Organizing Strategist Job Description

Overview
For over one hundred years, the ACLU has been at the forefront of every major civil liberties fight in our country’s history. The ACLU of Michigan, founded in 1959, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, public interest organization dedicated to the defense and expansion of civil liberties and civil rights in Michigan. Whether it’s reducing the prison and jail population, achieving full equality for the LGBTQ community, reducing immigration detention, or ending unjust laws that strip people of their fundamental right to vote, we take up the toughest civil liberties issues to defend all individuals from government abuse and overreach. We are a passionate, highly motivated group of lawyers, public policy experts, lobbyists, community organizers, communicators, and fundraisers, and we’re looking for exceptional talent to join our team.

The ACLU of Michigan is deeply committed to racial equity and social justice and is driven to act on these core values. This is an incredibly exciting time to join the ACLU of Michigan. We are building a more expansive advocacy infrastructure to increase our effectiveness to eradicate racial and social inequities in Michigan by building power from within the communities most impacted. Applicants must be able to recognize ways our identities intersect and play out in the work, especially with communities we serve, and must demonstrate the cultural competency to work with a diverse team as well as with historically marginalized communities. The ideal candidate possesses the necessary judgement to recognize ways the ACLU of Michigan can listen, understand, engage, and use its resources to create equitable change alongside historically marginalized communities.
Position Description

The ACLU-MI’s passionate community of activists is stronger than ever. The goal of the Organizing Strategist is to unlock the full potential of ACLU-MI activists, volunteers, and community members working together to create a Michigan that is just and equitable for all. Our mission is made possible through building and sustaining relationships on the ground.

The Organizing Strategist is part of the Political Department, working on issue-based legislative, electoral, and ballot campaigns through an integrated advocacy format that demands a high level of interdependence and works closely with departments across the ACLU-MI. The Organizing Strategist will advance our goals at the local and state levels through creative organizing strategies and tactics, with a strong emphasis on long-term relationship building. The Organizing Strategist reports to the Field Director.

ACLU-MI's COVID-19 protocols are evolving, though we are currently functioning remotely with the option to work in an ACLU-MI office. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is understood that face-to-face meetings with colleagues may be replaced by phone contact and video meetings, facilitated with ACLU-MI operations support. ACLU-MI will provide equipment for remote work.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Base Building

- Develop a base of community advocates who can be mobilized to participate in campaigns, meetings, events, and hearings around issues supported by the ACLU-MI and the national ACLU.
- Commit to a process to become familiar with ACLU issues, policies, and priorities to build the necessary expertise to lead volunteer teams.
• Nurture and strengthen alliances with communities of color, youth groups, formerly incarcerated people, and communities directly impacted by ACLU issues and campaigns.
• Galvanize support of community organizations and cultivate public officials, law enforcement officials, faith leaders, business leaders, donors, and new and diverse communities.
• Mentor strong volunteer leaders by providing guidance, technical assistance, and training opportunities necessary to build effective volunteer teams.
• Support community outreach opportunities for volunteers such as town halls, participation in fairs and festivals, and speaking engagements when appropriate.
• Develop a robust communication and feedback loop between volunteers, stakeholders, and ACLU-MI staff to ensure effective implementation of programming and event promotion.
• Identify opportunities for the ACLU of MI to support and participate in coalitions consistent with the organization's values and priorities.

Leadership Development and Volunteer Mobilization

• Recruit, train, and support members and volunteers to take action on ACLU-MI campaigns and programs. This includes legislative and electoral advocacy.
• Identify, recruit, and sustain volunteer leadership within communities directly impacted by ACLU-MI priority issues and the broader public to help shape campaign goals, strategies, and tactics.
• Ensure that the interests and vision of impacted communities help shape the ACLU-MI’s work on campaigns.
• Collaborate with coalition partners, allies, and ACLU staff to execute community actions and attendance at events (e.g., hearings, rallies, constituent/legislator meetings, public education forums, etc.)
• Plan and execute grassroots actions and events, such as legislative meetings, phone banks, canvasses, and community meetings, in service of larger campaign strategies.
Data and Administration

- Develop appropriate training and volunteer growth opportunities.
- Maintain accurate records on volunteer recruitment and engagement in internal databases and VAN (Voter Activation Network).
- Provide timely activity reports on volunteer participation.
- Participate in regular campaign team meetings.
- Maintain accurate team calendar, budget, and expense records.

QUALIFICATIONS

- At least two (2) years of experience in community/field organizing and base building for political and/or advocacy campaigns.
- A history of working collaboratively and successfully with people and organizations from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and a broad range of ideological positions and religious views.
- Experience putting campaign strategy and tactics for volunteer engagement into practice.
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and strong written and oral communications skills.
- Detail-oriented with strong follow-through and the ability to work independently and meet deadlines.
- Willingness and ability to travel in Michigan and flexibility to work weekend and evening hours when necessary.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Committed to advancing the ACLU’s values, mission, and campaign goals.
- Able to handle and prioritize multiple activities and tasks.
- Takes initiative and demonstrates follow-through.
- Creative, results-oriented, self-starting, and eager to learn.
- A team player who inspires collaboration and functions decisively and with flexibility; a person who assumes the best from colleagues and who resolves conflicts directly.
• Works productively and conducts oneself with a calm and professional demeanor when dealing with the public and/or difficult situations.

SUPERVISION: The Organizing Strategist is a full-time position supervised by the Field Director.

Compensation: The salary range for this position is $60,000-$65,000, depending on experience. Benefits include paid vacation; 100% employer-paid medical, vision, and dental insurance; a 401(k)-retirement benefits plan with employer match; life insurance; and long-term disability insurance.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

To apply, please submit a detailed letter of interest outlining your qualifications, any other information helpful for our review of your candidacy, and the contact information for three references. We prefer your application in digital form emailed to openpositions@aclumich.org; please specify Organizing Strategist in the subject line. If necessary, you can mail the application to:

ACLU of Michigan
2966 Woodward Ave.
Detroit, MI 48201
ATTN: Shelli Weisberg—Organizing Strategist

The position will remain open until filled, but the hiring committee will begin to review applications on April 18, 2022.

Accommodations will happily be made to adjust to restricted technology access or to suit candidates’ time constraints during the pandemic.

The ACLU of Michigan is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities. If you need assistance applying online, please e-mail
openpositions@aclumich.org and include “Accommodation” in the subject line. If you are selected for an interview, you will receive additional information regarding how to request accommodation for the interview process.

The ACLU of Michigan is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, disability, veteran status, record of arrest or conviction and any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

“ACLU of Michigan,” as used in this job description, refers collectively to two separate corporate entities, the ACLU of Michigan and the ACLU Fund of Michigan. The two entities share the same mission, office space, and employees.