



<https://www.blackoakscenter.org/>

Position Profile – Chief Operating Officer

Organization Overview

The Black Oaks Center for Sustainable Living (BOC) has been working to build community resilience since 2006. We operate from our 40-acre eco campus in the historic Black farming community of Pembroke Township, Illinois a short distance from Chicago, IL. Our focus is to serve and equip the community with skills in sustainable agriculture, sustainable building, and renewable energy – all grounded in resilience. We accomplish our mission through

- Local food system development (peri urban from Pembroke to Chicago)
- Teaching and experiential learning/skills building
- Technical assistance and advisory services to local landowners
- Building collaborative partnerships and networks

We are currently in a growth mode of assisting local farmers to retain and build viable farm enterprises on their land through the Pembroke Farmland Restoration initiative. This and other opportunities have created the need to have an experienced, mission-driven leader join our growing team.

Position Summary

Based on current and projected growth in our programming, we have created the position of Chief Operating Officer to focus on strengthening and managing our operational and financial infrastructure. This role is responsible for overseeing the organization's administrative functions, ensuring that internal controls are sound and transparent, and adding strategic acumen to the leadership team. Given the complexity of systems and relationships that make Black Oaks Center successful, the position requires someone with a collaborative, focused, and relational approach to the work.

Essential Functions & Responsibilities

- Acting as a strategic partner with the leadership team, board of directors and external stakeholders
- Managing administrative operations including maintaining internal controls, records, and tracking systems
- Overseeing core operational functions including technology, contract administration, human resource systems, financial management, accounting, insurance, and facility management
- Serving as liaison with organizational vendors and contractors
- Managing multiple projects and programs that have varying characteristics, requirements and time demands
- Creating analytical tools and processes to support operations and decision-making
- Overseeing and managing communications processes
- Supporting BOC's programs to ensure adherence to deadlines and reporting requirements
- Developing and implementing policies and procedures

- Providing regular reports and analyses on operations and systems
- Developing and coordinating annual business plans and budgets
- Assisting in the preparation and submission of grant and funding proposals
- Ensuring compliance with governmental regulations and funding criteria
- Continuously looking for ways to improve quality, efficiency, productivity, and resources

Key Experience and Education

- Minimum of a bachelor's degree in a relevant field with a preference of an advanced degree
- At least 7 years of progressive leadership/management experience in nonprofits, farm management, agriculture, environmental justice, community/economic development, and/or business
- Strategic and operational planning
- Building and maintaining effective organizational systems
- Demonstrated responsible management and stewardship of resources
- Demonstrated record of administrative/financial management
- Proficiency working with information technology, finance, accounting, and budgetary processes and systems
- Proven analytical skills supported by a track record of exercising sound judgment, proactive decision making, and collaborative problem solving
- Project and contract management
- Working knowledge of nonprofit fundraising practices (private and governmental) including participating in the development and execution of funding proposals
- Developing and implementing cost-effective practices
- Demonstrated resourcefulness in setting priorities and creating workplace efficiencies
- Maintaining awareness of relevant best practices
- Hiring, supervising, motivating, and evaluating staff

Desired Skills, Competencies & Attributes

- Committed to maintaining a high-performing culture rooted in BOC's mission and core values
- Exceptional interpersonal skills
- Results-, mission- and values-oriented
- Flexible, well-organized, and self-starting
- Excellent communications skills (listening, written, oral and presentation)
- Collaborative team player who builds trust and confidence
- Cultural competence with diverse stakeholder groups
- Flexible, collaborative, and proactive
- Thoughtful and curious
- Committed to giving and receiving constructive feedback
- Strategic thinking and problem-solving
- Committed to values-based management practices, learning, and continuous improvement
- Proficient in Microsoft Office products (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), QuickBooks, and various form of cloud-based project management and communication platforms and systems
- Proven commitment to social, economic, and racial justice and equity

Position Requirements

- Splitting time being on-site at the Pembroke site and working remotely [**Note.** Due to COVID-19, BOC practices all CDC protocols including social distancing and mask wearing. When it is considered safe, we anticipate easing restrictions and resuming normal contact].
- Access to a vehicle and a valid driver's license
- Ability to work evenings and weekends, as necessary

Salary & Benefits

A competitive salary and benefits package offered, commensurate with experience.

To Apply

Applications should include:

- A cover letter describing your interest, an articulated understanding of the position, and description of how your experience aligns with the position
- A resume that includes a chronological description of experience and education.

Submittals should be sent via email to: bocsearches@gmail.com. To streamline the sorting and review process, please type your name (Last, First) **and** BOC Chief Operating Officer in the subject line of your email.

Notes

- Candidates are advised to follow the application process and refrain from any phone calls, emails or direct communication with BOC Board and Staff.
- Black Oaks Center is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages applications from Black Indigenous People of Color and other marginalized identities. Selection will be based upon individual capabilities and qualifications without regard to race, color, religion, gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation/affectational preference, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, veteran status, or any other protected characteristic as established under law.

Application Period: Interviews with qualified candidates will occur on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Therefore, candidates are advised to apply as soon as possible.