

KOPPLIN KUEBLER & WALLACE

THE MOST TRUSTED NAME IN EXECUTIVE SEARCH AND CONSULTING

GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER PROFILE: THE DESERT HIGHLANDS ASSOCIATION SCOTTSDALE, AZ

THE GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER (GM/COO) OPPORTUNITY AT THE DESERT HIGHLANDS ASSOCIATION

The Desert Highlands Association (DHA) presents an exceptional opportunity for a General Manager/Chief Operating Officer (GM/COO) at one the country's most iconic residential club communities located in the highly desirable community of Scottsdale, Arizona.

Desert Highlands, home site of the first Skins Game, is widely recognized for its exceptional location, preservation of its natural beauty and landforms and top amenities, as well as its progressive and innovative leadership in both staff and volunteer roles. Possessive of several long tenured senior and line staff, DHA is an exceptional opportunity for a highly competent, member and staff engaged hospitality professional who is truly "authentic" in his/her sincere and caring manner, approach and diplomatic style. Being well networked in the industry and highly competent in key operational, financial, leadership, staff development, programming, governance and social and recreational management/execution competencies is truly beneficial for the new leader of this exceptional association.

[Click here to view a brief video about this opportunity.](#)

THE DESERT HIGHLANDS ASSOCIATION

The Desert Highlands Association (DHA), located in the shadow of Pinnacle Peak in Scottsdale, Arizona, is a private golf, tennis and recreational community that sets the standard in exceptional desert living. Set on 850 acres of lush Sonoran Desert, the community and the Club have been recognized by Platinum Clubs of America as being among the top 3 percent in the country.

Membership at Desert Highlands is tied to property ownership, so all members have a vested interest in the success of both the Club and the community as a whole. Members have continually supported the updating and enhancement of club and community amenities while maintaining the overall ambiance, sense of community and vision that make Desert Highlands such a special place.

The 18 holes of Jack Nicklaus Signature Championship golf has been recognized as "Best Scenic Course" by Arizona Foothills Magazine (2017) and selected as one of "America's Best 100 Residential Golf Courses" by Golfweek for the last nine consecutive years. Additional golf amenities include a unique Gary Panks designed, 4-acre, 18-hole, par 41 putting course, and a large practice range and support areas. A recent success story is members approving a \$7M irrigation replacement, bunker renovation and cart path replacement project. The vote was 80% YES which is testament to the members focus on keeping DHA assets in prime condition. Work will occur in the summers of 2018 and 2019.

The award-winning Racquet Club at DHA boasts 13 courts that includes all of the grand slam surfaces; 4 grass, 6 clay, and 3 hard courts. The Professional staff provide an active tennis program for all levels of players including clinics, lessons, organized play sessions, tournaments and many social events.

DHA has been recognized as one of America's Healthiest Clubs! This distinction is awarded to a small percentage of Private Clubs who achieve an established Health Score based on industry standards. The DHA 7,000 square foot Pavilion Fitness Center, spa and pool that caters to Members' health and well-being. Members take advantage of the fully equipped fitness center. Personal training and wellness programs throughout the year include retreats, fitness workshops and nutrition seminars. The community boasts three and one-half miles of jogging trails; and a pool that is kept at a comfortable 83 degrees year-round.

The award-winning Clubhouse boasts multiple dining areas, extraordinary views of the most significant landmark in the area, Pinnacle Peak, as well as the city of Scottsdale located in the valley below, numerous seating areas and fireplaces, and a simply extraordinary place to gather with friends and guests, and to hold functions and numerous activities of the Club's various groups.

DESERT HIGHLANDS GOLF CLUB MEMBERS SAY...

"This is what we wanted, a private club with complete facilities. Most importantly, we've found very good friends here. Desert Highlands draws a diverse membership of people from all parts of the world. The clubhouse has an ambiance and style that would be hard to duplicate. It really is something special."

THE DESERT HIGHLANDS ASSOCIATION BY THE NUMBERS

- At present, there are: 563 Full Member families and 23 other memberships
- Initiation Fee - Full Member: \$75,000, required for all new residents
- Dues – Full Member: \$1,225 monthly, covering all club and community fees
- 18-hole Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course
- Approximately 28,000 rounds of golf annually
- 18-hole Gary Panks designed par 41 putting course
- Overall revenues at DHA are in excess of \$15.0M, including operations and capital/reserve fees
- Food and beverage volume is approximately \$1.7M, with approximately 65% from ala carte dining
- The Clubhouse is approximately 35,000 square feet
- 13 tennis courts that includes all of the grand slam surfaces; 4 grass, 6 clay, and 3 hard courts
- 7,000 square foot award winning Pavilion Fitness Center with spa and pool
- Full-time/seasonal employees at peak season: 150
- DHA employs a 24-7 fully staffed security department
- There are 9 Board Members and 13 committees
- One board controls all aspects of the community: golf, tennis, fitness, HOA, security
- Average age of new Members over the last five years is 55 years old

DESERT HIGHLANDS ASSOCIATION WEB SITE: www.deserthighlandsscottsdale.com

GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER POSITION OVERVIEW (GM/COO)

The GM/COO at DHA has full responsibility for all aspects of operations of the Club and Community, effectively managing all resources and reporting to the President and the Board of Directors and is expected to be the embodiment of an "exceptional member-centric experience." The GM/COO will lead the management team, many of whom have years of tenure at the Club, be representative of modern management "best service" practices, while promoting a positive, engaging, responsive and highly competent service culture in all operations.

He/she is expected be an interactive "thought partner" with the Board and Committees, working closely with both groups as they collectively make decisions and set strategic direction for the long-term well-being of the residents and membership. Like many club communities, DHA has many new, younger members with families and the balance of tradition with relevance to today's member needs and expectations is a critical success factor.

Supporting and effectively working with many committees, who are important part of the history and Desert Highland's success, is a necessary and important skill set.

The successful new GM/COO at Desert Highlands will need to possess especially strong skills in "mentoring" and "holding accountable" senior staff and a group of meaningfully engaged and well-regarded employees who are looking for that type of leadership as well. Residents and membership have a high regard for its staff, but recognizes that the enhanced continuance of an energized, well-trained, committed team is critical for continued success. A sincerely engaged, personally invested, instinctual style is particularly important for one's success.

Key attributes, characteristics and style of the successful new leader include:

- Honesty, straightforwardness, integrity, accountability, leadership and dedication. He/she should be able to inspire and motivate others, earn the respect of the members and employees as well as the community at large.
- Possessive of the natural "art of seeing something....." and then either executing a plan to improve, add, eliminate or rally for whatever it is; essentially being naturally "aware" and "proactive."
- Being creative, innovative and mission oriented; anticipating how the Club and Community continues to evolve is important, as is being actively 'networked' in the industry to the point of being on the forefront of trends in clubs, communities, real estate and economic cycles.
- Naturally outgoing, conversant, respectful and diplomatic, but able to say "no" when appropriate without alienating members or staff while doing so.
- Actively participating and "thought partnering" with the Board, Committees and contributors to DHA's success.
- Proactively leading the Team of highly qualified and (many) long tenured Senior Staff with a highly transparent and uplifting style.
- Being innately understanding, empathetic, reliable and relatable to members and staff at all levels.
- Possessive of a sense of "Quality Consciousness" with respect to every part of the Association's operations and be very visible, as well as naturally open, engaging and approachable to the membership and staff.
- Understanding that this is a unique and diverse operation that combines traditional elements of club management with a true homeowner's association that requires an even higher level of empathy, authenticity, and responsiveness.
- Proven team building leadership qualities are desired with demonstrated ability to plan, direct, coordinate, facilitate and manage all facets of a full-service community.

Some of the broader management and leadership functions and responsibilities of the role include:

- The successful candidate will be responsible for all day-to-day operations of the Association including the Club and Homeowner's Association.
- Understanding and embracing the values and original vision of Desert Highlands; protecting its natural environment, recognizing the importance of view corridors, etc.; essentially understanding what the 850 acres of property are all about and what is necessary to maintain a pre-eminent status.
- Coordinating and administering the Club and Community's policies as defined by Board of Directors and Executive Committee Members.
- Specific responsibilities include financial planning and control, property management and residential services, food and beverage operations, golf operations, tennis operations, security and overall association management. Strong leadership and skills in establishing consistently high levels of execution are critical, especially within the F & B operation, and ensuring the highest standards are consistently met for food, beverage, sports and recreation, and entertainment.
- The Board and membership have made a commitment and established the expectation of having the finest residential community of its kind in the Southwest and the person selected will assume responsibility for achieving and maintaining this goal.

- The new GM/COO should be “confident yet humble and an astute listener with a bias for action.” He or she must also have the ability to engage in a meaningful fashion with both the members and the employees (beyond the board) to execute on day to day operations and ensure that the long-term strategy is attained. The ideal candidate must also demonstrate flexibility and a strong interest in challenging existing practices; always possessive of a mindset beyond “this is the way we have always done it” will help to ensure a consistent evolution to excellence within all DHA activities and functional areas.
- A financial aptitude commensurate with executive duties within a multimillion dollar operation.
- Ability to review income and costs, taking corrective action as necessary, implementing and monitoring all Community financials, while assuming responsibility of accuracy, timely review, and accountability for the overall adherence.
- Developing and leading a top-quality proficient management team to drive business results, operate profit centers within established guidelines, actively coaching, instilling team accountability, and rewarding successes.
- Managing the development of the Club and Community’s strategic and annual business plans.
- Developing, maintaining and administering a sound organizational plan; initiating improvements as necessary in conjunction with Human Resources as it relates to personnel.
- Serving as the “Behavior Model” for direct reports and all levels of employees.
- Securing positive strategic networking opportunities within the industry via associations or affiliates as reasonable to further elevate DHA’s “brand” and ensure forward thinking and trend awareness.
- Actively interacting and fostering a feeling of “belonging” within the community to enhance the prestige of DHA; broadening the scope of DHA’s public obligations as a participating community member.
- Actively conferring with administrative personnel and reviews activity and operations to determine changes in programs, operations or personnel.
- Leading, developing, participating and supporting organizational efforts to achieve strategic goals as established for marketing of the Community.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

- A minimum of over 10 years of progressive leadership/management experience in (preferably) a private member-owned country club, ideally within a residential community with significant, multi-dimensional operations, or leading hospitality operations outside of the club industry in a similar dynamic, large-scale operation. Leading in a true “CEO-like” model and taking “ownership,” accountability and responsibility while doing so are verifiably necessary traits and experiences. Having current or prior experience in leading HOA operations is desirable to complement exceptionally strong hospitality and leadership skills.
- Naturally outgoing, energized, motivated with an “authentic” style and a true “servant’s heart.”
- Proven and verifiable leadership qualities with a demonstrated ability to direct, coordinate and control all aspects of a full service, actively evolving gated, club community.
- Prior experience in coordinating and overseeing complex capital improvement projects.
- Appreciation for and knowledge of golf, which is the foundation of DHA.
- Strong history of success and keen understanding of quality Food and Beverage operations, including revenue growth, training, innovation and creativity, and strong service culture development.
- Working and verifiable knowledge of strong procedural programming; the ability to define and institutionalize process and procedures (SOPs) on a consistent basis throughout DHA is very important, especially as new amenities are brought on line, and existing amenities and programs are consistently evaluated and enhanced. Continued development and execution of Performance Standards and Performance Metrics is necessary.
- Technologically proficient and recognizing of best practices use of technology to improve ‘high touch’ service delivery to members, as well as to more effectively manage and lead operations.
- A motivator and leader who can bring out the best in others by setting clear goals and expectations, holding them accountable for outcomes, by providing consistent feedback, support and through respectful interaction and professionalism. A “great listener.”
- Someone with a history of innovation, and a champion of new ideas and initiatives, looking to consistent improvement of member experiences and operational efficiency.

- A true, confident, diplomatic and competent club industry professional who recognizes the importance of accountability, and who has a strong history of success in working with member boards and committees.
- The ability to adapt and positively contribute to changing and evolving circumstances.

EDUCATIONAL AND CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS

Preferably, a college graduate; Hospitality Management major preferred. Commitment to on-going personal development regardless of what stage they are in their career and hold a CCM or equivalent professional designation.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Open and commensurate with the geographic region and size of club operation, qualifications, and experience, with an incentive opportunity based on reasonable metrics will be developed. The club, along with the typical CMAA benefits, offers an excellent bonus and benefit package.

INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO APPLY

Please upload your resume and cover letter (in that order) using the link below. You should have your documents fully prepared to be attached when prompted for them during the online application process.

Preparing a thoughtful letter of interest and alignment, clearly articulating your “fit” with the profile and the above noted expectations and requirements is necessary.

Your letter should be addressed to **Mr. Thomas E. Plimpton and Mr. David J. Butler, Search Co-Chairmen, and the Desert Highlands Association Search Committee**, and clearly articulate why you want to be considered for this position at this stage of your career and why DHA and the Scottsdale area will likely be a “fit” to you, your family and the Club if selected.

Expressions of interest in this manner should be conveyed to our Firm no later than April 20th. Interviews occur in later May with the successful candidate likely in place in Summer 2018.

IMPORTANT: Save your resume and letter in the following manner:

“Last Name, First Name - Resume” &

“Last Name, First Name - Cover Letter”

(These documents should be in Word or PDF format)

Note: Once you complete the application process for this search, you are not able to go back in and add additional documents.

For directions on how to upload your resume and cover letter [visit this page](#).

[Click here](#) to upload your resume and cover letter.

If you have any questions, please email Patty Sprankle: patty@kkandw.com

Lead Partner and Search Executive:

Kurt Kuebler, CCM

Partner, KOPPLIN KUEBLER & WALLACE

kurt@kkandw.com

561-747-5213 (O)