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February 14, 2020

BUFFALO URBAN LEAGUE AFFILIATE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

BUFFALO URBAN LEAGUE (BUFFALO, NEW YORK)  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Salary: \$100,000+ per annum, commensurate with training and experience plus benefits

**The Organization and Community Being Served**

**About Our City**

**The City of Buffalo** is located where the eastern end of Lake Erie narrows into the Niagara River. Buffalo is the seat of Erie County and New York State’s second largest city with an estimated population of 256,304. It is the metropolis of a large urban complex in Erie County that includes the cities of Lackawanna, Lockport, Niagara Falls, and Tonawanda–North Tonawanda, as well as the towns (townships) of Amherst, Cheektowaga, Hamburg, Lancaster, and West Seneca, with an estimated combined population of 1,131,570.

The City provides residents a short drive to such destinations as the Niagara Falls, the Finger Lakes region and the Adirondack Mountains. Big cities, including New York, Toronto and Boston are also within a day’s drive. A unique blend of natural and man-made resources and amenities give Buffalo, NY a quality of life that is second to none. Buffalo’s history is surprising and rich, complete with countless historic sites and stories. Buffalo was a gateway for runaway slaves seeking freedom on the Underground Railroad, then later fertile ground for the Civil Rights Movement. Battles were waged here as the War of 1812 played out at Old Fort Niagara. Fortunes were made by the likes of William G. Fargo, founder of American Express and Wells Fargo. Jazz legends like Louis Armstrong jammed at our Colored Musicians Club. And American presidents lived, died, governed and are buried here.

As part of a region occupied by the Seneca Indians for over 1,000 years, Buffalo originated as a small trading community in about 1789. It then grew quickly to become the quintessential 19th century boomtown, rising to industrial preeminence. The city’s position at the western terminus of the Erie Canal made us the “Gateway to the West”—the departure point for immigrants on their way to the heartland. Today, this area has been newly revived at Canalside.

From the Civil War graves at our historic Forest Lawn cemetery to the antique cars at the Buffalo Transportation Pierce-Arrow Museum to our nation’s largest inland floating history museum, the Buffalo & Erie County Naval and Military Park, Buffalo is home to the American experience that includes the country’s first monument to honor all African American veterans. A trip to the Buffalo History Museum, the African American Heritage Corridor, or attending the country’s biggest Juneteenth celebration will get you started on an amazing journey of discovery.

**About Buffalo Urban League**

**Buffalo Urban League (BUL)** is a community-based, not-for-profit 501 (c)(3) that annually provides direct social services to more than 25,000 individuals and families. Since its inception in 1927, it has provided a comprehensive array of programs and services to strengthen individuals, families, and the Greater Buffalo Niagara Region. It is one of 90 affiliates of the National Urban League. The mission of the Buffalo Urban League is to empower African-Americans, other minorities, and disadvantaged individuals in securing economic self-reliance, parity, power and civil rights.

To achieve its mission, the Buffalo Urban League provides program services, research and advocacy in the areas of: (1) Workforce Development – Including literacy education, scholarships, training, and employment services leading to economic self-sufficiency, (2) Housing and Community Development – Counseling and support services that enable individuals and families to reside in quality affordable housing in neighborhoods which have services and support, and

(3) Family Preservation and Support Services – Services and support to strengthen and grow families in our community by providing foster care, adoption and intervention services to prevent children from being removed from their families.

### **Leadership Transition: Assessment and Opportunities**

The board seeks a new leader who can leverage the organization’s outstanding reputation, passion, well-executed programs and services, assets, and young professionals to further align the organization’s mission with contemporary solutions to issues. To support this important leadership transition, the board has mobilized to facilitate a thoughtful and inclusive executive transition process.

### **Role as President and CEO**

Reporting to the board of directors, and working closely with the staff and key constituents to promote the organization’s mission, the President and CEO will have full responsibility and authority for the management and coordination of the organization’s operations and finances, supervision of the staff and their activities, and implementation of BUL plans and programs in accordance with the policies formulated jointly with the staff and the board.

The President and CEO will be the organization’s primary representative to the broader community; serve as the chief fundraiser, spokesperson, and advocate of BUL; be a visible and involved member of the Buffalo-Niagara communities, as well as with select regional and national opportunities; keep abreast of issues facing the African-American and minority communities; and engage in dialogue across race, gender, sexual orientation, economic, and other differences. The President and CEO will provide strategic leadership and bring a fresh perspective; revisit, refine and implement the strategic plan and vision; leverage BUL’s assets, reputation, and talented staff; galvanize its community and alliance partnerships; implement a staff development program; drive fundraising efforts; be a strong communicator/social media proponent; and maintain and develop a strong relationship with the Board.

**BUL Strategic Challenges and Opportunities:** BUL is guided by the ongoing feedback from community stakeholders and addressing inequities that exist in the community.

1. Collaborations: further leverage and explore opportunities that will better serve the community.
2. Marketing and Communications: improvement in evaluating results and ‘telling our story’ regularly to all community stakeholders and supporters.
3. Programs: leverage well-executed programs and services; and identify/implement new programs to address critical issues.
4. Build sufficient resources for organizational sustainability.

### **Profile of the Candidate**

The BUL President & CEO role is considered a critical position in the community for the City of Buffalo, the Buffalo-Niagara Region, New York State and National Urban League. Candidates for the Affiliate President and Chief Executive Officer position must have a proven track record of leadership and management in a modern community-based nonprofit organization. The successful candidate will be passionate about the organization’s current role and future aspirations, be a strategic thinker, understand the big picture, and have the ability to excel in BUL’s principal roles as well as be a connector on community engagement. The new leader will be a problem solver, have an entrepreneurial spirit, and a coalition/team builder, with a lens of equity and advocacy.

For consideration, candidates must have five years of optimum senior nonprofit or for-profit management experience, including experience in: administration, human resources, fund raising, fiscal management, strategic planning, marketing and promotion, board development and relations, communications, resource development, and community mobilization and collaboration. Other optimum attributes considered in the review of candidates include direct service delivery, administration of demonstration projects, advocacy, policy development, and work with the public and private sectors. Experience in research; public and community education; the development, implementation and evaluation of programs; and management of volunteers is preferred.

The candidate must have a professional background that demonstrates the following attributes and abilities: the ability to implement change, following healthy analysis and engagement; solid business acumen; and an eagerness and ability to quickly form and maintain relationships with a diverse group of stakeholders, including residents, government officials and agencies, grant makers, and collaboration/alliance partners. Candidates will have proven skills in generating and using innovative approaches to enhance this organization's impact.

## **Qualifications**

The Board of BUL seeks candidates for the President and CEO role with the following experiences, abilities and personal attributes to assume the following associated responsibilities:

### *Senior Leadership, Strategic Thinking and Planning*

- Senior management experience including leading, inspiring and managing a diverse staff; managing a significant operating budget; multidisciplinary nonprofit experience; collaborating with the board; and working with a diverse group of funders and community stakeholders.
- Proven ability to provide the vision and leadership for accomplishing the mission and long-term development and growth. Experienced and accomplished public speaker serving as the primary spokesperson.
- Strong track record of strategic thinking, planning, and ability to align mission, business model, internal systems/structures, and staff/board skills, while creating/enhancing/evaluating/aligning programs and activity to support that strategy.

### *Strategic Communications and Community Collaborations and Alliances*

- Proven ability to develop and implement marketing/communications programs creating a clear and consistent identity that generates understanding and enthusiasm for the mission and goals, and a clear understanding of the accomplishments and impact generated by BUL.
- Experience working with the media and developing an organizational communications plan that is strategic, proactive and includes emerging communications platforms (e.g., social media).
- Initiate, develop and maintain productive and mutually beneficial collaborative relationships with individuals and organizations.
- Demonstrated commitment to effectively represent ethnically diverse communities across the City and region, including as a liaison/coordinator with community groups.

### *Fundraising*

- Extensive experience in grant writing/proposals.
- Demonstrated experience cultivating and maintaining relationships with private and public funding sources; developing fundraising strategies and executing them in partnership with the Board.
- Experience providing leadership ensuring the success of BUL's special events.

### *Advocacy and Educational Leadership*

- Experienced with staying informed of legislation impacting the local community.
- Participation in policy development and debate affecting stakeholders.
- Ensure BUL programs are of the highest quality and meet the needs of a variety of audiences.
- Proven skills generating and using innovative program approaches to enhance impact.

### *Operations/HR Management and Staff Development*

- Steward physical plant, ensuring the facilities and grounds are well maintained and safe.
- Experience building a team, recruiting/hiring, supervising, mentoring, providing professional development opportunities, and directing and evaluating senior staff in the performance of their duties.
- Demonstrated commitment to diverse staff, board and volunteers.

### *Financial Management and Planning*

- Prepare and administer annual operating and capital budgets; ensure appropriate systems, procedures and financial controls are in place; and understand and manage multiple projects.
- Oversee all financial reporting, contractual obligations and donor/funder restrictions, and maintain appropriate internal policies and procedures ensuring such compliance.
- Manage communication with the board to provide regular comprehensive reports on revenue, expenditures and other key financial and non-financial metrics

#### *Governance, Board Relations and Management*

- Experienced with board governance and working with the board on strategic planning, policy development, financial management, and fundraising.
- Manage and foster relationships and communications with the board of directors; participate actively in board meetings and present its members with the information necessary to support successful and informed planning and action.

#### *Other Minimum Qualifications*

A Bachelor's degree is required, Master's degree preferred, with a specialization in social work, business administration, public administration, nonprofit management, urban planning, human resources management, education, political science, or an appropriate related discipline. Prior Urban League experience is a plus.

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills. Ability to maintain/encourage open communications with staff, the board, volunteers and the community. Tech savvy and strong proponent of social media.

*Note: the successful candidate will also be expected to meet with members of a National Urban League CEO Certification team as part of the process.*

#### *Personal Characteristics and Leadership Attributes*

- Effective listener; open-minded; flexible; emotional intelligence.
- Relationship/coalition builder; approachable; fair; passionate.
- Strongly committed to equity, diversity and inclusion, and social justice.
- Self-confident, diplomatic; integrity; sense of humor; believes in continuous learning/improvement.
- Well-organized, results-driven and inspiring; maturity, judgment.
- Enthusiastic, focused, driven; visionary; managerial and politically savvy

#### **Candidate Guidelines**

This is a national search. All submissions are confidential. To express an interest, candidates can apply as follows: [jgordon@nyaaa.com](mailto:jgordon@nyaaa.com). Electronic submissions sent via this link are preferred. Candidates should include a resume and a cover letter, the latter expressing your interest and passion for the mission, fit for the role at BUL, and describing your strengths relative to the position profile. Applicants are requested to submit their candidacy information by or before March 13, 2020.