

## LEADERSHIP PROFILE



The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
The Leadership Conference Education Fund

### President and CEO The Leadership Conference/Education Fund Washington, DC

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*“To promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States and to lend its voice internationally on a range of civil and human rights issues.”*

*The Leadership Conference/Education Fund’s Mission*

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#### A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

In a nation increasingly divided by heated rhetoric, economic inequality, an unequal criminal justice system and high profile acts of religious, sexual and racial intolerance, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights provides an amplified voice for human dignity and equality and a mobilizing force to fight discrimination, and promote equity.

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and its 200 plus diverse member organizations, in partnership with its education and research arm, The Leadership Conference Education Fund, **work toward a shared goal: an America as good as its ideals.**



The member organizations are as diverse as the societal makeup of our nation with organizations which represent persons of color, women, children, individuals with disabilities, the LGBT community, older Americans, labor unions, major religious groups, civil libertarians, and human rights organizations. Today, more than 90 million people belong to the organizations that make up The Leadership Conference.

Wade Henderson, President and CEO of The Leadership Conference and Education Fund, has announced his retirement after 20 years of distinguished service. Henderson has led the coalition through the passage of every major civil rights law in the past 20 years and increased The Leadership Conference membership to more than 200 organizations, including its first Muslim and Sikh civil rights groups. Staff has also grown from 7 to 50, adding personnel to build capacity in policy, communications, and field, and professionalize development, finance, administrative and technology functions. In addition, The Leadership Conference/Education Fund has provided its voice internationally on civil and human rights issues and Americans for Financial Reform has become a project of the organization.

**The next President and CEO will face a civil and human rights environment presenting both challenges and opportunities.** Key elements of landmark civil rights protection have been chipped away as Affirmative Action has been banned for college admission in three states, Michigan, California and Florida, and Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act has been declared unconstitutional (Shelby vs Holder 2013). Comprehensive immigration reform has stalled. Discourse on race, religion, gender and policing has become coarse and polarizing. At the same time, rights for the LGBT community and individuals with disabilities have expanded. Latinos are the largest minority group and Asians have become the fastest growing population in the nation. The civil rights coalition has become broader and more diverse.



**The Leadership Conference/Education Fund requires a leader of leaders able to grasp the magnitude of this moment to mobilize, amplify and leverage the voice of its 200 plus members to advance the cause of civil and human rights in measurable ways.** The Leadership Conference/Education Fund provides the strategic leadership and public voice required to:

- *Provide* early identification of critical civil and human rights issues affecting the coalition
- *Build* consensus and mediate issues amongst coalition members to drive maximum legislative success
- *Advance* issues on Capitol Hill in a bi-partisan fashion, being a force-multiplier for the coalition
- *Ensure* administration of justice by executive agencies

- *Build* capacity in the field to advance national and local policy efforts through research and education
- *Deliver* a measured, thoughtful voice of power at home and abroad
- *Maintain* unity amongst a tremendously diverse group of organizations with varied interests, political sensitivities and goals

**Looking to the future, the next leader will also:**

- *Create* new approaches to drive regulatory and policy change while continuing to work toward legislative change
- *Engage*, enlist and marshal the next generation of leaders including Millennials and new and emerging organizations
- *Represent* the needs of the growing and changing demographics of the U.S., and their perspectives on civil and human rights
- *Expand* field capacity through training, technical assistance and coalition building to strengthen the overall social justice movement
- *Develop, coordinate and leverage* communications strategies, including the use of social media, in a manner complementary to members in order to amplify their voice
- *Increase* and diversify funding, consistent with the goals of the organization
- *Enlist* the support of the business community, as appropriate, to support and advance issues.

## THE ORGANIZATION

**The Leadership Conference, a 501(c) (4), was founded in 1950 and has coordinated lobbying efforts on every civil rights law since 1957.** Its primary role is legislative and administrative advocacy, and its current budget is \$2 million. The Education Fund, a 501C(c)(3), with a \$7million budget, was founded in 1969 with the mission to build public will for federal policies that promote and protect civil rights. The Education Fund campaigns empower and mobilize advocates around the country to push for progressive change in the United States.

**Located in Washington D.C. with a total staff of 50, the two organizations work in partnership to advance civil and human rights issues.** The staff works in five departments; policy, field, communications, development and finance and administration. Program work is organized through teams of policy, communications and field staff. Coalition members rely heavily on The Leadership Conference/Education Fund for representation on Capitol Hill and strategic advice, whether dealing with Congress, the Administration or the corporate community. In return, members offer their issue expertise to co-chair task-forces, teaming with The Leadership Conference/Education Fund staff to inform and develop policy and positions in critical areas.



Priority issues include:

- Voting rights
- Criminal justice reform
- Educational equity
- Economic security

The Leadership Conference/Education Fund also provides a civil and human rights perspective to infrastructure issues such as: transportation policy, telecommunications advancement and housing. They also continue to lead on judicial nominations and the census, and to educate about the need for immigration reform, as legislative progress has stalled in Washington. Engaging and training state and local leaders on how to form coalitions and advance issues is increasingly important as well.

*From rallies in the streets to Twitter storms on social media; from campaigns for a living wage and equal pay for equal work to the Black Lives Matter movement for criminal justice reform; from religious communities to disabled advocates and older Americans fighting for freedom and inclusion; from immigration reform activists advocating on behalf of aspiring Americans to LGBTQ Americans and Muslims, Arabs and South East Asians engaged in a fierce fight against bigotry, discrimination, and exclusion – we see that our communities are ready and willing to strap in for the long fight.*

The Education Fund recently received a substantial grant to educate state and local leaders on the Every Student Succeeds Act. With these resources, The Education Fund is helping state and local leaders understand the legislation, what's left to the States and how they can communicate with their constituency and elected officials. The Leadership Conference/Education Fund is also routinely called upon to lead the strategy and be the public voice on business, national and international issues where a civil and human rights voice and perspective is needed.

## THE RESPONSIBILITIES

**The President and CEO will be a leader of leaders with a record of success in promoting and protecting civil and human rights.** She or he will manage the organization to achieve next-level excellence, vitality, growth and impact.

The President and CEO will be:

- 1. An accomplished, visionary, strategist and public spokesperson able to identify, represent and advance issues on behalf of the coalition.** With a deep knowledge of civil and human rights issues, the President and CEO will be able to quickly distinguish those issues that affect the broader coalition, galvanize support, develop and execute measurable means of legislative, policy or regulatory progress.



- 2. An influential leader on the national and international stage.** The President and CEO will be a confident and charismatic leader. He or she will be a credible spokesperson on civil and human rights and relevant national and international issues. He or she will have access to bi-partisan leaders and represent the needs of coalition members in places where they may not have entree. Whether the conversations are on Capitol Hill, with the Administration, in a brokered meeting behind the scenes, or in the presence of media, the President and CEO will carry their voice to places of power.



- 3. A diplomatic and honest broker able to effectively facilitate consensus on issues where coalition members may have opposing or divergent views.** He or she will possess a sophisticated, nuanced sense of the prevailing issues and have the diplomacy and gravitas to negotiate an agreement, driving consensus and compromise amongst coalition members and ensuring everyone is heard and part of the

process.

- 4. An effective manager of a multi-dimensional organization.** The President and CEO will be an experienced, strategic manager of people and process. She or he will bring management acumen and the ability to lead, develop and empower staff. He or she will have the confidence and contacts to hire and retain talented leaders with complementary skill sets.
- 5. Able to attract and grow resources.** The President and CEO will have a proven record of engaging donors of all kinds and building significant, growing and sustainable financial support. She or he will have uncommonly strong relationship skills and the ability to engage a broad and growing base of supporters. The President and CEO will be a dynamic communicator, speaker and fundraiser.
- 6. An exceptional relationship builder.** The President and CEO will have demonstrated the ability to build effective, diverse and trusting bi-partisan relationships on all levels, with multiple stakeholders and partners, national and international governmental and non-governmental organizations, business leaders, labor unions, legislators, current and prospective donors.

## PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

**The ideal candidate is a respected leader with extensive relevant experience and demonstrated passion for civil and human rights. Personal assets include:**

- Strategist with a compelling, powerful voice and the ability to excite and engage broad, changing and diverse coalitions across generations and diverse audiences, using traditional and new media
- Ability to garner and inspire trust, build consensus, unify and lead
- An even-tempered disposition with good judgement and success working in a bi-partisan manner
- Superior intellect, emotional intelligence and nimbleness
- Insight to bring an equity and civil and human rights lens to infrastructure issues such as housing, transportation, technology and employment
- Depth and sophistication on issues such as criminal justice reform, voting rights, educational equity, and economic security

- Skilled diplomat, experienced with Capitol Hill, comfortable with discretion
- Proven management, team building, critical thinking and problem solving abilities.

## THE RELATIONSHIPS

The President and CEO is responsible and accountable for leading The Leadership Conference/Education Fund and making critical decisions on behalf of the coalition. The President and CEO also:

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| <b>Reports to:</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights Board of Directors</li><li>• The Leadership Conference Education Fund Board of Directors</li></ul>   |
| <b>Manages:</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Executive Vice President and COO</li><li>• Executive Vice President and Director of Public Policy</li><li>• Executive Vice President for Field and Communications</li></ul>  |
| <b>Plays a leadership role with other key stakeholders including:</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coalition Members</li><li>• Government officials in the U.S. and internationally</li><li>• Legislative, business, civic, and philanthropic leaders</li><li>• Current and prospective donors and partners</li></ul> |

## THE LOCATION

The Leadership Conference/Education Fund is based in Washington D.C., blocks away from the White House and a short cab ride from the nation's capital.



**For potential consideration or to suggest a prospect,  
please email**

**[CivilRights@BoardWalkConsulting.com](mailto:CivilRights@BoardWalkConsulting.com)**

**or call**

**Crystal Stephens, John Sparrow or Patti Kish at 404-262-7392.**