ERASE Racism

Job Notice
Housing Program Attorney (Full-time)
Syosset, NY
March 2020

JOB SUMMARY
ERASE Racism is seeking a full-time public interest attorney to advance our Inclusive Housing Initiative. There are two major areas of work to challenge racial discrimination and segregation on Long Island: Increasing the availability of quality affordable rental housing in high opportunity communities, and increasing the enforcement of fair housing laws. Tasks include research, policy and legislative analysis and advocacy, legal action, and educating and mobilizing the public to support fair housing. Most program activities are in Nassau and Suffolk Counties; however, statewide and national interventions also impact housing equity in the region. As such, we have played leadership roles in statewide coalitions and advocated for or against federal policies.

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 AND QUALIFICATIONS
We will consider both experienced attorneys who have been program managers or directors and exceptional junior attorneys with limited work experience. The experienced attorney must have demonstrated stellar skills and strong initiative and will be responsible for creating and sustaining the housing initiative with little supervision. We will also consider a junior attorney with demonstrated stellar skills and initiative (given their experience level) who will require more direction and assistance.

The attorney will work directly with ERASE Racism’s president on fair housing and housing equity projects and they will collaborate with the ERASE Racism Education Equity Coordinator. On Long Island, there is a nexus around housing and education equity.

The attorney will play a crucial role in generating progress towards three 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.

3. To increase enforcement of fair housing laws, including through legal action (with assistance from outside counsel).

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. They will also help organize and support regional coalitions to work on state-level legislative and policy changes. We also seek a skilled policy advocate, who will use their legal research skills to advance our fair housing agenda at different levels of government.

Travel within Nassau and Suffolk counties, with some travel to New York City and Albany is required. A car in good working order, driver’s license, and valid vehicle insurance is required.

A flexible work schedule is required in order to attend some meetings in the evenings and weekends.

The ideal candidate is a self-starter and passionate about social justice causes who is:

- Effective in analyzing public policies, a superior writer and communicator, creative thinker, strategist, and tech-savvy activist.
- Leader with skills and experience in grassroots organizing or policy campaigns (some volunteer experience may substitute for paid work).
- Knowledge about fair and/or affordable housing in general, Long Island’s development, and resulting discrimination/segregation; the current housing landscape; and challenges to realizing affordable housing and inequity is a plus.
- Demonstrated relevant work experience (familiarity with Long Island is a plus).
- Comfort with databases including Salesforce is a plus. Ability to use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Survey Monkey. Live polling and MailChimp are a plus.
Community Organizer Housing job description

- Strong skills in Microsoft Office Suite and other communication and social networking platforms.

TO APPLY: Applicants should forward a cover letter that persuasively connects their work experience with this position and a resume to jobs@eraseracismny.org and include Housing Attorney in the Subject line of your email.

The salary is commensurate with experience and can range from $60,000 to $75,000, depending on relevant work experience. Benefits include medical, dental, vision, disability, life insurance, holiday/vacation/sick leave, and travel reimbursement.

Applicants will be interviewed on a rolling basis until the selection of a candidate. We would like the successful candidate to begin work as soon as possible.

Only candidates who complete the application process, in full, as described above will receive consideration.

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. We engage in community education and organizing, policy and legislative advocacy, and legal action. We produce in-depth research, which is utilized 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.