



## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity (PLSE) is looking to appoint an Executive Director, to begin by September 3, 2019.

### **ABOUT PLSE**

Founded in 2010, PLSE provides free legal representation to low income residents of Philadelphia whose criminal records are holding them back from achieving their potential as productive, contributing citizens. The services include seeking expungements in criminal court and pardons from the Governor, educating elected and community leaders, creating community-based Pardon Hubs, and empowering under-resourced communities to seek a greater voice and needed systemic reforms. PLSE is a fast-growing organization that has significantly expanded in staff, volunteers and budget within the last two years. Other information about PLSE's staff and programs may be found on its website, [www.plsephilly.org](http://www.plsephilly.org).

### **ABOUT THE POSITION**

PLSE is seeking a strong, organized and farsighted attorney, with demonstrated passion for equal justice under law and for criminal justice reform, to serve as its next Executive Director (ED). The ED will act as the organization's chief operating officer, chief external advocate, fundraiser and team leader, overseeing the organization's continued growth and statewide leadership in the area of criminal history records and pardon reform. The ED will lead a team of currently three full-time employees – the Director of PLSE's Criminal Records Expungement Project, the Director of Communication and Outreach, and a staff paralegal – with the expectation of hiring two additional staff attorneys and one paralegal within the next six months. The current Interim Executive Director is expected to remain with PLSE as an independent contractor, assisting with fundraising and the development of the Pardon Project. Additional administrative and program support is provided by law student volunteers from the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University, co-op students from Drexel, and other volunteers. The ED will also, as needed, conduct intake, prepare court petitions, and appear in court to ensure all PLSE clients receive high-quality representation. The ED reports to a diverse, active and engaged 15-member Board of Directors.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

#### **External Leadership**

- Serve as the external voice of the organization, raising the public's awareness of the fact that criminal records permanently define and stigmatize people, not only causing intergenerational harm to families, but whole neighborhoods
- Manage a growing number of staff and volunteers during a time when there is significant interest in reform at all levels of government, and growing appreciation by community, civic and business leaders about the harm that criminal records cause

**Recipient of the 2018-2019 Barra Award as an Exemplary Non-Profit**

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- Develop and manage strategic relationships with key partners (community organizations, unions, industry and funding partners, policy makers, legal associations, etc.) to deepen PLSE's reputation as a statewide leader in the area of criminal records and pardon reform
- In partnership with the Board, create and cultivate relationships with major supporters (individuals, academic institutions, businesses, foundations, and governments), building a broad, knowledgeable and engaged networks of supporters
- Maintain a working knowledge of significant developments in the field and engage in and coordinate public advocacy and reform efforts on behalf of the organization

### **Organizational Leadership**

- Coach and mentor a high-performing team, hire and enlist new talent that is committed to PLSE's mission and work, and promote a climate which retains and motivates a diverse and talented staff
- Ensure staff has clearly defined roles and access to the information/resources necessary to achieve their goals
- Act as primary liaison to the Board of Directors, engaging Board members in the current and future needs of the organization and keeping the Board fully informed on the status, needs and health of the organization
- Articulate and energize the staff and Board around a shared vision for the future of the organization
- Oversee a quickly expanding budget, ensuring that operational needs and contractual deliverables to funders are met while developing and maintaining adequate financial reserves
- Maintain official records and documents, and ensure compliance with federal, state and local regulations

### **CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS:**

The ideal candidate will possess the following qualifications:

- At least 6 years of professional experience, including at least 2 years serving successfully in a leadership role with personnel, budget and fundraising responsibilities
- Excellent public speaking and communication skills, with the ability to serve as a strong external spokesperson in a wide variety of settings (from local community meetings to interactions with government officials in Philadelphia, Harrisburg and Washington)
- Exceptional interpersonal skills, with the ability easily to develop strong relationships across a diverse spectrum of stakeholders, to be trusted and welcomed by our client community, and to influence leaders in the private, public, and non-profit sectors
- Strong appetite to participate in and lead fundraising efforts

- Outstanding organizational leadership skills, with the ability to articulate a clear and inspiring vision while managing and developing a high-performing team
- Strong critical thinking skills, with a track record of developing strategies in the face of complexity and ambiguity
- Experience overseeing budgets, with the capacity to allocate resources strategically and manage spending
- Entrepreneurial mindset, with the willingness and ability to seize opportunities and solve problems as they arise
- Deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and the ability to demonstrate humility and empathy
- Passion for reforming the criminal justice system
- Experience working in a legal context (required) and in the criminal justice arena (preferred)
- Member in good standing of the Bar of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court (or willingness to seek admission promptly after appointment)

#### **COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS:**

Salary and benefits will be competitive and commensurate with experience. The Executive Director will be eligible to participate in IOLTA's Loan Repayment Assistance Program, which provides loans for educational debt and then excuses the loans after the completion of a year of service.

#### **TO APPLY**

**PLSE seeks to fill this position as soon as possible. It expects to begin interviewing candidates on June 12 and will accept applications until the position is filled.** Questions, nominations and applications should be sent to [oxholm@plsephilly.org](mailto:oxholm@plsephilly.org).

Applicants should include a cover letter, resume, and three professional references. PLSE values a diverse work environment. PLSE invites all applicants to include in their cover letter a statement about how your background and/or experiences might contribute to the diversity, cultural vitality, and perspective of our staff and the services we provide to impacted communities.

**Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity is an equal opportunity employer.** PLSE does not discriminate in the selection of employees on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, genetics, age, national origin, disability, or veteran status. In addition to federal law requirements, PLSE complies with all applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, leaves of absence, compensation and training.