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Firelands Workers Action/Acción de Trabajadores

Firelands Workers United/Trabajadores Unidos

FirelandsWA.org | jobs@firelandswa.org

Position: Organizing Director

Application Due: Rolling, preference by October 22nd 2023

Employment Type: Full-time (32-hour work week), exempt

Supervised by: Stina Janssen, Executive Director

Start date: January 2, 2024 (negotiable)

Location: Hybrid - remote with proximity to Aberdeen, WA for local events

Compensation: 32-hour work week at approx. \$66,700/year plus health insurance, dental insurance, and generous paid time off

***Note on Compensation:** Firelands currently has flat compensation for the entire staff team, a figure based on local union wages. We are in the process of updating our compensation packages and we'll share updates during the hiring process.

ABOUT FIRELANDS

Firelands Workers Action/Acción de Trabajadores¹ is a multiracial organization building working-class power in Grays Harbor and Pacific counties in rural Western Washington State. Agitated by daily struggles and animated by our vision for a just green economy, Firelands base and leaders fight for Green New Deal-style programs, dignity for rural working families, and healthy lands and waters. Firelands is a joyful, rigorous, full-hearted, bilingual (Spanish-English) organization made up of immigrant moms, loggers, childcare workers, retired veterans, renters, manufactured homeowners, cannery workers, and more. Firelands member-leaders and organizers are politically developed and dedicated: we knock on doors with our deep listening canvass, we organize mass base building events, we dig into vision and strategy with popular education, and we build solidarity and trust to work together across race, language, and culture.

Since forming in 2019, we have organized to help win several historic gains including state policy on wealth taxes, tenant protections, green jobs and increased funding for weatherization, pandemic relief, healthcare expansion, and more. Our current focus is on healthy, energy efficient,

¹ Firelands Workers Action/Acción de Trabajadores, a 501c4 organization fiscally sponsored by Rural Peoples Voice, and Firelands Workers United/Trabajadores Unidos, a 501c3 organization fiscally sponsored by Latino Community Fund. This position is split between the two organizations.

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and affordable housing. We contribute to shifting power as a member of multiple statewide coalitions and we are impacting national strategy as a member of People's Action.

Our region is home to a legendary history of labor organizing, yet today, we face high poverty, disinvestment, and regressive politics. In this context, we organize with working-class Latinx and white people across the political spectrum – we find the majority are with us on the issues, from housing to healthcare to good jobs. Firelands is now in a momentous period: we are launching a membership structure to engage our base more deeply, sharpening our campaign strategy, and strengthening our organization's infrastructure. The Organizing Director will be a core team member directly involved in leading this exciting next phase.

POSITION SUMMARY: Firelands seeks an Organizing Director who will bring experience, strategic analysis, and a deep commitment to relationship-building to elevate our work to the next level. The Organizing Director role is primarily about working with people one-on-one and in teams to develop organizers and leaders: cultivating their day-to-day skills and political analysis and designing and maintaining systems so that staff and members can achieve strategic goals. This position requires a strong belief in the power, abilities, and intelligence of working-class people, an understanding of the racial inequities and political contradictions within the working class, and a commitment to uniting working-class people across race and political orientation around a shared strategy to win. The ideal candidate will have particular excitement and experience working with an organizing team and member-leader team largely comprised of Latina women from Mexico, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Organizing with immigrants and working in Spanish and English are important skills for this position.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **MANAGES & SUPERVISES ORGANIZING TEAM:** Manages a phenomenal team of 3 Organizers (all former member-leaders):
 - Mentors organizers as they: plan base-building events, run deep listening canvasses, phonebank, manage data, facilitate zoom and in-person meetings and trainings, coordinate committees (including Firelands' Leadership Committee of ~25 advanced member leaders), train and coach member-leaders, make complex decisions, navigate and resolve conflict, etc.
 - Coaches, supports and holds accountable each Organizer through weekly supervision and stewards a strong team through weekly Organizer meetings
 - Leads assessments, evaluations and feedback for Firelands' organizing for growth and learning
 - Supports Organizers in practicing trauma stewardship and emotional resiliency (all Organizers have access to one-on-one trauma stewardship with an outside coach)

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- Offers leadership in resolving contradictions and challenges in our organizing programs
- Provides mentorship and direction to the Organizer who coordinates our conflict resolution committee
- Manages hiring of new Organizers or Organizing Apprentices
- **BASE-BUILDING & MEMBER DEVELOPMENT**
 - Designs systems, timelines, and practices to strengthen our existing work on base-building and leadership development
 - Designs plans and leads the launch and implementation of our membership structure:
 - Trains and mentors Organizers and member-leaders to canvass, phonebank, and hold one-on-ones to recruit hundreds of Firelands base members to become formal members who participate regularly
 - Co-facilitates (together with Trainings Manager and Organizers) political education, skills trainings, and member meetings with plain language and engaging popular education in Spanish and English
 - Designs and implements data management systems and trains Organizers to use them
 - Updates and supervises the integration of community services into our organizing work (we prioritize base-building and campaigns for systems change while attending to the crises of our people experience in the present)
 - Collaborates to develop future plans for electoral and Get Out the Vote organizing
- **ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP**
 - Co-leads organizational assessments and strategic planning
 - Co-leads on issue campaign strategy planning and facilitates staff and leaders to design strategy and tactics for campaigns (such as lobbying, media, actions, working with government agencies, etc); ensures tactics help us win our goals while building our base and developing leaders
 - Co-holds Firelands' political, cultural, strategic and emotional 'center' with love, rigor, integrity, and responsive leadership (e.g. during meetings, one-on-ones, supervision, and communication)
 - Represents Firelands and/or presents at coalitions and partner events as needed
- **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & FUNDRAISING**
 - Develops and manages organizing program budgets and supports in creating the annual organizational budget

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- Supports fundraising work as needed (e.g. provides information for grants, attends funder briefings, etc.)

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS & ATTRIBUTES

- At least 5 years of relevant experience in grassroots organizing, labor organizing, and/or electoral organizing, preferably with experience in grassroots working-class member-based organizations and working with immigrant communities
- Experience as a manager/supervisor of organizers
- Ability to build and steward a strong team as an accountable, respectful, motivational and effective supervisor and team-leader
- Ability to build trust with working-class people across race, gender, language, and political party/ideology including with Latinx, white, Black, API, and/or Indigenous people
- Strong analysis of the political and economic systems that exploit working-class people
- Experience planning and managing organizers and volunteers to carry out base-building activities, including canvassing, house visits, phonebanks, member meetings, large events, and trainings
- Demonstrated ability to facilitate groups using “everyday” language and to help groups make decisions
- Experience developing the analysis and skills of base members (through on on ones, accessible trainings, etc) to take part in strategy and campaign decisions
- Strong written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills
- Sufficiently **bilingual in English and Spanish** to coordinate, support, and supervise bilingual and monolingual staff and member-leaders
- Capacity to bring warmth and wisdom when working with people managing secondary trauma (we hear hard stories on the doors and most of our base have experienced trauma). This position does *not* require professional training in trauma stewardship or therapy, but it requires familiarity and sensitivity to trauma².
- Ability to work independently with self-identified goals, to make decisions and resolve challenges with long-term planning or improvisation when needed
- Capable of providing and receiving respectful feedback and mentorship
- Experience and skill resolving interpersonal conflicts with emotional intelligence and maturity

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience with multiracial populist political education and agitation
- Experience with deep-listening canvass methodology
- Familiarity with rural and small town communities and cultures

² Firelands works with a trauma stewardship coach to support organizers’ resilience and wellbeing.

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- Experience managing data in a database (such as EveryAction, Action Builder), experience using VAN, Google sheets, peer-to-peer text tools (we use ThruText), or other digital organizing tools
- Has had training in conflict resolution and trauma stewardship
- Understanding of WA state political landscape and conditions
- Knowledge of tenant rights laws and/or worker rights laws
- Familiarity with lobbying, working with government agencies, and organizing towards governing power

NUTS & BOLTS

- **Salary and Benefits:** This is an exempt position at 32-hour a week at approx. \$66,700/year plus health insurance, dental insurance, and generous paid time off. We use flex time when working over 32 hours/week.
- Firelands currently has flat compensation for the entire staff team, a figure based on union wages for carpenters in our area. We are in the process of updating compensation and we'll share updates during the hiring process. Firelands values a healthy workplace, worker rights and worker respect, including family and kid-friendly work options.
- **Location & Travel:** This position requires in-person work at minimum every other week in our region (Grays Harbor and/or Pacific County), and some months more often. Day to day work aside from in-person events may be done remotely via email, phone, and video conference from one of our offices or a home office. Our central office is in Aberdeen, WA and we also have an administrative office in Port Angeles, WA. We host events in other towns within an hour of Aberdeen. In the future, we may grow into other areas and we occasionally partner with other organizations to canvass across WA state. It is preferred that the Organizing Director live in Aberdeen or within a 3-hour drive of Aberdeen, WA. As this position requires driving to in-person meetings and events, the Organizing Director must have their own car - or have access to drive a car without much notice time - and must be a licensed, insured driver. Firelands covers mileage reimbursement at the federal rate and a per diem and lodging for eligible travel. Where possible, we carpool and encourage use of public transit.
- **Schedule:** Our weekly rhythm is currently full days Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, with lighter days Thursdays and Fridays. The Organizing Director will have some flexibility to set their schedule around the existing rhythm of events and weekly meetings. To accommodate our members' schedules, this position requires some weeknight and weekend hours (currently, we have weekly meetings each Wednesday night and we have occasional weekend events). We aim for a start-date in early January; however the start-date is negotiable.

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- **Supervision:** This position supervises Organizers (currently 3 people, previously member-leaders) and may in future supervise additional positions. This position is supervised by the Executive Director (a Firelands co-founder and former organizing director).
- **Organizational Support:** We invest in our team's leadership and skills! The Organizing Director will participate in a national cohort of Organizing Directors with People's Action and may join other cohorts; the Organizing Director will have access to coaching and trainings to deepen skills and leadership such as Rockwood, Midwest Academy, The Management Center, etc.
- **Employer:** This position is split between Firelands Workers Action/Acción de Trabajadores and Firelands Workers United/Trabajadores Unidos. The employer will be Latino Community Fund, Firelands Workers United/Trabajadores Unidos' fiscal sponsor. The employer will change in 2024 as we pursue independent status.

TO APPLY

Applications are preferred by **Sunday, October 22nd, 2023** with rolling interviews until the position is filled. Please contact the Hiring Committee at jobs@firelandswa.org with "Organizing Director" in the subject line:

1. Cover letter
2. Your resume

Firelands is an organization committed to justice. We encourage applications from people of color, women, LGBTQ people, people with disabilities, and rural working-class people, who drive our work and are the heart and soul of our staff, leadership and membership.