



## Mission:

Our mission is to provide quality services that promote choice, independence, and inclusion.

## Chief External Affairs Officer Opportunity Guide



envision  
UNLIMITED

evolving care with empathy,  
everytime, everywhere

[www.envisionunlimited.org](http://www.envisionunlimited.org)





## ABOUT ENVISION UNLIMITED

For more than 70 years, Envision Unlimited has served people with disabilities across all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. As one of the largest providers in the state of Illinois for people with intellectual, developmental, psychiatric disabilities, Envision Unlimited is a full spectrum of care organizations serving over 4,900 members and their caregivers.

With a mission to provide quality services that promote choice, independence, and inclusion for people with disabilities, Envision Unlimited has been a community provider since 1948, with a legacy of evolving care delivered with empathy, every time and everywhere. Innovative services include novel day programs; community living options; employment, respite, mental health services, supportive housing, and foster care for children with disabilities. Beyond the day-to-day efforts supporting members and their caregivers in Illinois, Envision Unlimited is a staunch industry advocate with a far-reaching impact. As a vocal and visible advocate in the disability community, and through outreach, evaluation, and service planning, Envision Unlimited's efforts help thousands of people become part of the community, transition them to safe homes, and access support services.

Focusing on innovation and adaptability allows Envision Unlimited to continually evolve its programs to reflect the latest best practices in the field of disability services. This includes integrating new technologies, developing community partnerships, and advocating for policy changes that benefit individuals with disabilities. Envision Unlimited's dedication to advocacy ensures that the voices of people with disabilities are heard, and their rights are protected, paving the way for a more inclusive society. Envision Unlimited's impact extends beyond its immediate members, influencing the broader community by promoting awareness and acceptance of individuals with disabilities. Through its outreach and education efforts, the organization helps to break down barriers and challenge stereotypes, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for everyone. The tireless work of Envision Unlimited and its staff exemplifies the power of compassion, dedication, and collaboration in making a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families.



## THE OPPORTUNITY: CHIEF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OFFICER

Envision Unlimited seeks its next Chief External Affairs Officer to lead philanthropic growth and guide the Marketing and Communications team with a focus on private revenue investments. Managing a team of 10, with three direct reports, the candidate will be responsible for the overall annual fundraising strategy and its subcomponents (individual, major gifts, planned giving), institutional partnerships/corporate giving, and marketing communications.

Envision Unlimited's current \$91 million operating budget represents nearly 400% growth over the last nine years. \$1.6M is currently derived from philanthropy. As Envision Unlimited continues to implement an aggressive growth plan, operations, philanthropy, and unrestricted giving must be grown to support a larger percentage of operating needs. In partnership with CEO, Mark McHugh, the candidate will work closely with the Board of Directors and senior leadership team to cultivate and maintain relationships with high-level donors and stakeholders. A skilled fundraiser, the successful individual will be tasked with diversifying and evolving the portfolio of Envision Unlimited and focusing on the major giving area with direct accountability for securing gifts. This role will focus a majority of the time (at least 65%) on philanthropy.



# PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

## Strategic Planning and Philanthropic Vision

- Develop, plan, and execute short and long-term strategic plans incorporating a diverse mix of donor sources and fundraising programs to attract and retain donors and volunteers, ensuring a strong return on investment.
- Redefine organizational strategy for Major Gifts, create a new plan, and lead Major Gift solicitation campaigns.
- Collaborate with the President/CEO and other development staff to identify, cultivate, and solicit a portfolio of major and planned giving donors and sponsors in support of annual operating, capital, and special projects for the organization. Lead the team in their accountabilities.
- Establish performance measures, monitor results, and evaluate the effectiveness of the fund development program. Provide timely, accurate, and comprehensive income and expense budgets and reports to assist the CEO and board in evaluating the organization's fund development initiatives.
- Lead the team in assessing the current donor base, develop strategies to cultivate that base, and increase donor engagement.
- Ensure technology is maximized to support the department, leadership, and Board needs related to donor management. Assess the current system and training needs as well as possible future changes.

## Board and External Relations

- Offer strategic support to the board and marketing/development committee by determining accountabilities, regularly evaluating performance, setting meeting agendas, developing an annual calendar, and soliciting ongoing input and involvement from all board members and fundraising volunteers.
- Assist board members, executive leadership team, other fundraising volunteers, and staff in identifying, cultivating, and soliciting charitable gifts.
- Provide strategic materials, background information, and donor options, and arrange visits/meetings with the support of the CEO accompanying solicitors as appropriate.
- Serve as an ambassador by promoting the strategy and vision to current and potential stakeholders and donors.
- Partner with the CEO in ensuring maximum board engagement.
- Integrate organizational messaging into Envision Unlimited government relations and advocacy efforts.



# PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

## Marketing and Communications

- Lead the development, execution, and assessment of a holistic marketing and communications strategy that strengthens the organization's mission and expands its presence in both current and new geographies.
- Refine, strengthen, safeguard, measure, and elevate the mission, brand, and legacy.
- Develop and implement initiative-taking media, PR, and thought leadership strategies to generate media interest, enhance brand awareness, and effectively communicate key messages. Maintain regular engagement with targeted media outlets and ensure timely responses to inquiries, collaborating with contracted consultants or agencies as needed.
- Provide leadership and support in all aspects of internal communication.

## Team Leadership and Accountability

- Lead the operations of individual and major gifts programs, providing oversight and monitoring/reporting on development activities. Address issues that may impact the organization's well-being and effectiveness and facilitate policy making.
- Represent the institution, board, and executives to donors, prospects, regulators, the Marketing, Communications and Development Committee, and fundraising volunteers professionally and appropriately.
- Set goals and accountabilities for individuals and teams, conducting regular performance evaluations to ensure continuous improvement and success.
- Ensure best practices for cultivation, acknowledgment, and recognition programs, including maintaining donor and prospect records, gift management systems, informational reports, and conducting prospect research.
- Demonstrated ability to lead, manage, and mentor a high-performing development team toward results while maintaining a collaborative and supportive work environment.





# THE QUALIFIED CANDIDATE



Envision Unlimited seeks a Chief External Affairs Officer (CEAO) to oversee the departments of philanthropy institutional giving and marketing/communications. Responsible for leading initiatives to expand the institutional and individual donor base, develop and execute brand strategy, enhance marketing and communications, and build strategic partnerships, the CEAO will work to strengthen relationships with policymakers, industry leaders, and other key stakeholders.

The successful candidate will ensure that outreach and engagement strategies are smart, collaborative, and effectively executed, and will build a broad base of support for the organization's mission. The CEAO is tasked with increasing the organization's visibility, securing significant resources, and driving revenue to support strategic goals. They will also lead the integration of public-facing and individual engagement efforts across departments, and develop the infrastructure needed for a best-in-class external affairs division.

## Specific Requirements Include:

- A commitment to our mission and to people with disabilities.
- At least 10 years of senior leadership experience, with at least 6 years in a senior development role supervising some aspect of philanthropy.
- Demonstrated experience and leadership in creating and managing a comprehensive and integrated development, marketing, and communications strategy.
- Established experience and track record in planning, management, and implementation of a comprehensive fund development program and producing charitable contributions from individuals and their extended networks (minimum of 5-figure gifts)
- Record of successful partnership with a President/CEO and Board of Directors, and experience working with other senior leaders in External Affairs, effectively deploying them in service of fundraising and communications as appropriate
- Strategic, visionary, and goal-oriented with the ability to “take charge and follow through.”
- Strong analytic and strategic-thinking skills, with a demonstrated ability to create, implement, and monitor complex plans and then translate those plans into goals and concrete strategies.
- Proficient in donor CRM software systems and other donor platforms as well as Microsoft Office business tools. Every Action is the current fundraising database and Envision Unlimited is planning to upgrade the CRM as part of a larger data system strategy.
- Career track record that shows stability with an organization and capacity to develop and nurture relationships culminating in overall success.
- Bachelor's degree is required, Master's degree is strongly preferred

Don't check off every box in the requirements listed above? Please consider applying anyway! Studies have shown that underrepresented communities – such as women, people of color, LGBTQ, people with disabilities, and immigrants – are less likely to apply for jobs unless they meet every single qualification. Envision Unlimited is dedicated to building an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible workplace that fosters a sense of belonging – so if you are excited about this role but your experience doesn't align perfectly with every qualification in the job description, we encourage you to consider still applying.



## HOW TO APPLY

This position offers a competitive salary with strong benefits, and based on depth of experience. The range for this position is in the \$190's – low \$200's.

Each team at Envision Unlimited's administrative offices operates in a hybrid format to best meet the needs and output required by the team. The CEO will set the pace, format, and frequency of individual and team meetings for the department. Some duties, events, and donor requests will need to be fulfilled outside normal operating hours.

Envision Unlimited does not and shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in employment or any of its activities or operations.

[APPLY HERE](#)

Applications with specific Cover Letters will be given priority consideration. To ensure confidential tracking of all applicants, no applications will be accepted via email. ALL INQUIRIES WILL BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE. All candidate-submitted materials and credentials will be reviewed for consistency and accuracy. Candidates can expect that KEES will verify employment/academic/background information both in the screening process and for the finalist(s) in a formal background check.

This search is being managed by Project Manager, Randi Blasutti and Heather Eddy, President and Founder of KEES. Questions may be addressed to [rblasutti@kees2success.com](mailto:rblasutti@kees2success.com).

Please submit your application as soon as possible. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis, and the search will remain open until a hire is made. Candidates who submit a formal application by October 5, will be given the highest consideration.

### About KEES

KEES (formerly Alford Executive Search) is a nonprofit executive search firm that builds diverse teams with dynamic leaders in the nonprofit and public sectors. A woman-owned and operated firm, KEES offers a full array of nonprofit consulting services including executive search, leadership development, interim staffing, and HR support. For more information, please visit [www.kees2success.com](http://www.kees2success.com).