



NEIGHBORHOOD LEGAL SERVICES

Because Justice is for All

Neighborhood Legal Services in Pittsburgh, PA Seeks Executive Director

Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS) headquartered in Pittsburgh, PA, seeks a visionary, strategic, and collaborative individual to serve as its next Executive Director. NLS's current and longtime Executive Director, Robert V. Racunas, Esq., is retiring in January 2022.

NLS is dedicated to the provision of high quality legal services to low income and vulnerable residents of Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, and Lawrence Counties. It is the primary provider of civil legal aid in the four county region, delivering its services through four local offices and a centralized phone and online helpline system. In addition to a staff of approximately 70, it uses nearly 200 volunteer attorneys from the private bar to provide pro bono legal advice and representation to those in need. NLS's advocacy and support staff is represented by the Iron City Legal Assistance Workers (ICLAW), an affiliation of the National Organization of Legal Services Workers District 65 of the United Autoworkers.

NLS works closely with the local bar associations and other nonprofit organizations in the region to expand access to the courts and to address the most critical civil legal needs of low income and vulnerable residents living within its service area. NLS is a member of the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network (PLAN), and is one of three independent legal aid programs participating in the Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Services Consortium, which seeks to coordinate the delivery of legal services across Southwestern Pennsylvania.

NLS has enjoyed 55 years of accomplishment and success in the region. The next Executive Director will join NLS at a time of stability, strength, and opportunity. The Executive Director is the key management leader of NLS, responsible for overseeing the administration, programs, and strategic plan of the organization. Other key duties include fundraising, marketing, and community outreach. The position reports directly to an active and engaged Board of Directors. The Executive Director is based in Pittsburgh, PA. Travel is required throughout the program's four-county service area (Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, and Lawrence counties) in Southwestern PA to ensure accessibility. Occasional travel out of town is required (i.e. Harrisburg, Philadelphia, national conferences, etc.).

About the Executive Director position:

NLS's Executive Director is responsible for:

- Providing visionary, strategic, collaborative leadership to accomplish NLS's mission and to improve the availability and quality of civil legal aid for low income people and victims of domestic violence in Southwestern Pennsylvania;
- Leading ongoing planning efforts and implementation of an articulated strategic vision and to ensure the continued thoughtful development of NLS programs and policies;

928 PENN AVENUE | PITTSBURGH, PA 15222-3799



1-866-761-6572



412-355-0168



WWW.NLSA.US



Funded, in part, by the Commonwealth and through a contract with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). The official registration and financial information of Neighborhood Legal Services may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. Federal regulations applying to NLS require that we notify all donors that no funds can be expended by NLS for any activity prohibited under P.L. 104-134 or otherwise prohibited by 45 C.F.R. §1600 et seq.



- Successful management of the \$7.4 million civil legal aid program in accordance with the policies and programmatic decisions of the NLS Board of Directors and the requirements of funders;
- Working with the Board, management team, and staff to review and develop policies to achieve adherence to organizational bylaws and inform program operations in order to fulfill NLS's mission;
- Ensuring NLS's fiscal integrity and growing the support for the organization;
- Engaging and inspiring staff members, board members, clients, and other stakeholders in development and implementation of the organizational mission, including its work to address poverty;
- Establishing positive and productive labor-management relationships with unionized advocacy and support staff through active participation in labor-management committee discussions and through collective bargaining;
- Developing talent pipeline and succession planning to replace long-tenured employees, ensure staff retention and engagement;
- Ensuring that client voices are heard and incorporated in all decisions;
- Passionately advocating for the legal rights of low-income persons;
- Serving as an effective ambassador for NLS's public and key stakeholders;
- Ensuring the long-term sustainability of NLS through active leadership of a diversified resource development program focused on individual and law firm gifts, foundation grants, and government grants and contracts;
- Forming strong relationships with local funders and government officials;
- Leading racial equity efforts in the areas of advocacy, community involvement, internal policies, board composition, and hiring;
- Ability to set vision and harness technology to improve access to justice and organizational efficiency;
- Working with Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Services Consortium partners to set direction for civil legal aid advocacy and legal aid program coordination; and
- Liaising with state and local bar associations, court systems, the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network, Pennsylvania IOLTA Board, state and national access to justice entities, and organizations such as the American Bar Association IOLTA Commission, National Association of IOLTA Programs, National Legal Aid and Defender Association, Legal Services Corporation, and other relevant entities as appropriate.

Qualifications of the Executive Director:

- Juris Doctor degree and admission to the Pennsylvania Bar, or the ability to obtain admission following employment;
- Broad and deep public interest legal experience across a range of issues;
- Demonstrated skills as an effective relationship builder and collaborator in networks such as agencies, judiciary, elected officials, grantee, local bars, social services, present and potential funders, the public at large, and client communities;
- Significant meaningful experience in management necessary to direct NLS's operations, manage staff, and oversee large budgets, with legal aid or nonprofit experience preferred;
- Experience working productively with a highly engaged board of directors;
- Knowledge of nonprofit budgeting, financial functions, grant reporting, and compliance;
- A track record of fundraising success;

- Ability to manage wide-ranging responsibilities and to assist others in managing their responsibilities in a demanding environment;
- Outstanding communication skills orally and in writing with a range of audiences and stakeholders;
- Experience working effectively with multiple organizations and individuals with diverse perspectives;
- Experience with relevant technology and its application to effective communication and efficient delivery of services; and
- Ability to bring vision, integrity, courage, decisiveness, intelligence, creativity, energy, humor, and compassion to the challenges of this demanding position.

Application Process:

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. To receive full consideration, candidates are urged to submit their application by September 17, 2021. Please submit a *letter* expressing your interest in the position, your qualifications, and what you hope to contribute to the organization's future. Please include a *résumé* and the names and contact information for *three professional references*. Applications will be held in confidence during the initial stages of the process.

Materials should be submitted electronically to ppap@mielegalaid.org in Microsoft Word or pdf format.

NLS offers a competitive salary depending on experience and excellent benefits. NLS is an Affirmative Action Employer.

NLS is assisted in the executive director search by Patricia Pap, Executive Director, Management Information Exchange, 105 Chauncy Street, Floor 6, Suite 3, Boston, MA 02111, 508-737-4010, ppap@mielegalaid.org. Candidates with questions about the position or process are encouraged to contact her.

About Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS):

Neighborhood Legal Services provides an essential social service that protects the safety, ensures fairness, and preserves the dignity of individuals who have nowhere else to turn for legal help. NLS is a civil legal aid program that helps low-income people and victims of domestic violence understand their legal rights and provides information needed to stand up for those rights and protect themselves. Our advocacy takes many forms: we educate; we give advice; and provide representation in administrative hearings and court proceedings. In every case, our clients have reached a point of desperation because at least one of their basic life needs – personal safety, shelter, income, health, food, warmth – is at risk. In many ways, NLS operates as a civil legal emergency room assisting low-income families and victims of domestic violence who have a critical legal problem.

NLS was founded in 1966 and has served Allegheny County for 55 years. Since 1974, we also provide civil legal aid to victims of domestic violence and low-income residents of Beaver, Butler and Lawrence Counties. Our 70 member staff includes five (5) directors (Advocacy, Compliance/Program Performance, Fiscal, Resource Development/Communications, and Technology); five (5) managing attorneys, 30 staff attorneys, three (3) paralegals, three (3) social workers; 16 secretaries/intake staff and seven (7) other support positions.

NLS is a nonprofit organization with an active and engaged 39-member board of directors comprised of low-income clients, lawyers appointed by county bar associations, and other members. The organization operates out of four county offices: Allegheny County (Pittsburgh, PA), Beaver County (Bridgewater, PA) Butler County (Butler, PA) and Lawrence County (New Castle, PA).

NLS is a member of the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network of civil legal aid programs and participates in the Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Aid Consortium along with Laurel Legal Services and Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Aid. Our collaboration efforts with these civil legal aid organizations foster efficiencies in such areas as training, technology, strategic planning, and development resulting in improved advocacy and organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

For more information about NLS and to read about our work, visit: <https://nlsa.us>.

NLS is an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer committed to the value of workforce diversity. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, age, religion, sex, gender identity, national origin, physical or mental disability, protected veterans, genetic information, or sexual orientation.