



Position Description for Chief Financial Officer

Background

Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law is a tax-exempt, nonprofit [501(c)(3)], nonpartisan, civil rights legal organization representing African-Americans, Hispanics, other minorities, and women in cases arising under employment discrimination, voting rights, housing discrimination, education, environmental justice, and other civil rights legislation, based in Washington D.C. The Committee generally focuses on class action or precedent setting litigation and policy issues that have a national impact on civil rights.

The Lawyers' Committee implements its mission and objectives by marshaling the pro bono resources of the private bar for litigation, public policy advocacy, and other forms of service by lawyers to the cause of civil rights. While some continue to argue that attitudes are more important than laws, or that persuasion is more effective than litigation, the history of the advancement of civil rights in this country indicates that the enactment of laws, and the litigation that ultimately enforces them, shapes societal attitudes and converts parchment guarantees into real protections. To protect civil rights effectively requires resources, not limited to financial resources, which law firms, and especially large law firms, can provide. This has become increasingly true as civil rights litigation moves from relatively clear-cut legal issues to the modern civil rights lawsuit, involving extensive fact-finding, discovery, prolonged trials, and lengthy appeals.

The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law has a rich and dynamic history of service, seeking to secure for all the rights that are the ideals on which our country was founded. The Committee's staff, its lawyer volunteers, its supporting law firms, the foundations, corporations, law firms, lawyers and individuals who provide financial support, the staff and lawyer volunteers of the Local Committees, can be justifiably proud of the Committee's many accomplishments. However, much remains to be done to defend the progress already made and to make the ideals of our nation a reality.

Current Situation

The staff of the Lawyers' Committee consists of 45 positions, of which the majority are attorneys and paralegals. An Executive Director heads the Lawyers' Committee with an executive management team that includes a Chief Counsel/Senior Deputy, a Director of Finance and Administration, a Deputy Director for Legal Programs, and a Chief Development Officer.

The Boulware Group

The work of the Lawyers' Committee is divided into seven primary project areas: National Support, Employment Discrimination, Voting Rights, Education, Environmental Justice, Fair Housing & Community Development, and General Legal. For descriptions of these project areas, with detailed information regarding the history and current legal docket for each area, please go online to www.lawyerscommittee.org.

The Lawyers' Committee has recorded net assets at the end of 2005 at \$4.4 million, and has estimated their 2006 budget at \$6.3 million. The Committee's revenue base consists of public support from individual donors, foundations, law firms, and corporations. A new capital campaign is being contemplated with the assistance of outside fundraising counsel with a five to seven year timeframe and a goal of raising \$25 to \$50 million to supplement the existing endowment and future program expansion.

Specific Role

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO), a newly created position, will report directly to the Director of Finance and Administration. The new CFO provides leadership and direction for the organization's financial operations by maintaining and developing systems and procedures to ensure that all transactions are accounted for in accordance with established internal procedures and generally accepted accounting principles. This official is responsible for the receipt, disbursement, and custody of the funds. This is a hands-on position that supervises an accountant, prepares statements of the organization's financial condition, and performs all functions relating to taxes.

The general responsibilities of the CFO include the following:

- Participates in the planning of short and long term financial objectives of the organization;
- Provides technical supervision to accounting personnel to ensure that the organization's financial data are correct;
- Recommends policies and procedures relating to the financial and accounting practices of the company;
- Coordinates and disseminates financial data as required both internally and externally;
- Prepares Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) compliant monthly financial statements;
- Represents the organization in dealings with internal revenue officials, external auditors, and financial institutions;
- Oversees the preparation of required federal, state and District of Columbia financial and payroll reports;

- Performs other duties related to the daily operations of the accounting unit, e.g., processing invoices, writing checks, reviewing invoices, journal entries, etc.;
- Assumes additional responsibilities as directed or required.

The responsibilities for custody of funds and related duties include:

- Maintains custody and manages the funds and other financial assets of the company;
- Insures appropriate deposit of collected monies with banks and other financial institutions; seeks to earn maximum returns on interest-yielding assets;
- Disburses funds on behalf of the corporation; reviews expenditures for possible economies;
- Supervises the preparation of checks and handling of the respective vouchers; secures countersignatures from management.

Major Objectives

In the first twelve to eighteen months, the new Chief Financial Officer will:

- Oversee the migration to a new financial system that serves the needs of a major civil rights organization;
- Develop a comprehensive reporting system that ensures financial integrity, including internal controls and compliance with all governmental requirements;
- Establish better integration between the budgetary process and financial management;
- Develop and implement a strategic financial plan that will support the growth of the Lawyers' Committee.

Professional Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have the following qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in business or accounting from an accredited university or college is required;
- 5-10 years senior level experience in nonprofit fund accounting experience and financial management;
- CPA or MBA is preferred;
- Strong management skills with an ability to build, motivate, and lead a finance team in a collegial environment;
- Have a strong understanding of governmental and industry standard financial reporting requirements and regulations;

- Demonstrated experience in strategic planning and cost allocation;
- Financial acumen and technical expertise in not-for-profit finance, accounting, auditing, and compliance matters;
- Ability to work in a fast-paced environment, managing several projects simultaneously.

Personal Characteristics

The ideal candidate will possess the following key characteristics:

- Desire to lead a rapidly changing organization through a significant growth stage;
- A strategic thinker with a vision for success, yet interested in and attentive to details and operational issues;
- Interest in innovative best practices regarding superior customer service and care; a consensus builder who values new ideas and perspectives;
- Strong analytical, interpersonal, and communication skills;
- Healthy respect for colleagues, employees, and superiors;
- A sense of humor.

Compensation

A highly competitive compensation package is offered with salary negotiated based on experience. The position also offers employer-paid fringe benefits.

Application

The Lawyers' Committee is an Equal Opportunity Employer, which encourage applications from minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.

Please forward resumes and appropriate material immediately to:

Anna Koivisto
The Boulware Group
625 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 422
Chicago IL 60611-3172
Phone: 312-322-0088
Fax: 312-322-0092
E-mail (preferred): lawyerscfo@boulwareinc.com