

## **GENERAL MANAGER PROFILE: BIRCHWOOD CLUB HIGHLAND PARK, IL (Chicago)**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Birchwood Club is seeking a General Manager who defines and demonstrates a management and leadership style that promotes a culture resulting in member satisfaction and employee engagement. In addition, the focus should be on meeting the annual long-range financial and strategic goals of the club.

Birchwood is a private, member-owned Racquets, Dining and Swim club that offers members a serene, casual, family-oriented environment. The club strives to offer exceptional competitive, instructional, and social programs in tennis, paddle, pickle and swimming, as well as varied social events for members of all ages.

Birchwood was founded in 1958 and is one of the longest standing premier clubs on Chicago's North Shore. Situated on 12 acres of beautifully landscaped property – ablaze with flowers and surrounded by lush woods, the club is a comfortable, relaxing getaway in the heart of Highland Park.

At the center of it all is the graciously appointed clubhouse. Refined but comfortable, it invites members and their guests to kick back and revel in the good life. Enjoy cocktails, beverages, dine on casual or sophisticated cuisine created by the talented Executive Chef, and host or attend fun and memorable events.

The club is governed by a Board of Directors and continues to plan for the future with common purpose and a fond collegiality that is a Birchwood hallmark.

Birchwood prides itself on the quality of its racquets instruction and its members' enormous enthusiasm for all sports. Playing levels range from beginners to tournament level. The majority of players enjoy casual games for camaraderie with friends, while competitive players enjoy club tournaments and inter-club matches.

The Club is in the beginning stages of a major renovation and expansion project to include an additional two (2) new paddle courts and three (3) new pickle courts, a redesign of the dining room, kitchen, locker rooms, and front entrance, and restoration of both the children and adult swimming pools.

Birchwood is a welcoming and down-to-earth place where adults and children can experience social events throughout the year but, the heart of Birchwood social life centers on informal gathering with friends and guests with good food and the pleasure of each other's company. Children enjoy opportunities like arts and crafts, movie night, and bingo nights throughout the summer months.

#### **Amenities**

- 12 Har-Tru Tennis Courts
- 6 Platform Tennis Courts and Hut
- 3 Pickleball Courts
- 2 Swimming Pools
- Outside Basketball/Sport Court

- Clubhouse Fitness area
- Clubhouse with dining and bar facilities
- Patio for dining and informal gatherings
- Men's and Women's Locker rooms
- Pro Shop with 3 full time professionals on staff year round

Club Facts:

- Number of Club Memberships: Total Families: 260 (Current Waiting list)
- Gross Dollar Volume \$3,200,000

**GENERAL MANAGER POSITION DESCRIPTION (GM)**

The General Manager is responsible for all day-to-day operations of Birchwood. S/he directs and administers all aspects of the operations to include amenities, staff, and all programs and activities to ensure outstanding service and member and guest satisfaction.

KEY ATTRIBUTES AND AREAS OF FOCUS

- Ability to act as a thought partner with the Board and its Committees
- Cultural development through strong hiring, training, communication, and fostering a strong team work ethic
- Innovative membership recruitment ideas and experience
- Strong understanding of Food and Beverage operations for the club members and guests
- Effective financial management skills through oversight of annual operating and capital budgets
- Sincere and consistent member and staff engagement and visibility to members and staff as the face of the club
- Superior communication skills, exuding energy, and creativity
- Attentiveness to member services, programming, and satisfaction
- Process driven leadership; setting standards of performance and execution including delegation
- Recognizes the club's marketplace, location and culture and works to position the club within the community as a desirable and admired club
- Capital project and renovation oversight experience
- Strong leadership and strategic planning experience

#### VISIONARY

- Must be a thought partner for the Board, recognizing the importance of keeping Birchwood on the cutting edge of Racquets, Dining and Swim club excellence by possessing a keen understanding of current and future trends, demographics, legislative, economic, and social issues. S/he should be decisive and set aggressive goals and objectives to ensure the club's current and future success.

#### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Must have sound financial management skills including the ability to oversee the preparation and management of annual operating and multi-year capital budgets supporting the strategic and tactical initiatives and expectations that s/he has established with the Board.
- Is ultimately responsible to ensure that appropriate safeguards and controls are in place for all of Birchwood's primary assets (membership, staff, amenities, etc.), whether it is for physical safety purposes or for the protection and long-term financial success of the club.

#### MEMBER RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

- Must lead Birchwood's membership recruitment and retention efforts. It is very critical that s/he understands the local market and economy. The candidate must be comfortable and competent being an integral and proactive part of developing relationships that lead to membership interest and/or business opportunities and is effective in orienting new members so their initial experience with Birchwood results in constant use of the Club.
- Is a catalyst for identifying new programs/services (including winter) and enhancing current ones for members and their guests to increase club usage, member satisfaction and retention.

#### FOOD AND BEVERAGE

- Assure gratifying food and beverage production and service in all dining facilities.
- Develop and enhance consistent training programs for all food service personnel, working as necessary with the F&B director and chef to together be directly responsible for those operations.
- Ultimately responsible for the marketing of banquet and outside functions to members and guests to ensure they are well-conceived, planned and executed.
- Controls Cost of Sales and has the vision to increase sales.

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING

- In partnership with the Board, the GM must lead the development of a strategic plan/business road map for the current and future success of the club.
- Must be able to identify issues, needs, goals, and objectives to help ensure the perpetuation and continued viability of the club.

#### MEMBER, BOARD, AND COMMITTEE RELATIONS

- Ensure that member satisfaction is always the first priority. Provide sincere and visibly engaged leadership and interaction with all facets of the membership and their guests. Be a consistent and positive force behind the creation and continuous enhancement of all aspects of Birchwood. Must be visible and available to his/her membership. Recognize that the *Member Experience* and meeting the expectations of Birchwood members is of critical importance to his/her long-term success.
- Must understand and be able to bridge the differences in the club's demographics through effective member relations, activities programming and communication.
- An active participant at Board and club Committee meetings to set policies and strategies to achieve the goals and objectives.

## EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

- Recognize, respect, and support the contributions of key managers and staff. Ensure that appropriately skilled and competent departmental managers are in place for all key positions and that each of them does the same in their respective areas of responsibility. Set standards of performance for all departments and hold them accountable for maintaining these standards within Birchwood, especially in member service areas.
- Maintain an environment and overall atmosphere for management/staff that promotes and values appropriate and responsible contributions to the success of Birchwood Club. Ensure that all staff is focused on positive, supportive relationships amongst themselves and with the membership.

## COMMUNICATION

- Will be a primary *two-way* conduit for information exchange, and must be consistent, positive, and able to *engage* in this process. S/he must be a true listener who places great importance on personal interactions with all constituencies of Birchwood.
- Experience in developing a communication platform using contemporary media (website, apps, social media, etc.) is desirable.
- Is the primary verbal and written communicator of important information to members and staff and recognizes that the ability to convey information in an articulate, well-conceived and well-written manner is of utmost importance.
- Believes in the power of proactive communication (i.e. orienting and culture setting) of members, staff, and guests to ensure the core values of the club are being recognized and achieved.

## CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

- A minimum of 3 - 5 years of verifiable, progressive leadership and management experience in similar environments. NOTE: Those current Assistant General Managers or Managers at well-recognized clubs, with verifiable records of achievement, will be ***strongly*** considered for this role.
- A verifiable career track that demonstrates a record of tenure and commitment to previous employers, and that career moves were for enhancement of skills and experiences as opposed to 'unplanned' career changes.
- Strong general leadership skills with verifiable strengths in team development, financial performance, diverse recreational amenity management (tennis, paddle, pickleball, dining, banquets, family activities, aquatics and others are especially desirable), quality food and beverage programming, exceptional member/guest service programming, strategic planning, project management, and most importantly the ability to consistently define and achieve goals and objectives.

## SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

- A *Team Builder*. A person who strives to be the ultimate coach and motivator, bringing out the best in others by setting clear goals and expectations, providing consistent feedback and support, and treating others with respect and professionalism.
- A confident, diplomatic, and competent professional who is a "*doer*" and "*take-charge person*" and who recognizes the importance of accountability.
- Possesses strong organizational skills with an attention to detail necessary to achieve high levels of quality, satisfaction and outstanding members experiences.

- S/he will have strong experience in working with Human Resource issues, including the creation of position descriptions and review procedures.
- A charismatic individual *with a sense of humor* and style that is commensurate with the culture and expectations of a family friendly, fun, and supportive membership.

#### **EDUCATIONAL AND CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS**

- A Degree is highly desirable, preferably in Hospitality Management or Business.
- In lieu of the degree, substantial private club or hospitality experience will be considered.
- Certified Club Manager (CCM) designation preferred but not a requirement.

#### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

Salary is open and commensurate with qualifications and experience. The club, along with the typical CMAA benefits, offers a bonus and benefit package. CCM certification support if needed.

Please email your cover letter and resume to both:

Eric Kuby  
Club President  
eric.kuby@gmail.com

Paul Geallis  
Incumbent General Manager  
pgeallis@birchwoodclub.com