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a s s o c i a t e s

Executive Search



Chief Executive Officer

Client Overview

The [League of Women Voters of the United States \(LWVUS\)](#) has retained Sterling Martin Associates to search for its next ***Chief Executive Officer***.

The LWVUS was born out of the 50th convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) to “finish the fight” to win national woman suffrage and to eliminate other forms of political and legal discrimination against women. Initially an auxiliary to the NAWSA, the League became an independent organization in 1920, six months before the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution was passed enfranchising women. The League was formed on the premise that a nonpartisan civic organization could provide the education and experience the public needed to assure the success of democracy. Shortly after its founding as an independent organization, an office with professional staff was established in Washington, D.C.

Today, after nearly a century of volunteer driven activism on a wide range of public issues, the League is at a self-proclaimed crossroads. With the assistance of an outside firm, the organization has developed a “Transformation Roadmap” and now seeks a CEO to help lead the League to its next phase.

LWVUS is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit, non-partisan membership organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League’s activist network derives its strength from the energy and commitment of more than 100,000 supporters and member volunteers nationwide. The League’s hallmark has been its unique grassroots approach to study and action. The League of

Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization works to increase citizen understanding of major public policy issues, and engagement in the democratic process.

The LWVUS and LWVEF (LWVUS/EF) are governed by a 12-member elected member Board of Directors & Trustees, and, unique to its *Bylaws*, are also governed by League members via a bi-annual convention that determines policy priorities and associated budgets of LWVUS. The organization's overall revenue for 2017 was just over \$10M. A professional staff of 23 operates from the League's headquarters in Washington, DC.

For more information about the League, please visit www.lwv.org.

Chief Executive Officer

Reporting to the LWVUS Board of Directors and the LWVEF Board of Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has overall responsibility for leading and managing the organization in delivering on the mission of both organizations, in accordance with policies established by their respective Boards. The CEO accepts full responsibility and accountability for total performance subject to the oversight of the Boards. The CEO's responsibility is to work with the Boards to develop the vision for the organization and guide the planning process to set the direction to achieve the vision and ensure that there is alignment between vision and strategy and the organization's operational goals. Fundraising and executing on LWVUS' recently-adopted Transformation Roadmap (2017-2020) will be critical components of the position.

Qualified candidates will have excellent leadership, interpersonal, and fundraising skills as well excellent verbal and written communication skills. The ability to build and maintain relationships is a key qualification.

Specific Duties & Responsibilities

Under the general direction of the Board of Directors and Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer will have responsibility for the following activities:

Planning. In concert with the Board, lead the implementation of the Transformation Roadmap (2017-2020). Ensure that senior staff are provided with sufficient staff and resources to carry out all duties and obligations.

Communications. Complementing the role of the President of the League as spokesperson, further the support of the League by serving as a "face" of the organization externally. Ensure that all communications channels within, from, and to the organization are open and functioning well. Foster positive relations with all stakeholders, including the Board, staff, partners, participants, volunteers, donors, the media and public bodies.

Advocacy and Legislation. Work closely with the Board of Directors to scale the League’s social impact programs by increasing engagement in the organization’s key issues.

Board Relations. Work closely with the President and Chair to ensure that Board and Committee meetings are focused on the right issues and that information provided to the Board is timely and complete. With the Boards, collaborate and contribute to the organization’s strategic planning and risk management processes.

Fundraising. As a priority, lead efforts to increase and further diversify the revenue streams of LWVUS and LWVEF. Ensure sound fundraising planning and implementation that meets revenue and expense goals. Cultivate and personally take part in major donor solicitations.

Developing People and Partnerships. Through oversight of the senior leadership team and their staffs, ensure that LWVUS/EF continues to improve as a “developmental environment” by offering challenging assignments, attracting and retaining top quality people in their fields who can both mentor others and continue to grow themselves, and creating a climate where risks may be taken, opportunities seized, and organizational learning practiced. Promote collaboration internally, involving all internal stakeholders. Work collaboratively in developing and maintaining relationships with external entities. Balance key relationships (e.g., national and state partners, state and local leagues) to build consensus.

Executive Leadership and Succession. Coordinate the efforts of the management team in developing current and long-range objectives and ensure their successful monitoring and execution. Plan for future generations of leadership in the organization.

Maintaining Awareness: Continuously collect and analyze information on the current business and economic climate and trends and on conditions in technologies, programs, and people which may present risk or opportunity to the organization. Ensure that this intelligence is communicated appropriately in a timely manner and that it informs and influences the organization’s short-term behavior and long-term directions. Foster a culture which enables LWVUS/EF to respond to new developments.

Ethics, Values, and Conduct: Set an operational philosophy that meets the highest of ethical standards and utilizes best practices in nonprofit management. Ensure that all operations are conducted in harmony with organization values and the Code of Business Conduct, conducted in full compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Ideal Background & Experience | Qualities & Characteristics

The League of Women Voters of the United States seeks a strategic, visionary leader who can navigate the unique dynamics of working in an organization with a significant volunteer component in a “federated” structure. S/he should be a proactive executive and visible spokesperson for the organization.

Ideal candidates for the position will be passionate about nonprofit service; poised and confident with executive presence; and manifest strategic leadership, professionalism, and interpersonal acumen. Candidates will be expected to be a trusted advisor throughout the organization and exhibit sound judgment and discretion.

Candidates will bring executive experience to the table in order to continue the work of bringing the League, as an organization, into the 21st century and lead the League into the future.

Candidates will bring the following skills qualifications, experience, and characteristics to the League:

- A baccalaureate degree (advanced degree preferred) – degrees in public policy, business administration, or non-profit management would be ideal.
- A minimum of ten years of leadership experience (ideally in the nonprofit arena), ideally with demonstrated success working in a grassroots membership organization with a strong volunteer component.
- A successful and proven track record in development/fundraising. Financial management and familiarity with nonprofit organizations.
- Experience with grant-funded programs a plus.
- A deep understanding of how to manage volunteers and volunteer governance.
- Proven leadership in a complex challenging organization and proven leadership in change management.
- Demonstrated experience managing a budget and staff similar in scope to the LWVUS/EF.
- Proven ability to structure, motivate, delegate, and maintain organizational competence.
- Demonstrated experience in developing and nurturing networks.
- Superior communications skills, both written and oral.
- An entrepreneurial spirit and orientation.
- Demonstrated ability to plan strategically and think tactically.
- An understanding of and a commitment to diversity.
- A passion for the League's mission.
- A warm outgoing personality in order to mix readily with the diverse networks in which the League participates.

Compensation

The League offers a very attractive compensation and benefits package to attract the right candidate. The position is available immediately.

To apply, please send a cover letter and current résumé (Microsoft Word® format preferred) to lwvus@smartinsearch.com. *A well-crafted cover letter outlining how your background and experience relate to the position is considered an important part of the candidate review process.* All applications will be acknowledged.

The League is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, economic status, personal appearance, family responsibility, matriculation, political affiliation, or any other status protected by applicable law.

For more information, contact:

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