Side by Side | Job Description

Director of Advocacy & Education

Mission

Side by Side is dedicated to creating supportive communities where Virginia’s LGBTQ+ youth can define themselves, belong, and flourish.

Core Values

- Equity
- Trustworthiness
- Boldness
- Collaboration
- Responsiveness

Strategic Priorities

- Commitment to Black/Brown LGBTQ+ Youth
- Youth Centered
- Tradition of Support
- LGBTQ+ Voice

Organization Overview

Our 30+ year-old nonprofit has historically provided youth support groups in Richmond, Charlottesville and Petersburg for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer plus (LGBTQ+) youth. Side by Side has also provided K-12 and community-based trainings and played an active role in sharing thought leadership surrounding LGBTQ+ issues within the Central Virginia community through advocacy and consultation. We have committed to support LGBTQ+ youth and young adults facing mental health challenges, financial emergencies, and housing instability; helping them to meet their most basic needs.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization has moved to a hybrid work format with most staff working three days in-person and two days remote. Office hours, when our building is open to the public, are currently Monday – Thursday, 10:00am to 4:00pm.

Future of the Organization

Side by Side has recently reimagined its mission, leadership structure, staff responsibilities, services provided and commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) through our shift to a Co-Executive Director and shared leadership model. Specifically, we envision a mission emphasizing racial and gender equity with youth centered in every aspect of partnership development, education and training, and communication with public and private organizations.

This realignment will prioritize teamwork and building a culture of learning, high levels of autonomy for staff and teams, open and transparent communication throughout the organization, encouraging continued education and innovation, and cultivating respect, trust and safety throughout the organization.

Our transition from a more traditional, hierarchical leadership framework allows us to approach power from a shared, distributed, and collaborative perspective. Our vision of shared leadership continues to be an ongoing journey with which we intend to further
develop using tools that are researched and deemed “best practices,” as well as the collaborative voices of youth, those with lived experience, staff, board, and community partners.

While we welcome all those interested to apply, in an effort to more intentionally advance our values of equity and inclusion, we seek to specifically engage and prioritize candidates that represent the very communities we would like to uplift, in order to ensure their voices and experiences are represented.

Role Summary

The Director of Advocacy and Education will lead the development and implementation of social justice strategies that work to advance racial and gender equity for LGBTQ+ youth and young adults. They will perform this working by consistently and clearly positioning the discussion of race, structural racism, gender expansive youth, and the harmful practices found in policies and legislation. They will have a strong focus on building and maintaining relationships with decision-makers, grasstops and grassroots organizations, community leaders and impacted persons. They will lead in identifying ways to support youth and families impact change at the policy and legislative level to align in the mission of creating safe and affirming spaces for LGBTQ+ youth and young adults.

The Director of Advocacy and Education will direct the development of school programming and training/educational services that guides educators and community partners in creating safe and affirming environments where all students and community members, specifically those who are LGBTQ+, transgender, non-binary, Black, Indigenous, people of color, and people with different abilities can thrive and reach their full potential. This role will serve as the organization’s primary ambassador on education and youth development, the Director is a thought leader on building a K-12 education system that is safe, affirming, and liberatory for all LGBTQ+ students. This position is responsible for stewarding strategic partnerships in order to bring LGBTQ+ affirming best practices to K-12 schools throughout the Greater Richmond Area. The Director will lead departmental team in centering Side by Side’s mission in alignment with the organization’s strategic priorities of advancing racial, gender, and disability justice outcomes in education. This role will report directly to the Co-Executive Director of Programs and Services.

Key Duties and Responsibilities:

- Supervise a team consisting of a School Programs Coordinator and a Training and Education Coordinator.
- Creating and implementing professional development programs and resources for educators, and other school district and school-based educational initiatives.
- Developing, coordinating and maintaining organizational partnerships with other national organizations working on related K-12 education, LGBTQ+, civil rights, and equity issues to increase the reach and impact of LGBTQ+-affirming best practices in K-12 schools.
- Representing Side by Side at educational conferences, school and community-based meetings, educational events and serve on coalitions with ally organizations.
- Evaluate Side by Side’s school and training services programs advance the organization’s goals in ways that also advance racial, gender, and disability justice.
• Guide team in expanding, maintaining and enhancing membership, supports and services for local gender-sexuality alliances.
• Lead staff in researching and developing presentations, trainings, and resource guides that provide school systems and community partners with the knowledge and skills to provide more affirming and safe environments.
• Supervise a dynamic team and implement the organization’s strategic plan.
• Create and manage methods to research, monitor, analyze and track key policy issues and policymakers.
• Will focus on lifting up and mobilizing the voices parents/caregivers, staff, youth, and leaders in the Commonwealth of Virginia to advance the support of policy and legislative change that protects the rights of LGBTQ+ youth.
• Identify and help build relationships with the right partners to maximize our advocacy impact and influence, to include but not limited to Equality Virginia, ACLU, NAACP, etc.
• Will assist in the development of youth programming that focuses on training youth in storytelling and building leadership skills.
• This role will assist the Co-Executive Director of Operations and Development in standing up messaging and communications related to advocacy, policy and legislation impacting LGBTQ+ youth and young adults.

Position Qualifications and Experience
• Desired
  o Bachelor’s degree in Education or a behavioral health/human service field from an accredited college or university.
• Welcomed
  o An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered.

Preferred Knowledge, Skills, Characteristics or Experience
• 2-3 years of experience in K-12 learning communities and advancing system level changes in school districts and schools.
• 2-3 years of program/staff supervisory experience.
• Strong knowledge and experience with K-12 education issues at the intersection of LGBTQ+ communities, civil rights, and equity in education. Understanding of national landscape preferred.
• Strong interest in social policy and addressing inequity and structural racism.
• Commitment to and experience with advancing racial, gender, and disability justice and dismantling all forms of oppression.
• Demonstrated experience developing and implementing educational presentations and skills-based training programs, and excellent public speaking skills.
• Strong management, interpersonal and communication skills, attention to detail, and exceptional organizational skills.
• Creativity, resourcefulness and flexibility.
• Understanding of adolescent and young adult development, especially related to LGBTQ+ youth, and resilience building.
• High familiarity with and ability to apply trauma-informed care practices.
• Crisis assessment and intervention experience, to include making necessary referrals and reports.
• Experience collaborating with varying levels of internal stakeholders such as the board and board committee members in service of delivering youth programs.
• Fluent Spanish speaking abilities desired.

Compensation
This is a full-time position. The salary range is $50,000 - $55,000. The compensation package includes health and dental benefits, and 4 weeks’ vacation.

To Apply
• Please submit the following to jobs@sidebysideva.org
• With the subject line: “Director of Advocacy and Education”
• Cover Letter
  o In addition to sharing the story of why you would like to join us at Side by Side please also provide answers to the follow questions:
    ▪ What do you see as the most pressing needs for LGBTQ+ youth in Central Virginia?
    ▪ Define what racial equity means to you and how you strive to create equitable communities where people and communities of color can thrive.
    ▪ Describe how you apply a gender & racial equity lens to youth programming and relationship building

• Resume to include name, pronouns, contact phone, mailing address, and email.
• Application deadline is open until further notice

Side by Side
2311 Westwood Ave, Richmond, VA 23230
(804) 644-4800 | Website: sidebysideva.org
Instagram @sidebysidevirginia | Facebook @sidebysideva