

Adolescent Counseling Services

Executive Director

The premier provider of mental health services to youth in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties seeks a nonprofit leader with success in operational and program excellence; increasing contributed revenue; and developing a vision and strategy for growth and broad community awareness.

Adolescent Counseling Services (ACS) was founded in 1975 and has evolved over time to meet the needs of young people. Today, as it approaches its 50th anniversary, it empowers youth to find their way through social-emotional support and by building safe, accepting communities. For fiscal year 2024/25, ACS served more than 26,000 youth and family members – an increase of 70% from the previous year – through four core programs:

- On-Campus Counseling provides free counseling to youth and families during school hours in 12 schools and youth centers. These contracts are funded by the schools.
- Community Counseling Program provides affordable counseling and psychotherapy for youth and families. Services are provided in English and Spanish and offered on a sliding scale based on clients' ability to pay.
- Adolescent Substance Addiction Treatment (ASAT) provides professional assessment, outpatient treatment services, and a tailored approach ensuring that clinicians deliver the best program to fit the particular needs of each family.
- Outlet empowers LGBTQIA+ youth and builds safe and accepting communities through support, education, and advocacy. Outlet provides affirmative and gender-expansive counseling services and social groups facilitated by Outlet Program Coordinators.

ACS clinicians are highly qualified, passionate, and committed to this work. A 2022-23 report by the American Psychological Association said that almost two in five teens felt they were not getting the support they need, which negatively impacted their well-being. ACS aims to meet this need for more accessible services.

The ACS Institute is a cornerstone of the organization's commitment to clinical excellence and workforce development in adolescent mental health. It currently provides intensive, multi-year training for graduate students, practicum trainees, and doctoral interns, with a focus on culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and evidence-based care. ACS aims to expand and accredit the Institute to offer CEU-eligible training for licensed clinicians, thereby strengthening the clinical talent pipeline, increasing service capacity, and cementing ACS's status as a regional leader in adolescent psychotherapy. The Executive Director will play a key role in championing and scaling this initiative.

The ACS Institute of Psychotherapy & Training offers a variety of adolescent-specific clinical training to a full spectrum of mental health trainees, practicum students, and interns. The training is multi-year to include doctoral-level interns. ACS desires to accredit and expand this program to include training licensed clinicians in order to satisfy their CEU while providing direct service to ACS.

For fiscal year 2025/26, ACS's operational budget is about \$2.2M. It takes no government funding. Income is derived roughly one-third from school grants contracts; one-third from

individuals/contributed; and one-third from foundations/corporate grants. ACS has a stable but growing endowment.

Adolescent Counseling Services is governed by a 10-member Board of Directors. The Executive Director reports to the Board and is an *ex officio* member of the Board of Directors and committees. ACS has a talented and committed team of 22, many of whom work remotely. They collaborate with, connect with, and support each other. Work/life balance is ingrained within the ACS culture.

BASIC FUNCTION

A good strategic sense, sound nonprofit operational and financial management, and exceptional human qualities are all important aspects of the Executive Director's and ACS's success. The ED provides overall leadership, direction, strategy, and vision for ACS and its programs, projects, and outreach. Assisted by the team, the ED manages the organization's activities, funding streams/fundraising, programs, infrastructure, staff, and finances. The ED has the primary responsibility to develop and deliver on a strategy for increased awareness and funding for ACS and will be a visible and credible spokesperson within the community.

SUCCESS IN THE ROLE WILL BE EVALUATED ON:

- Building strong relationships with stakeholders including staff, the Board of Directors, community leaders, funders, those important to the success of ACS, and those who need to be aware of ACS.
- Securing sustainable funding and diversifying all sources of revenue so ACS is poised for strategic initiatives and growth. In the first year, the ED will prioritize direct stewardship and cultivation of current and potential new major donors while concurrently driving the creation of a comprehensive fund development plan.
- Driving strategic planning: in collaboration with the Executive Director, Board and staff, ACS will embark on a new strategic planning process so that ACS has a clear vision, roadmap, objectives, goals, funding requirements, KPIs, and an accountability structure. Implementation of the plan will involve regular check-ins among the ED and team and regular reporting on progress to the Board.
- Develop and execute the strategy to expand the ACS Institute of Psychotherapy and Training; begin the accreditation process.

IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

The Executive Director's priorities in the first 90 days are to:

- Thoroughly understand ACS – its history and culture; governance structure, Board, staff; finances and funding; programs, services, and advocacy; outreach, community network, and constituencies – in order to effectively act as ACS's Executive Director and represent the organization as a spokesperson and fundraiser.
- Establish working relationships with staff; foster and sustain a culture of collaboration, trust, open lines of communication, mutual support, teamwork, and integrity; positively motivate and nurture a strong and committed team.

- Immediately provide support for any in-progress fundraising activities; understand ACS's sources of revenue. As the Fundraiser-in Chief, the ED will work with the Director of Philanthropy & Marketing and the Chair of the Fund Development Committee to develop a plan to increase philanthropic support from individuals, foundations, businesses, and corporations.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Director will marshal the collective talent of the ACS community to deliver quality services in fulfillment of its mission.

LEADERSHIP AND VISION

- Ensure that the organization retains its focus and mission as it adheres to its budget and works through financial and operational issues should they arise.
- Promote the understanding internally and externally of ACS's service philosophy of making a measurable difference in the lives of adolescents and their families.
- Within the first six months and in partnership with the Board of Directors and staff, undertake a strategic planning process to set a roadmap for the next several years. Ensure that the concerns of staff, the Board, stakeholders, and the community served are considered.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION

- Ensure that day-to-day operations and programs are professionally and efficiently organized and administered; review all internal communications, systems, controls for accounting, operations, processes, and procedures and ensure compliance with regulations; assure that ACS maintains a solid operational foundation; identify and address areas challenging ACS's evolution and growth.
- With the staff and Board, prepare the annual budget; maintain the organization's fiscal well-being in adherence to Board-approved policies; ensure that financial performance positively tracks budget and operating plans; ensure that there is a relationship between programmatic objectives and available resources; develop long- and short-term financial plans and prepare financial and operating reports for the Board.
- Oversee recruiting, retention, and evaluation of staff; ensure that the staffing mix is balanced, culturally diverse, and appropriate to meet the organization's goals; serve as a supportive mentor and encourage staff professional development efforts to enrich the competencies and experience levels of ACS staff.
- Ensure that official records and documents, as required by funding and licensing agencies, are securely maintained and that the agency complies with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations. Establish productive relationships with accountants, attorneys, partners, banks, insurance carriers, vendors, investment advisors, etc.
- Ensure that facilities are maintained and periodic upgrades are made to the physical infrastructure, making certain that all facilities are appropriate and provide a pleasant working environment for staff and clients.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- In collaboration with the Clinical Director, ensure that clinical programs meet the highest standards of care through collaboration with the Clinical Director on quality assurance initiatives, continuous improvement efforts, outcome measurement, and compliance with best practices in adolescent mental health treatment.
- Oversee the evolution of all ACS programs; identify gaps in service and where ACS could fill a need; continually upgrade program assessment, delivery infrastructure and staffing across all operating areas; develop and implement operating plans that ensure program objectives align programs to budget, staffing, fundraising, finances, and mission.
- Share knowledge internally and externally about ACS approaches and programs that are proven effective as a way of advancing the state-of-the-art mental health services; strengthen the organization's reputation as an innovator and thought leader; ensure ACS is viewed by the staff and community as an organization that fosters a strong service orientation that is innovative, compassionate, and professional; remain current on trends in the field.
- Where appropriate, develop cross-cutting projects and services in collaboration with other organizations and funders.

VISIBILITY, MARKETING, AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Strengthen ACS's internal and external communications, providing strong "branding" that helps to indelibly associate ACS in the public's mind with the organization's mission, values, and constituencies; review all ACS communication materials, including direct mail, digital communications, brochures, the website, and other written materials to ensure effective and consistent articulation of ACS's mission and purpose.
- Develop and cultivate mutually beneficial partnerships and relationships.
- Serve as a credible, articulate, and authentic spokesperson; promote a positive understanding of ACS and the need for more and diverse counseling for youth; interact with a variety of providers, educators, funders, parent groups, healthcare professionals, and community leaders, and through ACS convenings and trainings, industry events, conferences, civic/business clubs, referring organizations, etc.

FUNDING AND FUNDRAISING

- With the Director of Philanthropy & Marketing and the Chair of the Fund Development Committee, ensure a sound, diverse funding base for the organization; set fundraising goals, strategies and targets for all donor and funding segments; communicate funding goals, strategies, and progress to the Board and the staff.
- Actively drive direct solicitations and appeals to donors, specifically focusing on deepening and extending the commitment of current donors, leveraging current and past Board members, staff, parent, and community constituencies; continually seek to broaden donor base so that development activities increase in sophistication and scope as awareness of ACS and the organization's work evolves.

- Stay abreast of new funding opportunities if they align to ACS's mission, programs, and constituencies, and proactively stay aware of threats that could impact predictable funding.

BOARD RELATIONS

- Secure the Board's trust and confidence; provide ongoing communication to the Board on critical matters related to ACS.
- With the Board Chair and Executive Committee, implement Board policies, program goals, and objectives; coordinate the efforts of regular and *ad hoc* committees; develop Board meeting agendas, schedules, retreats, and other activities with the Executive Committee; ensure that all committees achieve objectives; encourage Board members' appropriate involvement in ACS's range of activities.
- Assist the Board in identifying and recruiting new Board members whose talents, backgrounds, and commitment are congruent with the needs and mission of ACS.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

The Executive Director will be an experienced nonprofit executive with credibility and passion for the diverse fields of adolescent mental health and psychotherapy, and a commitment to the mission of ACS. A combination of the following experiences and qualifications will be considered.

- Experience at the senior-level as an ED or division head with demonstrable accomplishments in operations, finance, staff management and development, new program development, creating and implementing strategic plans, and board relations.
- A track record in attracting philanthropic support from individuals, foundations, and businesses; a comfort level with fundraising and personally interacting with and cultivating major donors.
- A demonstrated ability to work effectively with representatives, advocates, and professionals with different backgrounds and from various communities, including educators, medical professionals and providers, the media, government representatives, clients, parents, and volunteers.
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills, including the means to address issues in non-polarizing ways but nevertheless with determination; excellent public speaking skills for formal and extemporaneous presentations.
- An LCSW, LMFT, PsyD, Ph.D., or experience working in a behavioral health environment is preferred.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate should be:

- Straightforward and able to share information easily, listen as well as give advice, and respect the abilities of others; someone who imparts trust and integrity and guides others in a similar vein.

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- Decisive and resourceful with the organizational sensitivity to gain the support and confidence of the Board and staff at all levels.
- A good listener and strategist; comfortable receiving input from many sources; and able to analyze and formulate disparate information into a sound, well-organized plan.
- A team builder, confident, and competent with strong skills in management and leadership; one who understands the subtleties of motivating and directing a diverse group of personalities with different work styles.
- Results-oriented; adept at planning, prioritizing, and organizing; follows through and holds themselves and team accountable; a team player who values and models working collaboratively.
- A “doer” with a willingness to work hands-on in developing and executing a variety of activities ranging from the internal day-to-day operations to the highly creative, visible external relations.
- Emotionally mature with a sense of humor to maintain balance and perspective.

The compensation range for this role is \$155,000 - \$225,000.

ACS is proud to be an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. People of color, women, trans and gender variant people, and individuals of diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

To apply, nominate another, or for more information, please contact:

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