

Position Profile

Chief Operating Officer

Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago

Chicago, IL

Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago (NHS) is seeking a skilled and entrepreneurial manager to lead the operations of this large and complex neighborhood revitalization nonprofit. The position offers an experienced manager a great opportunity to lead the transformation of a 40 year old high impact organization serving low and moderate income households and communities throughout the Chicago metropolitan area.

The Organization

NHS is one of Chicago's largest and most innovative neighborhood revitalization organizations, serving over 4,700 clients last year. NHS transforms neighborhoods through education, lending, real estate development, community-building, and policy. Since its inception in 1975, NHS has:

- Served over 228,000 clients
- Educated over 42,000 prospective homebuyers
- Created over 5,000 new homeowners
- Loaned over \$627 million to low- and moderate-income homeowners
- Counseled over 33,000 homeowners at risk of foreclosure
- Saved over 10,000 homeowners from foreclosure
- Recovered and stabilized over 1,500 troubled properties
- Financed, built, or rehabbed over 35,000 housing units

NHS' mission is to create opportunities for people to live in affordable homes, improve their lives, and strengthen their neighborhoods. NHS works in partnership with business, government, and residents to help families purchase, improve, and prevent the loss of 1-4 unit homes. These activities revitalize neighborhoods. NHS is one of the most productive members of NeighborWorks America.

NHS was established in 1975 to combat predatory lending practices and provide revitalization strategy and practical resources to families in low- to moderate-income Chicago neighborhoods. NHS' model was based on an organization in Pittsburgh that found success in getting diverse groups, financial institutions, government agencies, and residents, to work together to revitalize neighborhoods. In 1978, NHS formed the NHS Redevelopment Corporation (NHSRC) to support its revitalization efforts through direct development activities. In 1987, NHS responded to a growing need for creative and flexible loan products by founding Neighborhood Lending Services (NLS), an Illinois Residential Mortgage licensee, to provide home improvement, purchase, and home ownership preservation financing. NLS is the only nonprofit mortgage lender in the state of Illinois. In 2003, NHS noticed an alarming uptick in foreclosures, concentrated heavily in the city's lower-

income neighborhoods, and founded its nationally recognized and replicated Home Ownership Preservation Initiative (HOPI) to combat the rising tide of foreclosures. In 2007, NHS created an affiliation with NHS of the Fox Valley, allowing NHS to expand its program services to the city of Elgin and Kane County, Illinois. In 2013, NHS expanded its services and opened an office in south suburban Cook County, Illinois.

NHS Programs

NHS revitalizes neighborhoods through homeownership promotion, homeownership preservation, and property preservation.

Homeownership Promotion

NHS offers homebuyer education classes, one-on-one pre-purchase counseling, and financial coaching, providing the tools homebuyers need to purchase, rehab, insure, and maintain a home. Through homeownership promotion, NHS builds a pipeline of potential homebuyers to invest in the future of their neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Lending Services

Neighborhood Lending Services (NLS) is the Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) lending arm of Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago (NHS). NLS facilitates neighborhood revitalization by developing and administering loan and grant programs that finance home improvement, home safety repairs, home purchase, purchase-rehab, and home rehabilitation for low- and moderate-income families. Well-maintained, owner-occupied homes have a range of economic, social, and psychological benefits for their residents and are critical components of stable and economically healthy neighborhoods. To support such activities, NHS' Construction Services team manages repair projects for clients.

Homeownership Preservation

NHS counselors provide foreclosure prevention counseling to borrowers to help them keep their homes through loan modifications and workouts with loan servicers. NHS also provides practical post-purchase counseling and workshops to ensure homeowners that their homes stay affordable and well-maintained.

Property Preservation

NHS redevelopment activity strengthens neighborhoods by stabilizing vacant properties and rehabbing damaged housing stock. The NHS Redevelopment Corporation is responsible for administering the City of Chicago's receivership program for 1-4 unit buildings, securing distressed properties.

Neighborhood Strategy

NHS' five neighborhood-based and two regional offices engage in community-building activities to help neighborhoods stabilize and thrive by leveraging resources and collaborating with other organizations, block clubs, and residents. NHS neighborhood offices are the cornerstone of its strategy, demonstrating NHS' competitive advantage to knit together lessons learned from its neighborhood-based work with its homeownership and real estate products and services.

Current Situation

NHS is seeking a strong COO to continue the modernization process of the organization as programs and systems evolve to assure both mission impact and sustainability. This process has gained momentum over the past two years under the leadership of CEO Kristin Faust, who hired the organization's first COO to improve the coordination among programs and upgrade NHS' management and technology systems. This process has made great progress under the current COO, achieving a high degree of buy-in from the entire management team at NHS.

NHS Chicago has a staff of 91 and is governed by a diverse 18 member board of directors comprised of community leaders, housing professionals and lenders. It has a current annual operating budget of approximately \$11 Million.

The Position

Reporting to the President, the Chief Operating Officer (COO) has overall operational responsibility for all NHS programs and manages a group of senior leaders. The COO collaborates closely with the President to develop and accomplish goals as laid out in the strategic and annual plans and contributes to our strategies. The annual and strategic goals are established by management with input from staff and approved by the NHS Board of Directors. Central to this role is building efficient, cohesive, and coordinated internal operations and managing the day to day work in support of our mission and impact targets.

The COO vets and implements new programmatic initiatives and ensures that ongoing contract and programmatic reporting, compliance, and impact objectives are met.

The COO also partners with the President and senior leadership to develop, implement, and manage the operational aspects of the annual plan and coordinates with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to ensure budget alignment and goal coordination across all business lines. Finally, the COO assists in the cultivation of relationships with public and private funders.

PRINCIPAL JOB DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Operations:

Through ownership, collaboration and innovation, the COO provides leadership, management, and vision necessary to ensure the company has proper operational controls, technology, administrative and reporting procedures, and people systems in place to ensure operational efficiency, integrity, integration and financial sustainability across all business lines.

This means collaborating with the management team to develop and implement plans and technologies for the operational infrastructure of systems, processes and personnel design to achieve operational excellence and goal achievement. He/she coordinates the implementation, reporting, and administrative requirements of new programs or contractual initiatives. He/she also provides direction

to all staff that mirrors the adopted mission and values of NHS and ensures clarity, access to needed resources, and focuses on process and skill development. The goal is to ensure all actions undertaken ensure and promote seamless service delivery to the customer and high client satisfaction.

The COO also coordinates with the CFO to prepare and submit an annual operational budget to the President for review and approval, manages effectively within this budget, and reports accurately on progress made and challenges encountered. This is to ensure the continued financial viability of the NHS programs and services through sound fiscal management within all program delivery areas. He/she also provides programmatic leadership and input for all strategic planning processes with the President and staff.

Leadership & Management

The COO must also motivate and lead a high performance management team and mentor direct reports (currently seven department heads) to cultivate skills and to increase their consciousness of the interrelationship between each department in the Operations group, creating an environment of collaboration amongst all business lines and within the organization as a whole. The functional areas of supervision for the COO are: Construction, Homeownership, Innovations, Process Improvement, Lending & Credit, Neighborhood Strategy, and Redevelopment.

He/she is expected to provide effective and inspiring leadership, as well as stewardship, by being active and hands-on in all programs and services. The COO also functions as an agent of change for a learning organization and implements and leads a continuous quality improvement process throughout the program and service areas, focusing on systems/process improvement, promoting regular and ongoing opportunities for all staff to give feedback on program operations.

The near term priorities for the first 12-18 months of the new Chief Operating Officer's tenure include the following:

- Quickly understand the business model and approach of NHS Chicago, learn the structure of the organization, including an understanding of services and the needs of clients;
- Establish strong working relationships with the management team and the senior executive team;
- Continue the momentum toward increased coordination, collaboration and creative initiatives among the different business lines;
- Continue the momentum upgrading information technology systems to improve both program delivery and management systems;
- Assure the successful implementation of the Salesforce CRM in the second half of 2017;
- Assure timely decision-making about both new business opportunities and challenges which arise for NHS programs;
- Continue to build up the organization's management strength, especially at middle levels;
- Promote entrepreneurial thinking among the management team to identify opportunities for growth in program, impact and self-sufficiency.

Experience and Attributes

To perform the job successfully, an individual should demonstrate the following competencies:

Capacity Building - ability to effectively build organization and staff capacity, developing a top-notch workforce and the processes that ensure the organization runs smoothly.

Leadership and Organization - exceptional capacity for managing and leading people; a team builder who has experience in managing complex organizations; ability to connect with staff both on an individual level and in large groups; capacity to enforce accountability; commitment to ongoing staff development and continuous learning.

General Management - thorough understanding of finance, broad experience with the full range of business functions and systems, including strategic development and planning, budgeting, business analysis, finance, information systems and technology, human resources, and marketing.

Strategic Vision and Agility - ability to think strategically, anticipate future consequences and trends, and incorporate them into the organizational plan.

The COO must believe in the core values of NHS and be driven by its mission to lead neighborhood change. Significant operations management experience with another organization, at least 10 years of professional experience overall, and a minimum of five years of senior-leadership experience supervising seasoned staff is required.

Formal continuous improvement (e.g. Six Sigma) and/or Project Management certification and experience is preferred. The successful leader in this position will be an inquisitive and thoughtful project manager who promotes and cultivates a work environment focused on results and continuous learning. A Bachelor's degree is required and a Master's degree is preferred.

The COO must also demonstrate a history of strong relationship building, significant experience leading diverse work teams, developing an organization-wide strategy for program excellence, engaging community partners, and partnering with a President and Board of Directors.

Performance Measures

Achieving annual program targets, revenue generation, customer satisfaction, and neighborhood change are the overriding measures of performance. Specific performance measures include progress against annual goals in the following categories:

- Homeowners Created
- Foreclosure Saves
- Homebuyers Educated
- Vacant buildings reclaimed
- Capital leveraged & Lending targets
- Neighborhood/ Community Impact & Outcomes

Salary will be competitive and commensurate with experience.

Application Process

To apply, e-mail your resume, a cover letter that explains how your skills align with the requirements above, and salary requirements to our search consultant, David Erickson-Pearson: epdavid@earthlink.net (*e-mail applications are required*). For other inquiries, contact David Erickson-Pearson at epdavid@earthlink.net.

NHS of Chicago is an equal opportunity employer. More information about the organization can be found at www.nhschicago.org.