



Chief Communications Officer

(Communications, Marketing, and Branding)

New York, NY (preferred)
Los Angeles, CA (preferred)
Atlanta, GA
Chicago, IL
Dallas/Fort Worth, TX
Washington, DC

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About Lambda Legal

Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, and everyone living with HIV through impact litigation, education, and public policy work.

Since 1973, Lambda Legal has used impact litigation and other advocacy tools to decriminalize same-sex relationships; challenge discrimination against LGBTQ people and people living with HIV in the workplace, in the home, in schools, in health care, and in the military; and protect LGBTQ families, including by winning and defending marriage equality. Clients are not charged for legal representation or advocacy, and Lambda Legal receives no government funding. Headquartered in New York City, Lambda Legal has regional offices in Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas, and Washington, D.C.

Lambda Legal believes that serving the full breadth of the LGBTQ and HIV communities requires cultural competency and enthusiasm for diversity of all kinds. To be successful, the organization approaches its work with an understanding that discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity is not the only obstacle to achieving full formal and lived equality for LGBTQ people and everyone living with HIV; rather, it recognizes the intersectional nature of discrimination, specifically including biases based on race, religion, national origin, gender, disability, education, and class. In light of this reality, Lambda Legal prioritizes awareness and proactive commitment to counteracting these biases and their compounding effects.

Position Summary

Lambda Legal is searching for a senior marketing and communications executive to serve as **Chief Communications Officer**.

This is a wonderful opportunity for a seasoned storyteller and marketer to solidify the brand story of a 50-year-old organization poised to be the most influential leader and defender of rights in the LGBTQ movement over the next decade and beyond. Virtually every right that exists for LGBTQ Americans has been won through impact litigation, many because of Lambda Legal. This story must be told.

Lambda Legal has been modest about its achievements for a half-century. For the organization to meet this moment in which LGBTQ rights are under increasing threat across the nation, every lever must be activated, including the design and implementation of an integrated strategic marketing and communications plan to amplify the mission and vision of Lambda Legal and its importance to the future of families and individuals of all ages throughout the country, especially the most vulnerable among us.

This new executive and their contributions constitute a considerable role in executing Lambda Legal's new strategic plan, a priority of which is **to make Lambda Legal a household name**. By raising the visibility and influence of Lambda Legal, the organization will reach new audiences,

deepen its relationship with current supporters, and attract new donors to drive revenue that fuels its critical legal advocacy and impact litigation. A prominent profile and brand recognition will support fundraising and development efforts **to secure Lambda Legal's long-term financial health**—another strategic objective and a priority for the marketing and communications teams.

The CCO will guide:

- » **Internal communications** to contribute to cultivating an informed, collaborative, inclusive culture;
- » **External communications**, including public relations, earned media, and advertising to elevate the organization's profile, celebrate legal victories, inform of the ongoing threats to the LGBTQ community and people living with HIV;
- » **Development communications**, in partnership with the Chief Development Officer, to bring attention to the mission impact of individual, institutional, and corporate contributions and impress upon the public, through all channels, the importance of funding Lambda Legal; and
- » **Digital strategies** to reach new audiences and introduce Lambda Legal to new generations of philanthropists and activists. They will ensure their team's every effort is in service of growing the visibility and impact of the brand and reputation along with the organization itself.

The integrated strategic marketing and communications plan will include clearly defined and measurable objectives, benchmarks, and timelines; it will build on existing strengths, realign underperforming initiatives, and leverage new technologies to elevate the outputs of the marketing and communications departments and the outcomes of their collective effort.

Using market and data analysis, technology, and other sources of information, the CCO will work with their partners across the organization to maintain a relevant mix of communications approaches—digital and analog—to extend the organization's reach to new and existing supporters.

The CCO is charged with building out a robust marketing function and increasing the productivity and effectiveness of the communications team by allocating resources to achieve the greatest return and aligning each individual's role and skillset with the strategic priorities of the department, as set by the CCO, and the organization's strategic plan.

Essential Job Functions

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the core duties and responsibilities expected of the CCO:

- » Lead the creation and execution of a comprehensive, strategic, integrated marketing and communications plan that includes clearly defined and measurable objectives and timelines
- » Build on existing organizational and human capital strengths while using new technologies to deliver positive messages that advance Lambda Legal's reputation as a formidable champion and defender of civil rights
- » Pivot marketing and communications resources quickly when needed and maintain the highest level of communications excellence possible in a changing landscape
- » Build an employer brand as a recruitment tactic for talented employees

Communications

- » Translate complex legal analysis for non-expert/non-legal audiences to better tell the stories of our lawyers, clients, key stakeholders, and impact
- » Develop communications strategies for each active case aligned with the respective legal strategy to inform the public and lead the sector in compelling, educational, and real-time storytelling
- » Devise a thoughtful internal communications strategy to lift up collective and individual achievements among the staff, message organizational imperatives, and announcements, and inform staff of systems and policies changes
- » Cultivate a clear, bi-directional, ongoing flow of information with the development and legal departments
- » Ensure communications remain at the forefront of political and cultural trends that affect Lambda Legal's work
- » Ensure Lambda Legal stays ahead of emerging trends in data and technology to ensure continued relevance in its communications approaches

Marketing; Brand Cultivation + Stewardship

- » Define the Lambda Legal brand internally and externally
- » Drive brand awareness and development to ensure the organization's recognition and reputation match its mission, reach, and vision
- » Cultivate Lambda's brand, and leaders as viable, influential expert authorities on civil rights through top tier thought leadership and unique partnerships
- » Ensure the brand and reputation grow in visibility and impact along with the organization

- » Develop and lead a sophisticated marketing strategy that reaches Lambda Legal's based and target supporters with high-impact messages and campaigns that move audiences to take desired actions
- » Build and maintain a ladder of engagement for Lambda Legal that attracts attention to the organization, recruits new supporters, converts supporters to members and donors, and assists in efforts to develop donors to higher levels of giving
- » Track brand mentions, implement tracking software, and constantly evaluate content performance

Media

- » Cultivate media relationships and secure placement of spokespersons among various media outlets and contacts
- » Identify major media placement opportunities for brand recognition, validity, and increased donations
- » Support legal and development leaders who are faces of the organization in meeting their communications needs and growing their visibility
- » Build a comprehensive digital and video storytelling strategy

Key Responsibilities as a team leader

- » Cultivate an environment of trust, excellence, and accountability among the team
- » Offer problem-solving leadership, listen to, and coach staff to grow and develop with Lambda Legal
- » Model effective cross-departmental partnerships and collaboration, with an emphasis on the communications–development, and communications–legal departmental relations
- » Lead a team of communications professionals to ensure the team achieves organizational benchmarks
- » Ensure marketing and communications staff have the skills necessary to achieve their specific benchmarks
- » Ensure staff understand accountabilities, messaging priorities, policy details and goals, and other information that position them to meet their benchmarks

Qualifications

With the understanding that no one person will offer every desired skill and characteristic outlined below, compelling candidates will offer much of the following:

Education + Experience Requirements

- » Bachelor's degree in communications, marketing, or related field; related experience is required and will be considered in lieu of degree in these areas; advanced degree a plus
- » A minimum of 10 years in a similar executive role with proven leadership abilities and strategic communications experience (previous work in a legal setting and/or focused on social justice a plus)
- » Demonstrable commitment to leading marketing and communications staff and strategies with a diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) lens
- » Experience developing and implementing effective marketing and communications plans and establishing brand awareness
- » Demonstrated success in managing and leading teams through periods of change
- » Ability to build relationships and work effectively with diverse cross-functional teams
- » A collaborative approach to work and a demonstrated capacity to "play well with others," including colleagues in other departments
- » Proven success managing through change; comfort working under tight timelines in a fast-paced environment with grace and good humor while ensuring quality and accountability
- » Experience as a spokesperson a plus
- » Experience with nonprofit advocacy fundraising communications desired

Skills + Competencies

- » High emotional intelligence; able to understand the needs and concerns of partners and colleagues
- » Collaborative and visionary leadership with a demonstrated record of success in developing and implementing multi-faceted marketing and communications efforts that position and elevate the profile and perception of an entire organization or institution with multiple audiences
- » Comfortable with change; flexible and agile in a constantly transforming environment
- » Strong attention to detail with an analytical mind and superb problem-solving skills
- » Strong interpersonal skills, exceptional communication + presentation skills (both written and spoken), supervisory, and decision-making skills; good judgment
- » Highly organized with excellent time and project management skills
- » Adroit decision-making; clear, decisive, and patient with an ability to consider multiple factors in a dynamic, complex, nuanced environment
- » Experience working in a diverse and geographically distributed organization
- » Ability to cultivate and maintain strong relationships remotely
- » Strong analytical and problem-solving skills; ability to work creatively in a problem-solving environment

- » Resourceful, proactive, self-motivated with a strong sense of ownership and accountability
- » Possess the following personal attributes: Trustworthy, Strategic, Organized, Results-driven, Self-starter, Inclusive, Transparent, and Collaborative
- » Ability to balance time, care, and trust-building
- » Integrity in every word and action

Working at Lambda Legal requires a demonstrated awareness of and commitment to the concerns of the breadth of the communities that Lambda Legal serves. Prior work on behalf of the LGBT community and/or people living with HIV is highly desirable but not required. Some experience working with historically marginalized communities (in a professional or volunteer capacity) is also desirable. Any successful candidate will welcome the opportunity to work in a gender-diverse and racially diverse environment.

Reporting Relationships

The Chief Communications Officer reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer and has the following supervisory responsibilities:

- » **Communications Director**
- » **Director of Internal Communications**
- » **Director of Strategic Communications**
 - Graphic Designer – *vacant*
- » **Media Relations Director**
 - Public Information Officers (2)
- » **Digital Director** – *vacant*
 - Deputy Digital Director – *vacant*
 - Social Media Manager – *vacant*
 - Social Media Associate – *vacant*

(Bold indicates direct report)

Leadership + Key Colleagues

(Please do not contact the organization or its leaders directly)

Kevin Jennings **Chief Executive Officer**

Kevin's contributions to the LGBT movement began in 1988 when he helped students create the first school-based Gay-Straight Alliance club, leading him to found and lead the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) for 18 years. He then served as an Assistant Secretary of Education for President Obama, after which he led the Arcus Foundation, the world's largest foundation for LGBT rights organizations, for five years.

He has received multiple national and international awards, including the "Friend of Children" Award from the National Association of School Psychologists, the Human and Civil Rights Award of the National Education Association, the Distinguished Service Award of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the Diversity Leadership Award of the National Association of Independent Schools, the Bob Angelo Medal from COC Netherlands, and the "Appalachian Hero" Award from the Appalachian Community Fund, where he established the Alice Jennings Fund, which supports organizations serving low-income and battered women in the South. He also received the Distinguished Alumni Award from his undergraduate alma mater, Harvard University, in 2019, and the Distinguished Alumni Award of one of his graduate schools, Teachers College of Columbia University, in 2012.

Kevin is a Lambda Literary Award-winning author of seven books. His memoir, *Mama's Boy, Preacher's Son: A Memoir*, was named a Book of Honor by the American Library Association in 2006. He also helped write and produce the documentary *Out of the Past*, which won the 1998 Sundance Film Festival Audience Award for Best Documentary, and is an Executive Producer of the documentaries *The Lavender Scare* (PBS, 2019) and *Welcome to Chechnya* (HBO, 2020), the latter of which was short-listed for the Academy Award for Best Documentary.

Kevin is actively engaged in nonprofit and community causes. Currently, he serves on the Boards of the Pride Fund of the Connecticut Community Foundation, the Ubunye Challenge, the Y2Y Shelter Network, and Muslims for Progressive Values. Among his many past board memberships are the Harvard Alumni Association, Union Theological Seminary, Marjorie's Fund, the You Can Play Project, the Witness Stones Project, and he was the founding Board Chair for the Tectonic Theater Project, which created *The Laramie Project*.

In addition to his degrees from Harvard and Columbia University's Teachers College, Kevin holds an MBA from NYU's Stern School of Business, where he teaches today as an adjunct professor.

Compensation + Benefits

The salary range for this position begins at \$220,000.

A competitive benefits package is provided, including:

- » Medical*
- » Dental*
- » Life insurance*
- » Short- and long-term disability insurance*
- » Vision
- » Pre-tax Health Flexible Spending Account
- » Dependent care account
- » Commuter transit account
- » 403(b) retirement account with a 2% employer contribution plus up to a 4% match
- » Substantial vacation (accrue up to 15 days year 1)
- » Three personal, 12 sick days
- » Lambda Legal observes ten holidays per year and is supportive of the observance of religious holidays

** Life insurance, short- and long-term disability, and basic medical and dental provided at no cost to the employee.*

As a reflection of our firm's commitment to equity and equal pay for all, Cooper Coleman requires that salary ranges or salary starting points be published for every search we conduct. The practice of not posting salaries perpetuates the gender and racial wage gap and discriminates against women, people of color, and other historically excluded populations by causing individuals to negotiate from a disadvantaged starting point.

Location

The ideal candidate is currently or will be located in New York City or Los Angeles; however, this position can be located in any of the following major metropolitan areas where Lambda Legal has a regional office:

- » National Headquarters – New York, NY
- » Western Regional Office – Los Angeles, CA
- » Southern Regional Office – Atlanta, GA
- » Midwest Regional Office – Chicago, IL
- » South Central Regional Office – Dallas, TX
- » Washington, DC Office

Travel + COVID Statement

During the COVID-19 pandemic, travel will be minimal. However, some amount of travel (~15-20%) will be required in the future. Lambda Legal's offices have reopened. The health and well-being of our employees and their loved ones are of the utmost importance to us. We follow CDC and Department of Health guidelines to ensure the safety of employees who work from the office.

EEO + Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Lambda Legal is committed to further building and maintaining a staff that reflects the full range of LGBTQ, HIV-affected, and allied communities and is an equal opportunity employer. People of color, transgender, non-binary and gender-diverse people, women, people with abilities in multiple languages, immigrants, people living with HIV, and people living with (or perceived as having) other physical or mental disabilities are encouraged to apply.

Background Checks

Before sending your resume for this position, please read it over for accuracy. Cooper Coleman verifies its candidates' employment and academic credentials at the time of offer, and our clients frequently conduct background checks before finalizing an offer.

Submission Instructions *(read carefully)*

Applications will remain open until June 2, 2022.

Cooper Coleman is leading this search on behalf of Lambda Legal. To apply, please [visit this link](http://www.coopercoleman.com/lambda-legal-jobs) (www.coopercoleman.com/lambda-legal-jobs). Inquiries and nominations of qualified candidates can be sent to:

Johnny Cooper
johnny@coopercoleman.com

Kindly use the position title as the subject line of your email. All inquiries will be held in confidence.

A cover letter is not required with your initial application but is welcomed to help us understand your fitness for this role during our initial evaluation. Candidates invited for interviews will be asked to provide a thoughtful letter of interest indicating their specific qualifications for the opportunity, desire to join Lambda Legal, and connection to its mission.

Please note: Viable candidates for this role are senior-level experienced, practiced communications and/or marketing professionals. Those invited into the interview process will be asked to complete an exercise in which they draft their own job description for this opportunity outlining their point of view on how this role and its objectives should be approached, how they might re/allocate resources, and if necessary, how they suggest the department be restructured to maximize productivity and effectiveness as a supportive unit within the organization. Keep this in mind as you consider exploring this opportunity.

Cooper Coleman LLC is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all qualified candidates and will refer candidates without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or identity, age, ability, veteran status, or any other legally protected basis.

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About Cooper Coleman

Cooper Coleman is a full-service recruiting and consulting firm partnering exclusively with nonprofit organizations, foundations, and research and academic institutions to drive meaningful growth. We move organizations *forward* by placing the right leaders in the right roles at the right time, and we help to strengthen management and fundraising capacity to amplify their mission and impact.

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