

Adirondack North Country Association Executive Director

Job Description

The Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) seeks a dynamic, experienced Executive Director to join our rural economic development organization as we build prosperity across 14 counties located within and around New York's Adirondack Park. ANCA's work focuses on creating and sustaining local wealth and improving quality of life through three core program areas — Clean Energy, Food Systems and the Entrepreneurial Economy — as well as its close partnership with the Adirondack Diversity Initiative (ADI).

About the Position

ANCA's Executive Director leads a staff of nearly 20 in implementing an innovative five-year strategic plan with ambitious, measurable goals across the organization. This position has responsibility in three key areas: leadership and management; fundraising and communications; and strategy and planning. The Executive Director works closely with the Adirondack Diversity Initiative to include equity throughout all aspects of ANCA's engagement in the region. The Executive Director is a passionate advocate for North Country communities and economies with regional, state and federal bodies. ANCA is, fundamentally, a service organization that works in close partnership with other nonprofits; the Executive Director must see ANCA in that role as it serves a huge region in northern New York.

ANCA has a high-functioning, close-knit staff driven by our mission and values. We seek a creative individual with a collaborative leadership style who is committed to the principles of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

This position reports to ANCA's Board of Directors and is based in ANCA's main office in Saranac Lake, NY.

Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate has a deep knowledge of the challenges and opportunities facing rural communities and economies in the context of climate change and environmental sustainability. This person may have an economic development background and experience and/or creating systems-level change to achieve sustainable progress. The candidate has experience with ANCA's core program areas: Food Systems, Clean Energy and the Entrepreneurial Economy. They are passionate about creating an economy that works for everyone — not just the few. The candidate has substantive experience addressing the economic challenges facing minoritized and underserved populations, especially after the economic upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This person must be a persuasive and passionate communicator and a good listener with excellent interpersonal and multidisciplinary project skills.

Strong candidates have experience managing \$1M+ budgets and engaging donors, foundations and federal agencies in funding program activities. They will appreciate how a lack of access to capital suppresses rural economic growth, especially for farmers, microenterprises, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)

entrepreneurs and Main Street businesses. The candidate is skilled in centering grass-roots community involvement and constituent participation in their work.

About ANCA

Founded in 1955, ANCA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation with a transformational approach to building prosperity across northern New York. With community-informed, boots-on-the-ground strategies, we seek to create and sustain wealth and value in local communities.

Our work is distinguished by its results-driven focus, creating an inflow of resources, high-impact ideas, investments in infrastructure and greater economic diversity. We measure results and adapt as we scale up programs. We find and leverage the resources to implement broad system changes that will result in long-term impact. We explore, build, learn, adapt and expand our proven programming throughout the region.

Advocating for our region is central to the success of our work. Over the past five years, ANCA has been able to secure and leverage over \$65M in financial resources for local businesses and communities, creating over 150 jobs, supporting 3,400 jobs, impacting 195 communities and engaging 25 school districts. Our programs have influenced New York State's clean energy and farm to school policies. We seek to continue this critical work and change the narrative about our local communities by advocating for policies and resources that support food systems, clean energy and the entrepreneurial economy.

ANCA is recognized at the local, state and federal levels for identifying rural economic challenges and implementing solutions that can go to scale. We are a leader in clean energy use and expansion, small business transition planning and innovative support for the local food economy. Adapting to and minimizing climate change is a major characteristic of our work.

As ANCA has expanded its staff and impact over the past 10 years, we have developed an organizational culture that has proved successful in helping attract and retain high-performing staff. Our culture places a high value on collaboration and a range of viewpoints, accommodation of remote work and flexible schedules, and continuous cultural and critical consciousness development on the intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality and other social identity categories; it is an evolving culture aimed at providing a mutually supportive safety net for the extremely dedicated staff.

Adirondack Diversity Initiative Partnership

In 2019, ADI hired its first full-time, paid director and moved under ANCA's umbrella. Under inaugural director Nicky Hylton-Patterson, ADI is pursuing an aggressive agenda at the intersection of environmental and transformational justice, working to make the Adirondacks a more welcoming and inclusive place for both residents and visitors while ensuring a vital and sustainable Adirondack Park for future generations.

Equicentric Leadership

In a resolution adopted in 2020, ANCA's Board of Directors committed to "intentional action to disrupt 400 plus years of racism and to dismantle the structural inequities that plague our region and our nation."

To this end, we hold ourselves accountable for building a community of staff, board members, advisors, donors, interns, volunteers and partners that demonstrates Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as core values as we pursue an actively anti-racist agenda for the region.

We define human diversity as differences in race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical and/or mental capabilities, and religious beliefs.

We define equity as providing fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement for all people, eliminating barriers that have prevented the full participation of all groups.

We define inclusion as creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to participate fully.

We see diversity as an asset to the region and ANCA's efforts to create economic strength and stability, increased productivity, and a healthy, vibrant place for people to live well.

ANCA respects knowledge, science and a diversity of opinions, including those we may find novel or uncomfortable.

See www.adirondack.org and www.diversityadk.org for more information.

About the North Country

The Adirondack North Country is one of New York's most rural and dramatically beautiful places. This region is native land to three of the five original nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy — the Mohawk, Oneida and Onondaga Nations.

The 14 counties served by ANCA encompass 38 percent of New York's geography. The region is home to 1.26 million people living in 255 small towns, 14 small cities and rural hamlets and three sovereign nations — the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe at Akwesasne and the Oneida and Onondaga Nations.

This northernmost part of New York benefits the whole northeast as a renewable energy exporter (over 95 percent of the electricity generated in the region is from renewable sources), as a major food producer with agricultural products accounting for close to \$1B in market value annually, and for its long-term, globally recognized success in sustaining wild places and rural quality of life in an increasingly fast-paced, connected world.

The person hired should know, however, that positive changes are happening across the region. The North Country has a growing number of small farms - working with nonprofits and stakeholders committed to rebuilding communities around local food production. Renewable energy resources are at the heart of a rapidly growing clean energy economy, and the region is witnessing a resurgence of the culture of innovation, tapping into the innate entrepreneurial and independent character of North Country residents

and newcomers. ANCA has positioned ourselves at the forefront of ensuring that BIPOC New Yorkers have equal access to and the support needed to capitalize on these emerging economies.

Duties & Responsibilities

ANCA's Executive Director drives scale and innovation in the practice of just economic development across our 14-county North Country Region. They have responsibility in three key areas: leadership and management; fundraising and communications; and strategy and planning for each of ANCA's three focus areas — food systems, clean energy and the entrepreneurial economy. The Executive Director also works closely with ADI leadership.

The heads of each of ANCA's program areas report to the Executive Director. The Director of Communications and Development and the Director of Finance and Operations also report to the Executive Director.

Leadership & Management:

- Ensure ongoing local programmatic excellence, rigorous program evaluation and consistent quality of finance and administration, fundraising, communications and systems; recommend timelines and resources needed to achieve the strategic goals
- Actively engage and energize ANCA's board members; partnering organizations; supporters; local, state and federal agencies and other stakeholders
- Maintain, enhance and support a strong Board of Directors; serve as ex-officio for Executive & Personnel and Compliance Committees, and as an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee. Seek and build board engagement with strategic direction for ongoing operations
- Ensure effective systems to track progress and regularly evaluate program metrics to quantify successes and challenges for dissemination to the board, funders and other constituents

Fundraising & Communications:

- Lead efforts in obtaining grants, gifts and contracts
- Work closely with the Director of Communications and Development to expand local revenue generating and fundraising activities to support existing program operations and regional expansion
- Deepen and refine all aspects of communications — from web presence to external relations with the goal of strengthening constituent engagement and philanthropic support
- Use external presence and relationships to garner new opportunities

Strategy & Planning:

- Implement the five-year strategic plan recently launched by ANCA's board
- Develop effective strategies to drive each program area toward achieving its goals
- Work closely with ADI to develop, articulate, and execute the organization's five-year strategic vision for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

- Build partnerships in new markets, establishing relationships with relevant funders and political and community leaders
- Be an external local, regional and national presence that publishes and communicates program results with an emphasis on the successes of the local programs as a model for regional and national replication

Preferred Qualifications

The Executive Director will be thoroughly committed to ANCA's mission. All candidates should have proven leadership, management, mentoring and collaborative relationship-building experience, as well as:

- An action-oriented, entrepreneurial, adaptable and innovative approach to strategy and planning
- An ability to work effectively with multiracial, multiethnic and low-to-moderate (LMI) income stakeholders
- Passion, idealism, integrity, positive attitude; be mission-driven and self-directed
- Demonstrated leadership and experience in addressing the interplay between human activity and natural habitats, as well as the causes of climate change
- Excellence in organizational management with the ability to coach staff, manage and develop highly collaborative teams, set and achieve strategic objectives and manage a \$1M budget
- Past success working with a Board of Directors with the ability to cultivate existing board member relationships
- Strong written and verbal communication skills; be a persuasive and passionate communicator with excellent interpersonal and multidisciplinary project skills
- Able to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and open communication
- Recognized as a creative and practical problem-solver
- A kind, thoughtful and respectful person who can appreciate a variety of viewpoints

Benefits & Salary:

Salary: approximately \$100,000 and a benefits package. ANCA is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes candidates from diverse backgrounds.

How to Apply:

Please send a cover letter, resume and references to: bhobson@adirondack.org. No phone calls please.

Please submit applications by Friday, May 7, 2021.

ANCA encourages applications from persons who identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Color, as well as other underserved and underrepresented communities.