

Position Description Executive Director Appleseed

Nationally recognized social justice leader Appleseed, supporting 17 local Appleseed Centers across the country, seeks a new Executive Director to lead their national staff of 16 highly dedicated professionals in Washington, D.C. The new Executive Director, a visionary strategic thinker with passion, drive, and creativity, will manage a budget of over \$3 million and work in a dynamic team environment, leading the nation's largest network of pro bono attorneys and fostering high impact legal and policy initiatives.

Background

In 1993, Richard J. Medalie, a successful Washington lawyer, and a group of fellow Harvard-trained lawyers from the Harvard Law class of '58 sought a new approach to pro bono legal organizations. Their strategy was to focus on broad systemic social initiatives, rather than the traditional model of providing legal services to individuals. The central theme that united these lawyers was the notion that law is not just a means to restrain abuses, but rather is an opportunity to give people a chance to fulfill their potential in life. Medalie, in a letter to his colleagues at the time, announced: "We have called the entity formed to carry on this program Appleseed, because our concept is to plant a seed from which a public service activity involving lawyers, young and old, can grow and develop across the country."

Thirteen years later, Appleseed Foundation ("Appleseed") has grown to a national organization supporting 17 local Appleseed Centers in New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Alabama, Connecticut, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington. In addition, an Appleseed Center has been established in Mexico City.

Current Situation

Appleseed is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to building a just society. Appleseed strives for a society in which opportunities are genuine, access to the law is universal and equal, and power is used to advance the public interest, and believes the best way to achieve big results is to work for the kind of change that levels the playing field and transforms entire communities at a time. Appleseed works at the local level, establishing and networking independent public interest centers that identify and address issues community by community.

Local Appleseed Centers function as independent organizations linked by the national network. Each Center recruits its own leadership, raises its own sources of funding, and develops its own projects and strategies for reform. To date, Appleseed has generated over \$30 million in pro bono support for projects. Appleseed Centers develop practical and lasting solutions to chronic injustices in public education, health care, child welfare, justice, and immigration.

The Boulware Group

Although most of Appleseed's projects begin and end locally, there is a set of issues on which Appleseed Centers work collaboratively, primarily in three programmatic initiatives: education, immigration, and small business healthcare. National Appleseed brings together pro bono volunteers, funding, and project coordination to ensure that information is shared across projects and that Centers are maximizing their reach by providing local perspectives to national issues. These collaborative projects continue to produce solutions with broad national and international implications. Beyond the three core issues identified above, Appleseed also has significant activity in the fields of access to justice, democracy, economic opportunity, and children. For fuller descriptions of these issues, please go online to www.appleseeds.net.

A sixty-nine member Board of Directors governs Appleseed, headed presently by two Co-Chairs. The Executive Director leads the day-to-day operations and oversees a staff of 16, including a senior team of three directors for operations, development, and field. At the end of 2006 Appleseed recorded net assets at \$2 million, and estimates its 2007 budget at \$3.1 million. In 2006 Appleseed leveraged over 16,500 hours of pro bono time valued at over \$5.4 million. Its revenue base consists of public support from individual donors, law firms, foundations, and corporations.

Specific Role

The Executive Director oversees the operations and provides leadership to the national organization. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors and works to develop a shared sense of unity and mission. The Executive Director leads the national staff and helps to coordinate the activities of scores of public interest and pro bono attorneys.

The new Executive Director of this volunteer-driven network will be a multi-talented individual capable of fulfilling the roles of organizational leader, legal strategist, chief advocate, and experienced fundraiser. The first and most visible is that of an organizational leader and spokesperson, both within the organization and to the community at large. This official has primary responsibility for identifying opportunities and making recommendations to the Board concerning strategies for Appleseed to pursue. The Executive Director also works closely with other public interest law organizations and community groups as an active participant in the public interest service network in order to foster more synergy in this arena.

The Executive Director must be a respected strategist whose experience as a nonprofit leader has enabled him or her to think through many of the challenges that confront public interest organizations today. As chief advocate of Appleseed, the Executive Director will have a solid understanding of the social and legal issues promoted by Appleseed. The ideal candidate will be capable of developing a compelling and streamlined policy strategy that energizes Appleseed's work, stimulates Board, staff, and Centers, and finds support within the greater legal community.

A seasoned leader, the Executive Director will oversee the operations of the Appleseed headquarters office and will help hire, train, supervise, retain, and motivate staff and volunteers. As financial leader, he or she will oversee the development and implementation of Appleseed's budgets. The Executive Director should have a gift for inspiring and motivating staff and volunteers alike, including the clients served by Appleseed. This ability to motivate will go hand in hand with clear vision and unshakeable commitment to grow the impact of the organization both locally and nationally.

Finally, the Executive Director must be an experienced fundraiser who is comfortable making requests from a diverse pool of funders. Appleseed wishes to increase substantially the funding it receives from corporate, foundation, and individual sources. This multi-dimensional funding platform calls for thoughtful program planning and positioning in order to take advantage of new and existing funding opportunities. The Executive Director must be able to relate Appleseed's mission and goals to potential funders in clear and compelling ways. The new Executive Director must possess creativity as well as excellent communication skills in order to market the Appleseed brand both nationally and locally.

Major Objectives

Appleseed expects the new Executive Director to accomplish the following major objectives over the next 12-18 months:

- Lead the national staff professionally and efficiently in a manner that is consistent with Appleseed's mission, vision, and values;
- Provide a strong voice for Appleseed's mission by implementing marketing strategies to raise the national profile of the organization and its constituent Centers;
- Continue to develop and enhance in active partnership with the Board a strategic plan that will guide the organization's growth and policy efforts over the next five years, coordinating and prioritizing national collaborative projects with local initiatives, establishing such new Centers as the Board may determine, and increasing the budget to \$4.5 million;
- Nurture the relationships with the leaders of the 17 Appleseed Centers, strengthening and supporting their organizational capacity and working collaboratively on a balanced mix of national and local initiatives;
- Build strategic partnerships with private practice lawyers, corporate counsel, law schools, civic leaders, and professionals from other disciplines aimed at increasing the level of participation and funding;
- Increase the financial and pro bono support of law firms and develop new diverse streams of funding, particularly among corporations and foundations;
- Strengthen relationships between Appleseed and other corporate, philanthropic, civic, and community based organizations.

Professional Qualifications

The following qualifications are preferred in the new Executive Director:

- Previous experience as an executive director of a nonprofit organization;
- Sharp mind that quickly grasps complicated legal issues and an ability to identify and analyze important public interest issues;
- Strong sense of vision and strategic thinking with a demonstrated ability to plan, direct, and oversee the operations, programs, and staff of a complex organization;
- Demonstrated track record of raising funds from public, foundations, and individual sources as well as legal sources;
- Passion for Appleseed's mission: building a just society through legal advocacy, community activism, and policy expertise;
- Ability to inspire and lead a national staff and a growing network of volunteer attorneys;
- Ability to recruit pro bono lawyers for top profile projects;
- Astute political sensitivities for working with public officials, particularly state and U.S. legislators;
- Comfortable and effective in communicating with Board members and fundraising sources, many of whom reflect a variety of different political points of view;
- Integrity, energy, and outstanding communication and media skills;
- A track record of working well with staff, volunteers, and community groups.

Personal Characteristics

The following characteristics are preferred in the new Executive Director:

- A deep personal commitment to legal advocacy and social justice;
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills with a commanding presence;
- A superb listener and a consensus builder;
- Positive outlook, self-confidence, patience, and force of will that produces results;
- Healthy respect for colleagues, employees, and superiors;
- Goal-oriented, project-oriented, and achievement-oriented;
- Strong sense of honor and integrity;
- A sense of humor.

Compensation

Appleseed offers a competitive compensation and benefits package for this position that is commensurate with skill and experience.

Application

Please forward resumes, salary history, and appropriate material immediately to:

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