

Child Advocates of Silicon Valley Executive Director

Child Advocates seeks a proven executive to double contributed revenue and grants, and significantly expand its child advocacy services in Santa Clara County.

The new Executive Director's primary role is to significantly increase the scale of the organization as it recruits, trains, retains and supports Court Appointed Special Advocates ("CASAs") who improve the lives of children living in foster care. This new era will see the organization through a funding and management step-change that involves significant growth. The new leader will drive this growth.

This organization depends on a dedicated cadre of volunteers. Experience in engaging, retaining and managing a volunteer workforce is critical to the success of the Executive Director, as is the ability to deliver a cost-effective and lean operating infrastructure that supports the work of the organization, its volunteers and clients.

BACKGROUND

[Child Advocates of Silicon Valley](#) provides stability and hope to children who have experienced abuse and neglect by being a powerful voice in their lives. Focusing on foster children who have been removed from the custody of their parents, Child Advocates matches children with a trained, dedicated and trustworthy volunteer. The Court Appointed Special Advocate ("CASA") is there for the child and to advocate for the child. The CASA serves as a consistent and reliable presence in the child's life while they are part of the dependency system... and often beyond. They are the one person in the child's life that can meet with teachers, doctors, social workers and foster parents, and provide insights and recommendations to the court so that judges can make better decisions that advance a child's welfare. The CASA spends quality time with the child, works to identify and then introduce them to beneficial services and programs, and ideally becomes a friend and trusted mentor.

Since its founding in 1986, Child Advocates has matched over 16,000 of the county's most vulnerable children with a CASA. The model has demonstrated that:

- 71% of Child Advocates' children ages three-to-five are enrolled in preschool, compared to 23% of all three-to-five year old children in the Santa Clara County Dependency System
- 95% of Child Advocate youth completed or are on track to complete their high school requirements, compared to 58% of foster children in California
- When a CASA is assigned to a foster child, more educational, therapeutic, and medical services are ordered for children and families.

The organization is laser-focused on recruiting and training CASAs, and on matching them with foster children to provide the critical emotional and educational support. New CASAs receive over 30 hours of training and once matched with a child, it is unlike most other "volunteer" roles, due to the time, the immediacy and emotional commitment involved. The benefits to a child are immeasurable – this is where an adult can make a real difference.

In FY2018, Child Advocates supported more than 900 of the 1500 children in the Santa Clara County dependency system. Its new three-year strategic plan is to provide a CASA for 1200 foster children living in the county by year-end 2021. To meet this goal, Child Advocates needs to increase and diversify its funding in order to recruit, train and support CASAs. This will require a 33% - 50% increase in funding and in the number of CASAs. The Executive Director, the Board and staff, with the help of the community, will drive toward achieving this goal. Child Advocates ultimate goal is to provide a CASA for every child living in the Santa Clara County dependency system.

Child Advocates has a regular, full-time staff of 26 compassionate professionals. It is governed by a 20-member board of directors. The operating budget for FY19 is \$2.5M. Of that, approximately 50% comes from events and individuals, 25% from government funding, and the remainder from foundations and corporations.

BASIC FUNCTION

The Executive Director will be a passionate and powerful voice for children in foster care, for volunteers who agree to be CASAs, and for the organization. Specific responsibilities and oversight duties include:

LEADERSHIP & VISION

- Thoroughly understand Child Advocates – its history and culture; governance structure, staff, Board, funding streams, programs, outreach, community network, political landscape and constituencies;
- Provide thought leadership and encourage openness and experimentation for creative approaches for tackling new CASA recruitment, training and support; identify and address areas challenging Child Advocates' evolution and growth;
- Interpret, own and implement the strategic plan with an eye keenly focused on scale, organizational development and financial sustainability.

FUNDRAISING, EXTERNAL RELATIONS, CASA RECRUITING

- Create a fund development strategy to diversify contributed revenue so funding becomes more predictable and sustainable; review all current fundraising activities and segmentation by donor type to determine how resources are being allocated; refocus, if needed, to ensure energies are prioritized on activities with greatest ROI.
- As Fundraiser-in-Chief, personally drive the cultivation, solicitation and stewardship of new and existing major donors and grants; ensure appropriate staffing is in place to support fund development strategy; provide coaching and support to Board members to assist in their fundraising activities.
- Expand the public's understanding of Child Advocates' brand and work so that its mission, values, outcomes and stories are consistently and effectively conveyed through the website, social media, and printed collateral; ensure that materials designed to attract multi-cultural CASAs are appropriately placed and are bi-lingual; transform awareness into contributed revenue and new CASA volunteers.
- Conduct public speaking and community outreach with the goal of building support for Child Advocates; serve as an empathic advocate and knowledgeable spokesperson on issues related foster children; assume an active working role with various local collaboratives that move system-change activities forward; develop and cultivate mutually beneficial relationships with other nonprofit organizations, state and local government and community leaders to deepen the services and partnerships necessary to fully support the needs of foster children.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT, FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND ADMINISTRATION

- Ensure that day-to-day operations and programs are professionally and efficiently organized and administered; ensure proper administration of contracts, including compliance with relevant employment laws and other legal requirements; maintain and strengthen the

organization's infrastructure including IT systems, financial controls and related business processes to sustain and improve service.

- Review current organization structure to assess that senior management has the appropriate training and resources to effectively lead their teams and advance operational and strategic goals; provide continued assessment of staff to ensure advancement, productivity and performance.
- Review all workflows, systems, controls, processes and procedures; ensure that Child Advocates' maintains a solid operational foundation; continually improve agency's processes and technology to effectively deliver donor/volunteer centric services.
- Maintain the organization's fiscal health, make sure it adheres to a sustainable financial plan based on a Board-approved annual budget and that financial performance positively tracks budget and operating plans; foster an atmosphere of transparency and accountability in matters relating to the organization's financial condition.
- Maintain a climate that attracts, retains, motivates and develops a multi-cultural, diverse, high-quality staff and Board; create an environment that embraces collaboration, innovation, accountability and diversity of opinion.
- Establish metrics and dashboards ensuring programs meet objectives and that data is captured and analyzed for program evaluation purposes.

BOARD RELATIONS

- Become familiar with Child Advocates' governance policies; develop, recommend and implement policies, fundraising and program goals and objectives; provide ongoing communication to the Board on critical matters related to Child Advocates.
- With the Board Chair and Executive Committee, coordinate the efforts of regular and ad hoc committees; develop meeting agendas, schedules, retreats and other activities with the Executive Committee; ensure that all committees achieve objectives; encourage Board members' appropriate involvement in Child Advocates' range of activities.
- Assist the Board in identifying and recruiting new Board members whose talents, backgrounds, commitment and interests are congruent with the needs and mission of Child Advocates.

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Executive Director will be a driven and pragmatic leader possessing the following key qualifications and characteristics:

- A commitment to the mission of Child Advocates; an understanding of the needs and challenges of foster children, either as a nonprofit leader in a related field, a current or former CASA, public official or nonprofit board member, with eight+ years of management experience.
- A track record in attracting financial support, whether as a nonprofit executive or board member, or from the commercial sector, from individuals, foundations or businesses; a strong partnership/relationship builder; having contacts in the Silicon Valley would be an advantage.
- Demonstrated experience in change management and scaling an organization; ability to build and align essential resources for administrative infrastructure, technology, talent

acquisition and retention, and awareness building/CASA recruitment; track record of implementing strategies that improve internal workflows, communications, goal setting and metrics for measuring progress.

- Decisive and resourceful, with the organizational sensitivity to gain the support and confidence of the Board and staff at all levels; a team builder and collaborator, confident and competent, with strong skills in management and leadership; one who trusts and empowers the senior management team; understands the subtleties of recruiting, motivating, directing and retaining a diverse group of personalities with different work styles.
- Fearless and experimental; one who can see and convey the long term benefits of taking calculated risks.
- One who is creative and can identify and convey the synergies and mutual benefits that come from collaboration; a contributor who works well with diverse stakeholders, partners and collaborators; politically savvy.
- A grounded visionary and lifelong-learner who can see the real-world needs of foster children and complicated systems based on data and trends, and shape programs that are effective, highly leveraged and sustainable.
- An individual with outstanding human qualities; one who is straightforward, shares information easily, listens as well as offers advice, and respects the abilities of others; someone who imparts trust and integrity, and guides others in a similar vein.
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills.
- An individual possessing a sense of humor, and an ability to maintain balance and perspective.

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