

HEIDRICK & STRUGGLES

Position Specification

Public Counsel

Chief Executive Officer

2020

Overview

Organization Overview

The Position

The Person

Engagement Team

Public Counsel Overview

Public Counsel, the nation's largest *pro bono* law firm, seeks a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The organization's activities are far-ranging, including both providing direct services to individual clients in California and engaging in strategic impact litigation for social justice nationally.

In addition to its own staff, Public Counsel works with major law firms and corporations to change people's futures through the provision of *pro bono* legal services. Since its founding in 1970, it has employed a *pro bono* model that leverages the talents and dedication of thousands of attorney volunteers – annually assisting more than 16,000 families, children, immigrants, veterans, and nonprofit organizations.

The organization addresses systemic poverty, economic injustice, and civil rights issues through impact litigation and policy advocacy, having a national impact in these areas. Some of its recent representations include the successful defense of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy at the Supreme Court and the establishment of a constitutional right to literacy in the Sixth Circuit.

Website

<http://www.publiccounsel.org>

Overview

Organization Overview	●	Board Members	<p>Philip E. Cook, Chair, The Cook Law Firm, P.C</p> <p>Jonathan H. Anshell, Vice Chair, ViacomCBS Media Networks</p> <p>Karen N. Frederiksen, Treasurer, The Walt Disney Company</p> <p>Dan Grunfeld, Secretary</p> <p>Full board (link)</p>
The Position	●	Management	<p>Margaret Morrow, Outgoing President and CEO</p> <p>Tracy Rice, Vice President, Chief Development Officer</p> <p>Lynne Bolen, Vice President, Finance and Chief Financial Officer</p> <p>Cindy Panuco, Vice President and Chief Program Officer</p> <p>Rachel Roberts, Vice President, Human Resources and Administration</p>
The Person	●	Key Practice Areas	<p>Center for Veterans' Advancement: Campaigns for military veterans by helping them overcome trauma, escape homelessness and provide for their families</p> <p>Children's Rights: Expands children's rights through litigation, lobbying and direct services to hundreds of foster youth, students and adoptive children</p> <p>Community Development: Supports non-profits and small businesses in cutting through red tape to pursue their dreams, and sustaining, preserving and protecting affordable neighborhoods</p>
Engagement Team	●		

Overview

Organization Overview

The Position

The Person

Engagement Team

Key Practice Areas *Continued*

[Consumer Rights](#): Champions the rights of consumers, including representing families who risk losing their homes and livelihoods to fraud and providing legal assistance to people facing bankruptcy

[Education Rights](#): Combines litigation, legislative and policy change, direct service and community partnerships to create opportunity, foster equality, and promote success for all students

[Homelessness Prevention](#): Prevents homelessness among families, individuals and people with HIV/AIDS, and assists people in escaping life on the streets

[Immigrants' Rights](#): Promotes the rights of immigrants nationwide and represents children, victims of domestic violence and people fleeing torture

[Opportunity Under Law – Impact Litigation](#): Combats economic injustice in all its forms through class action, representative impact litigation, public awareness strategies and community organization, succeeding in achieving a number of significant legal victories in state and federal courts in recent years.

[Women and Girls' Rights](#): Advances equal justice and economic empowerment for low-income women and girls through legal education, integrated assistance and systems change

Overview

Organization Overview

Public Counsel's
Commitment to Diversity,
Equity & Inclusion

Public Counsel is committed to enhancing the diversity of its staff and its Board of Directors.

Public Counsel is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment regardless of age, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, military/veteran status or any other status protected by law.

The Position

On June 1, 2020, Public Counsel President & CEO Margaret Morrow issued the following statement on recent events: "This is a moment in which silence is not an option. For racial justice to prevail in our country, we must all do our part to dismantle systemic racism. . . . We hope you will join with us and commit to building a country where Black lives matter." The full statement can be found at: <http://www.publiccounsel.org/stories?id=0307>.

The Person

Engagement Team

Overview

Organization Overview

The Position

The Person

Engagement Team

Example of Public Counsel's Work & Impact:
Direct Service

Challenge

Ensuring all in the LA community have access to the provision of direct legal services

Public Counsel's Action and Impact

- Through its own staff and thousands of pro bono volunteers providing direct representation, Public Counsel provides a wide variety of legal services to low-income individuals, nonprofits and small businesses.
- Examples of areas in which Public Counsel provides assistance: adoption of foster youth, guardianship, children with developmental disabilities, victims of trafficking and violent crimes, foreclosure scams, bankruptcy, consumer fraud, legal representation for veterans, servicemembers' Civil Relief Act claims, affordable housing advocacy, evictions, tickets and warrants, employment disputes, government benefits, business formation, contracts, and intellectual property.
- Public Counsel's provision of direct legal services can be seen through the organization's work with deported veterans. In March of this year, Public Counsel assisted a 51-year-old deported US Veteran in returning to the U.S. after nearly 20 years of being separated from his children and grandchildren.
- Similarly, in February, attorneys from Public Counsel and Greenberg Glusker relieved a 55-year old substitute teacher of \$327,000 in student loan debt in his bankruptcy case. The case was the largest successful discharge of student loan debt through the assistance of Public Counsel's Debtor Assistance Project.

Overview

Organization Overview

The Position

The Person

Engagement Team

Example of Public Counsel's Work & Impact:
Impact Litigation, Immigrants' rights

Challenge

Fighting the Trump Administration's decision to end DACA

Public Counsel's Action and Impact

- Public Counsel was honored to represent six DACA recipients who fought the Trump Administration's decision to end DACA.
- Their suit, *Garcia v United States*, resulted in a nationwide injunction that blocked the Administration from ending DACA for over two years.
- On June 18, 2020, in a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court delivered a victory for DACA recipients.
- *"The decision overturning the rescission of DACA is just what the nation needed. It means that 700,000 DACA recipients can live their lives in full, continuing to give to the only country they've ever known and doing their part to make the United States whole again. The historic decision by Chief Justice Roberts means that for now and forever the Executive Branch must be accountable for its decisions that would upend lives and livelihoods, that would destroy community bonds."* – Mark Rosenbaum, directing attorney of Public Counsel's Opportunity Under Law program

Overview

Organization Overview

The Position

The Person

Engagement Team

Example of Public Counsel's Work & Impact:
*Impact Litigation,
Education rights*


Challenge

Ensuring the right to education

Public Counsel's Action and Impact

- In April 2020, in response to an appeal filed in 2018 on behalf of Detroit public school students, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a groundbreaking ruling that all children have a constitutional right to a “basic minimum education” ensuring they have access to literacy.
- The ruling was a historic opinion that affirmed a fundamental right to basic minimum education, adding “a basic minimum education has a longstanding presence in our history and tradition, and is essential to our concept of ordered liberty.”
- The students were co-represented by Public Counsel.

The Position



Organization Overview	Position Title	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
The Position	Location	Los Angeles, California
The Person	Reports to	The CEO reports directly to Public Counsel’s Executive Committee
Engagement Team	Position Summary	<p>The CEO is the principal champion of Public Counsel’s mission, responsible for leading, managing, and growing a dynamic organization serving marginalized communities and advancing economic and social justice in LA and beyond. The CEO will provide the vision, strategy and management expertise to guide and shape Public Counsel amidst a rapidly evolving legal and political landscape, while maintaining the utmost commitment to providing direct services to the individuals and families the organization serves. The CEO will also focus on the many facets of fundraising.</p> <p>This individual will lead the critical work of Public Counsel going forward, including :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting the challenges and opportunities facing disadvantaged individuals and underserved communities in the legal system, while advancing social justice in a changing legal environment• Providing accessible legal services for the people it is meant to serve, both within the LA community and nationally

The Position

Company
Overview

**The
Position**

The
Person

Engagement
Team

Position Summary
Continued

- Tackling issues of access to justice, racial equality, and diversity
- Evaluating the priorities and projects of Public Counsel to drive the organization's vision and mission forward
- Revitalizing Public Counsel's internal culture to foster a motivated and unified organization
- Communicating with the Executive Committee and Board regarding key matters pertaining to the organization
- Engaging the organization's existing donors and pursuing new sources of revenue through fundraising and community engagement

The Position

Company
Overview

**The
Position**

The
Person

Engagement
Team

Responsibilities

Specific duties of the CEO include:

Strategy & Vision

- In collaboration with the Board and staff, oversee legal and programmatic strategies to ensure Public Counsel is fulfilling its mission – and proactively craft and implement strategies to achieve the objectives of that mission.
- Work with the Executive Committee and Board to review and improve its structure and processes, and ensure it is most effectively set up to support the organization.

Management & Operations

- Be a forceful and effective advocate for Public Counsel and its work at all times.
- Ensure the financial stability and integrity of Public Counsel through responsible budgeting, planning, fundraising and stewardship.
- Enhance the public profile and brand of Public Counsel through public appearances, personal communications and community engagement.
- Advance diversity, equity, and inclusion within Public Counsel.

The Position

Company
Overview

**The
Position**

The
Person

Engagement
Team

Responsibilities
Continued

Fundraising and External Engagement

- Serve as a key spokesperson to the organization’s stakeholders, the media, the public, government officials, and civic groups.
- Maintain and enhance collaborative efforts with partner organizations and legal services providers.
- Play a critical role in the organization’s development efforts, engaging internal and external resources as needed to maximize these efforts.
- Leveraging the internal development team, establish and maintain personal relationships with key donors in order to encourage ongoing and increased support; continue building a constituency that extends beyond the current donor base, including foundation, corporate and individual donors (particularly high net-worth donors); explore and establish strategic partnerships to support development.

The Person

Organization Overview

The Position

The Person

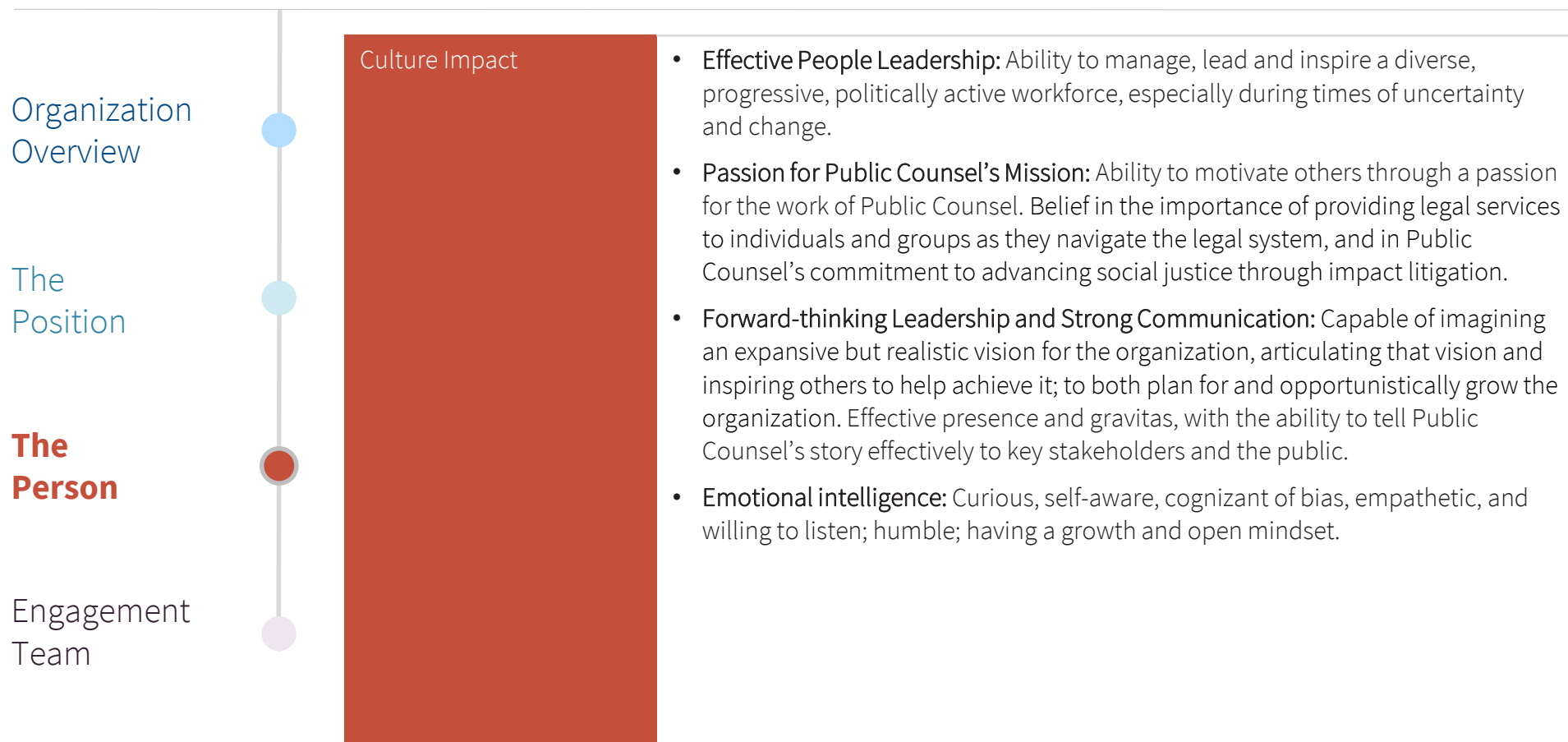
Engagement Team

Pivotal Experience and Expertise

The successful candidate will have earned a JD and have:

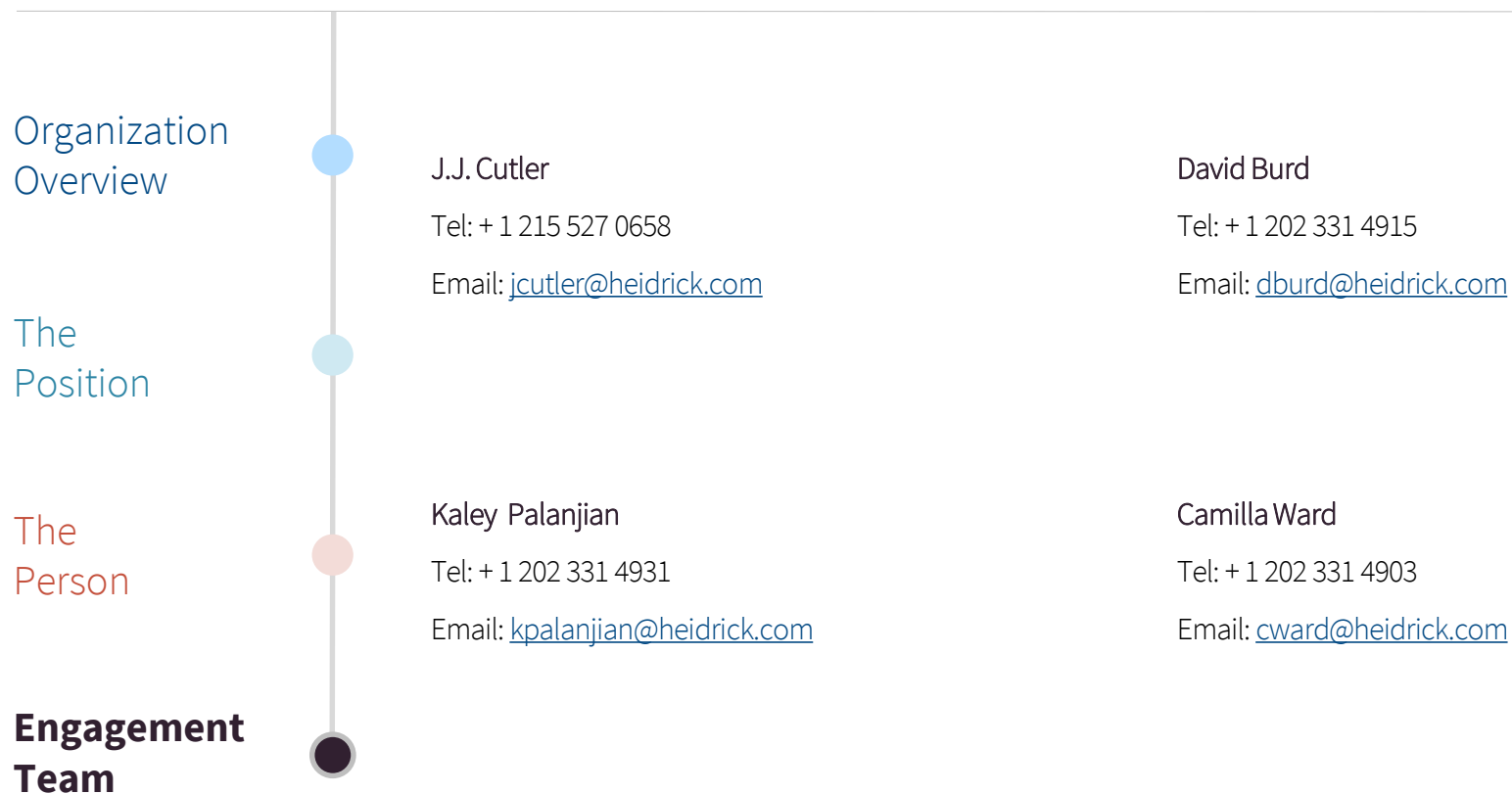
- **Relevant Legal Leadership and Background:** 10+ years of demonstrated leadership experience at a nonprofit, social justice, and/or litigation-focused organization; an academic entity such as a college, university, research institute or law school; a law firm or corporate law department; and/or a relevant government agency or other related enterprise. Demonstrated ability to create a strategic vision, prioritize efforts, and build, organize and manage an organization to realize that vision.
- **Strategic Development:** Aptitude, interest and experience attracting and engaging donors, and building and maintaining relationships with key individual funders or decision makers at organizational funders. Ability to think creatively about how to expand Public Counsel’s base of donors.
- **Management and Team Building Experience:** Experience and demonstrated ability in identifying talent and building, mentoring, and leading teams.
- **Stakeholder Management:** A background building working relationships with key stakeholders and communicating to a variety of audiences, including a Board of Directors, clients, community partners, donors, government and community representatives, and the legal community.

The Person



Engagement Team

Nominations and applications for the position should be directed to PublicCounselCEO@heidrick.com.



Heidrick & Struggles serves the executive leadership needs of the world's top organizations as a trusted advisor for leadership consulting, culture shaping and senior-level executive search services. Our data driven solutions empower senior executives and boards of directors to transform their organizations by leveraging top talent and accelerating performance across all layers of the business.