



American Youth
Policy Forum

Position Profile
Executive Director
American Youth Policy Forum
Washington, DC

American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF) seeks a visionary executive who is committed to AYPF's mission of educating, engaging, and informing policymakers and practitioners about education, youth, and workforce policies to improve the lives and outcomes of traditionally underserved youth.

The Organization

Founded in 1993, AYPF is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, professional development organization. AYPF has served thousands of national and state policymakers by conducting events such as Capitol Hill forums, discussion groups, webinars, study tours, and producing research-based reports and social media materials. AYPF makes sense of a complex education, youth, and workforce landscape by providing timely, clear, and concise information and resources.

AYPF seeks to educate and inform policymakers, policy influencers, and other stakeholders so that they can build their capacity and understanding to make better and more equitable decisions on behalf of traditionally underserved youth. The organization does this by sharing best practices, policies, strategies, innovations, and research on positive youth development approaches and effective education, youth, and workforce policies. AYPF focuses on traditionally underserved youth, such as youth in the foster care or juvenile justice systems, youth with disabilities, first-generation college students, immigrants, and those from low-income families and communities. The organization's goal is to ensure equity of opportunity and outcomes for them all.

AYPF's policy expertise runs deep and spans numerous domains, including:

- College and Career Readiness and Success
- Career and Technical Education
- Afterschool and Expanded Learning
- Youth Development
- Systems-involved Youth
- Cross-system Collaboration
- Youth Employment
- Workforce Development

AYPF's Accomplishments

Over the years, AYPF has had several notable accomplishments in the policy arena. With its focus on traditionally underserved youth, AYPF has raised awareness of the need to support first-generation students and other youth in becoming college and career ready. AYPF helped change the discourse from a focus solely on testing and accountability to a broader focus on the needs of youth and the importance of having strong relationships with adults and supportive services. Having a youth-focused approach has led to more balanced policies that address the development of the whole young person (i.e., social and emotional skills and employability, in addition to academic skills).

AYPF was also one of the first organizations to examine how learning in the out-of-school hours helps youth be college and career ready, with a special focus on ensuring equity of opportunity for all youth. By promoting closer alignment between what youth learn in school and the opportunities for skill building that take place in the non-school hours, AYPF has seen more support for these types of programs and a growing policy interest in making more effective use of afterschool programs to address educational inequities.

AYPF has remained nonpartisan in an increasingly partisan environment and is viewed as a source of unbiased, evidence-based information that can be used by policymakers across the aisle. AYPF continues to bring together diverse groups of individuals for meaningful and engaging discussions that transcend politics.

Guiding Principles

Five organizational principles guide AYPF's work:

1. **Equity and Justice for All Youth:** AYPF is dedicated to the success of all young people and believes that they can be successful with the appropriate and necessary supports and systemic changes.
2. **Continuous Education:** AYPF believes in providing ongoing and continuous high quality, innovative professional development and learning opportunities, for the policy community and for its staff.
3. **Open Exchange of Ideas:** AYPF promotes an open and free exchange of ideas that is inclusive of diverse viewpoints and perspectives. Dialogue, discussion, and reflection are encouraged. And, AYPF reserves a respectful space for youth voice.
4. **Strategic Collaboration:** AYPF actively reaches out to partner with organizations, convenes dynamic groups for a multitude of purposes, and bridges sectors and disciplines within the education and youth development fields.
5. **Focus on the Positive:** AYPF focuses on what works for young people to be successful and believes that sound, research-driven policies can make a difference in the lives of young people and society at large.

With a staff of seven, AYPF is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors. AYPF's current annual budget is approximately \$1 million and is financed primarily through foundation grants and governmental and nonprofit contracts.

For more information, please visit <https://www.aypf.org/>.

The Position

The Board is looking for an Executive Director to lead the organization and make strategic decisions about how to most effectively impact traditionally underserved youth through effective policy and practice. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director must be committed to advancing AYPF's nonpartisan mission.

Leadership Outlook and Near-Term Priorities

The new ED will advance the near-term leadership priorities identified by the Board and staff, which include:

- Amplifying the youth voice in AYPF's programs.

- Positioning the organization for future growth and relevance.
- Diversifying funding streams and identifying revenue generating models.
- Identifying and expanding strategic partnerships to advance AYPF's mission.
- Working closely with the board and staff to navigate the complexities resulting in a leadership transition and foster a positive workplace.
- Identifying opportunities to integrate diversity, equity and inclusion principles into AYPF's work, both internally within the organization and externally through programs.

Key Responsibilities

Primary responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Advancing a policy and practice agenda and communication strategy that advocates passionately and effectively on behalf of traditionally underserved youth.
- Developing, nurturing, and leveraging relationships with national, state and local policy leaders to educate and inform policy decisions related to AYPF's mission and goals.
- Ensuring that AYPF achieves its fundraising goals necessary to achieve long-term sustainability while simultaneously meeting current operating needs; delivering expected goals through grant funding, maintaining and deepening funder relationships and proactivity seeking new opportunities to raise funds from a variety of funding sources.
- Overseeing all financial systems and ensuring fiscal accountability and integrity.
- Serving as AYPF's primary spokesperson to the organization's constituents, the media and general public, and strengthening AYPF's brand and reputation.
- Providing direction, guidance and support to staff and fostering strong staff morale whereby staff feel empowered to do their best work and affect change for young people.
- Overseeing and enhancing the day-to-day operations, ensuring that AYPF's convenings, social media, and products reflect the organization's values and align to its strategic plan.
- Building relationships with strategic partners and organizations to increase AYPF's impact.
- Collaborating with the Board of Directors to refine and implement AYPF's strategic plan while ensuring that the budget, staff and priorities are aligned with AYPF's mission and goals.

Experience and Attributes

Ideal candidates for this position must have strong communications, policy, leadership and management skills. The ideal candidate must excel at balancing internal management with external impact and visibility, and will ensure that AYPF is fiscally and programmatically sound while strategically advancing its mission and goals. The ED will bring a variety of experiences and attributes to AYPF, including:

- A strong commitment to AYPF's mission.
- Demonstrated bipartisan approach and the ability to work well with decision-makers of all political backgrounds.
- Demonstrated experience working with policy makers and policy influencers at the national, state and/or local government levels, and an understanding of legislative and administrative processes.

- Knowledge of and experience with research, policies and practices that examine and impact traditionally underserved youth; brings a desire to formulate new and creative strategies to inform and educate policymakers and policy influencers about relevant issues.
- Exceptional skills in persuasive communications (verbal and written) and the ability to educate, inspire, persuade, and motivate a variety of key audiences including elected officials, government agencies, donors, and the media.
- Prior success in cultivating and securing funding, and foundation grants in particular; experience with fee-for-service models helpful.
- Experience with annual organizational budgeting and financial oversight.
- Experience leading and inspiring a diverse staff at different stages in their career; success in fostering a healthy and equitable work environment.
- Strategic mindset, with a willingness to take the organization in bold new directions; strategic planning experience a plus.
- A strong racial equity lens with a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion; experience in confronting and dismantling systems of racial and ethnic inequalities and the policies that perpetuate them.
- Past success supporting and working with a board of directors in its governance role a plus.
- Senior leadership experience in the nonprofit/social sector, government and policy sectors.

AYPF offers generous benefits and a small, congenial work environment near Dupont Circle in downtown DC.

Application Process

To apply, e-mail resume, cover letter and salary requirements to:

AYPF@marcumllp.com. For other inquiries contact Adrienne O'Rourke at Adrienne.orourke@marcumllp.com. Resume reviews begin immediately.

AYPF provides equal employment opportunities without regard to race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, pregnancy or recent childbirth or related medical condition, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, the use of a guide or support animal because of blindness, deafness or physical handicap of any individual, citizenship, veteran or military status, genetic information, marital status, familial status, domestic or sexual violence victim status, possession of a GED instead of a high school diploma, or any other protected characteristic under applicable federal, state or local laws.

About Raffa – Marcum's Nonprofit & Social Sector Group

On behalf of AYPF, Raffa – Marcum's Nonprofit & Social Sector Group is working with the Board of Directors to advance the search. Founded in 1984 and recently merged with Marcum, Raffa is, and always has been, a mission-driven professional services firm seeking to do more for nonprofits and socially conscious organizations like AYPF. Learn more about our work at <http://marcumllp.com/industries/nonprofit-social-sector>.