Senior Policy Advocate  
Job Opportunities Task Force - Baltimore, MD

Mission of the Job Opportunities Task Force (JOTF):  
To develop and advocate policies and programs to increase the skills, job opportunities, and incomes of low-wage workers and job seekers in Maryland.

Position Description:  
The Senior Policy Advocate is responsible for developing and advancing JOTF’s policy agenda at the state and local levels that seeks to advance employment and livable wages for low-wage job seekers in Maryland. This position focuses on: workforce policy; access to education and work supports; job quality and workplace fairness; barriers to employment; and establishing and strengthening employment pipelines for low-income communities in Maryland through strategic policy reform. The Senior Policy Advocate has a strong understanding of the various political layers of social welfare, family, and economics that impact low-income communities in Maryland. Working closely with the Executive Director, the Senior Policy Advocate forms and maintains strategic relationships with key stakeholders that will achieve the organizational mission. As part of a dedicated, hard-working, collaborative team, the Senior Policy Advocate also performs cross-sectional work to achieve JOTF’s advocacy, program, public education and research, and fundraising goals.

Major Responsibilities include but may not be limited to the following:

Advocacy
- Develop and actively support JOTF’s policy agenda and actively lead it individually and in conjunction with allies at the local and state levels.
- Develop and supervise policy-specific research and analysis related to workforce development, adult education, workplace policies, and barriers to employment.
- Identify opportunities to expand JOTF’s presence in Maryland, particularly in Baltimore County, Eastern Shore and Tri-Counties.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of issues within JOTF’s portfolio and related policy trends.
- Represent JOTF on key state and local taskforces, workgroups, as appropriate.
- Keep current on policy changes and activities at the local, state and, when necessary, federal levels.
- Manage and establish new, strong relationships with key policymakers, administration officials, workforce stakeholders, and community-based organizations and partners.
- Organize and present at public forums to promote JOTF’s research and policy priorities.
- Identify potential opportunities for policy engagement, leadership, and partnership based on JOTF’s organizational mission and priorities.
- Create, develop, and maintain alliances, coalitions and partnerships.

Fund Development and Communications
- Coordinate with JOTF’s Executive Director to diversify organizational funding opportunities.
- Provide grant proposal solicitation and writing assistance in securing funding streams to support JOTF’s policy agenda.
- Work with the organization’s development team in support of JOTF’s fundraising agenda.
- Provide key support to the Executive Director in the planning and coordination of organizational efforts to educate key policymakers on JOTF’s mission and policy agenda.
- Work with the Communications and Development staff to develop strategies to translate policy reform activities to external audiences, particularly funders.
- Develop a media advocacy strategy to include policy memos, op-eds, and blog posts for diverse audiences.
• Develop organizational materials such as reports, policy briefs or fact sheets that complement and communicate JOTF policy values and agenda.

Management and Reporting
• Develop and support a cohesive policy team through establishment of clear expectations, consistent reinforcement of goals and objects, and ongoing coaching to achieve individual and department success.
• Actively supervise and evaluate the advocacy and communications work of the Policy Associate and develop learning opportunities for that role. Supervise interns.
• Prepare regular reports for the Executive Director, Board of Directors on the advocacy priorities and trends and discussions in the field on workforce issues.
• Participate in strategic and cross-functional discussions and learning with the team to inform organization-wide collaborative practices and solutions.
• Participate in developing the annual budget for public policy and communications and assist with related fundraising activities.
• Support key organizational projects with accurate and timely policy and research analysis by tracking latest developments in issue areas and exploring policy development opportunities for JOTF projects.
• Other duties as assigned

Requirements:
● Master’s degree preferred; Bachelor’s degree required.
● At least three years of consecutive advocacy experience and designing and implementing a policy strategy, using data and research to support the strategy, and tracking results, particularly in Annapolis.
● Experience providing testimony and speaking before legislative bodies.
● A strong understanding of policy-making processes in the legislative and executive branches of government.
● Substantive understanding of policy trends on issues facing disadvantaged Marylanders, especially employment-related challenges of low-skill men and women and the workforce needs of employers.
● Experience managing a team and developing rising staff in an advocacy/policy department.
● Excellent writing, speaking and analytical skills.
● Ability to research and analyze problems and propose solutions.
● Organized, detail oriented and can work effectively in both a team and individually.
● Good interpersonal skills and ability to relate effectively with diverse populations.
● Demonstrated ability to handle multiple priorities simultaneously and meet deadlines.
● Experience with fact checking and quick turn-around research tasks a plus.
● Ability to work collaboratively with diverse communities and people.

Position Details:
This is a full-time, permanent position. Work will be based out of our downtown Baltimore, MD office during regular business hours between May - December, with some off-site meetings and occasional after-hours or weekend events. During the legislative session, work will be based in and focused on the Maryland General Assembly’s 90-day legislative session in Annapolis. The ideal candidate will be able to provide his/her own transportation for travel to meetings around the state, community events, and to Annapolis during the legislative session. Downtown parking and reimbursement for business travel are included.

The Senior Policy Advocate reports to JOTF’s Executive Director, and works closely with JOTF staff.

Compensation:
This is a full-time position. Salary is competitive based on experience. JOTF offers a competitive benefits package including health insurance, matched 403(b) and paid leave.
JOTF is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, religious or political affiliation or any other classification considered discriminatory under applicable law. We strongly encourage all to apply.

For background information about the Job Opportunities Task Force, see our website at www.jotf.org.

To Apply:
Send a cover letter with salary requirements, resume, and two short writing samples (no longer than 2 pages each):
  Electronically: resumes@jotf.org
  Or Via Mail: Caryn York
  Job Opportunities Task Force
  217 E. Redwood Street, Suite 1500
  Baltimore, MD 21202