectious Diseases.

Prior to joining the Foundation, Thiel was Associate Vice President and Deputy Director of Athletics at San José State University, leading a team dedicated to generating philanthropic support for the Spartans' 22 Division I intercollegiate sports programs. Thiel began his career in fundraising at the Stanford School of Medicine as Assistant Director of Annual Giving and eventually moved into a major gifts role in support of medical education initiatives. After two years at the University of Colorado Hospital Foundation, he was

recruited back to Stanford as Associate Director of Development for Cardinal athletics followed by nearly four years of leading athletics development at Rice University.

Thiel holds a BA in business administration from the California State University, Fullerton and an MA in sports management from the University of San Francisco.