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December 20, 2018

PUBLIC INTEREST LAW CENTER—Housing community organizer position available

The Public Interest Law Center is seeking applications for a community organizer to ensure low-income families in Philadelphia are able to live and thrive in safe, healthy, and affordable rental homes. The organizer will work to ensure a voice for communities in combatting uninhabitable housing, unresponsive landlords, discrimination in Landlord-Tenant Court, and all too frequent evictions that create poverty and trauma, and can leave families homeless.

The community organizer will be paired with a newly hired attorney, both of whom will join the Law Center's growing housing project. In conjunction with the housing team, the organizer and the attorney will identify three neighborhoods in which to commence targeted organizing and community education based on factors such as areas with the highest eviction rates, clusters of unlicensed landlords, clusters of buildings owned by offending landlords, poor health outcomes, or high rates of poverty. Working with these communities, the organizer and attorney will develop tenant-centered, data-centered, plans for each of three communities, identify the communities' key housing priorities, describe how those priorities may be addressed, establish activities for engaging more residents, and set measurable, tailored outcomes.

The organizer will conduct numerous individual and small group informal meetings, run community trainings, and build community capacity, such that community members become actively engaged and equipped to advocate for better housing policies and assert their own legal rights against abusive landlords.

The end goal of the project is to have more low-income Philadelphians living in safe, healthy housing. Accordingly, the organizer will work hand in hand with the attorney, and with the community itself, to put a plan into action. The organizer will identify a core group of leaders in each neighborhood and develop an initial set of tenant-articulated priorities pertaining to rental housing quality, as well as engagement strategies. The organizer will then take the lead on carrying that plan to fruition. As a result, the job will be rewarding, but also will require a candidate who is sensitive to high-stress situations and empathetic to client populations who often find themselves in precarious situations.

Primary activities include:

1. Community engagement and education, relationship building in affected communities, and establishing strategic and collaborative partnerships.

2. Provide training to promote self-advocacy.
3. Participate in local, regional and national policy advocacy to advance the interests of communities.
4. Connect individuals and community groups with needed outside resources to achieve strategic objectives.
5. Identify high impact solutions to improve the health and housing conditions of the communities served by the organizer.
6. Working closely with a community-based attorney to carry out strategic plan.
7. The ability to work a reasonably flexible schedule, including intermittent evenings and weekends

The organizer also will participate in the leadership of the organization including attendance at board and staff meetings, development projects and ongoing administrative projects.

The organizer reports directly to the head of the Law Center's housing project.

Qualifications. The candidate should have at least three years of organizing experience and/or issue campaigns, but outstanding candidates will be considered at any stage of experience. We will not focus on any single qualification, but are especially interested in candidates who demonstrate enthusiasm about our mission; interest and experience in working with clients of diverse backgrounds, including people experiencing poverty; initiative, creativity, and an entrepreneurial approach to developing relationships and strategies; high levels of organization; project management skills; and strong oral and written communication skills.

The Public Interest Law Center is a nationally-renowned public interest law firm with a mission of using high impact legal strategies to advance the civil, social, and economic rights of communities in the Philadelphia region facing discrimination, inequality, and poverty. We use litigation, community education, advocacy, and organizing to secure their access to fundamental resources and services. Areas of focus include a high-quality education, healthcare, housing and community services, employment, environmental justice and the unencumbered right to vote.

The position is located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The salary and benefits are commensurate with experience.

The Public Interest Law Center is an equal opportunity employer. We are especially eager to receive applications from candidates who contribute to the diversity of our organization, including, but not limited to, people of color, people living with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ community.

To apply, email a letter of interest, which describes relevant experience, a resume with salary requirements, a short writing sample of ten pages or less, and contact information for at least three references to:

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