

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Who We Are

Mississippi Center for Justice is a nonprofit, public interest law firm with a simple mission: developing and pursuing strategies to combat discrimination and poverty statewide. Our team of attorneys and professionals have advanced social and economic justice for low-income people and communities of color since our founding in 2003.

Since our beginning, we have fought for the people of Mississippi, protecting fair housing and preventing foreclosure for hundreds of low-income residents, restoring Medicaid benefits for tens of thousands of poverty level aged and disabled individuals, challenging discriminatory laws in court, and providing legal representation for hundreds of individuals swept up in ICE raids.

Our lawyers work with community leaders to support their social justice campaigns and to channel the energies of the legal community to combat discrimination and poverty. With offices in Jackson, Biloxi, and Indianola, we seek systemic solutions that protect immigrant families, protect the rights of consumers, secure access to healthcare, protect voting rights for all, and make fair and affordable housing available for all Mississippians.

Position Summary

We are seeking a talented Communications Director to join our racial and economic justice work. The Communications Director will develop, lead, and implement our internal and external communications and branding strategy. The Director is responsible for developing and implementing all marketing strategies, strategic communications, and public relations activities.

The Communications Director will report to the President/CEO and serve as a key member of the executive team. Working closely with the Director of Philanthropy, Advocacy Director(s), and campaign leaders, the Communications Director will help promote the activities of MCJ and design and execute a strategic communications plan and organizational messaging to advance MCJ's mission, advocacy, and image outreach to stakeholders and the media.

Our Ideal Candidate

If you are a true self-starter with deep experience balancing multiple projects and priorities, exceptional writing, branding, and digital media skills, with a vested interest in advancing racial equality and fighting inequity, we want to hear from you. Hands-on expertise leading communications strategies in media, legal, or nonprofit spaces are highly preferred. A high degree of integrity, alignment with MCJ's mission and values, and proven experience building and deepening media relationships are musts.

Job Responsibilities

Strategic Communications

- Develop a written branding and messaging guide to distill MCJ's overall story and ensure consistent use of language
- Develop messaging guidance that persuasively shapes how the Center presents its positions to the media, lawmakers, donors, and other audiences

- Develop rapid response protocols for use in identifying specific moments in the news cycle where MCJ can proactively reach out to reporters to comment in real time
- Create and maintain content calendar for use in proactively identifying media opportunities surrounding major MCJ litigation and activities
- Ensure brand identity, messaging and marketing and communications strategy are infused in all organizational efforts (programming, development, network support)
- Manage communications interns

Media Relations

- Build and maintain relationships with state and national reporters, bloggers, podcasters, and broadcast media outlets
- Pitch MCJ leaders and litigators to state and national media and manage interview requests
- Work with advocacy staff to write press releases, press advisories, statements, op-eds, and letters to the editor
- Guide the strategy on press outreach, including messaging in press releases, creation of press kits and materials, talking points, interview preparation, and responses to media requests
- Prepare staff for media interviews

Website, Social Media, and Email

- Manage MCJ's website to ensure a steady stream of fresh content, particularly on breaking news events or around major litigation or initiatives
- Manage MCJ's social media channels with an eye towards growing MCJ's social media following and getting MCJ's messaging to reporters and supporters more quickly
- Work with development staff to develop and implement a plan to communicate with email subscribers regularly and increase the list
- Oversee other staff or interns involved in the Center's social media work
- Interpret web analytics and monitor traffic to gauge the success of online marketing efforts

Writing and Editing

- Collaborate with President/CEO and advocacy staff to draft opinion editorials and communications to governmental and regulatory officials
- Edit external-facing materials prepared by staff with a communications eye for clarity and consistency
- Work with development and advocacy staff to prepare the annual report, brochures and other publications

- Work with staff and vendors to produce videos for advocacy and development

Events

- Work with development staff to plan, implement, and publicize the *Mississippi on the Potomac Reception*, the *Champions of Justice Dinner*, the *Great Mississippi Road Trip* and other development events throughout the year, including, but not limited to, advocacy focused virtual and in-person events, regional donor/supporter events, pro bono counsel events, etc.
- Work with staff and vendors to determine programmatic elements of each event
- Work with vendors to prepare all written and visual collateral associated with each event

Video and Photography

- Photography as needed
- Work with staff and vendors to produce videos for advocacy and development

Qualifications

- At least three to five years of experience leading communications, marketing, social media and public relations activities
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent work experience in journalism, nonprofit communications, public affairs, or related field is required.
- Exceptional writing and editing skills, and experience with social media engagement and digital communications
- Demonstrated commitment to advancing racial justice, working across lines of difference, and working with a diversity of stakeholders
- Excellent people skills, with commitment to working with shared leadership and in cross-functional teams
- Flexible and a self-starter; able to manage multiple concurrent projects while also being highly detail-oriented with an attention to quality
- Demonstrated resourcefulness in setting priorities, proposing new ways of creating efficiencies, and guiding investment in people and systems
- Proficient in Excel, PowerPoint, and Word
- Personal qualities of integrity, credibility, and a commitment to the Center's mission

Preferred

- A background in the law, legal affairs, or nonprofit advocacy is encouraged.
- Strong media networks and national communication experience

- Experience overseeing the design and production of online and print collateral and publications is a plus.

Salary/Benefits

Salary is competitive and dependent on experience. The Mississippi Center for Justice offers a generous package that includes medical, life and dental insurance, generous leave, participation in a retirement savings program, and other benefits.

To Apply: Please send cover letter, resume with three professional references and two writing samples (i.e. published article/op-ed) to:

Vangela M. Wade, President/CEO

vwade@mscenterforjustice.org

Please, no telephone inquiries.

The position will remain open until filled.

The Mississippi Center for Justice is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We value a work place that is diverse in race, gender, economic status, age, geographic origin, sexual orientation, and other differences that enrich our organizational culture.