

GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER PROFILE: THE BUFFALO CLUB BUFFALO, NY

GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AT THE BUFFALO CLUB

We are leading the search for a new General Manager/Chief Operating Officer for The Buffalo Club, an exceptional opportunity to lead one of the country's most historic and distinctive private clubs. The ideal candidate will have a deep understanding of how to develop initiatives and solutions tailored to the needs of the club and the broader hospitality industry. Most important is the ability to lead a team in providing outstanding service and hospitality to meet the highest standards of member experience.

Candidates should possess a strong background in food and service operations, dining programming, and overnight accommodations, with a welcoming personality that fosters a positive and inclusive atmosphere across the team. Capital budgeting and project management experience are also highly valued. While prior experience in a private club setting is preferred, we are open to considering candidates from other areas of hospitality who bring a high level of operational expertise. This role is ideal for a polished professional who embodies The Buffalo Club's respect for its rich history while valuing our diverse membership.

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

ABOUT THE BUFFALO CLUB

The Buffalo Club is a historic 157-year-old city club located in the heart of downtown Buffalo, New York's 2nd most populated city after New York City. Buffalo sits on the eastern shores of Lake Erie at the origin of the Niagara River. Buffalo has diverse architecture, and it is home to many historical attractions, world-renowned art galleries, theaters, and performing arts institutions. In 2025, The Buffalo Club was ranked 15th in the nation on the Platinum Clubs of America list. The Buffalo Niagara area offers family fun, festivals and events, restaurants, nature, recreation, and nightlife.

Like the city of Buffalo, The Buffalo Club was built on tradition and is steeped in history. It was founded in 1867 by, among others, President Millard Fillmore. Another U.S. President, Grover Cleveland, was a member from 1881-1908. In 1901 after President McKinley's assassination, the Club was used as a headquarters by his cabinet and Vice-President Theodore Roosevelt. The Buffalo Club holds the distinct honor of being one of only several clubs listed as a Platinum Club of America, a Platinum Club of the World, a Top 25 City Club, and recognized as an Iconic Club, one of only 37 privileged to hold that status, by *BoardRoom* Magazine.

The 116,000 sq. ft. Club has gone through many changes over the years, the most significant of which was the \$9M renovation of the locker rooms, squash courts, and Spa. In 2021, the Club invested \$1M into renovating its restaurant, the Presidents Grill. In 2024, the Club renovated two of its main banquet facilities. The Club features an array of enhanced amenities with a full-service spa, fitness center, squash courts, swimming pool, bowling lanes, rooftop patio, four overnight rooms, al fresco and fine dining, and meeting rooms and banquet facilities. The Buffalo Club provides unrivaled service and the finest of foods in an elegant setting. The Club is committed to impeccable service where members are recognized, their preferences remembered, and their wishes catered to promptly. The Buffalo Club is Buffalo's finest private club with a meaningful past, vibrant present, and exciting future.

THE BUFFALO CLUB BY THE NUMBERS:

- Approximately 1,000 Members

- \$8,000 Initiation fee
- Approximately \$6,077 Annual dues
- Approximately \$10.4M Gross volume
- Approximately \$4.4M Annual dues volume
- Approximately \$3.55M F&B volume (approximately 42.1% from a la carte and 57.9% from catering)
- Approximately 74 FT Employees; 45 PT Employees
- 21 Board members

THE BUFFALO CLUB WEBSITE: www.thebuffaloclub.org

GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER – POSITION OVERVIEW

The General Manager/Chief Operating Officer (GM/COO) manages all aspects of Club operations to ensure maximum membership satisfaction and is responsible for the efficient and effective management of the Club’s activities consistent with its policies and objectives. This is done in accordance with the rules and regulations established by the President and the Club Board, with his/her input, and within an annual budget authorized for Club operations.

The GM/COO must have the ability to understand and embrace the unique culture of the Club based on its historical connection to Buffalo and its values while balancing the business side of operations.

While a large, diverse, and multi-faceted operation, The Buffalo Club requires a respectful, professional, detail-oriented leader who has the unique ability to seem to be everywhere, whether a member function, behind the scenes with staff, or in Committee meetings. It takes a high-energy, organized, calm, and composed individual with highly developed business and personal skills to successfully manage the Club. The Buffalo Club is a “home away from home” for its members, and the goal is that everything it provides should be performed in commensurate quality to the standards of The Buffalo Club. Ultimately, the goal is to “be the best in class” in everything The Buffalo Club offers!

The new GM/COO is expected to provide or possess the following:

Leadership:

- A natural gravitas and engaging style, with a sincere desire to build relationships with members, staff, and others who contribute to the overall well-being and success of The Buffalo Club. Someone who clearly “inspires” others in all that he/she does by how they conduct themselves in an always appropriate manner.
- The ability to interact with and lead in an active member participatory environment, recognizing that the continuity of success to reach mutually determined goals and objectives for The Buffalo Club rests primarily in his/her leadership efforts.
- A strong attention to the details of success and the ability to articulate and memorialize standards expected of each contributing constituency within The Buffalo Club organization.
- Embracing and appreciative of the history of The Buffalo Club, able to preserve the unique atmosphere of the Club while still seeing ways to modernize and move forward.
- An especially strong financial acuity to ensure that balancing the above-noted trends and issues is performed within a financial metric to maintain membership and engagement levels.
- Ability to fully engage in the continuous evolution of quality member and staff experiences; someone who can recognize what success looks like, how to implement and review SOPs, and how to motivate others to engage in a similar capacity on the journey to success. A thoughtful ‘tone at the top’ leader.
- Ability to develop and implement a plan to raise the awareness and stature of The Buffalo Club through consistent delivery of positive experience, recognition of innovative and quality programming, and representation of the Club through its leaders in the industry.

Operations:

- Takes personal ownership of operations, being especially aware of the significant physical plant and overall presentation of the operation, including the need to be consistently “member ready and focused” in both appearance and service.

- Plans, develops, and administers operational procedures in concert with the Club's policies and strategic direction.
- Develops and maintains a sound organizational plan, including proactive leadership to ensure that key staff positions and quality of personnel are in place and supportive of the big-picture goals for The Buffalo Club.

Financial Management:

- Works with the President and Board Members to develop the Club's strategic direction and initiatives.
- Coordinates the development of the annual operating and capital budgets for Board approval by supervising and coordinating with the Director of Finance and collaborating with the Finance and Audit Committees. Monitors monthly financial statements and takes proactive corrective action as needed.
- In conjunction with key departmental Directors, ensures that The Buffalo Club meets its fiduciary responsibilities while conducting its business functions.

Personnel Management:

- Is actively involved in the furthering of a member-centric service culture: Setting standards, processes, and ongoing training while providing leadership for managers and staff at The Buffalo Club and ensuring the staff culture is equally as positive, supported, and sees the same level of personal attention and engagement.
- Ensures that a vibrant performance management system is in place and followed. Establishes a strong culture of attention to detail, consistency of quality execution, positive and supportive staff engagement, and sets very clear accountabilities supported by measurable goals and objectives.

Communications:

- The GM/COO must be an exceptional communicator, have adroit interpersonal skills, and instinctively know how to make members, guests, and staff feel that they are treated in a gracious, professional, and sincere manner. Further, he or she must be able to communicate these expectations to staff with diverse backgrounds and promote buy-in, so they understand and execute those expectations.

INITIAL PRIORITIES OF THE NEW GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The focus of the initiative is to improve employee morale, engagement, and organizational effectiveness by fostering proactive relationships and communication. This includes learning team members' names, understanding daily operations, and engaging with employees to address concerns. Key areas of attention are evaluating the organizational structure to ensure it is aligned with future success and filling key positions, as well as assessing the member service experience to enhance both customer satisfaction and employee morale. Additionally, the initiative involves reviewing and responding to a recent member survey and setting clear goals, responsibilities, and timelines for continuous improvement. A comprehensive review of the food and beverage operation will need to be conducted to ensure consistency and high standards. Ultimately, the goal is to build trust and confidence with key team members through thoughtfulness, transparency, and active listening.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty. The requirements listed above are representative of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions. Additional qualifications include:

- A proactive, member-focused leadership style that promotes membership and staff engagement.
- Ability to assess and develop clubhouse staff, setting clear expectations and creating a culture of accountability.
- Demonstrated financial management experience with effective oversight of the annual operating budget.
- Willingness to build a strong relationship with the Board of Directors and Club Committees, working to create a strong bond with respectful communication and openness.

EDUCATIONAL AND CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS

- A bachelor's degree is preferred, with a focus on Hospitality Management.
- Substantial private club or hospitality experience will be considered in lieu of the degree.
- Industry certifications such as CCM, CCE, and CMC are encouraged but not required

EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION

In compliance with federal law, all persons hired will be required to verify identity and eligibility to work in the United States and to complete the required employment eligibility verification form upon hire.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Salary is open and commensurate with qualifications and experience. The Club offers an excellent bonus and benefits package, including association membership. *Salary Range: \$175,000 - \$250,000*

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. Please be sure your image is not present on your resume or cover letter; that should be used on your LinkedIn Profile.

Prepare a thoughtful cover letter addressed to **Immediate Past President/Ms. Amy Habib Rittling**. Clearly articulate your alignment with this role, why you want to be considered for this position at this stage of your career, and why The Buffalo Club and the Buffalo, NY area will benefit you, your family, your career, and the Club if selected.

You must apply for this role as soon as possible but no later than Friday, February 7, 2025. Candidate selections will occur in February, with the first Interviews expected in late February with the second interviews a short time later. The new candidate should assume his/her role no later than May 2025.

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

“Last Name, First Name - Resume” &

“Last Name, First Name - Cover Letter – Buffalo Club”

(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.

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

If you have any questions, please email Alice Stevens: alice@kkandw.com

Lead Search Executive:

Michael G. Smith, CCM, CCE, ECM

Search Executive

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