



KORN FERRY



Position Specification
Chief Executive Officer

2022-2023

CONFIDENTIAL POSITION SPECIFICATION

Position	Chief Executive Officer
Organization	College Possible
Location	Location is agnostic as long as the individual has the ability to represent College Possible in the community and willingness to travel regularly throughout the country on behalf of the organization.
Reporting Relationship	National Board of Directors
Website	https://collegepossible.org/

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

As one of the largest and most successful college access and success programs in the country, since 2000 College Possible has helped more than 80,000 students from underrepresented communities get into and through college through an intensive curriculum of coaching and support. Its pioneering model matches students with a near-peer coach and an evidence-based curriculum designed to help students overcome the most common barriers to getting into college and completing their degree – all at no cost to students or their families. Nationwide, College Possible students are three times more likely to earn a bachelor’s degree within six years than their peers from similar backgrounds.

College Possible’s near-peer coaching model has earned national recognition: the inaugural Evergreen National Education Award recognized its leadership in increasing access to and success in college for students from low-income backgrounds. It also earns top-of-field results: a Harvard study found that the program more than doubles a student's chance of enrolling in a four-year college, and its students are four times more likely to become college graduates than their low-income peers. College Possible has an annual operating budget of \$33 million, more than 150 full-time employees and over 175 AmeriCorps and VISTA service members. During the 2021-2022 school year, the reach was an estimated 24,000 students nationwide.

College Possible is a proud AmeriCorps program. AmeriCorps is a federal agency that brings people together to tackle the country’s most pressing challenges through national service. AmeriCorps members commit to a year of service as a College Possible coach in communities throughout the country. Many coaches represent the identities of the students they serve, and each brings a commitment to social justice and closing the college equity divide.

College Possible operates eight regional sites in St. Paul, MN; Chicago, IL; Milwaukee, WI; Omaha, NE; Philadelphia, PA; Portland, OR; and Seattle, WA; and College Forward in Austin, TX. The organization also delivers two national offerings: CoPilot and Catalyze partnerships in California, Iowa, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, and Tennessee.

College Forward

As part of College Possible’s continued commitment to deepen its impact and scale meaningful student outcomes, College Forward became part of College Possible on July 1, 2021. College Forward expanded the work to Austin, TX. By combining organizations, it reinforces foundational programming, expands national reach, and evolves the service model and capacity to meet the needs of students long into the future.

Catalyze

Catalyze is a college success partnership program where partner universities are matched with trained near-peer coaches to support the first-to-second-year persistence and degree completion of eligible students on their campuses. College Possible provides trained, on-campus AmeriCorps coaches, program administration support, and a proprietary coaching curriculum that adds capacity for better student retention. Catalyze coaches extend the reach of already existing campus resources. The Catalyze program can be customized to reach top-priority student segments, and/or specific retention goals, or to augment known gaps in student support.

CoPilot

CoPilot is an industry-leading student information system providing student support professionals/practitioners with a 360-degree view of their students, offering insight into the academic, financial, and social well-being of students. CoPilot users can track student interactions, monitor student progress, and replace data silos or spreadsheets. The team guides organizations through data migration, implementation, and optimization. Built on the Salesforce.com platform and highly customizable, CoPilot empowers users with cloud-based technology and equips them with real-time analytics to prevent students from falling through the cracks.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

College Possible is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and seeks to build a diverse workforce to create impact in partnership with the communities served. We welcome a diverse pool of qualified applicants. For each of its positions, College Possible is mindful about how to best serves its students, and seeks to hire staff with relevant experience, skills and aptitude, and a commitment to the power of education.

THE OPPORTUNITY- WHAT YOU'LL DO

College Possible has achieved national recognition as a leader increasing access to and success in college for students from low-income backgrounds, and since its inception has grown significantly. The next phase of the organization's evolution is critical. After 20+ years of rapid growth and expansion, the next CEO must strengthen the organizational infrastructure to be more sustainable before deepening/expanding the impact of its programs and services to support more youth. There is a mandate for delivering a strong national vision and value, strengthened relationships with all sites, future growth, and programmatic innovation. As such, the CEO will be charged with strengthening the operational structure and driving intentional investment in its leaders that will even further enhance their ability to create more opportunities for underserved students and ultimately greater social impact.

The CEO for College Possible will be responsible for the strategic leadership and management of the national organization and for setting a strong vision for its future as a robust multi-site and multi-service enterprise. The CEO, with the collaborative support of dedicated site executive directors and a national leadership team, will build organizational capacity to achieve its mission and goals. The next chapter will require change management and accountability of all team members to meet goals and metrics that deliver for students. The CEO will establish policies, systems, and procedures to maximize efficiencies and alleviate natural tensions of a multi-site organization and national programs working at scale. This position will lead the development and implementation of College Possible's strategic objectives and related business plans and budgets.

This next phase of organizational building will position College Possible to drive scale and enhance program offerings, financial sustainability, and operational capabilities. The CEO will manage a senior team and provide mentorship. Working closely with the National Board, the CEO will serve as the chief resource-generator and ambassador for College Possible, raise community awareness of its mission, goals and accomplishments, and act as the spokesperson for the organization in its efforts to attract and retain donors, funders, and business partners.

The CEO inspires and motivates internal and external audiences, leads with clarity and purpose, expands the organization's impact and supporters, engenders an inclusive and engaged internal culture, and demonstrates a strong commitment to the powerful mission.

Specific opportunities include:

- **Lead the national strategy for the organization's continued impact and growth:** The CEO will provide the vision and leadership necessary to achieve the philosophy, mission, and future goals through long-range planning efforts of the organization including shaping the overall strategy for organizational sustainability and capacity to enhance organizational impact and growth. Build a productive working relationship with the Board, its committees, and task forces.
- **Ensure Program Quality Across All Sites & College Partners: Create standardization, role clarity, unified culture, and consistent approach/programmatic delivery.** Help ensure the delivery of high-quality programming to students, including maintaining and enhancing relationships with partner high schools, colleges, and community volunteers. Oversee the implementation of the College Possible curriculum and ensure the site level program is operating in synergy with the national model while innovating to improve program outcomes.
- **Refine Organizational Capacity for College Possible:** Provide a high level of managerial leadership throughout the organization with clearly defined accountability measures. Oversee budget planning and financial reporting. Build, develop and retain a high-quality senior management team and staff. Direct ongoing internal organizational development to define and measure success and build or refine the infrastructure necessary to support a collaborative multi-site organization and support the growth plans of the organization including review of the current and potential pipeline for peer coaching.
- **Prioritize Culture:** Build a culture that fosters collaboration within and across communities across the organization. As a leader, the CEO will model and ensure a culture that builds trust, promotes belonging, supports courage, and empowers community that fully embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **Diversify Funding:** Enable the success of fundraising activities and initiatives, including earned revenue, national fundraising, and multi-site grants. Work closely with Board, staff, and volunteers in expanding the organization's donor base and engaging corporate partners to generate revenue and mobilize significant resources in support of the College Possible vision. Ideate, encourage, and implement new programming and earned revenue opportunities that expand the reach of the organization.
- **Represent College Possible locally and nationally:** Serve as the primary national spokesperson for the organization. Leverage compelling storytelling to build a network of external partners and supporters who are advocates of CP and its mission. Establish and manage the organization's national reputation and branding.

WHO YOU ARE

The ideal candidate should bring a mix of the following experience, qualities, and established track record in order to lead College Possible:

- Demonstrated leadership experience with a track record of success in managing a fiscally sound, growing, complex, multi-program nonprofit and/or corporate organization.
- Passion for and demonstrated commitment to advancing college access and college success for underserved students and first generation to college students, and public service.
- Considerable experience or exposure working directly with a Board of Directors, maintaining collaborative working relationships with its members, and the ability to develop, recruit and leverage an effective Board.
- Managerial experience at scale with an emphasis on developing, mentoring, retaining, and inspiring distributed and diverse teams.
- A history of empowering and fostering a positive culture and implementing change as needed.
- Experience and patience building organizational capacity, gaining organizational and partner buy-in across a distributed, multi-site, diverse organization through stable change management.
- A strong dedication to and success in fundraising and revenue generation.
- Financial fluency paired with experience in fiscal responsibility.
- Demonstrated accomplishments in the areas of strategic development and implementation; the ability to identify and prioritize varied and competing issues.
- Proven record of facilitating collaboration and cooperation with organizations and the community.
- Working knowledge of strategies to propel educational access initiatives and prioritize other relevant issues via public policy advocacy.

Additional ideal personal, leadership and values-based characteristics will include:

- A high level of humble confidence combined with an entrepreneurial yet collaborative, accessible management style that engenders trust, empathy, credibility, values transparency, and cohesion.
- Effective public speaker and motivational leader; able to communicate the mission of the organization in many different arenas and to diverse constituencies.
- Highly effective listening and communication skills, both written and oral, a high tolerance for ambiguity and change, sound judgment, and a strong results orientation.
- Demonstrated experience defining and measuring the success of diversity, equity, and inclusion; attuned to current social environment/educational challenges.
- An ability to connect authentically with College Possible's students, representing marginalized communities and identities.
- Servant leadership that models the highest integrity, ethical standards, and respect for others.
- Knowledge of college access and college success offerings with an authentic connection to first generation students, ideally.

EDUCATION

Given the mission of the organization, an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university is strongly preferred. However, we recognize that education requirements can perpetuate racial, gender, socio-economic, and background disparities due to access. We encourage all candidates with the professional experiences, values, and skills outlined in this position specification to apply.

COMPENSATION

This position offers a comprehensive compensation package with a target of \$325,000 and excellent benefits package (complete health, dental, life, short-term and long-term insurance, 401(k) retirement plan and generous paid time off program).

Equal Opportunity Employer

College Possible is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Applicants will receive consideration for employment regardless of their race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance. Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

KORN FERRY CONTACTS

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