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ERASE Racism

Job Description

Full-Time Housing Policy Organizer

Syosset, NY

August 2019

JOB SUMMARY

ERASE Racism is seeking a Full-Time Housing Policy Organizer to educate and mobilize residents and other organizations to support projects, proposals, and policies that increase affordable housing on Long Island; especially, housing that challenges racial segregation and discrimination.

A two-year fellowship funded by Enterprise Community Partners supports this position. This fellowship targeted community-based organizations in New York State with missions focused on housing advocacy and/or organizing efforts focused on housing-related community needs. Since its founding in 2001, inclusive housing has been a key focus of ERASE Racism, which secured this funding via a competitive grant process.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

The Organizer will play a crucial role in generating progress towards two related organizational goals:

1. To increase the availability of quality rental housing, affordable to Long Island residents—especially lower-income residents of color—who have been systematically excluded from predominately-white communities because of their actual or perceived race. In addition, these white communities frequently have more resources to support public schools and other benefits as compared to racially segregated communities of black and/or Latinx families. To achieve this goal there needs to be an increase in the approval rate for multi-family housing projects proposed by housing developers, which contain some affordable units.
2. To create a policy infrastructure, at the local and state level, that supports and encourages such housing. Some current, state and municipal laws and policies, such as the NYS Home Rule Policy and municipal land-use policies and regulations, perpetuate residential segregation. There are various proposals to require a fair share of affordable housing in all communities and to offer financial incentives for the creation of affordable housing. There are also proposals to, under certain circumstances, provide mechanisms for NYS to override local land-use decisions blocking the creation of affordable housing.

The Organizer will have primary responsibility for coordination of education and mobilization of stakeholders who can advocate for specific affordable housing

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developments in communities where they reside, as well as local and state housing policy campaigns. Stakeholders include existing ERASE Racism Partners and other individuals and organizations recruited to participate in this Inclusive Housing program. Organizational partners include the Long Island Builders Institute (LIBI), the Health and Welfare Council of Long Island (HWCLI), and other organizational recruits.

EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC DUTIES

- Create a toolkit and workplan for workshops and meetings with stakeholders in preparation for local and state campaigns. Topics may include: Long Island segregated housing history and continuing patterns of housing segregation. Municipal government structures, policies, roles and responsibilities related to land-use decisions. Organizing tips and resources, such as templates for written and verbal testimony at public hearings. Summaries of proposed public policies to advance affordable housing and worksheets explaining local and state legislative processes.
- Provide leadership training that equips residents with the knowledge and skills to be effective advocates, able to recruit their neighbors and collectively participate in zoning board and/or town council meetings reviewing proposed affordable housing projects.
- Work with local leaders to track progress of housing proposals, organize turnout at public hearings, educate lawmakers, etc.
- Coordinate with LIBI and developers about upcoming affordable housing projects in specific communities. Coordinate with HWCLI and other nonprofits to recruit their constituents in need of housing to participate in the campaign.
- Utilize a range of communication tools to recruit and amplify local and state campaigns, including social media.
- Maintain office files documenting the project and assist with compiling information for program reporting and fundraising. Administer and compile evaluations, track resident participation and program outcomes, e.g., How many people are participating? How many housing projects are approved?
- Work with ERASE Racism's president on selected fair housing and housing equity projects that may involve legal action or state and national coalitions.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Demonstrated relevant work experience and familiarity with Long Island. Some relevant volunteer experience may be substituted for some amount of paid work experience. Passion for racial and socioeconomic equity. Past experience dealing with public policy and/or advocacy.
- College degree a strong plus. This position could also be appropriate for a public interest attorney (New York State Bar not required) or other professionals with organizing or project/campaign coordination experiences/interests and skills.

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- Willingness to travel within Nassau and Suffolk counties, plus some travel to New York City and occasionally Albany is required. Car in good working order, driver's license, and valid vehicle insurance required.
- Accommodation of a flexible work schedule is required in order to attend some meetings in the evenings and weekends. The exact work schedule will evolve, based on the job demands.
- Strong skills in Microsoft Office Suite and other communication and social networking platforms.

The ideal candidate is a self-starter, who is passionate about social justice causes, effective in dealing with public policy, and a superior writer and communicator, creative thinker and strategist, and tech-savvy activist. This candidate would have strong leadership skills and experience with campaigns and/or grassroots organizing. Knowledge and passion regarding racial/social justice, and some knowledge of fair and/or affordable housing in general, Long Island's development, and resulting discrimination, segregation, and inequity; the current housing landscape; and challenges to realizing affordable housing. Comfort with databases including Salesforce is a plus. Ability to use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Survey Monkey. Live polling and Mailchimp are a plus.

We do not seek a canvasser. We seek an organizer who will utilize education and leadership development to help create and support local groups of allies in various communities who can advocate for equitable local housing policies and projects. The organizer will also help organize and support regional coalitions to work on state-level legislative and policy changes.

SALARY RANGE: \$50,000 - \$60,000 plus benefits including medical, dental, vision, disability, life insurance, holiday/vacation/sick leave, and travel reimbursement.

TO APPLY: Please send cover letter and resume to jobs@eraseracismny.org and include Community Organizer - Housing in the Subject line of your email.

Applications will be reviewed and interviews conducted on a rolling basis until a candidate is selected. Our intention is for the successful candidate to begin work as soon as possible in September.

We have provided an expansive job description and, unfortunately, we are unable to accept telephone or email inquiries. **Only candidates who complete the application process, in full, as described below will receive consideration.**

Applicants should forward a cover letter that (a) persuasively connects their work experience with this position, (b) which also includes their most recent salary for the most relevant position and (c) indicates their salary expectations for this position. A

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\$60,000 salary is appropriate for a candidate who has substantial, relevant work experience and who requires limited supervision. Also, include your resume.

ABOUT ERASE RACISM:

Since its founding in 2001, ERASE Racism has been successfully challenging racial discrimination, particularly in housing and public school education on Long Island. In addition to community organizing and awareness, policy and legislative advocacy, and legal action, we produce in-depth research that has been used by the media, public officials, academics, organizational partners, and community members. Our activities have mobilized a cross-section of Long Island leaders, students, teachers, tenants, homeowners, and other partners, who have formulated and pursued remedies to persistent regional inequities rooted in embedded institutional and structural racism.

Our vision: *Transformed, integrated communities in which no person's access to opportunity is limited by race or ethnicity.*

Our mission: *To expose forms of racial discrimination, advocate for laws and policies that eliminate racial disparities, increase understanding of how structural racism and segregation affect our communities and region, and engage the public in fostering equity and inclusion.*