



**Vice President +  
Chief Operating Officer**

*Washington, DC*

**Johnny Cooper, MPA, CFRE**  
Founder + Principal

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Chicago | Cincinnati | New York

## About AIDS United

AIDS United's mission is to end the HIV epidemic in the United States. We fulfill our mission through strategic and participatory grantmaking, policy and advocacy, capacity building, and technical assistance. AIDS United envisions a time when all people, governments, and organizations commit to ending the epidemic and strengthening the health, wellbeing, and human rights of everyone impacted by HIV. We address the intersectional issues, inequities, and social determinants of health that drive the HIV epidemic.

AIDS United partners in and with communities to support community-driven responses that reach people most directly affected by HIV, including people living with HIV, gay and bisexual men, transgender and gender non-conforming people, women, communities of color, people living in the Deep South, sex workers, and people struggling with and who experience substance use. The range and depth of our partnerships reflect our core values that embrace and espouse the principles of health equity, harm reduction, racial and social justice, and MIPA – Meaningful Involvement of People with HIV/AIDS. Our work is centered on the voices and lived experiences of all people affected by HIV by building long-standing, supportive partnerships to ensure members of affected communities are substantively engaged in the design, development, and delivery of our initiatives.

AIDS United's grantmaking portfolio dates to the founding of our predecessor, the National AIDS Fund, in 1988. For more than three decades, we have supported community-driven responses to the HIV epidemic across the country that reach the nation's most disproportionately affected populations. To date, our strategic grantmaking initiatives have directly funded more than \$120 million to local communities and have leveraged more than \$115 million in additional investments for programs that include, but are not limited to, syringe access, access to care, capacity-building, HIV prevention, and advocacy. AIDS United was recognized this year as a top ten grantmaker in the world for HIV and is currently granting over \$8 million. At any one time, AIDS United has across its grantmaking initiatives a portfolio of 150-250 grantee organizations in over 40 states and territories.

AIDS United's policy and advocacy roots were born out of coalition in 1984 when AIDS service organizations (ASOs) across the country came together to form the AIDS Action Council (AAC) as their organizational voice to address Congress and the federal government on policies and funding for HIV/AIDS. AIDS Action Foundation (AAF) was formed as the education arm a few years later. AAC and AAF together formed AIDS Action. Decades later, AIDS Action merged with the National AIDS Fund, and together they announced the formation of AIDS United in 2011.

The coalition of organizations involved in AIDS United's policy work continues to grow. AIDS United advocates for people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS and the organizations that serve them. We house the most seasoned and respected domestic AIDS policy team in Washington DC, and our public policy work is informed by a Public Policy Council (PPC), the continuation of AAC that today includes over 50 dues-paying member organizations. PPC members are collectively a broad array of service providers and advocacy organizations from all regions of the country engaged in working to end the HIV epidemic in America. AIDS United's annual AIDSWatch is the nation's oldest and largest HIV advocacy event for directly bringing

grassroots voices on HIV to Congress and the Administration. AIDSWatch is in its 28<sup>th</sup> year and is a signature effort of AIDS United's mission.

AIDS United is a leading capacity-building and technical assistance provider. We provide direct assistance to health departments and community-based organizations to support them in achieving their mission and creating and implementing strategies for ending the HIV epidemic in their communities. AIDS United is a longtime capacity-building partner for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and is the CDC's current lead capacity-building agency for the Midwest.

AIDS United is headquartered in Washington, DC, and is a primarily virtual organization with approximately two-thirds of its 42-member staff working remotely from 19 states and Puerto Rico. With growth over the years, AIDS United has budgeted revenue and expenses for FY 2022 of \$15 Million.

AIDS United is governed by a large board of trustees, including members of its Public Policy Council, grantees, funders, and leaders and allies in the HIV movement. The board reflects the HIV epidemic and is today comprised of 70% people of color and nearly 50% persons living with HIV.

## Position Summary

**AIDS United seeks a mission-driven, hands-on Vice President + Chief Operating Officer (COO). Reporting to the President + CEO, the COO is responsible for the organization's financial and business operations, providing strategic leadership for achieving organizational goals, directly supervising multi-departmental staff, and providing day-to-day oversight and management of business protocols and standards.** They will develop, implement, and communicate effective operational strategies and processes of the organization's administrative and support services. This search is intended to replace its prior, effective COO, who recently departed the organization after five successful years with AIDS United.

**The COO is a dynamic and trusted leader who can build and execute thoughtful and ambitious strategies while ensuring operational excellence.** They will have exceptional interpersonal and people management skills, with the ability to build and manage high-performing, cohesive teams. The COO will be a results-oriented motivator with high standards for excellence. They will be a clear, consistent, and empathetic communicator, someone who excels at relationship building, constantly innovating and is dependably pragmatic, has entrepreneurial instincts, and naturally absorbs new information. The COO is someone who thrives in a collaborative and fast-paced environment, and who is driven by excellence and accountability. The COO is responsible for establishing credibility throughout the organization and, in conjunction with the CEO and board, is an effective developer of solutions for business challenges and opportunities.

The COO must have a commitment to achieving health equity, ending the HIV epidemic, and working with the diversity of staff, stakeholders, and communities impacted by HIV

# Essential Job Functions

The COO position requires demonstrated entrepreneurial ability to develop alliances and coordinate the shared interests of all parties, with excellent communications and problem-solving skills designed to meet the challenges of a fast-paced environment. A track record of successful change management, process improvement, and organizational performance improvement is essential for success in this role.

The candidate must have comprehensive experience in and advanced knowledge of:

- » Nonprofit finance and accounting operations
- » Organizational and project budget development, monitoring, and reporting
- » Federal grants administration, financing, and compliance
- » Contract development, management, and negotiations
- » Human resources
- » Employee benefits
- » Organizational development
- » Infrastructure management

The successful candidate will also have significant experience with:

- » Managing a Board of Trustees and corporate governance
- » Strategic planning
- » Organizational development and culture building

Major oversight and supervisory responsibilities include:

- » Financial reporting, accounting, and investments
- » Organizational and program budget development and monitoring
- » Financial audits and Forms 990
- » Adherence to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and local, state, and federal regulations
- » Contract and grants management and compliance
- » Human resource policies and procedures
- » Communications strategies and media relations
- » Development and fundraising

Major direct responsibilities include:

- » Primary interface with the Board Treasurer and the Finance, Investment, and Audit Committees; and provide support to the board of trustees

- » Adherence to federal, state, and local employment laws
- » Administration of employee benefits
- » Risk management and corporate insurance
- » Vendor and consultant management
- » Administration and monitoring of conflicts of interest policies
- » Implementation of information technology and cybersecurity policies
- » Facilities and lease management
- » Support continual evolution of organizational culture
- » Guide organizational practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); workplace safety; and conflict resolution
- » Serve as a key advisor to the CEO

## Qualifications

### Education + Experience Requirements

The ideal candidate will possess a master's degree in Business or a related field and/or have at least ten years of 501(c)(3) operational experience at the Director level or, preferably, the Executive level.

- » Experience in the HIV sector, the LGBTQ+ and/or social justice sector
- » Knowledge of the HIV space, including the community; policy, laws, and rights; understanding of the biomedical and social justice environment as they relate to HIV
- » Keen understanding and personal champion of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)
- » Experience working with individuals with various lived experiences is essential

### Skills + Competencies

- » High emotional intelligence; able to understand the needs and concerns of partners and colleagues
- » 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
- » 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 thrive in a results-oriented, deadline-driven environment with the capacity to make decisions and anticipate future needs in a changing landscape
- » Proven success within a highly flexible, visible, entrepreneurial culture; comfort working under tight timelines in a fast-paced environment
- » A collaborative approach to work and a demonstrated capacity to "play well with others," including colleagues in other departments
- » Strong interpersonal skills and exceptional communication and presentation skills, both written and spoken, with an ability to inform, influence, convince, and persuade
- » Ability to navigate a wide variety of stakeholders and juggle competing priorities and interests to move the work forward
- » Strong nonprofit finance experience
- » Strategic thinker and planner
- » Ability to effectively and meaningfully connect with and engage colleagues virtually
- » Task- and outcome-oriented
- » Highly organized

## Reporting Relationships

The Vice President + Chief Operating Officer reports directly to the AIDS United President + CEO and has the following supervisory relationships:

- » **Controller/Director of Finance**
  - Senior Accountant
  - Grants + Compliance
- » **Director of Communication**
  - Communication Manager
  - Program Communication Associate
- » **Acting Operations Administrator**
- » Consulting or outsourcing firms that are currently managed:
  - Human Resources
    - Health and Personnel Benefits
    - Retirement plan
  - Information technology
  - Legal
  - Audit + investment management
  - Fundraising, grant writing, and business development

*\*Bold indicates direct report*

## Leadership + Key Colleagues

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

### **Jesse Milan Jr., JD** **President + Chief Executive Officer**

Jesse Milan, Jr., JD, is a tireless community advocate and recognized national and international expert on HIV/AIDS policies and programs.

Milan joined AIDS United in 2016 as interim CEO and later that year was appointed by the board of trustees to the position of President + CEO. Milan brings over 30 years in executive roles in public and private sectors, including government, not-for-profit, academic, and faith organizations. During his long career, Milan has directed multi-million-dollar budgets and programs for federal, state, local, and global health agencies.

Milan's exceptional public service record includes serving on the Scientific Advisory Board for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), on the Infectious Disease Board of the American Board of Internal Medicine, and on the board of AVAC (AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition). He is an officer of the board of directors of Funders Concerned About AIDS (FCAA) and serves on the Dean's Advisory Council for the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health.

A lawyer and trusted advisor, Milan chaired for five years the CDC/HRSA Advisory Committee on HIV and STD Prevention and Treatment. He is past chair of the board of the Black AIDS Institute, past board president of ActionAIDS (now Action Wellness), and past president of the National Episcopal AIDS Coalition. In 2007 he was designated a Fulbright Senior Specialist in Global HIV/AIDS.

Jesse has addressed millions on television and radio and given hundreds of keynote addresses and presentations at national, regional, and global conferences and events. An inspiring speaker, he has conducted three speaking tours as an American expert on HIV to seven African nations on behalf of the U.S. State Department. In 2020, he delivered the opening address to the American Medical Students Association conference and the closing address for HRSA for the 30th anniversary of the Ryan White Program.

Milan is former AIDS Director for the City of Philadelphia, was a Deputy City Solicitor for Philadelphia, and served six years as chief of staff to the president of Temple University. He has worked as a leadership and executive coach with the Dorrier Underwood firm and as a public health consultant for federal contractor firms and agencies. He has co-authored peer-reviewed articles and published numerous op-ed pieces. He is a graduate of Princeton University and the NYU School of Law.

Jesse has received numerous honors, including the Public Service Award in 2015 from the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (ANAC) and the 2022 Alexander Forger Award for HIV Advocacy from the American Bar Association. In 2020, Milan received an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Virginia Theological Seminary for his years of service to faith and HIV communities. He has been listed among exceptional HIV leaders by POZ and HIV Plus magazines and received an award from HRSA for "leading the national and international fight against HIV disease."

Milan has been living with HIV for nearly four decades. He and his husband, Bill, celebrate over 30 years of commitment.

“Fighting HIV has been my life’s work, and doing it every day with the dedicated team at AIDS United is a privilege.”

**Athena Cross**  
**Vice President + Chief Program Officer**

Athena Cross is a health care leader with more than 15 years’ experience leading market access initiatives, insurance contracting, health care reimbursement, public policy, and health care strategy in the public and private sectors. She specializes in improving the public health care delivery system and has also led several initiatives and developed numerous strategies to improve and increase access to reproductive health and women’s health services.

In 2016, Cross created Cross Health Care Solutions (CrossHCS), a consulting firm that focuses on addressing inequities in health. CrossHCS works with nonprofits, state and local governments, foundations, and community-based organizations to align strategies for social change. Leveraging multiple funding opportunities, CrossHCS works on the local, state, and national levels to build community-led initiatives that reduce health disparities. CrossHCS’s work includes public-private partnerships, city, and statewide initiatives, policy, and advocacy strategies.

Cross has worked in the pharmaceutical space, leading the U.S. commercialization of a new product. In health care delivery, creating national operations strategies to accommodate the vast policy and reimbursement challenges associated with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. And in the health insurance industry, leading pharmacy, provider networks, and various citywide collaborative projects. Before these experiences, Cross worked in business development and pharmaceutical sales.

Cross is a public health doctoral candidate at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and is a social justice warrior, aligning her work with her commitment to addressing inequities in health for marginalized people.

**Carl Baloney, JD**  
**Vice President + Chief Advocacy Officer**

A longtime advocate for vulnerable populations. Carl has focused his 15 years in policy and advocacy on developing and implementing innovative policy solutions that benefit disenfranchised communities across the country, with a particular focus on the rural south.

Carl has excelled at the highest levels of his chosen fields and has continued to support grassroots advocacy and political engagement by taking leave to aid several political and advocacy campaigns across the country, developing volunteer recruitment programs, and Get Out The Vote efforts.



During his tenure at Planned Parenthood Federation of America, his leadership forged the path to winning the first major expansion of comprehensive women's health access in a decade through the expansion of women's healthcare coverage. His tenure as a policy staffer in the US (United States) House of Representatives has afforded Carl deep relationships with policymakers and an in-depth understanding of the legislative process.

As a Board Member for both the National AIDS Housing Coalition and Planned Parenthood Advocates of VA, MD, DC, Carl has expanded his ability to lead through collaboration. Now with AIDS United, Carl leads the organization's federal HIV advocacy in partnership with 50+ HIV member organizations through 35 key issue areas ranging from access to care, harm reduction, sex workers' rights, racial justice, and housing.

## Compensation + Benefits

The salary range for this position begins at \$180,000.

A competitive benefits package is provided, including:

- » Annual and wellness leave accruals
  - PTO: accrual of 15 days per year
  - Safe + Sick: accrual of 12 days per year
- » Paid designated holidays (*currently 11 + one week off for Winter Holiday at the end of December*)
- » Health Insurance
- » Dental Insurance
- » Vision Insurance
- » Life insurance
- » Safe + Sick Leave
- » Employer-sponsored 403(b)(7) retirement plan
- » Flexible spending plan
- » AD+D
- » STD
- » Workers Compensation
- » Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

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 COO may work remotely as AIDS United is a primarily virtual organization but should be located within reasonable access to AIDS United headquarters in Washington, DC, to oversee organizational infrastructure and lead onsite activities and facilities management as necessary. Candidates from beyond the District of Columbia-Maryland-Virginia (DMV) region will be considered, provided they are within a half-day travel time to Washington, DC.

## EEO + Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

AIDS United is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against otherwise qualified applicants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), age, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, personal appearance, gender identity and expression, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, veteran status, an individual's genetic information, HIV status, or any other bases under federal or local laws (collectively "Protected Bases").

## 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)*

[Cooper Coleman](#) is leading this search on behalf of AIDS United. To apply, please [visit this link](#) ([www.coopercoleman.com/current-searches](http://www.coopercoleman.com/current-searches)). Inquiries and nominations of qualified candidates can be sent to:

**Johnny Cooper**  
[johnny@coopercoleman.com](mailto: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 AIDS United, and connection to its mission.

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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