



Position Description: Chief Executive Officer

OVERVIEW

Umoja Student Development Corporation (Umoja) was founded in 1997 with a mission to equip young people to succeed and confidently claim their futures. Umoja's theory of change is grounded in the understanding that for schools in communities hardest hit by poverty, disinvestment and violence, organizing around academics alone is not sufficient to drive transformation. To complement the academic program, schools need a set of comprehensive and integrated supports to help students navigate the journey through high school to graduation and beyond. Umoja's infusion of human capital and professional development builds the capacity of schools to: eliminate the disconnects that far too many students feel between their current education and future aspirations; build trust between students and adults to help meet the social-emotional needs of students, and reduce conflicts and restore relationships to keep all of our students in school.

THE UMOJA MODEL

Umoja is an essential on-the-ground partner for public schools and districts seeking to increase student engagement, reduce violence, promote academic achievement, and increase graduation and college enrollment rates. Leveraging relationships, resources and programs, Umoja's model of [Social and Emotional Learning](#), [Restorative Justice](#), and [Post-Secondary Readiness](#) creates the conditions in schools for all students to achieve academically, and ultimately realize postsecondary success. Umoja is currently impacting more than 4,500 public high school students in 17 core public high school partners across Chicago, and is delivering professional development to 140 schools, districts, and nonprofits.

Read more about our vision, mission, history, and model [here](#).

OPPORTUNITY

Umoja's next CEO will join a well-respected organization with a strong team, and field-changing program model, poised for greater reach and impact. Working closely with its Board and executive team, the new leader will leverage Umoja's 20+ year history of improving student outcomes, while also facing strategic choices regarding program optimization, growth, and brand-building, that capture, clarify and amplify Umoja's evolution, and position the organization to play a distinct leadership role in an increasingly competitive field.

POSITION

Umoja is seeking a strategic leader who will advance its vision and mission, and enable more students to achieve their potential, by embedding Umoja's proven model in more schools, and partnering with more districts to build the capacity of adults who work with students. The CEO will be accountable internally for driving team performance and outcomes, and will also be a visible member of the education/funding communities, advocating for the value of improving school environments for all students.

The new CEO will create value through high-leverage partnerships with Umoja's board and leadership team, collaborating to creatively and constructively manage strategic and human tensions, and achieve ambitious goals.

Specific **RESPONSIBILITIES** include:

Vision & strategic direction

- Work closely with Board, funders, staff, and stakeholders to develop and align on vision for Umoja's future, with an eye toward growth
- Implement near and medium term goals and direction – including accountability and metrics
- Track progress against goals – continue to refine and iterate with experience and learnings

Representing Umoja externally

- Represent Umoja's brand, vision and organization across external stakeholders, including foundations, public and civic leaders, and sponsors
- Share stories of success and learning – emphasizing the unique value of partnership with Umoja
- Engage with funders and supporters to understand needs; set and achieve funding goals
- Support program team's engagement with current and future school partners to build brand, interest and partnerships that maximize Umoja's impact

Organizational leadership

- Cultivate a strong and transparent working relationship with the Board, and ensure open communication about measurement of programmatic, operational, and financial objectives
- Articulate Umoja's vision and strategic direction internally; inspire and support the development and pursuit of a cohesive set of goals and tactics by leadership team and staff
- Promote an aligned and accountable culture that supports the vision and strategic direction
- Ensure that Umoja sets and meets Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) goals, and brings an equity lens to work with all stakeholders

Other responsibilities

- Ensure sound and efficient fiscal and operational management (including human resources, professional development, etc.) and deployment of resources
- Continuously develop and groom pipeline of new ideas and opportunities to support strategy

EXPERIENCE

The next CEO will possess the following professional experience and personal characteristics that validate their stated readiness to lead a complex educational organization with an ambitious mission:

Experience & Skills

- Minimum of 10 years of executive experience, ideally at comparably sized non-profits
- Experience as a recognized thought leader in college and career readiness, student retention and/or equity in education
- Direct experience and success defining and implementing a vision, supporting strategy, measuring impact on outcomes, and growth in scaling
- Experience commercializing capabilities and managing a mixed portfolio of products
- Record of meaningfully increasing fundraising from individuals, foundations, and corporations
- Record of managing a \$3+ million budget/organization
- In-depth knowledge of the nonprofit and philanthropic climate

Personal Characteristics

- Passion for Umoja's mission and impact
- Demonstrated alignment with Umoja's core values of partnership, tenacity, results, inclusion, and joy
- Ability to inspire confidence and cooperation; a motivator and leader

- Ability to lead across difference; confidence and sensibilities to relate to people of all ages, races, and socio-economic backgrounds
- A track record of being decisive, yet willing to listen and adapt appropriately
- Strong personal and professional integrity

Ideally, candidates will also bring:

- Connection to and network in Chicago
- Familiarity with, or a working knowledge of, youth development organizations
- An advanced degree in a discipline complementary to leading Umoja

LOCATION

Chicago, IL

COMPENSATION

Salary for this position will be commensurate with professional experience. Additionally, Umoja offers a comprehensive benefits plan including: health and dental insurance, a 401k plan, a flexible spending account, 10 weeks paid parental leave after birth or adoption of a child, sick time that accumulates indefinitely, and 30 days of paid time off beginning in the first year of employment.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY AND COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

Umoja is an equal opportunity employer and seeks to employ qualified individuals based on individual merit. Umoja does not discriminate against any individual with respect to the terms and conditions of employment based on that individual's race, sex, age, religion, color, national origin, disability, genetic information, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, housing status, or any other non-merit factor protected under state, local or federal laws. Equal Employment Opportunity applies to all personnel actions such as recruiting, hiring, compensation, benefits, promotions, training, transfer, termination, and opportunities for training. Umoja is committed to a fair and equitable workplace where everyone is a respected and valued member of the team.

TO APPLY

The Executive Search team at Promise54 is managing this search. Review of applications will begin immediately, and continue until the position is filled. For best consideration, submit a resume and letter of interest to Leslie Nair, Partner, at leslie@promise54.org, by Wednesday, November 21st, 2018.