POSITION PROFILE

Chief People Officer
Youth Guidance
Chicago, IL
Youth Guidance creates and implements school-based programs that enable children to overcome obstacles, focus on their education and, ultimately, to succeed in school and in life.

Youth Guidance (“YG”) sees a bright and burgeoning future for every elementary, middle, and high school student. Youth Guidance is present in schools to facilitate an environment that truly engages students and supports their social emotional development to help them realize their full potential and graduate with a meaningful plan for successfully managing life. For almost 100 years, Youth Guidance has created and implemented culturally responsive programs that enable children to overcome obstacles, focus on their education, and ultimately be successful in school and in life.

Today, Youth Guidance is a leading provider of outcomes-driven programs and capacity-building initiatives, directly serving about 14,000 youth while touching the lives of hundreds more parents, schools, and local communities. YG partners with 168 schools across eight geographies to advance social and racial justice for boys and young men of color (BYMOC) and girls and young women of color (GYWOC) through a healing centered, social emotional learning (SEL) lens. YG’s work is iterative, innovative, and evolving – as is their agency. YG’s journey is guided by their belief that no matter the challenges a young person faces, they are more likely to succeed when they have a caring adult in their lives and when they are empowered to recognize and act upon their own talents and strengths. YG counselors bring this ethos to life by delivering programs that destigmatize mental health interventions and create a peer community that makes room for students to find their voice, affirm their narrative, and become leaders in their schools and communities.

Headquartered in Chicago, Youth Guidance operates in some of the nation’s most under-resourced communities, and provide school-based programs in partnership with schools. With locations and programming in Chicago, Boston, Dallas, Kansas City, London, Los Angeles, New York, and Washington D.C., YG will opportunistically expand footprint to new cities as they continue to deepen and sustain impact through their portfolio of programs.
YOUTH GUIDANCE’S BROAD SPECTRUM OF SERVICES INCLUDE:

**Becoming A Man® (BAM):** In 2001, the BAM program was launched at Youth Guidance to help young men navigate difficult circumstances that threaten their future. The BAM program is a school-based counseling and mentoring program that guides young men in 7th – 12th grades to learn, internalize and practice social cognitive skills, make responsible decisions for their future, and become positive members of their school and community. BAM integrates clinical theory and practice, rites of passage work, and a dynamic approach to youth engagement. BAM has gained national attention, serving as a model for Former President Obama’s My Brother’s Keeper Initiative to support boys and young men of color. BAM has expanded to 8 cities with plans for continued expansion to additional cities.

**Working on Womanhood (WOW):** WOW is an evidence-based healing-centered group counseling and clinical mentoring program that works to improve social-emotional competencies for girls in 7th-12th grade exposed to traumatic stressors in high risk and under-resourced communities.

**Career Readiness and Success:** Youth Guidance’s Workforce Development programs ensure that youth from under-resourced communities are empowered with the key life skills and resources necessary to connect to meaningful employment or postsecondary opportunities aligned with their interests, skills, and goals.

**Community After School and Enrichment Programs:** Highly trained, youth-centered staff partner with school administration to provide high-quality, effective, and unique afterschool programs.

**School-Based Counseling:** Youth Guidance meets youth where they are – physically in schools, socially, and emotionally – to offer support that addresses a student’s entire support system and facilitates positive change through individual, group, and/or family counseling.

**STRIVE:** The STRIVE Program (Strategies to Rejuvenate Interest and Value in Education) – a partnership with area public schools and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) – works to integrate support systems within schools to help youth in care transition into adulthood and lead productive lives.

**The Fellowship Initiative (TFI):** The Fellowship Initiative (TFI) is a partnership between Youth Guidance and JPMorgan Chase designed to expand economic opportunities, including academic success and career readiness, for young men of color in Chicago and Washington, D.C.
THE OPPORTUNITY

Youth Guidance seeks a top tier Human Resources professional to develop and execute the organization’s human resource strategy to achieve results aligned with the organization’s overall business plan, mission, and strategic vision. The Chief People Officer (“CPO”) will drive talent management, change management, organizational and performance management, training and development, compensation, and succession planning.

The CPO will support and define Youth Guidance’s organizational culture, including developing positive values and behaviors, enhancing a diverse and inclusive work environment, fostering professional development and learning, and ensuring the organization continues to be a place where high-performing people love coming to work. This leader will play an integral role in establishing and enhancing the diverse, equitable and inclusive work of YG on both a large-scale and interpersonal level. The CPO will be a champion for integrating an inclusive mindset across the organization. Additionally, Youth Guidance seeks a leader with a progressive HR mindset, excellent communication and relationship-building skills, and the highest ethical standards and values.
Reporting to the CEO, Michelle Morrison, and working closely with the Executive Management Team, the CPO will serve as a strategic advisor and functional expert regarding human resources management and organizational culture. The CPO also articulates HR needs and plans to the Executive Management Team and the Board of Directors. The CPO will provide direction and support to Youth Guidance’s talent strategy facilitating the achievement of people-driven goals, while meeting management and regulatory human resources expectations. In addition, the CPO will coach, develop, and lead YG’s highly competent HR team in supporting Youth Guidance’s performance and growth strategies while fostering an engaging, positive work environment.

The CPO will lead the charge of moving Youth Guidance forward by implementing new practices, systems, and tools where needed, and improving all structures and practices wherever possible.

Key responsibilities of the CPO include, but are not limited to:

- Establish and implement HR efforts that effectively communicate and support the organization’s mission and strategic vision.
- Shape the vision for YG’s physical and increasingly more geographically dispersed work environment to support core values and culture.
- Develop HR plans and strategies to support the achievement of the overall business plan and growth strategy.
- Function as a strategic business advisor to the executive management of each organizational program regarding key organizational and management issues.
- Ensure ongoing development and long-term career planning for all team members through practices such as robust goal-setting processes, individual development plans, succession planning and development of a culture of consistent and honest feedback.
- Develop comprehensive strategic recruiting and retention plans to meet the human capital needs.
- Build strong internal relationships with senior leaders, staff, and Board members.
- Use data analytics and metrics to measure employee engagement levels and make sound business decisions for the organization.
- Develop and implement comprehensive compensation and benefits plans that are competitive and cost-effective.
- Partner closely with the Compliance Department to help reshape and reform employee onboarding systems and processes.
- Identify and grow high performing talent, conducting effective performance reviews and providing opportunities for development as well as coach others to provide constructive reviews in a timely manner.
- Support the work of the Board of Directors through attendance and presentations at Board meetings.
- Establish common performance evaluation practices that measure results with consistent metrics aligned with the YG’s strategic priorities.
- Research and generate best practices for retaining and supporting exemplary staff members, in order to maximize return on investment in employees.
CANDIDATE PROFILE

The Chief People Officer of Youth Guidance will have the following professional and personal qualities, skills, and characteristics:

EXPERTISE IN PEOPLE, VALUES AND CULTURE

The CPO will be highly strategic advisor and functional expert to the CEO and Executive Management Team regarding talent management, employee relations, and culture. This person will develop and execute comprehensive HR, employee relations, employee effectiveness, and talent management strategies in alignment with the organization’s priorities. The CPO will bring a proven track record of leading a best-in-class human resources function with a superior understanding of human capital management and talent development strategies. This leader will evaluate and advise on the organization’s policies and systems and will have a proven ability to foster and strengthen cultures rooted in collaboration, compassion, and professionalism. A catalyst for change and growth, the CPO will inspire others to think entrepreneurially and inject new ideas. The CPO will have practical experience in communicating change, including those related to technology or other changes with systems. The CPO will enhance Youth Guidance’s reputation as an employer of choice through the development and implementation of a wide range of innovative employee support and development initiatives.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDER AND COLLABORATIVE LEADER

The CPO will value relationships and support the well-being of Youth Guidance’s staff and leaders. The CPO will possess the ability to listen intently, think clearly, and respond effectively, empathically, and judiciously to a variety of challenges. They will garner support for all aspects of the management of human resources, including developing the internal structures and systems to support a passionate and dedicated staff. With confidence and empathy, the CPO will be skilled at building and sustaining excellent relationship with diverse people and with a demonstrated ability to connect, build bridges and command respect. Critical to success in this role, the CPO will be inclusive, allowing for the building of consensus and promoting the recognition of teamwork and collaboration. The CPO will also oversee regular assessment and reporting on employee morale with a focus on continuous improvement and development of positive employer/employee relationships to promote a high level of morale, motivation, retention, and job satisfaction. With confidence and a collaborative mindset, the CPO will operate with a high degree of transparency and clarity. The CPO will drive culture to establish and maintain a level of credibility and trust that encourages employees at all levels to discuss issues openly and set a tone for the entire organization.
CULTIVATING EQUITY AND USING INFLUENCE

A culturally competent HR leader, the CPO will have a deep understanding of the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and will embed these ideas in the management of staff and in the communities that YG serves. Experienced in working with diverse populations, this person will have the character and integrity necessary to develop rapport with people of varying experiences, backgrounds, and philosophies. The CPO will relentlessly be in pursuit of creating an environment where every employee can be their authentic selves and will lead YG’s efforts in becoming an equitable employer of choice that offers career depth and career mobility for its staff. A resourceful coach and capable facilitator, the CPO will enthusiastically lead the organization’s staff in developing awareness, comfort, and confidence to address and champion equity in all aspects of the organization and its services.

PASSION FOR THE MISSION

The CPO will be passionate about youth development and will embody the values and mission of Youth Guidance. As a result, this leader will inspire and motivate others to push the mission forward in a collaborative manner. The CPO will help to solidify others’ commitment to advance the well-being of the organization’s elementary and high school students, enabling each student to succeed in school and reach their full potential following graduation. They will lead by example, understanding that, at times, empathy is an essential quality. The CPO will have an eye consistently focused on the future and how to best adapt the organization to its changing environment while staying true to the mission of Youth Guidance. The CPO is someone who can be trusted without reservation. This leader will also serve as an ideal team player, modeling the values of the organization in their everyday work and exhibiting humility and a flexible interpersonal style to build, motivate and guide a cohesive team in attaining organizational goals.

Youth Guidance is an equal opportunity employer and proudly values diversity. Youth Guidance does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law and is committed to creating a dynamic work environment that values diversity along all of these lines. People of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.
Koya Partners has been exclusively retained for this search. Marissa Delgado, Judene Hylton, and Maureen Clancy are leading the engagement. To make recommendations or express interest in this opportunity, please submit your materials here or email youthguidance@koyapartners.com. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

Koya Partners is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals living with disabilities. If you are a qualified individual living with a disability and need assistance expressing interest online, please email NonprofitSearchOps@divsearch.com. If you are selected for an interview, you will receive additional information regarding how to request an accommodation for the interview process.

**About Koya Partners**

Koya Partners, a part of Diversified Search Group, is a leading executive search and strategic advising firm dedicated to connecting exceptionally talented people with mission-driven clients. Our founding philosophy—The Right Person in the Right Place Can Change the World—guides our work as we partner with nonprofits & NGOs, institutions of higher education, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

For more information about Koya Partners, visit [www.koyapartners.com](http://www.koyapartners.com).