



Connecticut Health FOUNDATION

Changing Systems, Improving Lives.

Vice President of Policy and Communications Hartford, CT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As Connecticut's largest independent health philanthropy, the Connecticut Health Foundation (CT Health) believes that everyone deserves the opportunity for optimal health—regardless of race, background, or income level. CT Health strives to improve the health and well-being of people across the state by focusing on systems change to unlock greater access to quality, affordable care, especially for people of color and underserved communities. With a unique focus on health equity in the region, CT Health works to ensure that communities of color not only have access to care but also receive appropriate and high quality health care.

CT Health leverages change through grant making, leadership development, and by influencing decision makers to ensure greater access and quality of care for Connecticut residents. With an endowment of \$105 million and an annual programmatic and grant making budget of \$4.8 million, CT Health has made a significant commitment to policy, advocacy, and communications initiatives that will advance its mission and strategic goals. CT Health now seeks a new Vice President of Policy and Communications who will lead and give strategic direction to the Foundation's policy and communications efforts.

The new Vice President will shape and implement the new strategic communications plan and build capacity internally and externally to advance CT Health's policy goals. S/he will partner closely with the President and CEO and an engaged board in developing the Foundation's policy agenda and will seek innovative opportunities to integrate policy and advocacy efforts into CT Health's programmatic and grant making activities. S/he will lead government relations efforts, developing and nurturing strong bipartisan relationships throughout Connecticut government and diverse coalitions to improve the health and health care access of Connecticut residents with special attention to underserved populations.

The ideal candidate will bring a keen understanding of the intersection of good communications strategy with effective policy change. S/he will be a collaborative leader internally and externally with the ability to build strong, mutually beneficial relationships with a broad and diverse constituency interested in improving health and health care in Connecticut. The new Vice President will be an effective communicator and spokesperson on behalf of the Foundation who conveys the importance of CT Health's mission to the media, policymakers, key stakeholders, and the general public. This is an exciting opportunity to improve the health and healthcare of the people of Connecticut.

This search is being conducted by Carolyn Ho and Mira Kline of the Nonprofit Professionals Advisory Group. Application instructions can be found at the end of this document.



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Connecticut Health Foundation (CT Health) is the state's largest independent health philanthropy and a leading voice on health equity, the Affordable Care Act, and oral health for low income families. CT Health has awarded over \$58 million in grants in 45 cities and towns throughout the state since 1999. In addition to grant making, CT Health improves lives by leveraging systemic change in both health policy and the health care delivery system. The Foundation has played a leading role in advancing health equity for people of color as a state priority and actively participates in health reform implementation.

CT Health has made a strategic decision to focus on health equity, ensuring that communities of color not only have access to care but have access *and* utilize *quality care* that improves lives and health outcomes. While ninety-six percent of Connecticut residents currently have insurance, over forty percent of African-Americans and Latinos with commercial marketplace plans in the state have not used their insurance and even higher percentages do not have a primary care physician. Despite access gains, the health system has much work to do in closing health disparities gaps in asthma, diabetes, hypertension, and in addressing lower life expectancies for people of color. To combat these trends, the Foundation invests in grant making, policy, program, leadership development, and communications initiatives that help people of color stay enrolled in insurance, navigate the complex insurance and healthcare systems, and find quality ongoing healthcare that meets their needs. CT Health also works to improve the integration of oral and mental health in health care delivery, improve safety net programs, and analyze and track access and health outcomes data by race and ethnicity with the ultimate goal of improving health outcomes.

The Foundation has prioritized a culture of integration where program, policy, and communications efforts are aligned. This unique structure accomplishes more than would be possible if the work was concentrated in a single team. CT Health has recently made a significant investment in policy and communications. At the end of 2015, the Foundation adopted a new strategic communications plan that includes a campaign-focused strategy, expanded investment in paid and digital media, a robust outreach strategy to policy leaders and their staff, and emphasis on increasing the communications capacity of grantees. This is an exciting opportunity for a new leader to increase the Foundation's impact by leveraging partners, grantees, and other resources to influence policy change and utilizing best-in-field communications strategies to extend the Foundation's reach in Connecticut and embed health equity strategies throughout the health system.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FACING THE NEW VICE PRESIDENT

The Vice President of Policy and Communications reports to the President and CEO and provides vision and strategy for the Foundation's communications and health policy objectives. In the first 12-18 months, the new Vice President should expect to engage in the following opportunities and challenges:

Develop and implement CT Health's key policy initiatives in partnership with the Foundation's President and Policy Committee

The new Vice President will develop the annual policy agenda that is grounded in the Foundation's strategic plan and annual operating plan, aligned with key grantees, and informed by the state's current political climate. S/he will stay abreast of both emerging health policy issues and relevant state and federal policy, budget, and regulatory changes, especially those pertaining to ACA, Medicaid, and health equity. S/he will work in partnership with the Vice President of Programs to support policy and advocacy grantees and find innovative ways to both build their capacity and engage them in the Foundation's broader policy efforts.

***Refine and implement the strategic communications plan***

The new Vice President will be responsible for the strategic positioning of the Foundation and will align staff and organizational resources to achieve CT Health's strategic goals in policy and communications. S/he will oversee the development of content and maximize the best platforms for reaching target audiences. The new VP will also enhance grantees' communications capacity through training, shared content generation, and technical assistance. S/he will lead the development and implementation of a communications plan that will introduce and promote CT Health's next strategic plan starting in 2017, including a comprehensive website refresh. In addition to implementing the new long-term strategic communications plan, s/he will oversee the creation and execution of the annual communications plan and evaluation.

Build strong, bi-partisan relationships throughout state government that advance CT Health's policy goals

The new Vice President will oversee CT Health's government relations efforts by forging strong relationships with key policymakers. S/he will collaborate with CT Health's portfolio of seasoned policy and advocacy grantees as well as build the capacity of grantees, especially those new to advocacy work, to be effective advocates on critical health issues the Foundation supports. S/he will seek to broaden the Foundation's impact by developing strong coalitions and convening key stakeholders to identify and discuss innovative solutions to improving the health of Connecticut's residents. The Vice President will represent the Foundation on select state-wide health policy advisory committees and seek out new opportunities to ensure that health care safety net programs are preserved, that Connecticut continues to maintain strong insurance enrollment, and that appropriate and high quality health care is available to the state's most vulnerable populations.

Serve on CT Health's senior leadership team, partnering on integration of key program areas and providing input on future programmatic initiatives and strategic planning

The new Vice President will be a key partner with the President, board, and senior staff in shaping both current programmatic initiatives and the Foundation's strategic planning process in 2017. S/he will ensure the integration of program, policy, and communications teams, working closely with the CEO and Vice President of Program on shared objectives that increase CT Health's impact. S/he will support the implementation of the pilot year of CT Health's redesigned leadership program which will focus on advancing the next generation of health policy and advocacy leaders.

Manage the communications and policy staff and budget

The Vice President will lead and develop a staff of two who will execute on key aspects of the communications strategy and annual policy agenda. S/he will employ and oversee consultants and provide oversight to key campaign initiatives or other special projects as appropriate.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

While no one candidate will embody all the qualifications enumerated below, the ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes and experiences:

- Ten or more years of experience in public policy, advocacy, government, public affairs, public relations, journalism, communications, or a related field; A background in political or advocacy campaigns that blend policy objectives and strategic communications is highly desired; Expertise in health care or public health and an understanding of the changing landscape of health reform is a plus; Bachelor's degree in a related field required, Master's degree preferred;
- A passion for CT Health's mission of achieving a more equitable health care system for people of color and underserved populations;



- Ability to forge lasting relationships with public officials, the media, advocates, clinical providers, non-profit organizations, and community leaders; Keen understanding of how to advance policy change in a state like Connecticut;
- Impeccable writing, editing, presentation, and oral communication skills that convey the Foundation's value proposition, raise the organization's profile, and take into account the diverse interests of multiple stakeholders;
- Exceptional public speaking skills and comfort serving as public spokesperson on behalf of the Foundation; Savvy in leveraging media contacts for strong placement of issues central to CT Health's mission;
- Expertise in building capacity and training partners and grantees in communications, policy work, and advocacy;
- Proven ability to leverage diverse coalitions around a shared agenda; Bipartisan approach that builds strong relationships with those of diverse viewpoints;
- Critical thinking paired with a pragmatic approach that can identify opportunities for systems change in creative and innovative ways;
- Multicultural perspective that understands the unique challenges people of color face in accessing the health care system and receiving quality care;
- Ability to work independently or in teams; Collegiality to inspire others to work toward achieving common goals; Flexibility to manage multiple and competing priorities simultaneously;
- A healthy sense of humor and appreciation for the personal creativity and inspiration that can come from work that is in service to others; The ability to carry that inspiration, creativity, and fun into work with the staff and Board.

TO APPLY

More information about the Connecticut Health Foundation may be found at: <http://www.cthealth.org/>.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Applications including a cover letter describing your interest and qualifications, your resume (in Word format), salary history and where you learned of the position should be sent to: CTHF-VP@nonprofitprofessionals.com. In order to expedite the internal sorting and reviewing process, please type your name (Last, First) as the only contents in the subject line of your e-mail.

**Connecticut Health Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and proudly values diversity.
Candidates of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.**