Job Title: Community Organizer
Supervisor: Director of Community Organizing
Hours: 35 hours per week; availability for weeknight & some weekend responsibilities required
Annual Salary: $46,500, full benefits
Status: Full time, union
Location: Somerville, MA

OVERVIEW:
The Community Action Agency of Somerville, known as CAAS, is changing lives for our community members who are furthest from opportunity. For over 40 years, we have been helping local families and individuals achieve financial security while working to eliminate the root causes of economic injustice. Our vision for Somerville is for a city where no one lives in poverty, where we support each other through strong community structures, and where the opportunity to thrive is a lived experience for every resident. We are proud to be a source of stability and support for our community. Our website: https://www.caasomerville.org/

WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE:
The CAAS Community Organizing & Advocacy program is a key anchor in Somerville’s local movement for housing justice. Our organizational structure allows us to support our tenants holistically, and our tenant leaders are those who are experiencing the affordable housing crisis first-hand. We are dedicated to empowering Somerville residents who are the most oppressed from accessing power: low-income residents, renters, people of color, immigrants and refugees, seniors, non-English speakers, and people with disabilities. Our campaigns have educated hundreds of tenants about their rights, won policy protections such as the Somerville local eviction moratorium extension during the Covid-19 pandemic, and united and mobilized residents of all backgrounds under the vision that housing is a human right.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZER ROLE:
The Community Organizer will join a dynamic and highly collaborative team as the fifth bilingual staff member of the CAAS Organizing program. Reporting to the Director of Organizing, this position is key to carrying out tenant outreach and education, housing stability advocacy, tenant leadership development, and broader issue- and policy-based organizing campaigns to prevent evictions and displacement citywide.

GENERAL DUTIES:
1. Tenant Outreach & Advocacy: Identify opportunities to reach residents of color, non-English speakers, undocumented immigrants, and “informal renter” households who may be at risk of housing instability. Conduct base-building and recruitment activities by door-knocking, making phone calls, canvassing, outreach at community events and public places, and establishing a regular presence at identified sites. Support tenants in meeting their immediate housing stability and resource needs, including education about renters’ rights and triaging referrals internally and to external partners. Collect and report data on resident outreach, engagement, and service provision as needed.
2. **Leadership Development**: Organize and conduct one-on-one and small group meetings to build relationships with potential leaders who have not traditionally had access to power (low-income residents, renters, people of color, immigrants and non-English speakers, seniors, people with disabilities). Work with leaders to organize tenant unions and other community initiatives that build collective power. Train and inspire tenant leaders to develop new skills as leaders by co-preparation and facilitation of meetings, public speaking, policy advocacy, organizing public events and campaign actions, etc.

3. **Organizing Campaigns**: Work with the Director and tenants to design campaigns that prevent displacement and further the housing justice movement at the intersections of racial, economic, and gender justice at the municipal and statewide level. Identify targets, assist with research, implement tactics over the short and long term, and participate in evaluation.

4. **Coalition Building**: Represent the CAAS Organizing program at local meetings and coalitions and report back on the latest service and policy developments that may impact low-income residents. Build coalitions and work with existing ally organizations, government and elected officials, residents and businesses, and tenant leaders to move campaign goals forward.

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**THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:**
The ideal candidate has direct experience organizing in a multiclass, multiracial, and multilingual movement setting, and an unwavering commitment to justice and building the leadership and power for marginalized communities of tenants in Somerville.

**Professional background**
- At least 2-3 years experience in tenant or community organizing; equivalent lived experience and/or deeply committed volunteer experience will be considered as much as formal education
- Proven ability to build relationships with people of different backgrounds, particularly across socioeconomic classes, racial/ethnic identities, and languages other than English
- Experience organizing and facilitating community meetings; multilingual meetings a plus

**Skills**
- Verbal and written fluency in Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, or Chinese (Mandarin or Cantonese); samples will be requested
- Outstanding written and verbal communication skills
- Fundamental organizing skills such as active listening, group facilitation, storytelling, 1:1s, power analysis, and campaign planning
- Proven track record of positive collaboration in a small team setting
- Proven dedication to detail and ability to following through on multiple dynamic tasks
- Proven ability to problem solve creatively and take initiative independently
- Proficiency using technology and online systems, such as Google Suite and Zoom

**Personal characteristics**
- Proof of full Covid-19 vaccination (required for all CAAS employees)
- Familiarity with the challenges faced by communities experiencing poverty and oppression, knowledge of the root systemic causes, and willingness to deepen this understanding and analysis of intersectional oppressions
- A spirited attitude to take risks, develop new systems and relationships, and refine strategies and approaches to organizing

**Preferred (but not required) Qualifications**
- Training or education in organizing theories and frameworks, such as popular education
- Familiarity with the regional affordable housing crisis, players, and/or policy proposals
- Familiarity with the local service provider and political context in Somerville

LOCATION AND TRAVEL:
The Community Organizer will work from the CAAS administrative office in Union Square, Somerville and have hybrid flexibility to also work from home certain days of the week. Ability to travel to in person local meetings and events in the metropolitan area required, as well as availability for evening commitments and occasional weekend commitments (typically 2 weekend days per month).

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:
The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally required to stand; walk; sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl and talk or hear. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 10 pounds.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:
The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

COMPENSATION:
CAAS offers competitive compensation for this position plus an attractive benefits package, which includes medical, dental, retirement, professional development and other benefits, and a collaborative, committed team of colleagues.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT:
No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be discriminated against by this program, including in employment, because of race, religion, sex, national origin, immigration status, cultural heritage, age, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status.

TO APPLY:
The review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled, with the ideal candidate beginning as soon as possible. For best consideration, please submit a cover letter and resume to Janet Grogan at: jgrogan@caasomerville.org