



JOB TITLE: Director of Communications

TEAM: Communications

REPORTS TO: Executive Director

FLSA STATUS: Exempt

LOCATION: Richmond, VA

DATE: February 2020

JOB SUMMARY

The Director of Communications is a member of the American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia (ACLU-VA) senior leadership team and is responsible for the planning and execution of a communications strategy that maximizes ACLU-VA's statewide impact and its ability to achieve its mission and established goals and objectives. The Director heads a communications team that includes expertise in traditional and online communications and advocacy, creative content, and public relations. The Director leads the development of communications strategies and messaging for integrated advocacy designed to achieve established policy change objectives, including overseeing all external communications. The Director is a principal spokesperson for the ACLU-VA. As a member of the senior leadership team, the Director participates in setting organizational goals and priorities and strategic planning, develops and manages the organization's communications budget, and assists in raising funds to carry out the ACLU-VA mission.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Communications

- Build and direct a strong, well-designed, well-defined strategic communications plan and programs that promote civil liberties and civil rights across the Commonwealth and empower members, supporters and the public to help ACLU-VA achieve its mission and strategic policy objectives.
- Serve as a key spokesperson for the ACLU-VA.
- Collaborate to help integrate and communicate the work of the ACLU-VA legal, advocacy, development and communications teams to build a groundswell of public support for the ACLU-VA brand and its work by selecting and deploying the most effective strategies for particular audiences and producing content to be used in materials presented to the courts, before the legislature, in the media or in communications to donors/supporters and the public;
- Lead communications research efforts such as public polling or surveying key constituencies, to inform messaging and communications goals.
- Oversee development and implementation of a strategic and targeted calendar of public speaking engagements that maximizes opportunities to build public awareness of and support for the ACLU-VA brand and its strategic objectives and programmatic goals across diverse communities and audiences statewide.
- Oversee multi-media public education campaigns designed to extend the impact of the ACLU-VA's legislative, legal, and policy advocacy.
- Pitch stories, maximize earned media coverage, and enhance the visibility of the ACLU-VA in diverse communities statewide.
- Oversee production of press materials, including press releases, advisories and background memos, drafting and editing materials as needed.

- Manage dynamic content for the ACLU-VA website, e-communications, blog, and social media.
- Oversee development of online activism campaigns and other web organizing campaigns.
- Oversee development of any paid media programs.
- Oversee written development and production of all print materials for the organization including major reports, know your rights materials, annual report, legislative and litigation reports, development collateral, membership communications, and other publications, including newsletters.
- Oversee the preparation and implementation of crisis communications plans.
- Oversee the development and implementation of a communications policy for ACLU-VA.
- Serve as final gatekeeper and approver of all external-facing communications in accordance with the ACLU-VA Communications Policy.

Leadership & Management

- Actively train staff and board members and other community leaders to be effective ACLU-VA messengers, serving as an internal coach on effective public speaking, press interactions, writing, social media, and other communications strategies.
- Take action to ensure there is a consistent and effective flow of information about our integrated advocacy efforts and organizational momentum across all staff and to the board.
- Recruit, hire, train, develop, and actively supervise and evaluate the work of the members of the communications team, including developing work plans, managing personnel situations, facilitating a positive team culture, and holding staff accountable.
- Develop metrics for measuring the effectiveness of the communications programs of the affiliate and oversee the preparation of regular reports.
- Develop and manage the annual budget for communications and publications.
- Oversee the development and execution of annual communications and publications plan; and
- Assist with resource development and fundraising activities when requested.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- A commitment to the mission and goals of the ACLU, and to racial justice and civil rights issues and an understanding that these issues are central to the overall protection of civil liberties.
- Significant professional, managerial and leadership experience in strategic communications and media relations including:
 - Experience serving as a spokesperson for campaigns or organizations.
 - Experience writing, editing and producing effective communications materials for publication in print and online.
 - Experience effectively managing, supervising and developing individual staff and building and developing teams.
- Willingness and availability to work beyond the normal workday, on weekends, and/or more than 40 hours a week as necessary.
- Willingness and ability to travel throughout Virginia, and occasionally to other states for conferences and training.
- Proficiency with office technology and information systems, including online communications and word processing.

- A commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, to refrain from unlawful discrimination and to comply fully with all applicable laws; a personal approach that values the individual and respects differences of race, ethnicity and national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ability and socio-economic circumstance, and the ability to work with diverse individuals within the organization and broader community.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Excellent writing, speaking and analytical skills.
- Strong self-motivation with a creative and resilient mindset focused on creating solutions to identified problems.
- Strong attention to detail.
- Ability to provide clear direction, set priorities, meet deadlines, and hold staff accountable to deadlines on concurrent projects in a fast-paced, occasionally stressful environment.
- Ability to plan, coach others on planning, and provide meaningful and critical feedback on the planning and execution of programs.
- Ability to identify and segment multiple audiences, determine the best distribution channels for each audience, and transform key messaging points depending on the intended audience in order to ensure the highest impact level.
- Strong interpersonal communication skills and the ability to have constructive conversations about difficult issues.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively with diverse communities and people.
- Skill and comfort in proactively building relationships with diverse audiences.

DESIRABLE EXPERIENCE, SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Working knowledge and broad understanding of civil liberties and civil rights issues, integrated advocacy and strategic communications.
- Experience working at an organization with an integrated advocacy model where legal, legislative, education and advocacy tactics are used collaboratively and cohesively to achieve results.
- Experience in the non-profit sector.
- Experience with legislative and government relations in Virginia.
- Valid Virginia driver’s license.
- Ability to speak and/or write in Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Arabic or other language spoken by a language minority in Virginia.

EQUIPMENT USED

- Computer, phone, copier, scanner, fax

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Accepted by: _____ Date: _____

DISCLAIMER: Nothing in this job description restricts the Executive Director's right to assign other duties or responsibilities to this job at any time.

The ACLU of Virginia is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU of Virginia encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, and veteran status and commits to comply with all applicable equal opportunity and nondiscrimination laws and to refrain from unlawful discrimination.