

About the Center for Native American Youth at the Aspen Institute

The Center for Native American Youth (CNAY) believes all Native American youth should lead full and healthy lives, have equal access to opportunity, and draw strength from their culture and inspire one another. As a policy program of the Aspen Institute founded by former U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan (ret.), we work to improve the health, safety, and overall well-being of Native American youth ages 18-24, with special emphasis on youth suicide prevention. We do this through youth recognition and leadership development, research, advocacy, and policy change; Native youth program capacity building; and by connecting Native youth with strengths-based media. We strive to bring greater national attention to the issues facing Native American youth while fostering community-driven solutions. The program, and this position, is based in Washington, DC.

Job Summary:

CNAY is seeking an Executive Director to lead a dynamic and impactful Native American youth leadership development and advocacy organization who can build on its successful growth since its founding in 2011. The candidate must have a very strong understanding of Native American policy issues and deep relationships with tribal communities, tribal leaders, and tribal nonprofit leaders. This position requires a strategic thinker who can work closely with youth and community stakeholders to design programs driven by their vision and rooted in their cultural values, while leveraging the wide resources and expertise of a large organization that is a global leader in the fields of leadership development, policy, and action. In addition to leading the strategic positioning and growth of CNAY's programs, the Executive Director will manage a staff of 5 people and oversee all finance and operational responsibilities for the program. The Executive Director is also responsible for raising funds and other resources for the program, which is an essential part of the job. Finally, the ideal candidate will be the key external representative for the organization and possess strong writing and speaking ability that will raise the profile of CNAY to funders, elected officials, thought leaders, and other key stakeholders.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

1. Strategic Leadership and Management:

- Recruit, manage, and retain a talented team of program staff to achieve the organization's mission and program deliverables.
- Collaborate and coordinate with the CNAY Youth Advisory Board, Aspen Executive team, funders, community partners, and other stakeholders to set a strategic and accountable vision for the organization.
- Consult, collaborate and communicate with the Board of Advisors and Youth Advisory Board on a regular basis about Program goals and activities.
- Youth Advisory Board breakout
- Identify strategic opportunities to partner with other Aspen Institute programs and executive leadership to strengthen the internal and external capacity of CNAY as a leader in the youth leadership and Native American fields.

- Work with CNAY program staff and the Board of Advisors to develop a communications plan that raises the external profile of CNAY and its work, communicates innovatively with its national network of Native youth leaders, and elevates Native youth voices in the media.

2. Development:

- Develop, lead, and implement a strategic fundraising plan that maintains and builds upon an annual operating budget of over one million dollars and a significant reserve fund.
- Ensure fiscal stability through budget management and oversight.
- Cultivate high level investors and donors, manage relationships with key donors and foundations, and lead strategic meetings and events targeted at foundation representatives.
- Write and/or edit proposals, concept papers, project narratives and all other materials related to fundraising for CNAY to be submitted to donors.
- Review and contribute to all quarterly, bi-annual and annual reports to funders.

3. Program Content:

- Oversee the CNAY team's successful design and execution of key leadership development, research, policy, advocacy and communication programs.
- Work closely with Youth Advisory Board and national network of Native youth leaders to identify key issues and priorities to drive program outcomes.
- Build coalitions of Native and non-Native organizations that support Native youth priorities.
- Oversee development of annual State of Native Youth report, which lifts up promising Native youth-led and serving programs and Native youth policy priorities each year.
- Conduct/commission research on local, tribal, state and national system-level barriers, and help create opportunities for Native youth to succeed.
- Work with team to provide targeted technical assistance to local community programs and Native youth leaders that draws on CNAY's expertise, systems of support, and financial resources.
- Work closely with Native youth advisors to identify new program opportunities.

Knowledge, Education & Experience:

The ideal candidate is a strong leader, a 'self-starter' social entrepreneur with a demonstrated ability to create and successfully manage an organization, a deep commitment to serving Native youth, and an established credibility with tribes and Native organizations. The candidate will possess:

- Current knowledge of:
 - Native American youth issues, including relevant statistics and trends;
 - Federal, tribal, state and local policies related to tribal communities and their impacts on youth and families
 - Current best practices in addressing Native American youth engagement and leadership;

- Relevant resources, experts and potential partners in areas related to Native American youth well-being
- Exemplary partnership building skills; the ability to lead on complex issues within and outside of organizations and across various institutions and levels of authority is essential.
- Experience working with Indian tribes and tribal organizations and a strong national network required; direct experience working with vulnerable youth and communities is preferred.
- Proven track record and very strong experience raising financial resources, maintaining strong relationships with current funders and identifying new diverse funding partners for the organization.
- Strong project management skills, including experience managing and reporting on budgets in the nonprofit sector.
- Attention to detail and ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously.
- Ability to travel at least 50 percent.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, cross-cultural competencies, facilitation, presentation and public speaking skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Entrepreneurial spirit and drive needed to excel in a collaborative environment
- Experience working with a national network of entrepreneurial leaders and providing guidance, inspiration, support and buy-in across all groups.

Bachelor's Degree required, and Master's Degree in a relevant field preferred and/or ten or more years' experience in a policy arena, youth development and program management is required.