

Position Profile

Executive Director

Connecticut Voices for Children

Background

Connecticut Voices for Children's (Voices) mission is to promote the well-being of Connecticut's children and families by identifying and advocating for strategic public investments and wise public policies. Voices advances its mission through high-quality research and analysis, policy development, strategic communications, and sustaining a powerful voice on behalf of children.

For example, we have been instrumental in the redesign of a community-based system to divert youth from entering the juvenile justice system. Our research and advocacy helped to create the state Office of Early Childhood. We recently launched a state-wide college and career readiness alliance. We established the annual Youth at the Capital Day, which has amplified the voices of youth in state custody.

With a staff of 11 and an annual budget of approximately \$1.4 million, New Haven-based Voices punches well above its weight as a source of information for policy innovation and advocacy, and as a coalition partner. See more about Voices at www.ctvoices.org

Current Circumstances

Before setting out in our search for a new Executive Director, we asked two questions:

- Is there a profound inequality in opportunity and justice for vulnerable children and families in Connecticut, along racial, ethnic and economic lines?
- Are Voices' status as an independent, nonprofit organization and its commitment to rigorous, evidence-based analysis vital to effective advocacy on behalf of these vulnerable children and families?

We answer both questions with a yes. We believe that examining the root causes of the conditions affecting Connecticut's children and objective, data-based analysis of key policies and practices will continue to inspire and inform policy makers, advocates and citizens to overcome these inequities. Our attention to regular input from communities who are most affected by these policies has helped educate and focus our research and policy agenda.

Voices' independence and objectivity are essential to the credibility of its analysis and impact on public discourse.

Voices has evolved its strategic focus over four generations of executive leadership since its founding in 1995. Prior leaders have brought different levels of experience in key elements of the Executive Director's role—management, policy, research, communication, advocacy, fund raising—and leadership. But leadership is key. We will look to the Executive Director to organize a team to assure we have all the needed expertise to achieve our mission.

Voices enjoys great credibility and influence in Connecticut and as a part of a national movement. We have significant institutional knowledge and history and a core staff with substantive expertise and training in our fields of study. We have a network of alumni and supporters who are great resources. We have a loyal and dedicated board and funders who believe in the importance of this work. We seek a leader who burns to improve the life circumstances of children in Connecticut, who understands the reality of inequality in the lives of those we serve, who can help us identify the means of bringing about lasting change, and justice. That leader will find a board and an organization that are ready to develop a united vision and strategy for the way forward.

Our Process

In this recruitment process, we are eager to explore the fullest range of approaches for effectively leading Voices in the future. We welcome candidates who bring diverse life experiences, background and understanding of the communities and constituencies we serve as both an opportunity and resource to Voices' continuing evolution as an organization. We seek someone who can run a credible, research-based organization and has deep regard for the lives of people affected by adversity, whether driven by race or economics. The successful candidate will have experience or demonstrated understanding about how good public policy can enhance life prospects for people whose views may not be well represented when policy decisions are made. We seek someone who can be a compelling public voice for children and astutely lead and build our team.

Our issue areas—fiscal policy, child welfare, early care, education, economic security, health and juvenile justice—track different public systems and policies. These systems, the needs they serve and their impact on children and families, are all connected. Policies and practice in one system can undermine or confuse practice in others, or they can advance progress. Understanding how this all connects and translating it in to comprehensive analysis and policy guidance requires a highly organized and coordinated approach to this work. This is the essential challenge for the new Executive Director, to lead in a way that helps create solutions that better integrate public systems while also harmonizing the work of a capable staff.

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We aim to engage with promising candidates in a discreet, frank and informed dialogue, sharing our thoughts and expecting concrete ideas and potential strategic agendas to emerge. We will invite and empower our new Executive Director to lead us through a strategic planning process to determine how the entire organization, staff, and board can best align to a shared vision.

Requirements

The Executive Director will demonstrate the leadership and strategic expertise and experience needed to organize and inspire our team to best achieve a research and policy agenda, secure revenues and maximize the performance of the organization, and will embody our values and dedication to the children and families we serve.

Contact

A resume and cover letter can be submitted to ctvoices@fordwebb.com

All inquiries will be held in strict confidence.

Connecticut Voices for Children is an equal opportunity employer, and as such, takes affirmative action to ensure that discrimination does not occur on the basis of race, creed, color, age, sex, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, religious or political affiliation, disability, or any other classification considered discriminatory under applicable law.

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