



Invitation to Apply for the Position of
Director
Center for Consumer and Community Engagement
in Health System Transformation

Participation | Inclusiveness | Empowerment | Awareness | Diversity | Respect | Learning

Search Summary

Community Catalyst, a national non-profit advocacy organization working to build the consumer and community leadership that is required to transform the American health system, is seeking a knowledgeable and exceptionally creative leader to serve as the inaugural Director of its Center for Consumer and Community Engagement (the “Center”). Building on the successes of Community Catalyst and synthesizing its human, financial, and reputational resources, the Director will have an opportunity to create and sustain structures and practices for consumer engagement in transforming the health system, so it is responsive to consumer needs.

The health care system in the United States is going through a significant transformation with new, integrated delivery systems and with new modes of payment proliferating. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (“ACA”) has accelerated this trend and created new regulatory, purchasing, and health care delivery structures meant to radically transform the United States health care system to improve outcomes and reduce costs. Community Catalyst has responded to this challenge by creating the Center, which will provide strategic leadership to consumer health advocates in order to maximize their collective impact in this rapidly changing system.

Community Catalyst is seeking a Director who understands, is prepared for, and is motivated by the enormity of this challenge and opportunity to engage consumers in payment and delivery system reform. The successful candidate for this position will bring knowledge of the current issues in health system transformation particularly for low-income populations and communities of color, the capacity to build and direct a team of experts in a highly collaborative environment, strong strategic skills that identify priorities and integrate resources toward achieving these objectives, and exceptional translation skills that connect evidence-based knowledge and policy with effective advocacy and leadership development. In addition, the Director should be mission-driven, entrepreneurial and experienced in successful fundraising.

Community Catalyst has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this important endeavor. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to the firm as indicated at the end of this document.

Community Catalyst

Community Catalyst's mission is to organize and sustain a powerful consumer voice to ensure that all individuals and communities can influence the local, state and national decisions that affect their health. Since 1998, Community Catalyst has built a consumer health advocacy movement from the ground up, working in 40 states with consumer advocacy organizations to ensure consumers have an organized voice and a seat at the table wherever important decisions about the health system are made. Currently Community Catalyst has about 70 employees working in its offices in Boston, Washington, DC, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Atlanta.

Community Catalyst has developed a unique knowledge base and platform of experience in engaging consumers and progressive stakeholder organizations in working for health quality improvements and the policies that will support them. Beginning in 2001, Community Catalyst started to bring consumer advocacy to bear on delivery system reform when it helped to incubate the Commonwealth Care Alliance (“CCA”), an innovative health plan serving seniors and people with disabilities founded by Dr. Robert Master. Community Catalyst applied the lessons from CCA in its advocacy around the national health care reform debate and implementation of the ACA. Key to this work has been The Atlantic Philanthropies-funded Voices for Better Health (“VBH”) program. VBH has been shaping the design and implementation of state-based demonstration projects focused on one of the most vulnerable populations – those eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid (i.e., “dual eligibles”). Through VBH, Community Catalyst has supported consumer advocates who have played an instrumental role in shaping their state’s demonstration projects. The VBH program has also drawn support from the John A. Hartford Foundation, which has made it possible for Community Catalyst to engage geriatricians in the pro-consumer work that advocates have been doing in several demonstration states.

Critical to Community Catalyst’s mission is building the capacity, influence and power of state and local organizations to bring a consumer voice to health policy change. Whether the aim is to pass or prevent passage of legislation on a particular health care issue, defend against cuts to critical public programs or educate a particular constituency about the impact of a law or regulation, organizations seeking to advance a consumer health agenda must have six advocacy capacities to succeed; they include the capacity to:

- Analyze complex legal and policy issues to develop winnable policy alternatives
- Develop and implement health policy campaigns
- Build and maintain strong broad-based coalition and stakeholder alliances
- Design and implement communications strategies
- Build an active grassroots network
- Generate resources

Community Catalyst works with its partners to build each of the capacities and create a system of advocacy in every state. Community Catalyst offers policy, legal, communications, and organizing and advocacy expertise so advocates are equipped with the right strategies, information and tools to succeed. Community Catalyst’s commitment to collaboration also

extends to the national level where coordination of state efforts on a national scale is critical both to strengthen state-based consumer advocacy and achieve national impact.

For more information on Community Catalyst's history, achievements and current initiatives and issues, please visit: www.communitycatalyst.org.

The Center for Consumer and Community Engagement

Community Catalyst has developed the Center to serve as a hub devoted to transforming the health system with a particular focus on eliminating disparities faced by low-income populations and communities of color through organizing, advocacy, teaching and learning. Supported in part by a five-year \$14.8 million legacy grant from The Atlantic Philanthropies, the Center will collaborate with and support the work of Community Catalyst state consumer advocacy organizations and networks along with key national organizations that represent and advocate for the most vulnerable. The Center will provide diverse groups of consumer health advocates with the “next-generation” skills they will need to assess the financial complexity and risk involved with new models of care and the organizing and technical skills necessary to fully participate with powerful stakeholders in health system transformation debates and policy reforms.

Key to the Center's success will be the lessons learned from the VBH program. VBH has been shaping the design and implementation of state-based projects focused on “dual eligibles.” These projects have been successful learning labs for VBH and Community Catalyst and will continue under the auspices of the Center. The Center will be built as a permanent enterprise within Community Catalyst, and will need to develop partnerships and a stronger development infrastructure to support the mission. This will require fundraising from national and local foundations to enhance anticipated support from earned revenue sources, individual donations and government grants and sub-grants.

The Center will support consumer engagement as patients, as members of health plans or delivery systems, and as advocates around local, state and federal policy. The conceptual architecture of the Center involves seven interrelated and mutually reinforcing strategic approaches.

Enhanced (“Next-Generation”) Skills for State and Local Consumer Advocates. Consumers and advocates are often at a disadvantage in debates concerning the health care system, because they do not have the technical or business skills (e.g., provider payment arrangements, risk adjustment) necessary to fully participate in critical aspects of these debates. The Center will help consumer advocates build their capacity, skills and leadership, so that they are able to engage in a fully informed way with the providers, payers, and other business experts. The Center will support advocates in the development of new approaches to consumer engagement and new strategies to build a sustainable consumer voice in the evolving health system.

Leadership Development. One specific way the Center intends to help advocates advance their skills is through a new, formal mentoring program. Leaders in the health care community will help advocates develop the “next generation” skills and capacities needed to advocate astutely and effectively in the changing health care delivery system. They will do so by bringing their deep experience with providers, plans, and other important organizations in the health care arena.

Investments in State and Local Consumer Advocacy. A significant portion of the Center’s work will be devoted to identifying and funding new campaigns where a concerted consumer advocacy effort will make a significant change. These new state and local campaigns will supplement the work already occurring in the sub-granting program through several Community Catalyst program areas, including VBH, Value Advocacy Project, Substance Use Disorder project, Hospital Accountability project and the Alliance for Children’s Health project, and the ACA Implementation Fund.

Expanding a Washington, DC Presence and Enhancing National Visibility. In order to strengthen the voice of consumers in an evolving health care system, Community Catalyst needs to enhance its national presence in Washington, DC and take its experience at the state level to inform and shape national conversations and policy debates. The purpose of a stronger, more consistent national presence is to directly influence the policy debates in Congress and within the Administration. Delivery system change is implemented at the local level, and bringing the direct experience of state and local advocates to national decision-making is a key strategy. In addition, the Center intends to build stronger ties with federal funding agencies that can support state demonstration projects that advance a consumer agenda.

Research and Evaluation. The paradigm shift that the Center will promote—toward health system transformation that values empowered and engaged consumers—will require a deep and ongoing research and evaluation base that shows the return-on-investment that consumer engagement brings. Towards that end, the Center needs research to make a compelling business case for the role consumers play in creating a market that is informed by cost and quality measures. Community Catalyst is a partner with a large research university in Boston to hire a faculty member for a joint appointment which will be shared by the Center and the university to facilitate this effort.

Expanding Communications Capacity. Strategic communications and messaging will play a critical role as Community Catalyst and advocates execute successful health system transformation campaigns on the ground and engage at the system and institutional level, particularly given the power of well-resourced industry stakeholders in presenting a strong voice and in shaping these issues to date. In order to educate and engage consumers, build public will for policy change, and mobilize consumer action, advocates need to know how to talk about the issues in language that resonates with consumers. The Center will pursue a proactive earned media approach to build visibility and credibility for Community Catalyst and its state and local partners as national thought-leaders on health system transformation issues, and to reach new target audiences. To do that successfully, the Center will contribute to original research and public opinion research (polling and focus groups) and produce policy products that provide analysis and recommendations that are relevant to policymakers, opinion leaders, and other stakeholders. To counter industry voices, advocates must leverage their knowledge about consumer experiences with the health system to build and articulate a positive vision for a people-centered health system. Health system transformation issues are very complex.

Consulting to Delivery Systems and Plans. The passage of the ACA has brought the needs of patients and consumers to the forefront, and many health plans and provider networks are seeking to implement new strategies for engaging members and their communities. With interest

at such a high level, now is a perfect time to get on the “inside track” to assure that consumer interests are institutionalized in these new and evolving delivery systems. The Center will offer consulting services alone and in partnership with a leading community health plan to other health plans and health care and social service organizations that are interested in establishing new mechanisms for consumer engagement.

Challenges and Opportunities

Collaborating with the staff, Board, funders and partners of Community Catalyst in launching the Center and directing this new enterprise in its formative years presents an exceptional, compelling opportunity that will ensure a lasting impact in the transformation of the American health system. There is no comparable opportunity for a leader wishing to utilize all their experiences and skills to effect substantive change. The reputation of Community Catalyst earned through years of successful work, its goodwill throughout the country among its partners and health reform advocates, its talented, mission-driven staff, its accomplished governing Board, and the financial resources already granted from its funders are waiting for a leader with vision, courage and an entrepreneurial spirit to build an effective project. There will be challenges – some now seen, and others yet unseen – but accompanying each challenge is an opportunity to shape the future of the new American health system.

Developing a strategic direction for the Center that maintains the long-term focus on centering the new American health system on the consumer, while responding to emergent opportunities in a rapidly changing political ecosystem around health. The Director needs to be both visionary and opportunistic. The architecture of the Center has been wisely crafted but it will be the Director’s responsibility (in conjunction with other senior officers at Community Catalyst) to develop the strategies and tactics that guide the day-to-day work of the Center. The task is complicated by the fact that the health system is not static or predictable. In developing strategies that effectively use the Center’s human and financial resources for maximum impact, the Director needs to stay conversant with the shifts in the strategies of other players, both consumer allies and those that are pursuing adversarial interests. The Director should be prepared to shift gears rapidly, accelerating to seize opportunities and braking to avoid disabling conflicts and loss.

Building the Center with coherence among its many programs and initiatives, while maintaining adherence to Community Catalyst’s larger mission, objectives, history and governance. The Director is being asked to build a Center, not as a stand-alone enterprise, but as key Community Catalyst program that connects with other health system transformational work occurring throughout the organization. The Director will have a core staff inherited from existing programs (VBH), and that existing staff will have to be integrated with new staff hired by the Director to effect the initiatives described above. To be successful the Director will need to develop coherence among program pieces and avoid silos. At the same time the Director needs to work with the senior officers of Community Catalyst to maintain a strong affinity to the organization as a whole. The Director will be successful in meeting this challenge to the extent s/he quickly assimilates with the culture of Community Catalyst and understands how it manages its human and financial resources. Cultural sensitivity is required. Coordinating with other programs at Community Catalyst and with its fund-raising, communications and human resource components is essential.

Fundraising. Under the terms of the grant from The Atlantic Philanthropies, Community Catalyst is required to raise significant matching funds to assure long-term sustainability. The Director will be expected to play a lead role in fundraising for the Center. Community Catalyst enjoys excellent relationships with top, national foundations that entrust the organization with millions of dollars annually to lead and support the consumer health advocacy movement. The Center needs a thoughtful sustainability plan that does not rely solely on philanthropic investments. The Center will house new earned revenue options for supporting its work and the work of state and local advocates. The Center will also enhance its efforts to raise state and federal government grants and to become a sub-contractor to large, national organizations, as well as to socially minded lenders and donors. The enhanced visibility the Center intends to establish with federal officials will serve as a direct line to federal opportunities and for more and larger contracts and sub-contracts.

Translating knowledge and policy expertise to strengthen advocacy and leadership that engages consumers and communities in health system transformation. The principal challenge and opportunity here is to acquire, analyze, and disseminate knowledge so that it is useable by consumer and community advocates in transforming the health system. To realize this opportunity the Director has to be comfortable in the seminars of academia and think-tanks where discussions around economics, finance, healthcare delivery, structural disparities and other complex issues are aired, while also being able to connect with activists and advocates in the field. The ideal candidate will have experience in both worlds and will understand the access issues that drive consumers as well as the system reform issues that motivate policymakers. The Director needs to be intellectually curious and have the experience, knowledge and courage to ask hard questions. The role bridges the divides that separate consumer advocates and health system architects and uses knowledge as the connective tissue in the integrative process.

Desired Qualifications and Experience

The Search Committee will consider the following factors in evaluating candidates for this important leadership role. While no single individual will possess all the desired experiences and qualifications, the successful candidate should possess many of the following characteristics:

- Broad, diverse knowledge and experience in all aspects of health policy, and substantive, deep experience in health system transformation;
- A commitment to the mission, goals, and values of Community Catalyst, including nurturing diversity and inclusion, and eliminating health disparities, is critical;
- A commitment to racial equity, undoing institutional racism and ensuring that the work positively impacts diverse racial and ethnic groups;
- Significant experience managing and leading a major, complex project or a nonprofit organization, a private or corporate business, or a government department or function, comparable in size and scope to the Center;
- An entrepreneurial spirit and the capacity to develop innovative programs and partnerships;
- Strong team-building skills including the ability and desire to lead a mission-driven staff in a complex, highly collaborative organization;
- Excellent communications skills in all aspects of programmatic work with media, policy-makers, funders, staff, Board and the general public; and

- A demonstrated record of successful fund-raising from one or more of the following entities: foundations, major individual donors, corporations, federal funding sources and the public at large.

In addition, the following qualities will be helpful:

- A postgraduate or advanced degree (e.g., PhD, MPH, MBA, MPA, MPP, JD);
- Experience working with state and federal policymakers;
- An interest and capacity in translating evidence-based research and knowledge into public policy strategies and practice;
- A record of successful public interest advocacy and/or a deep appreciation of the value of advocacy, education and organizing to influence and change public policy; and
- High energy level, good humor and contagious optimism that inspires others with a sense of possibility, progress, and hope.

Community Catalyst seeks a broad spectrum of qualified employees and is strongly committed to a diverse, equitable and family-friendly work environment. Community Catalyst does not discriminate in hiring based on age, color, ethnicity, race, national origin, primary language, religion, economic status, family status, mental and physical disabilities, veteran status, gender identity and expression, sex or sexual orientation. Through all its programs, Community Catalyst works to advance health equity, focusing on people of color and immigrants, as well as disability, gender, sexual identity and socio-economic status.

Application Procedure

Applicants are asked to send a cover letter and resume to the following web address: www.imsearch.com/5465. Inquiries and nominations may be submitted to the same web address or to the search firm representatives at the contact information below. **Electronic submission of applications and correspondence is strongly preferred.** Review of nominations and applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled.

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