

## **NHLAA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - POSITION DESCRIPTION**

New Haven Legal Assistance Association (LAA), established in 1964 as one of the first legal services programs in the country is seeking an Executive Director to begin serving in January 2017 or soon thereafter. Susan Garcia Nofi, a longtime staff member who was deputy director and who became Executive Director in 2012, has decided to return to direct client representation and is leaving to take a litigation position in Massachusetts, closer to her home. Her predecessor served for over 30 years as Executive Director.

LAA's single office is located in downtown New Haven, Connecticut, adjacent to Yale University. LAA employs 34 persons, including 18 attorneys, 4 paralegals, and support staff, who serve the Greater New Haven area, including the lower Naugatuck Valley.

With a budget of \$4 million, LAA provides high quality legal services to those whose access to justice is complicated by low income, disability, age or other barriers. LAA provides civil and criminal representation and counseling to thousands of low-income clients each year. We address systemic issues through impact litigation and legislative and policy advocacy. We work closely with local social services, client advocacy and community organizations, as well as with the other legal services programs in Connecticut. We host several Yale Law School clinics.

Many of our attorneys and paralegals have been with the program for over 20 years. They are experts in a wide range of poverty law issues: housing and homelessness, public benefits, employment, domestic violence and family law, immigration, health law, education, and civil rights. All non-management staff belong to one of the two unions that represent our workforce.

Over 50% of LAA's annual budget comes from IOLTA (interest on lawyers trust accounts, mandated by state law) and state court filing fees. The balance comes primarily from grants and donations from individuals and law firms.

LAA does **not** receive funding from the federal Legal Services Corporation.

LAA has a Board of Directors to whom the Executive Director reports. A separate board, The Friends of New Haven Legal Assistance, oversees fund-raising efforts. The agency does not currently employ a development director.

## **ABOUT THIS POSITION**

LAA is seeking a committed, skillful and visionary leader to continue our commitment to high quality legal services, social justice, and systemic change for poor people. We seek someone who will foster the organization's financial sustainability and its high profile in the general and legal communities in the New Haven area. We seek an individual who is familiar with the uses of technology in accomplishing our mission. We seek an individual who will provide effective leadership in funding, staff management, advocacy and service.

## **POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **VISION**

- Under the guidance of the Board of Directors, acts as the chief executive of the organization.
- Formulates and articulates to the Board of Directors, staff, and the community a vision and direction for the program that is both general and specific based on needs and capabilities.
- Leads and motivates the staff in achieving that vision.
- Maintains an effective, trusting relationship with the board, staff and community.
- Prepares NHLAA's Annual Report and other communications necessary to tell the program's story in a compelling manner to the community and funding sources.

### **FUND RAISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

- Works with staff and Friends Board of Directors to ensure the long-term sustainability of NHLAA through diversified and effective fund-raising efforts focused on foundation grants, individual and law firm donations, government grants and contracts, and events.
- Acts as the chief representative of the agency with respect to relations with state and local bar associations, the legal community, community groups, the state legislature, the judicial branch, other legal services providers, and funding sources.

### **PROGRAM OVERSIGHT AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

- Directs the overall operation of the program in compliance with applicable collective bargaining agreements, federal and state laws, office policies and procedures, requirements of funding sources, and guidelines and directives set by the Board of Directors.
- Analyzes needs for legal services and prioritizes program objectives and programs in consultation with the Board and the management team, with regular communication with staff.
- Oversees hiring, termination and other personnel-related matters of the program.
- Fosters professional development of staff and opportunities for advancement.
- Supervises preparation of the annual budget that reflects existing revenue, requirements of funding sources, and the programs objectives and priorities.
- Understands and oversees financial systems and controls.
- Oversees technological policies and practices to enhance productivity and efficacy.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

The successful candidate for this position must have at least five years experience in nonprofit management or law-related employment and demonstrated commitment to public interest law, social justice, and assistance to low-income people and groups.

Specific skills and background include:

- Connecticut bar membership or ability to join the Connecticut bar soon after hire.
- Ability to direct and oversee LAA's services and programs.
- Ability to work well with a diverse, unionized workforce.
- Commitment to high standards of practice and staff development.
- Ability to direct and oversee financial planning, budgeting and administration of a \$4 million organization.
- Ability to work effectively with the Board of Directors, other legal services agencies, and the legislature and judicial branch.
- Ability to represent LAA before the state legislature, funding sources, and in other public contexts.
- Openness to change, decisiveness and capacity for problem solving.

### **SALARY**

LAA offers a competitive salary and a benefits package. LAA is an equal opportunity employer that welcomes all qualified applicants without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or disability.

### **TO APPLY**

Please submit by November 30, 2016, a confidential letter of interest with attached resume and no fewer than three references (with contact information) to Carolyn Gontarski at [CGontarski@nhlegal.org](mailto:CGontarski@nhlegal.org). LAA may consider late applications if they are submitted before the position is filled.