

(This search was completed in January, 2001, with the appointment of Jacquelyn Lendsey, Vice President for Public Policy at Planned Parenthood Federation of America.)

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## **Job Announcement**

### **Women in Community Service President and CEO**

(Posted: November 2, 2000)

Women in Community Service (WICS) is looking for an outstanding person with strong leadership and management skills to become its next President and CEO. WICS invites applications from and nominations of candidates with the skills, characteristics, and experience described below. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

#### **The Organization**

Women in Community Service is a national, nonprofit organization based in Alexandria, Virginia (just outside Washington, DC) whose mission is to reduce the number of women and youth living in poverty by promoting self-reliance and economic independence. Founded in 1964 by five major national women's groups—Church Women United, the National Council of Jewish Women, the National Council of Negro Women, the G.I. Forum, and the National Council of Catholic Women—WICS focuses on teaching employability and life management skills, and providing a support network during critical transitions.

For women and youth whose lives are characterized by homelessness, drug addiction, incarceration, unemployment, and poverty—and the resultant low self-esteem—skills such as how to find and keep a job, how to relate to a supervisor and to peers at work, how to find an apartment and child care, and how to live on a budget, spell the difference between success and more despair. Through a paid staff of 140 people affiliated with more than 20 offices throughout the United States and several thousand volunteers, WICS connects impoverished youth and women with volunteers, corporations, and community service providers and equips them with the tools, training, and support needed to improve their lives.

WICS currently has three major programs:

1. The Women's Program specializes in preparing low-income women for the workplace and long-term economic success. In the last decade, WICS has expanded its programs to serve homeless women, welfare recipients, and women transitioning from prison.

2. The Youth Program provides youth with the skills to get and keep jobs, and to live independently. A grant from the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest fund has allowed WICS to provide enhanced training to its youth services staff, which has further increased the organization's capacity to serve youth.
3. Level 1 Employer Services helps companies hire, train, and retain entry-level workers. WICS provides clients such as Xerox and Bank of America with a menu of services including internal mentoring, orientation, and frontline management sensitivity training.

In addition, WICS, through the extensive use of a network of 7,000 volunteers, provides ongoing mentoring to low-income women and youth that helps build their self-esteem and enables them to improve their own lives.

For many years WICS obtained financial support almost exclusively through contracts with the Job Corps, a residential education and job-training program for at-risk youth administered by the U.S. Department of Labor. As a result of recent efforts to diversify its sources of revenue, WICS also obtains support from contracts with other government agencies, grants from foundations, and contracts with corporations (to provide services to new entry-level employees). Total revenue for 2000 is \$6 million, approximately half from a Job Corps contract, and the other half from other sources.

WICS is governed by a board of directors of 16 women and men who have distinguished careers in business, government, and the nonprofit sector and share a commitment to improving the lives of low-income women and youth. The current board chair is Virginia Austin Schubert, former senior vice president of the Points of Light Foundation.

More information about WICS is available at <http://www.wics.org>.

### **The Position**

The President and CEO is WICS's senior staff person. The position is currently open because Ruth Herman, WICS's highly regarded chief executive for the past 16 years, is retiring.

The overarching responsibility of the new President and CEO is to lead WICS to new levels of achievement. Given the significant changes in the welfare system over the past four years, including the expectation that people on welfare will become self-sufficient within an explicit period of time, and the transfer of much decision-making from the federal to state and local levels; implementation of the Workforce Investment Act; restructuring of the Job Corps; the increasing female population in prison; and the desire of corporations to find and retain increasing numbers of entry-level workers to support their expanding business opportunities, WICS has the opportunity to grow its programs so that it can reach more low-income women and youth, and provide them with a broader array of services.

## **Principal Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the President include:

1. Being WICS's most visionary thinker and strategic planner, analyzing and anticipating trends in the field of life management skills, and working with the board and staff to position the organization so that it continues to grow and thrive.
2. Refining and implementing a new business plan developed by the board and staff. Key components of the plan include expanding programs that benefit low-income women and youth, identifying new sources of financial support that will further diversify and strengthen WICS's financial base, and improving the organization's communications efforts, both internally and externally.
3. Managing a \$6 million budget, including developing annual operating budgets that reflect current strategic goals of the organization.
4. Leading a talented and committed staff of 140 people in 20+ locales throughout the United States. A key responsibility in this area is to work closely with WICS's headquarters-based program vice presidents to insure the effective management of WICS's extensive field staff and its national network of community volunteers, including strengthening the synergy between headquarters and field staff in order to more effectively market WICS's varied programs.
5. Generating revenue by raising grants from foundations and individuals, contracts with corporations that retain WICS to deliver specific services to its employees, and contracts with government agencies at the federal, state, and local level, including renewing support from the Job Corps.
6. Representing the organization, via speaking and writing, to current and prospective funders and contractors, business leaders who provide entry level jobs to low-income women and youth; leaders of other nonprofit social service agencies that help women and youth; policy makers; and low-income people who look to WICS for assistance.
7. Actively creating alliances, partnerships, and collaborations with other organizations in the nonprofit, corporate, and public sectors that will enable WICS to expand its reach among low-income women and youth and women transitioning from prison.
8. Engaging the board of directors in its leadership responsibilities. In recent years, the board has moved from a board composed of representatives of the five founding organizations to a board made up of diverse individuals possessing skills and stature for effective governance. This process of engaging the board at the appropriate strategic level of the organization is an ongoing one, and will require the President's active participation.

## **Desired Skills and Characteristics**

The President of WICS should be:

1. Fully committed to WICS's overriding mission of helping low-income women and youth achieve economic independence and self-sufficiency in the broadest sense of the term.

2. Instinctively entrepreneurial, eager to find innovative ways to grow the organization so that it can serve more low-income women and youth with a diverse array of programs and services.
3. An energetic and fearless fundraiser, adept at soliciting major gifts from individuals, foundations, and corporations.
4. A polished and engaging communicator, able to speak and write effectively before a wide range of audiences including business leaders, social service agency executives, potential contractors and funders, journalists, policy makers, and low-income women and youth.
5. Culturally sensitive, able to work effectively with diverse groups of people.
6. Capable of developing, motivating, and supervising a professional staff made up of talented individuals highly committed to the mission of the organization, as well as a large corps of volunteers who are an integral part of WICS's program delivery system.
7. Able to work effectively with an active and committed board of directors.

### **Desired Experience**

1. At least ten years of broad-based senior management experience. Experience in the nonprofit sector is preferred, but not required. Relevant experience in other sectors, such as business or government, will be valued highly.
2. A track record of building a national or regional organization with local affiliates.
3. A lead role in generating income for a complex organization, including both contributed and earned income.
4. First-hand experience as a volunteer for a nonprofit social service organization and a deep appreciation for the role of community volunteers in a national organization.

### **Compensation**

Salary will be commensurate with experience and qualifications. Compensation also includes a comprehensive benefits package.

### **To Apply**

Please mail or e-mail a cover letter, resume, and three-year salary history (which will be held in strict confidence) to:

Larry H. Slesinger  
 Slesinger Management Services  
 5809 Augusta Lane  
 Bethesda, MD 20816  
 Tel.: 301-320-0680  
 E-mail: [LSlesinger@erols.com](mailto:LSlesinger@erols.com) (please attach files in Microsoft Word only)

(This job announcement can also be found at <http://www.SlesingerManagement.com>.)

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