

**The Correctional Association of New York
Executive Director**

MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

The Correctional Association of New York (the “Association”) is an independent, non-profit organization founded by concerned citizens in 1844 and granted unique authority by the New York State Legislature to inspect prisons and to report its findings and recommendations to the legislature, the public and the press. Through monitoring, research, public education, leadership development and policy advocacy, the Association strives to make the administration of justice in New York State more fair, efficient and humane. The Association is one of only two independent organizations in the United States with legislative authority to visit prisons and report on conditions of confinement.

The Association envisions a criminal justice system that holds a person accountable for a crime yet does not condemn an entire life based on a person's worst act, a system that recognizes the power of individuals to transform their lives and that encourages such change, and a system that expresses the value of social and racial equality on all levels.

Throughout its over 165 years of service, the Association has focused public attention on inhumane prison conditions as well as misguided efforts to use prison as a salve for serious social problems. The Correctional Association has been a national leader in the field of prison reform. In the 19th century it pointed out abuses in New York State prisons, in the 20th century it advocated for alternatives to incarceration and for less harsh sentences. As early as 1942, the Association issued warnings about the inadvisability of treating drug addiction through incarceration. In recent years, its advocacy work has played an important role in the enactment of several important pieces of reform legislation, including significant reform of the Rockefeller Drug Laws, the mandating of oversight by the State Department of Health of HIV and Hepatitis C care in prisons and jails and the restricting of the use of shackles on pregnant inmates during labor and after delivery. In its oversight capacity, it has demonstrated the power of independent citizen involvement in opening closed penal institutions to public scrutiny.

THE WORK OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association currently operates four distinct but inter-related programs: the Prison Visiting Project, the Women in Prison Project, the Juvenile Justice Project, and the Public Policy Project.

The **Prison Visiting Project** carries out the Association's unique legislative authority to monitor New York State prisons and report on their conditions. It enlists citizens including experts and non-experts for these regular visits and reports; does in-depth research and reports on specific correction issues, such as the recent report on healthcare and its current project evaluating substance abuse treatment in prison; works with legislators and corrections officials to develop more humane prison policies; and educates the public about issues relating to incarceration including prison conditions, prison-based programs and effective re-entry programs for incarcerated individuals returning to their community.

The **Women in Prison Project** advocates and campaigns for change with respect to a broad range of issues including maintaining bonds between incarcerated mothers and their children, improving medical and mental health care for incarcerated women, reforming the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence survivors, and eliminating barriers to reentry for women returning home. It does this work through its role as coordinator of the statewide Coalition for Women Prisoners;

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monitoring visits to women's prisons; engaging in policy advocacy, public education and community organizing; issuing reports and policy materials; and running a leadership training program for formerly incarcerated women.

The **Juvenile Justice Project** works through legislative advocacy, public education, and coalition-building to reduce the use of incarceration as a response to social problems facing youth, including LGBTQ youth, in New York City and New York State; to re-invest resources in communities most impacted by juvenile justice policies through educational programs and alternatives to incarceration; and to include young people and neighborhood constituents affected by juvenile justice policies in the decision-making process.

Through the **Public Policy Project**, the Association seeks to broaden the base of support for needed policy changes at city and state levels. Activities include coalition-building; organizing forums; aggressive press work; educational presentations to community organizations, schools, religious institutions, and policy makers; and publishing and distributing fact sheets and reports. The Project also inspects the New York City court pens and makes recommendations for improved conditions. The recent focus of the Public Policy Project has been coordination of the Drop the Rock Coalition and its efforts to reform the Rockefeller drug laws

The Association has an annual operating budget of approximately \$2.5 million. There are currently 18 members of the staff, all of whom work out of the Association's offices on the second floor of the former Hotel Theresa on 125th Street and Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard in New York City.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE POSITION

The Executive Director is the chief executive officer of the Association and is responsible for directing and coordinating the work of the staff, managing the organization's day-to-day activities and operations, leading the organization's fundraising, ensuring the organization's fiscal well-being, and serving as the primary spokesperson for the organization and a passionate advocate for its mission. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors.

The Executive Director must be a thoughtful and creative leader and manager who excels at balancing internal management with external impact and visibility. S/he will work with board and staff to develop and implement the Association's vision and strategic direction and will ensure that its programs and services are meeting the needs and interests of its constituencies. It is important that the Executive Director partner effectively with a committed and professional staff and a committed and involved board.

FIRST YEAR'S PRIORITIES

During the first year of employment, the Executive Director will be expected to:

- Thoroughly immerse herself/himself in the Association – its history, mission, philosophy, programs, structure and operations, finances, constituencies, organizational culture and values, and potential;

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- Provide oversight and continuity for the Association's current activities while, at the same time, responding to evolving needs and beginning to plan new initiatives;
- Work in partnership with the board and staff to assess the Association's current mission and strategic plan;
- Provide clear vision and direction to maintain the Association's financial, operational and programmatic soundness;
- Establish a solid working partnership with the Association's staff and Board of Directors in order to bring forth their best ideas and efforts;
- Develop productive relationships with the Association's donors;
- Become an effective and visible spokesperson for the Association, increasing awareness of the Association's mission and work and broadening the organization's reputation and visibility among policy makers, elected officials, media, and others.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Director will have ongoing responsibility for the following:

- Work with board and staff, lead the Association in setting overall direction and priorities, develop and implement programmatic and organizational strategies and goals;
- Work with board and staff to shape and implement fundraising goals; Use their talents, resources, and ideas to enhance fundraising activities; Enhance board members' ability to identify fundraising opportunities and encourage their ongoing participation as donors and solicitors;
- Assure quality, effectiveness and impact of the Association's programs and emphasize the quality and best practices of research, analysis and information-sharing within and outside of the organization;
- Maintain current knowledge of prison reform issues, research, policy and practice to ensure that the Association's programs are appropriate, effective and timely;
- Build on the Association's reputation and credibility as a media resource among key local, regional, and national media; Develop creative outreach through technology;
- Ensure strong internal communication and coordination among staff; Recruit new staff when appropriate and regularly evaluate performance; Enhance opportunities across the organization for staff's professional development;
- Ensure through effective supervision that day-to-day operations and programs are professionally and efficiently organized and administered; Oversee the Association's financial operations; Ensure that sound financial controls are in place and that funds are spent wisely;

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- Work closely with the Board Chair and various committees of the board to facilitate the proper governance role of the board and implement board policies, goals, and objectives; Regularly brief board on the status of the organization; Remain actively in touch with and well-informed about the board's activities;
- Develop and implement ways in which the organization can play a more effective and meaningful role in the national discussion and debate about prisons and prison oversight.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

The Executive Director should thoroughly embrace and represent the mission of the Correctional Association and have the following experience and qualifications:

- Experience as a dedicated and passionate advocate for social justice is required;
- At least 10 years of senior-level managerial, strategic planning, relationship-building, communications and organizational development experience are required;
- Experience in criminal justice, generally, or prison reform, specifically, is desirable, but not required; A working knowledge of and familiarity with correctional policy in a state with a large urban population, preferably but not necessarily New York, is desirable;
- Credibility and experience to connect the Association to resources and opportunities outside the organization; A successful track record of raising money from a variety of sources, including major donors and foundations is highly desirable;
- An outstanding relationship builder, with existing ties to a broad and diverse range of communities; Proven successful experience working in a variety of diverse contexts and communities;
- Experience in leading and participating in the formation and operation of various types of collaborations, including advocacy coalitions;
- The ability to interact professionally with dedicated board and staff members who have diverse professional skills and perspectives; The skill to establish and implement organizational strategy and manage through growth and change, while building strong teams and working toward consensus;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, including formal and extemporaneous presentations and the use of traditional and emergent media for effective communication;
- A record of success as a positive and high energy leader; Experience leading an organization in transition is desirable;
- A Bachelor's degree is a minimum requirement; an advanced degree in a relevant discipline is preferred.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Ideally, the Executive Director will be:

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- Passionately committed to attaining justice for all people; A catalyst with vision who can create excitement and energy around the Association's programs and encourage others to support the goals of the organization; Persuasive, persistent, and creative in the pursuit of the organization's mission; strategic and resourceful;
- An outstanding relationship builder with the integrity, maturity, confidence, wisdom and collaborative skills necessary to gain the trust and confidence of the Association's board, staff, funders, and other constituencies;
- A team builder; able to delegate and prioritize multiple activities and responsibilities; One who inspires collaboration, functions decisively, and treats people fairly; One who understands the subtleties of motivating, directing and working with diverse, strong, independent personalities and work styles;
- A highly skilled communicator; A keen listener;
- Politically astute; able to manage complex decision making processes and negotiate organizational change; Diplomatic; Able to maximize the contributions of the Association's board and staff;
- An analytical and creative problem solver and skilled negotiator who can conceptualize programs, originate ideas and act on events which may create opportunities for the Association;
- Emotionally mature and self-confident, with a sense of humor.

To learn more about the Correctional Association of New York, please visit:

www.correctionalassociation.org

To apply for the position, please submit a substantive cover letter and current résumé to:

Lauren I. Gumbs
Senior Partner
Gumbs + Partners

lgumbs@gumbspartners.com

The Correctional Association of New York is an equal opportunity employer and considers all applications without regard to race, color, religion, creed, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, age, disability, socio-economic status, marital or veteran status, or sexual orientation.