



DELAWARE CENTER  
— FOR —  
JUSTICE  
INCORPORATED

**Delaware Center for Justice**  
Wilmington, Delaware

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Delaware Center for Justice (DCJ), with a rich history of service to justice-involved citizens and crime victims, is at the forefront of transforming the quality of justice in the state of Delaware by combining direct services, advocacy, and policy work to support youth and adult offenders and crime victims. Originally established as the Prisoner's Aid Society in 1920 and going into its 100<sup>th</sup> year, DCJ seeks an experienced and visionary Executive Director who can build upon its base of exceptional programming, positioning DCJ to expand services across the state and to participate more fully in national criminal justice reform efforts.

DCJ's work touches a wide range of individuals impacted by the justice system – those returning to their communities, children with incarcerated parents, young people held in detention facilities, and victims of crime. DCJ works in schools, detention facilities, communities, and the legislature. Its work involves robust case management, restorative justice approaches, policy advocacy, and deep respect for the clients and communities it serves. DCJ firmly believes in comprehensive support and fresh starts for its clients to help counter the destructive impact of prison overuse, particularly in communities of color.

The Executive Director will lead and nurture a skilled, diverse, and dedicated staff of 18 and work collaboratively to define the vision for the next phase of DCJ's leadership on criminal justice reform in Delaware. The ideal candidate will have at least eight to ten years of proven leadership experience, including successful track records in strategic planning, communications, fundraising from diverse sources, and establishing and administering strong human resources and budget management systems. A Bachelor's degree and well-established success engaging with diverse communities are required.

This search is being conducted by Katherine Jacobs and Meredith Horton at [NPAG](#). Application instructions can be found at the end of this document.

## ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

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The Delaware Center for Justice is the leading non-profit organization in Delaware committed to transforming the quality of justice through research, advocacy, policy, and direct service delivery. Throughout its extensive history, DCJ has maintained an unwavering commitment to ensuring a more effective, efficient, and equitable system of justice for all Delawareans. Today, DCJ has a staff of 18 that continues to work to transform the delivery of justice in Delaware and carryout programs that facilitate fresh starts for victims of crime, youth at risk, and the incarcerated.

In achievement of its mission, DCJ focuses on issues and actions impacting the criminal justice system, including: conditions of confinement; alternatives to incarceration; reentry initiatives for incarcerated populations; the more cost effective and efficient use of limited corrections resources; legislative reform that seeks to create a higher quality of justice; meeting the needs of victims of crime; and crime prevention and intervention programming.

DCJ's work is grounded in a strong set of cultural values: a commitment to integrity, high performance, and accountability to clients; innovation and creativity; and maintaining a safe, inclusive, and open environment for staff and clients. DCJ firmly believes in second chances and restorative justice to counter the damaging and traumatic impacts of the overuse of prisons on their clients – whether they are victims or individuals who have committed harm.

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

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DCJ is unique in its approach to justice reform in Delaware for its use of direct services, policy, and advocacy to create change. Its programming is often undertaken with government agencies as partners and funders, along with other community service providers.

**Programs for Adults.** DCJ supports policies and programming that hold individuals accountable while also improving their capacity to achieve future success. To combat recidivism and strengthen communities, DCJ works to empower individuals to address trauma, identify professional opportunities, access healthcare, and resolve conflict.

- Adult Victims Services (AVS): The Adult Victims Services program supports adult crime victims age 50 or older who live in New Castle County, Delaware. AVS helps clients navigate the many systems (e.g., legal, healthcare, housing) that impact their lives after being victimized. AVS provides counseling services, makes home visits, accompanies clients to court, and offers clients long-term follow up care and assistance in establishing reliable support systems.
- Community Reentry Services Program (CRSP): CRSP, a collaborative effort between DCJ, the Department of Correction, and multiple community partners, provides case management support and other crucial services that foster successful reentry. Services include housing assistance, job search assistance, identification acquisition, mental health and substance abuse referrals, educational and vocational placement, life skills, and social support.

- Court of Common Pleas Mediation Program: By capitalizing on the benefits of mediation, DCJ gives victims the chance to be heard and feel that justice has been served. DCJ provides individuals who have committed harm with the opportunity to make restitution, complete community service, and learn skills needed to lead a law-abiding life. For example, the Adult Diversionary Program involves mediating certain misdemeanors instead of prosecuting them and empowers victims to help shape resolutions. Charges are dropped for individuals who have committed harm and fulfill all required obligations. This program is part of the Restorative Justice Project.
- Read In, Read Out: The Read In, Read Out Program is a collaborative project of the Department of Correction, DCJ, and Read Aloud Delaware. Selected incarcerated parents can record themselves reading age-appropriate books to their children. Each child receives the recording, the books, and an inexpensive tape player. Through this program, incarcerated parents are better able to preserve a bond with their children, improve their communication and parenting skills, and transition back to their families and communities.

**Programs for Youth.** DCJ youth programming is grounded in its support of policies and practices that are fair, equitable, and developmentally appropriate for youth involved in the justice system, who are disproportionately students of color.

- School Offense Diversion Program (SoDP): School Offense Diversion Program staff work with students referred by the Attorney General's Office due to an arrest for an in-school incident. This program is an alternative to the juvenile court process and punitive disciplinary approaches. It is a space for mediation with students to talk through and understand the nature of the incident and to validate their experiences. Students learn to resolve problems skillfully and sustain healthy relationships so that what may have been their first experience with the criminal justice system is their last.
- Student Warriors Against Guns and Gangs (SWAGG): This program is a comprehensive and collaborative gun intervention and prevention program that works in partnership with the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families - Division of Youth Rehabilitation. The program consists of educational classes at New Castle County Detention Center for pre-adjudicated youth. Classes teach skills and strategies for coping with chaotic environments and reducing violent behavior. The program also provides after-care support groups in the community focusing on community service projects for program participants.
- Truancy Reduction Program: The Truancy Reduction Program works with high-risk students in two school districts whose school attendance has ceased or dropped dramatically. The program seeks to increase truant students' engagement in school to decrease dropout rates and prevent future criminality. Through intensive case management, students and their families receive support in addressing the underlying causes of truancy, which may include factors such as bullying, lack of appropriate clothing or transportation, undiagnosed learning disabilities,

precarious housing situations, and/or lack of academic support.

- **Victim Sensitivity Program:** The program works to help youth understand the impact they have on their communities, families, and themselves when committing crimes. With the overall violence in the City of Wilmington, this program resonates with many young people – they hear real stories from individuals that have lived through or committed violent acts. The program creates a space where youth can share without being judged and can ask questions about how to change their lives.

**Policy and Advocacy.** DCJ's education and advocacy initiatives engage the public and policymakers in reasoned discussions of criminal justice issues connected to its direct service work. DCJ lobbies for legislative reform, collaborates with other community-based organizations, disseminates research, and trains justice system stakeholders. In 2018, DCJ pursued campaigns designed to reduce recidivism, restore victims, and promote age-appropriate responses to youth crime.

## **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FACING THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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DCJ's next Executive Director will be passionate about the organization's work and ready to help advance DCJ into its next stage of leadership and service to Delaware's communities. The new Executive Director will face the following opportunities and challenges:

***Work collaboratively across staff, board, and key stakeholder groups to craft, articulate, and carry forward a vision for DCJ's next phase.*** Building on DCJ's creative and critical programming, the incoming ED will set – in consultation with staff and board – a thoughtful plan for deepening and expanding DCJ's program and policy work across the state. Further, the new ED will work to position DCJ as a national focal point in the statewide criminal justice reform landscape and will understand how to present Delaware to funders and other stakeholders as an ideal state for investing in innovative direct service programs and policy reform.

***Raise the visibility of an organization that has been serving Delaware's communities for nearly 100 years.*** The new ED will bring a strategic approach to amplifying DCJ's programs and policy work. He/she/they will develop plans to target key state and national stakeholders, including funders, to ensure they are aware of and engaged in DCJ's work and connected to the organization through regular and strategic communications, including appropriate use of social media and other effective vehicles.

***Build and support an engaged and active board of directors.*** DCJ's board of directors is ready to help move the organization toward becoming an even more critical leader in Delaware's criminal justice reform community. The board is well-connected across the state and can work with the ED to navigate key relationships and politics. The next ED will leverage the talents, contributions, relationships, and passion of current board members, while thinking strategically about the needs of this body for the future.

**Manage, nurture, and lead a skilled, effective, and dedicated staff.** Driving DCJ's successes is a team of talented, diverse, and independently operating staff. They have developed, sustained and deepened DCJ's services to adults and youth involved in the criminal justice system in thoughtful and creative ways with a consistent focus on the needs and experiences of their clients. There is an opportunity for a supportive, committed senior executive to help lift up their work and to sustain and expand DCJ's programming.

**Review and refine existing operations and infrastructure.** The new ED will continue the effort to build a solid operations foundation so that day-to-day functions, including human resources, budget management, physical space use, and technology integration are professionally and efficiently administered. The ED will ensure that these functions support DCJ's near- and long-term goals and facilitate DCJ's work with clients, communities, and partners throughout the state. Further, with the departure of the Director of Operations, the incoming ED will have the opportunity to recruit additional senior leadership to complement his/her/their skills.

**Build a collaborative organizational culture that focuses on continuous learning.** The new ED will join a staff team that values mutual respect, flexibility, and self-care. He/she/they will share these values and will help build a culture of increased transparency and trust where it is clearly understood how decisions are made; work to align programmatic decisions around a thoughtful strategic plan; and create an environment where continuous learning and data collection are used to support program refinement and expansion.

## **QUALIFICATIONS OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE**

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DCJ's next ED will be a collaborative, skilled manager and practical visionary who can bring energy and passion for criminal justice reform to enhance DCJ's effective direct service and policy work. While no one candidate will embody all the qualifications enumerated below, the ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes, and experiences:

- At least eight to ten years of relevant leadership experience, with demonstrated success inspiring, managing and mentoring highly talented and diverse teams;
- Experience navigating strategic communications and developing relationships required for effective fundraising;
- A track record of success raising funding from diverse streams;
- Demonstrated deep knowledge of and commitment to the social justice issues that are at the core of DCJ's work and DCJ's multi-pronged approach to its work;
- Well-established success engaging in diverse communities; lived experience that informs an authentic understanding of the challenges faced by justice-involved individuals, victims of crime, and their communities;
- Demonstrated success managing budgets and finances;
- The ability to inspire collaboration while functioning decisively;

- An undergraduate degree is required; a degree in social work, law or another relevant field is preferred, but not required.

Compensation is commensurate with experience and can be discussed with interested individuals. DCJ offers a medical, dental and life insurance; short- and long-term disability coverage; and a retirement plan with a match of up to 3% after one year of employment.

## **TO APPLY**

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More information about the Delaware Center for Justice may be found at: <http://dcjustice.org>.

This search is being conducted with assistance from Katherine Jacobs and Meredith Horton of Nonprofit Professionals Advisory Group. Due to the pace of this search, candidates are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Applications including a cover letter describing your interest and qualifications, your resume (in Word format), and where you learned of the position should be sent to: [DCFJ-ED@nonprofitprofessionals.com](mailto:DCFJ-ED@nonprofitprofessionals.com). In order to expedite the internal sorting and reviewing process, please type your name (Last, First) as the only contents in the subject line of your e-mail.

**Delaware Center for Justice is an equal opportunity employer and proudly values diversity.  
Candidates of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.**