



Position: Director, Career Opportunities Initiative

Classification: Exempt

Supervisor: Executive Vice President

Supervises: Career readiness coaches and mentors (paid and volunteer); talent recruiter, curriculum consultant; and program assistant

The **Career Opportunities Initiative Director** will work closely with COE's employer partners, TRIO programs, and COE staff—particularly the vice president of advancement, the director of alumni relations, and the senior vice president of program and professional development—to build the infrastructure for this initiative. The Career Opportunities Initiative Director will manage three key activities: building the infrastructure for the Career Opportunities Initiative; building employer partnerships and the infrastructure to manage them; and building out and refining the technology platform to support employer engagement and talent recruitment and even more robust data collection and impact assessment.

About the Initiative: The Career Opportunities Initiative (COI) increases the career opportunities and success of students completing associate and baccalaureate degrees while receiving support from college access and success programs, particularly the Federal TRIO programs. It provides low-income, first-generation participants with information about careers and career development, targeted, intentional coaching from mentors trained to provide supportive accountability (regular check-ins, monitoring, encouraging, nudging, troubleshooting), and supplemental skill development with extensive opportunities for supervised practice. The initiative also assists individual TRIO programs to expand capacity in these areas.

Employer partnerships are essential to the success of the Career Opportunities Initiative. COE has started to build talent-sourcing partnerships with major national and multi-national employers and will build partnerships with employers in a wide range of career fields, prioritizing partnerships in areas with significant national labor shortages, including STEAM, healthcare, and education. COE will use a technology platform to facilitate and support student development and engagement, mentor training and mentor/mentee engagement, and data collection to monitor and continuously improve the performance and effectiveness of the mentoring program.

Position Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree is required, and a master's degree in Business, Human Relations, or a related field is preferred.
- A minimum of 5-7 years of experience working in a corporate, non-profit, or academic environment with a strong partnership engagement and management background with demonstrated creative productivity; however, COE may consider the experience in a related field in which the candidate can show a successful track record.
- Experience building or managing workforce or career development programs.
- Demonstrated ability to build programs or implement initiatives effectively—experience collaborating cross-functionally and interacting effectively with employers, students, alumni, and university personnel.
- Able to plan and manage multiple complex projects simultaneously and balance priorities under time constraints while maintaining strong attention to detail; the ability to evaluate programs and collect and analyze data; and strong oral and written communication skills required.
- Extensive knowledge of computer database software, spreadsheets, and word processing and the ability to understand integrated computer systems (Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, Salesforce, Handshake, et cetera)

- Must be highly organized and detail oriented.
- Knowledge of budget management.
- Able to conduct research and resolve problems.
- Must possess excellent interpersonal and customer service skills to support relationship building.
- Able to work well under pressure, multi-task effectively, set priorities, and meet deadlines.
- Able to manage confidential and sensitive information.
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion, equity-minded practice, and knowledge about methods of developing knowledge of respect for and the skills to engage with those of other cultures or backgrounds.
- Excellent customer service skills demonstrated by great listening and proactive problem-solving.
- Creative and strategic thinking abilities and a self-starter in implementing new initiatives.
- Strong project management skills and experience using project management tools.
- Practical verbal and written communication skills to successfully manage meetings and project events and to generate documents required to handle partnerships.
- Experience working with college access and success programs and knowledge of TRIO programs are helpful.
- Flexibility as the job scope requires travel and attendance at evening or weekend activities, meetings, events, seminars, and workshops.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Work with technology and research partners to build a career pathways program that addresses the unique needs of low-income, first-generation students seeking upward economic mobility by providing targeted, intentional mentoring/coaching and opportunities to acquire and hone skills employers prioritize—to scale the program.
- Curate existing and have new training guides developed that embed career readiness mentoring aimed at increasing workforce readiness, skills, and access to professional networks.
- Establish talent-sourcing partnerships with college access and success COE's member institutions.
- Develop and implement a recruitment plan that includes webinars, information sessions, social media, and marketing materials.
- Recruit, hire, train and supervise Career Readiness Coaches who will work with students through individual and group coaching sessions augmented with support from volunteer mentors.
- Work with the COE director of alumni relations to recruit and train volunteer mentors; develop a plan for evolving to a volunteer-based model with mentor recruitment in targeted industries.
- Establish talent-sourcing partnerships with major national and multi-national employers to provide paid internships and employment for students and alumni.
- Build the infrastructure to manage employer partnerships.
- Work with technology partners to build out and refine the technology platform so that in addition to facilitating and supporting student development and mentor engagement, it can help employer engagement and talent recruitment and more robust data collection and impact assessment.
- Work with the COE communications team to design and deliver a comprehensive communication strategy to generate widespread awareness of the Career Pathways Initiative among employers and TRIO programs.
- Work with research partners to develop evaluation protocols for the project to assess how the model is effectively reaching its long-term and short-term goals and objectives, to evaluate how training and coaching help students to develop the skills prioritized by employers, and how effectively the initiative is helping students to reach their career goals equitably.
- Prepare regular reports to forecast, track, and assess the career pathways initiative; use the information to improve the operation and management of the initiative.

- Perform other duties as assigned.

Additional Information: The position is in Washington, D.C., with a competitive salary commensurate with experience and a generous benefits package.

Closing Date: This position remains open until COE fills it.

How to Apply: Please send a cover letter, resume, and list of references with the subject line "Director, Career Opportunities Initiative" to Vanessa.Ramirez@coenet.org. No phone calls, please.