

**MISSISSIPPI**  
**CENTER**  
**FOR JUSTICE**

LEADERSHIP PROFILE  
**President and**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Jackson, Mississippi

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 23, 2024



**"We must never forget that it is our duty to seek justice,  
not for ourselves alone but for all of humanity."**

– Unita Blackwell (First Black Woman Elected Mayor in State of Mississippi)

## THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A TRUE CHAMPION OF JUSTICE

There is no greater time than this to step into a leadership role that can ignite hope and drive transformative progress, advancing justice in a state that is positioned at the tipping point for positive change. The Mississippi Center for Justice (MCJ) is seeking a champion to lead the organization as President and CEO in this next era of impact and victory. As MCJ President and CEO, you will lead a team of passionate advocates and subject matter experts dedicated to advancing racial, economic, and social justice; increasing access to quality education; protecting voters' rights; advocating for safe affordable housing and land ownership; eliminating health disparities; and enforcing the civil rights of marginalized Mississippians. In addition to working within Mississippi, the MCJ President and CEO will be at the forefront of civil rights work that influences justice-seeking efforts across the nation. Candidate must live in Mississippi and work primarily out of our central office in Jackson, Mississippi.

## GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIP: THE MCJ BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The MCJ Board of Directors is a dedicated and passionate body that practices respectful governance, thought partnership, and integrity in all decision-making processes. Each board member brings a wealth of expertise, contributing their time and skills to strengthen the organization. Their commitment is further demonstrated through proactive fundraising efforts and personal investments, which have been instrumental in securing the necessary resources for the organization's long-term sustainability. This unwavering support and strategic oversight have significantly bolstered MCJ's capacity to achieve its goals and drive impactful change. The board culture is one of consistency and commitment with board members engaged as trusted partners ready to support the CEO when needed. Board members demonstrate great discernment and intentionality with a big picture lens focused on their fiduciary responsibility and a commitment that is engrained in their individual connections to Mississippi.

## JUSTICE-DRIVEN: OVERVIEW OF THE MISSISSIPPI CENTER FOR JUSTICE

MCJ was founded in 2003 by Martha Bergmark, a nationally-recognized leader in the movement to fulfill America's promise of justice for all. The organization works to advance racial, social, and economic justice across the state through an approach that combines legal services with policy advocacy, community education, and media outreach. The Center partners with national, regional, and community organizations to develop and implement campaigns designed to create better futures for low-income Mississippians and communities of color. Currently, MCJ operates out of three office hubs in Jackson, Biloxi, and Indianola, Mississippi, with over 30 staff members and countless fellows, volunteers, and partners that support issue specific work on an ongoing basis. For more information, visit [www.mscenterforjustice.org](http://www.mscenterforjustice.org).

## POSITIONED FOR CONTINUED IMPACT

Since the 1960s, Mississippi has been at the epicenter of the Civil Rights Movement. With a 20-year legacy of transformative legal advocacy, MCJ continues to use its expertise and resources towards the ongoing fight for justice and human rights in the state. As the new President and CEO steps into this role, they should be poised to lead an organization with a proven track record, driven by a passionate team and an unyielding mission. The next phase in the organization's work offers meaningful opportunities to amplify this impact and build on the foundation of progress. Though grounded in Mississippi, MCJ has boldly positioned itself to influence actions that impact the fight for justice nationally.

- MCJ is at the forefront of the fight to protect reproductive rights serving as co-counsel on behalf of the Jackson Women's Health Organization in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, which the Supreme Court used to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.
- MCJ continues to advocate on behalf of Black Mississippi farmworkers against major Mississippi Delta agricultural and catfish farms filing lawsuits that led to the Department of Labor investigation resulting in multiple fines against Delta farms and recovered wages for nearly 200 workers.
- MCJ continues to fight against a restrictive democracy by protecting the first amendment and the right to vote in the state of Mississippi.
- MCJ has educated over 9,000 individuals on preventing or resolving heirs property issues ultimately preserving generational land ownership in the south.
- MCJ joined a federal complaint against the state of Mississippi for its gross mishandling of the Jackson water crisis and history of discrimination against majority-Black cities in Mississippi.
- MCJ is working with court leaders and advocates to bring parity in Mississippi courts pushing for uniform practices for eviction and debt collection proceedings that give self-represented litigants a reasonable chance to defend themselves.

## CANDIDATE PROFILE

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the President and CEO (P/CEO) manages all aspects of the Mississippi Center for Justice's (MCJ) administration and operations, ensures financial sustainability, and advances the growth and innovation of MCJ's advocacy initiatives and strategic plan. Other key duties include fundraising, marketing, and community outreach. The position reports directly to the Board of Directors (Board).

## GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

**Board of Directors:** Work with the Board to fulfill MCJ's mission.

- Lead MCJ in a manner that supports and guides the organization's mission as defined by the Board.
- Cultivate and maintain a strong and transparent working relationship with the Board; ensure open communication about financial, programmatic, and operational performance through comprehensive and regular





reporting to executive, finance, development, governance, audit, and advocacy committees.

- Work with each Board committee to implement MCJ's objectives in each area of committee responsibility.

**Financial Performance and Viability:** Ensure the organization's fiscal health and integrity.

- Oversee the organization's financial health, including budgeting, financial reporting, and resource allocation. Ensure overall fiscal responsibility and sustainability.
- Work with the Director of Finance and Administration (DoFA) and Director of Operations / General Counsel (DoO/GC) to establish, implement, and monitor internal controls (policies and procedures) to ensure transparency to prevent fraud, errors, and mismanagement of funds.

**Strategic Vision and Leadership:** Work with the board and staff to ensure coordination and alignment of all organization activities to strategic direction in community impact, resource development, and staff alignment to fulfill the mission through programs, strategic planning, and community outreach.

- Execute strategic planning to ensure that MCJ can successfully fulfill the organization's mission into the future and for implementing MCJ's programs that carry out that mission.
- Enhance MCJ's image by being active and visible in the community and working closely with other professional, civic, and private organizations.
- Provide inspirational leadership and direction to all staff and ensure the continued development and management of a professional and efficient organization; establish effective decision-making processes that will enable MCJ to achieve its long- and short-term goals and objectives.

**Organization Operations:** Oversee and implement appropriate resources to ensure MCJ's appropriate operations.

- Responsible for the hiring and retention of competent, qualified staff.
- Recruit, hire, and manage the DoO/GC, HR consultants, technology vendors, and other operational support required to enlarge or enhance organizational capacity.
- Develop and administer personnel policies and procedures, including recruiting, hiring, evaluating, developing, disciplining, and terminating personnel with the support of an external HR consultant and DoO/GC.

**Development and Fundraising:** Lead fundraising campaigns, donor relations, and strategic development efforts to help secure resources to advance the organization's mission.

- Supported by development staff and consultants, develop and implement fundraising systems and strategies that enable the organization to meet its financial development goals and carry out its programs and general operations.
- Lead and participate in cultivating, soliciting, and recognizing current and potential donors with the support of board members, development staff, and external development consultants.

**Communications:** Managing communication strategies and policies.

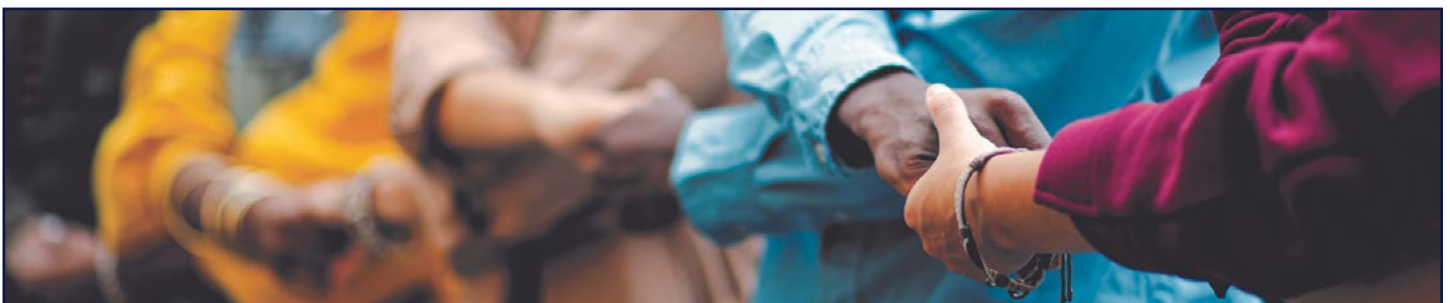
- Develop and execute the organization's communication strategies with the support of internal and external communications teams.
- Identify and respond to relevant local, state, and federal issues through press conferences, press releases, op-eds, social media, and blogs.
- Serve as MCJ's primary spokesperson and work diligently to promote the organization through increased visibility, funding, and community engagement with the support of the Board and staff.

**Advocacy and Policy:** Oversee and support the creation and delivery of strategic advocacy to support the mission.

- Meet annually with each campaign director and Director of Advocacy and Policy (DoAP) to review campaign advocacy and strategic development plans to ensure alignment with the mission and financial capacity to support strategies and personnel.
- Collaborate with campaign directors and DoAP as a thought partner to determine new areas of advocacy and litigation.
- Develop advocacy projects consistent with the organization's mission in emergencies to support community needs and pursue funding streams to support the same.

**Administrative:** Demonstrate leadership values and integrity by actively engaging with staff in day-to-day operations.

- Organize, engage, and manage the leadership team (DoO/GC, DoFA, DoAP, Director of Philanthropy (DoP), Director of Communications (DoC)).
- Supervise and support the Director of Heirs' Property Campaign, Education Policy Team, Civic Engagement and Government Accountability Project, and Broadband Advocacy Project.
- Maintain an open-door policy for all staff.
- Actively provide professional development opportunities for the growth of all staff.



## REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND QUALIFICATIONS

### Educational Background

- A master's degree in Public Policy, Political Science, Human Rights or a related post graduate degree required. Juris Doctor (JD) preferred but not required.

### Professional Credentials

- License to practice law a plus but not required. Nonprofit leaders, seasoned social justice advocates, and policy leaders encouraged to apply.

### Professional Experience

- Minimum 8 years of senior leadership experience directly reflective of the responsibilities of this position.
- Experience in policy advocacy, legal strategy, and legislative processes.
- Extensive experience in strategy, planning, and execution.

### Leadership Skills

- Strong visionary leadership with the ability to inspire and motivate staff, volunteers, and stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to lead and manage a diverse team.

### Commitment to Justice

- Deep understanding of and commitment to social justice issues, particularly those affecting Mississippi.
- Experience working with under resourced communities and communities of color.

### Grounding in Mississippi Context

- Understanding of the political and legal landscape of the south, especially Mississippi.
- Proven strategies for building and maintaining strategic relationships in Mississippi, including community leaders, policymakers, legal professionals and other nonprofit organizations.

### Fundraising and Financial Acumen

- Demonstrated success in securing and managing funds from diverse sources, including individual donors, foundations, and government grants.
- Strong financial management skills with experience in budgeting and financial reporting.

### Communication Skills

- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to represent the organization effectively to the public, media, and key stakeholders.

### Personal Attributes

- Integrity, transparency, and a commitment to ethical leadership.
- Strong problem-solving skills and the ability to navigate complex challenges.

## Board Relations

- Experience working with and reporting to a board of directors.
- Ability to collaborate with the board to achieve organizational goals.

## COMPENSATION

The Mississippi Center for Justice offers a competitive compensation package that demonstrates our commitment to our employees and to the greater mission towards justice. The compensation offered is more than just a package, it is part of our philosophy. Compensation includes:

- Annual salary range beginning at \$191K with final salary based on experience.
- A 403(b) plan with an option for employer contributions.
- Comprehensive health insurance coverage including medical, dental, and vision coverage.
- Cafeteria Plan that includes Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) for Medical and/or Dependent Care.
- Short-Term Disability.
- Life insurance coverage up to \$50,000.
- Monthly cellular phone allowance.

## Additional Benefits

- Paid Time Off (PTO)  
Generous paid time off, including vacation days, sick leave, and personal days.
- Holiday Closures  
Paid holidays consistent with the office closure schedule.
- Professional Development  
Opportunities for professional development, including funding for conferences, seminars, and continuing education courses.
- Relocation Assistance  
Relocation assistance for candidates moving from outside the area, including a stipend to support moving expenses.

## WHAT MCJ DOES

- Economic Justice
- Disaster Recovery
- Educational Opportunities
- Health Law
- Heirs' Property
- Fair Housing
- The George Riley Impact Litigation Initiative – a ten-year initiative to provide litigation and public policy advocacy in areas related to racial and economic justice, including voting rights, housing, consumer protection, and educational access.

## SUBMISSION

Qualified applicants should submit a resume and cover letter stating qualifications and chronological employment history.

For consideration or to recommend a potential candidate, please email [MCJ@sharedstrategygroup.com](mailto:MCJ@sharedstrategygroup.com).

Include in the subject line:  
MCJ President and CEO.

Interested candidates must submit the requested information by  
**SEPTEMBER 23, 2024**  
for consideration.

*The Mississippi Center for Justice is an equal opportunity employer committed to advancing equity and justice. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or veteran status.*