



Job Announcement: Community Organizer in

East St. Louis / Southern Illinois

Overview

Join us in building a grassroots movement of parent leaders working for economic, racial and social justice for families. Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI) builds the leadership, power and voice of low-income parents to fight for equity on behalf of their children and families. COFI is looking for experienced organizers for a range of positions. At least 2 years of organizing experience is required, and we are particularly looking for staff with 3-5 years of organizing experience. At COFI, Community Organizers work with parent leaders (mostly mothers and grandmothers) in Black and Brown communities across Illinois on leadership development, local organizing campaigns and larger public policy initiatives aimed at making policy and systems more equitable and responsive to the needs of all families. We are currently hiring for a position based in East St. Louis and covering communities in Metro East and Southern Illinois. A driver's license, car insurance and access to a car are required.

Who We Are

COFI is an organizing center that elevates the voices of parents living in challenged communities of color through:

- **Local Organizing:** COFI trains and organizes neighborhood and school-based parent teams to take action on issues they identify as important to improving life outcomes for children.
- **Policy and Systems Change Organizing:** COFI unites parent leaders across neighborhoods, race and ethnicity to impact policy changes of priority benefit to children and families.
- **Sharing the Learning:** COFI provides training and resources to parent-led organizations around the country.

COFI's innovative model of leadership development and community organizing, [*The COFI Way*](#), emphasizes the interconnection between personal struggles and broader community issues and builds capacity for parent leaders to address these issues through collective action. Through COFI's intensive and systematic leadership development and organizing process, parents develop skills, confidence and the organized power to win improvements in schools, communities, and public policies.

What You'll Do

COFI Organizers work as a team with Illinois parent leaders and other COFI organizers on a wide range of leadership development, community organizing and parent-led policy campaigns. Specific responsibilities depend on the position but typically include:

- Build parent action teams in one or more communities and/or support statewide parent campaign committees.
- Facilitate and coordinate components of *The COFI Way* – a 3-year leadership and organizing process.
- Develop parents' leadership skills and capacity to impact change in their own lives and communities.
- Organize and coordinate meetings, trainings and campaign activities.
- Coordinate planning and strategy development for parent-led campaigns at the local, citywide and statewide levels.
- Network with and build relationships between parents and community organizations, advocacy groups and policymakers.
- Research and analyze complex policy issues and create training and resource materials for parents to help inform their decision-making.

COFI's current policy campaign issue areas include:

- *Early Learning:* addressing barriers to access to early intervention, child care and quality preschool for low-income children and families.
- *Elementary Justice:* seeking to end punitive school discipline policies and the criminalization of youth of color.
- *Health, Food and Recess:* working on food insecurity, and other health and mental health equity issues for children and families.

- *Stepping Out of Poverty*: working on utility debt reform, asset building, reining in government fees and fines, and other economic security issues for families in poverty.

Who You Are

Candidates who will be successful in this job will have:

- Strong grassroots organizing, leadership development and campaign skills.
- A commitment to building the leadership and voice of parent leaders from low-income Black and Brown communities across Illinois.
- At least 2 years of experience with community, labor or grassroots electoral organizing.
- Enthusiasm for learning *The COFI Way* organizing model and working with COFI's staff and parent leaders to implement the model.

Other qualifications include:

- A demonstrated ability to work effectively across racially diverse communities and cultures.
- Knowledge, understanding of and commitment to racial, economic and gender equity.
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to relate easily with a wide range of people.
- Strategic thinking skills, with a demonstrated ability to build campaigns that connect local issues with broader public policy issues.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Research, policy analysis and media skills.
- Excellent organizational skills including planning, time management and information management.
- Creativity, flexibility and good problem-solving skills.
- Willingness to work flexible hours, including some evenings and weekends.
- Must have a car and maintain a valid driver's license and automobile insurance coverage.
- Spanish/English bilingual preferred but not required for East St. Louis position.

What Else You Should Know

If hired, you will join a team of dedicated organizing staff working in across Illinois. You will coordinate closely with other COFI organizers to support the leadership and policy change work led by POWER-PAC Illinois, COFI's statewide network of grassroots parent leaders.

Women organizers and organizers of color are strongly encouraged to apply. COFI is an equal opportunity employer.

More information about COFI is available at www.cofionline.org.

Salary and Benefits

COFI's salary schedule is built to acknowledge varying levels of experience and responsibilities on the organizing team. Depending upon experience, COFI's starting organizer salaries can range from \$45,000 to \$62,000 (for organizers with lead organizing experience including 3-5 years of organizing and some supervisory experience).

Generous family friendly benefits include health, disability, life, 403(b) with employer match, paid time off, flex benefit, flexible scheduling, paid sabbatical after 10 years, and optional vision and dental. Out-of-pocket expenses and car mileage are reimbursed by COFI.

How to Apply

Please submit a resume, cover letter and COFI Employment Application to applications@cofionline.org. The application can be downloaded from our Jobs Page <https://cofionline.org/about-cofi/jobs/> or completed [here](#).

Applications may also be submitted by mail to Applications, COFI, 2245 South Michigan, Suite 200, Chicago, Illinois 60616 or by fax to 312/226-5144.

Application Deadline

Please apply by January 21, 2024.