

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

OGLEBAY GOOD ZOO DIRECTOR

LOCATION: WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA

ORGANIZATION: OGLEBAY PARK RESORT

STATUS: FULL-TIME | EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP



Oglebay

LEAD WITH PURPOSE. INSPIRE WITH HEART.

The Oglebay Good Zoo isn't just a zoo—it's a place where conservation meets community, where education is hands-on, and where every guest leaves inspired. Located within the stunning 2,000-acre Oglebay Park Resort, the Oglebay Good Zoo is West Virginia's only AZA-accredited zoo and a cherished part of the region's identity.

We're seeking an enthusiastic, strategic, and mission-driven Zoo Director to lead this beloved institution into its next era of growth, innovation, and impact.

At Oglebay, you don't just direct a zoo—you steward a legacy.





ABOUT THE OGLEBAY GOOD ZOO

Tucked into the rolling hills of West Virginia, the Oglebay Good Zoo is home to more than 50 species—many of them rare or endangered—and offers dynamic programming for guests of all ages. Whether it’s a red panda encounter, a scenic train ride through our natural habitats, or a lesson in wildlife conservation, the Good Zoo offers wonder at every turn.

Through a powerful partnership with West Liberty University, the zoo also serves as a vital hub for academic research and conservation education.

VISITORS ANNUALLY

95,000 – 105,000

ZOO SPECIES

Home to 63 species, the zoo’s primary guest draws include red pandas, snow leopards, cheetahs, Grevy’s zebras, red and western gray kangaroos, red-necked wallabies, red river hogs, red and maned wolves, and black-and-white ruffed lemurs.

NEXT ACCREDITATION

Application: February, 2029
Inspection Cycle: June, 2029

ZOO BUDGET

\$1.6 Million

THE OPPORTUNITY

As Director of the Oglebay Good Zoo, you'll be the chief visionary and operational leader—guiding a passionate team, expanding impact, and ensuring excellence across every aspect of the zoo's operation.

This role is perfect for a leader who brings both business acumen and a love of wildlife, and who thrives at the intersection of strategy, storytelling, and stewardship.





YOUR IMPACT

You'll lead with heart and vision across several key areas:

Strategic & Operational Leadership

- Direct the full spectrum of zoo operations: animal care, education, guest services, retail, custodial, maintenance, and volunteer teams.
- Advance and implement long-range strategic and master plans that align with Oglebay Park Resort's broader mission.
- Foster academic collaboration with West Liberty University in support of the Zoo Science major and associated research.

Community & Stakeholder Engagement

- Represent the Oglebay Good Zoo locally and regionally—building strong relationships with guests, partners, media, and community leaders.
- Promote the zoo's mission through public speaking and creative storytelling.
- Work in partnership with the Oglebay Foundation to identify and secure grant funding, support planned giving efforts, and elevate the zoo's philanthropic profile.

Financial & Administrative Stewardship

- Oversee and manage operating budgets, adjusting as needed to meet goals.
- Ensure full compliance with AZA accreditation standards and regulatory requirements.
- Hire, train, and develop staff to uphold the highest standards of care, safety, and guest experience.

Conservation & Guest Experience

- Lead with a commitment to world-class animal care and welfare.
- Deliver memorable, meaningful guest experiences that connect people to nature and inspire conservation.

THE KIND OF LEADER WE'RE LOOKING FOR

We're seeking a warm, mission-driven leader who brings energy, empathy, expertise and:

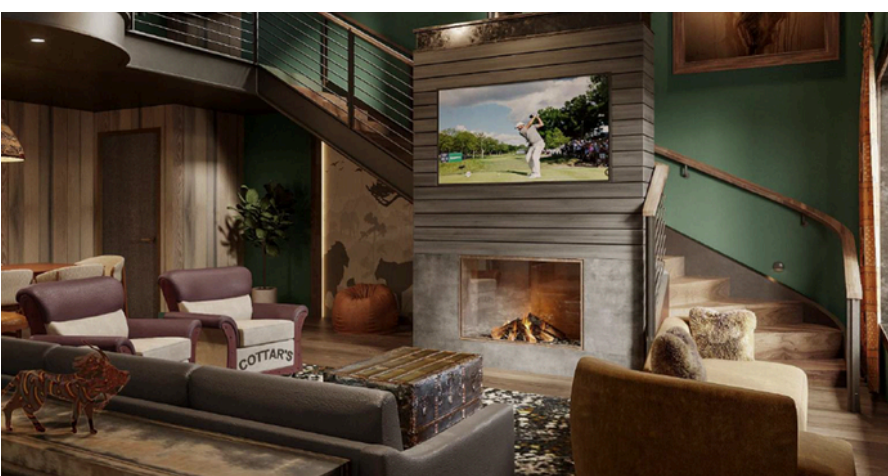
- 4-year college or university program, 10 years of related experience and/or training, or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- A track record of operational and team leadership in dynamic, public-facing environments.
- Strong familiarity with AZA standards and the evolving role of modern zoos in conservation.
- Public speaking and communication skills that inspire trust and enthusiasm
- A collaborative spirit and a deep appreciation for Oglebay's core values: legacy, connection, enrichment, and community.
- A valid driver's license and the ability to work on-site in Wheeling, WV.



SHAPING THE FUTURE OF CONSERVATION TOURISM

As Director of the Oglebay Good Zoo, you won't just manage what exists—you'll help shape what's next. One of the most thrilling aspects of this role is the opportunity to be a driving force behind an ambitious new expansion: the Gary E. West Pridelands at the Oglebay Good Zoo, opening in summer 2026.

This landmark addition will introduce one of the nation's first immersive lion-viewing villa experiences, nestled beside a state-of-the-art breeding habitat. Designed to inspire awe and support critical conservation efforts, the Pridelands will offer guests the rare opportunity to wake up eye-to-eye with lions—one of the most iconic species on the planet. As Director, you'll play a key role in the successful launch, operation, and storytelling of this bold new chapter in wildlife engagement and eco-tourism.



CONCEPTUAL RENDERINGS: GARY E. WEST PRIDELAND VILLAS



WHY THIS ROLE MATTERS

The Oglebay Good Zoo is a vital piece of the Oglebay Park Resort experience and a cornerstone of the region's conservation and education efforts.

This is your opportunity to:

- Lead West Virginia's only AZA-accredited zoo within a nationally recognized park resort.
- Be a voice for conservation, education, and community engagement.
- Shape a legacy of impact for generations to come.

WHEELING, WV— LIVE HERE. BELONG HERE.

Wheeling, West Virginia offers affordable housing in a historic, close-knit community with a strong sense of identity. Residents enjoy regional access to world-class healthcare and proximity to several respected colleges and universities.

Nicknamed The Friendly City, Wheeling was ranked #33 on Fortune.com's Best Places to Live for Families in 2024.

Conveniently located along Interstate 70, Wheeling provides quick access to major cities:

- Pittsburgh, PA – 1 hour 10 minutes
- Columbus, OH – 2 hours
- Cleveland, OH – 2 hours 40 minutes
- Washington, DC – 4 hours 45 minutes
- New York City – 6 hours 45 minutes

Wheeling also sits within a 500-mile radius of half the U.S. population and 60% of Canada's, making it an ideal hub for both comfortable living and regional travel.





APPLY TODAY

Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to lead the Oglebay Good Zoo into its next exciting chapter. If you're ready to make a meaningful impact in conservation, education, and community engagement, we want to hear from you.

Oglebay Good Zoo has partnered with Canopy Strategic Partners to recruit top-tier talent in the zoological field. To be considered for this role, please submit a letter of interest and resume in a single PDF format to Lauren David at ldavid@canopysp.com