DISABILITY RIGHTS
LOUISIANA
Protect. Advocate. Empower.

Job Title: Executive Director
Job type: Full Time
Location: New Orleans

Executive Summary:

Disability Rights Louisiana (DRLA) protects and advocates for the human and legal rights of people with disabilities of all ages across Louisiana. DRLA works to empower the disability community to live an integrated life, free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Building on recent successes with impactful litigation and innovative programming, DRLA now seeks its next Executive Director (ED).

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the new ED will lead a highly qualified team of approximately 50 dedicated staff delivering free legal services, educating policymakers, advocating for clients, and delivering trainings throughout the state. The ED will oversee organizational development, supervise senior staff, and manage a roughly $5M annual budget. They will also ensure compliance with legal and funder requirements, safeguarding the short- and long-term fiscal and programmatic health of the organization.

DRLA seeks a compassionate manager who will foster a strong internal culture and lead strategic growth in service of greater impact for the disability community across Louisiana.

The ideal candidate will have significant nonprofit leadership and management experience within disability rights, legal advocacy, or a closely related field. Strong candidates will demonstrate commitment to advocating for the rights of people with disabilities, motivating teams and fostering alignment, and mobilizing public and private support and partnership for the systems change and direct service work DRLA does.

The ED will exhibit humble servant leadership and will have a strong ability to build relationships and gain the trust of the Board and staff at all levels of the organization. The ED will represent DRLA publicly and will continue to elevate the organization's profile as a critical, impactful agency, both across the state and nationwide.

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Requirements

Essential Functions & Responsibilities:

• Provide strategic leadership and effective management of the agency including program planning, compliance, development, budget, performance management, and financial oversight.

• Build a robust, collaborative culture of transparency, active communication, and trust, working to envision and implement a cohesive organization where the Board and staff are clear on the important roles they play in advancing DRLA's mission and vision. Work in partnership with the staff union to ensure organizational needs are met and staff are supported through fostering a positive relationship with union and non-union staff alike.

• Prioritize areas in which DRLA can optimize operations and support staff development by reviewing existing Human Resources systems and policies and identifying opportunities for advancement.

• Cultivate a strong working relationship with the Board of Directors through effective and responsive engagement with all members, both at and between Board meetings, and ensuring healthy exchange of information between the Board and staff.

• Partner with the Finance Director to lead overall budget and financial management with a particular focus on compliance and reporting for federal and other funding streams.

• Along with development staff, explore cultivation of potential grant funding as well as new donors and stewardship opportunities, identifying and pursuing the potential to broaden and diversify the funding base beyond the current revenue streams.

• Foster a culture that values diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, ensuring that those values drive key decisions about organizational goals, practices, and priorities.

• In partnership with the Board of Directors and staff, develop, implement, and communicate DLRA's strategic vision among legislators, key partners, and stakeholders in ways that increase DRLA's influence and enhance its impact.

• Enhance the capacity of the agency to address and evaluate client and community needs, service priorities and outcomes, and impact opportunities through building robust and mutually beneficial relationships in the diverse disability communities of Louisiana.

• Raise the visibility of DRLA by identifying and cultivating strategic and robust relationships with cross-sector partners, key decision makers, and other relevant local, statewide, and national organizations and leaders.

• Guide and support community organizing and advocacy initiatives in partnership with staff.

• Serve as an ambassador for DRLA internally and externally, inspiring others to take bold action to address systemic issues facing people with disabilities.

• Directly supervise and mentor the Leadership Team, currently comprised of 9 direct reports.

Education, Experience, & Qualifications:

The ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes, and experiences:

• An inclusive, compassionate, and transparent executive leader with demonstrated experience effectively inspiring and empowering staff, Board members, and partners toward greater impact through effective collaboration and communication.

• Deep appreciation of, and success in carrying out and managing, advocacy, training, impact legislation, and/or policy change for the rights of people with disabilities.

• Demonstrated leadership in a complex and dynamic organization, including fiscal oversight, reporting, compliance, budget development experience, revenue stewardship, and familiarity with fundraising from federal, state, and other sources.

• Experience developing systems to support organizational capacity, with an eye toward opportunities for process improvement and refinement, particularly as it pertains to people management.

• Demonstrated success, internally and externally, as a consensus builder and collaborator who can earn and maintain trusting relationships.

• Excellent writing, analytical, and communication skills.

• A demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, and an understanding of and deep respect for the distinctive culture of, specific challenges faced by, and assets unique to people from disability, LGBTQIA+, and BIPOC communities, including clients and colleagues.

• Sensitivity and low ego as conducive to stepping into an agency that has experienced significant turnover in senior leadership and seeks stability in service of future growth.

• Ability to represent DRLA to a variety of stakeholders and intermediaries across the state and around the country in a credible and influential way.

• Self-starter with strong ability to manage a diverse, driven, and successful staff including those with a long history at the agency and those who have joined more recently.

• An optimistic outlook, along with the humor, integrity, patience, and perseverance necessary to support mission-driven staff in challenging but essential work.

Work Environment & Demands:

- Physical requirements include the ability to lift up to 25 pounds occasionally.

- May involve standing or walking for extended periods while some tasks may require bending, stooping, or reaching.

- Regular use of standard office equipment such as computers, phones, and various digital devices.

- Capacity to perform repetitive tasks; read, analyze, and interpret data; maintain visual attention and mental concentration for significant periods of time.

Work Authorization: Must be currently authorized to work in the United States for any employer.

Disclaimer: Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform these essential functions. Please note this job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities, and activities may change at any time with or without notice. This job description shall not constitute or be construed as a promise of employment or as a contract between Disability Rights Louisiana and any of its employees.

Disability Rights Louisiana provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity and/or expression, national origin, age, or disability.