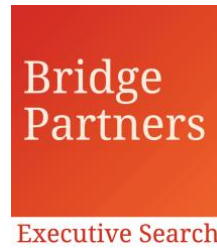




Advocates for Children of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn



ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN OF NEW YORK

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

<https://advocatesforchildren.org/>

The Organization:

Advocates For Children (AFC) is a dynamic social justice organization that strives to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds.

Since 1971, AFC has been speaking out for the children and youth who are at greatest risk for failure or discrimination in school because of their poverty, race, disability, immigrant or English Language Learner status, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, or involvement in the foster care or juvenile justice systems.

No other city-wide organization is like AFC: working in the trenches to provide these vulnerable students and their families with urgently needed guidance and advocacy, while at the same time, pressing for systemic reforms that benefit all students, even those who are most challenging to educate.

Our efforts on the individual and policy levels inform and strengthen each other, further increasing our effectiveness for the communities we serve.

The Need:

Of the approximately 1 million students enrolled in New York City public schools, over 20% are classified as needing special education services, and 72% live in poverty. A staggering number of these students need additional assistance or support to succeed academically. The demand for our services has always far exceeded the supply.

Our Model

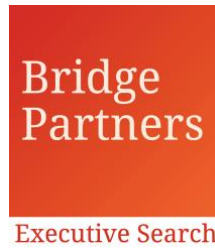
AFC simultaneously works side by side with students and their families, providing the one-on-one guidance and advocacy they need, while pressing for systemic reforms that benefit all students. Our unique and flexible approach to problem-solving gets students the support they need to succeed, educates and empowers families, and drives meaningful education reform.

Free advice and legal representation

We help families of students who are struggling or experiencing discrimination in school to protect their education-related rights and obtain the educational support their children need.



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Free trainings and workshops

Our know-your-rights trainings for parents, communities, educators, and other professionals equip them to better advocate on behalf of students.

Policy advocacy

Based on our 50 years of on the ground experience, we conduct policy advocacy that spurs change in the education system and improves education outcomes.

Impact litigation

When real change will not happen without a court order, our impact litigation provides the most marginalized students protection under the law, gives them the opportunity to receive a quality education, and compels education reform.

Our Values:

Family-Centered

We listen to what families want for their children and empower them with information and support.

Expertise

We ground our advocacy in more than 50 years of experience with the NYC public schools and deep knowledge of the legal and education systems affecting the students and families we serve.

Passion

We are united by our unrelenting drive to dismantle obstacles to education and our unwavering dedication to NYC's students and families.

Community

We foster collaboration and inclusive practices within our team and with outside partners so we can learn from different perspectives and unite in advancing our common goals.

Justice

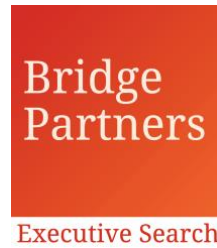
We view the law as a powerful tool to bridge gaps in access to education and help families from under-represented communities fight for their rights.

Impact

We recognize that our value lies in the difference we make in the lives of students and their families and push ourselves to achieve concrete results.



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The Role

- Location:** New York, NY
(Hybrid, in-office & remote)
- Reports to:** AFC Board of Directors
- Team:** Direct reports include Deputy Director, Chief Operating Officer, Director of Development, Policy Director, Director Project LIT, Senior Communications Manager, Director of Equity and Impact (currently vacant)
- Overview:** AFC is seeking an inspirational, strategic, and mission-driven Executive Director to lead the organization through its next chapter of impact. The Executive Director will provide visionary leadership, ensuring AFC's long-term sustainability, programmatic success, and continued role as a leader in educational justice.

This position is responsible for fundraising, program leadership, and leading the organization, balancing external engagement with strong internal management. The Executive Director will serve as a key spokesperson, building relationships with funders, policymakers, media, and community partners while ensuring operational excellence.

This role requires passion and subject-matter expertise, strong fundraising acumen, and a high level of emotional intelligence to foster an equitable, inclusive and empowering workplace culture.

Key Responsibilities:

Visionary Leadership & Strategic Direction

- Develop and execute a five-year strategic plan, ensuring AFC's mission and sustainable growth, remaining at the forefront of educational justice.
- Assess and prepare for an opportunity to scale/deepen AFC's impact, ensuring the structures and systems support long-term sustainability.
- Drive strategic decision-making in areas such as fundraising, policy, advocacy, and organizational growth.
- Maintain high-level engagement with staff, ensuring an inclusive and approachable leadership style.
- Sustain and evolve AFC's role in diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism efforts, ensuring that staff know and feel that the Executive Director is genuinely committed to advancing these principles within the organization.
- Effectively balance the internal and external components of an Executive Director's responsibility, including close partnership with - and appropriate reliance upon - the Executive Team and project leads.



Fundraising & External Relations

- The Executive Director must be an exceptional fundraiser, highly skilled at relationship-building, networking, and direct donor engagement.
- Bring a "no fear" approach to fundraising, comfortable showcasing AFC's impact and making the ask.
- Ensure that fundraising remains a Board priority, including increasing Board engagement in giving and donor outreach.
- Highly skilled at developing productive relationships with government officials and policy-makers.
- Represent AFC in media, advocacy, and public speaking engagements, increasing public visibility and positioning AFC as a leader in education policy.
- Attend appropriate galas and donor cultivation meetings/events to build AFC's donor base and presence in philanthropic circles.

Organizational & Executive Leadership

- Lead as both a strategist who can articulate the vision and an implementor/manager in a "roll up your sleeves" culture.
- Authentically lead in an impassioned, high-touch, and people-centered culture, ensuring that staff continue to feel heard, valued, and supported, centering inclusivity in decision-making processes.
- Ensure a leadership structure that is strategic rather than reactive, helping to build a high-performing team.
- Oversee financial planning, budgeting, and resource allocation, ensuring fiscal sustainability.

Policy & Advocacy

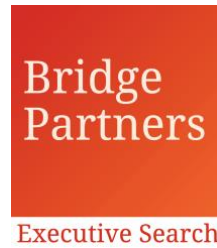
- Represent AFC as a well-prepared and passionate thought leader in education policy and advocacy, ensuring that the organization continues to be a key player in education policy development and conversations.
- Lead as a strong policy advocate; if not already a policy expert, learn AFC's issue areas quickly, develop strong messaging, and help drive strategy, sustaining and strengthening AFC's reputation as a leader in the field.
- Continue AFC's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and racial justice, addressing issues around anti-racism and systemic inequities in education.

Media & Public Relations

- The Executive Director must be comfortable engaging with the media as a credible and prepared spokesperson, speaking about education advocacy and the nonprofit sector and ensuring that AFC's work is well-represented in public discussions.
- Work with AFC's communications team and other staff, as well as external partners, to shape public narratives and media strategy.



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Board Relations & Governance

- Develop and maintain strong relationships with the members of the Board to ensure positive support and strategic organizational oversight, and effectively leverage their expertise to further AFC's impact, operations, financial stability and mission.
- Foster Board engagement, ensuring a well-rounded and diverse governing body that reflects AFC's values.
- Work with the Board to promote fundraising participation and long-term financial sustainability.

The Person:

The successful candidate will be a passionate advocate, organizational leader and culture champion. They will be an engaged, mission-driven, courageous, curious, and approachable executive who fosters an environment of joy and collaboration.

Strong candidates for this role will possess a majority of the following professional and personal attributes and competencies:

Professional Experience

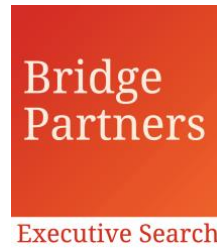
- Understanding of, and personal/professional passion for, AFC's mission.
- 15+ years of senior leadership experience, preferably in education advocacy, legal services, nonprofit management, or social justice organizations.
- Direct experience with large urban center nonprofits, of a similar size to AFC, that provide services to low-income communities and families, legal organizations, education advocacy organizations etc, will be valued.
- A legal background is strongly preferred but not required.
- An expert in their field—whether that's education, law, advocacy, or nonprofit leadership—with the credibility to lead both internally and externally.
- Proven fundraising expertise, including cultivating major gifts, foundation funding, and corporate partnerships.
- Experience engaging with the media and serving as a public voice for an advocacy organization.
- A prior public policy and advocacy background will be valued; however, the ability to message AFC's work effectively is critical.

Leadership Style & Characteristics

- A **mission-driven** leader with a deep commitment to educational equity and AFC's focus on students who face barriers to academic success.
- **Empathetic** and **compassionate**, with a genuine desire to serve vulnerable children and families.



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- Embodies a "**can do**" attitude, remaining resilient and optimistic in the face of obstacles.
- Exceptional interpersonal and leadership skills, with an **approachable** and high-touch style and a talent for teamwork, mentoring and team building.
- Desire to **learn**, both as an individual and as part of an organization, and apply diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism principles.
- An **effective** communicator, motivator, and delegator who earns trust and delivers on goals.
- **Exceptional** in their ability to connect, inspire, and elevate those around them.
- A natural **collaborator** who believes in the power of teamwork and values diverse perspectives across staff, board, partners, and community stakeholders.
- A **courageous** advocate, relentlessly **driven** to make a difference, with a track record of follow-through and results.
- **Impactful** in their work—strategic, intentional, and focused on outcomes that matter.
- Exceptional **judgment**, **professionalism**, and **discretion** in handling confidential and sensitive information and situations.

Education:

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree will be viewed as a plus.

Compensation:

- This is a full-time position, with a salary in the range of \$210,000-\$240,000, depending on experience, and includes a comprehensive benefits package.

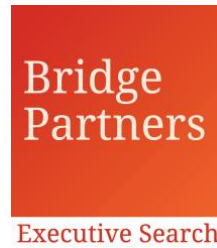
Benefits:

- AFC's current compensation package includes medical and dental insurance, with a plan option that covers full payment of medical plan premiums for staff and their qualified dependents.
- AFC has generous time-off policies that include 10 federal holidays, office closure between Christmas and New Year's Day, and 15 vacation days and 15 paid time off days in the first year of employment.
- AFC also offers a 403(b) plan with a fully vested employer match and coverage of the premium cost of life insurance, short-term disability insurance, and long-term disability insurance.

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AFC is an equal opportunity employer that actively seeks to recruit and retain a diverse staff and especially encourages applications from people of color, persons with disabilities, parents of persons with disabilities, persons of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or gender expressions and persons of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

AFC is committed to providing access, equal opportunity, and reasonable accommodation when requested by a qualified applicant or employee with a disability or other protected characteristic. The policy regarding requests for reasonable accommodation applies to all aspects of employment, including the application process.

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To be considered for this opportunity, please e-mail a resume and cover letter to:

Tory Clarke
Partner, Bridge Partners
tory.clarke@bridgepartnersllc.com

Neeta Mehta
Partner, Bridge Partners
neeta.mehta@bridgepartnersllc.com

Candidates should highlight why they are interested in this role at AFC and how their experience aligns with the Executive Director position, including any personal or professional experience that demonstrates a connection to the populations that AFC serves.

Priority will be given to applications submitted by May 5th 2025 although we will continue to receive and review applications until the position is filled.