The Children’s Coalition of Northeast Louisiana was created in 1998 to work regionally to “create communities where children and families thrive.” Through addressing the developmental, social and emotional needs of children ages 0-18, the Children’s Coalition has brought to fruition many programs, partnerships and services to create a true coalition of providers impacting the lives of families throughout the northeastern part of the state. Children and families are served in four primary focus areas: Early Childhood, Healthy Living, Parent Education and Youth Development. Signature programs include Early Head Start, Child Care Resource and Referral, Drug Free Communities and the Family Resource Center. The Coalition also provides training, coaching, technical assistance and referral services to families in need of additional assistance.

With a budget of $6 million and staff of 85, the Children’s Coalition relies on grants, fundraising initiatives and federal funding, in addition to private and community partnerships. Events such as the Dragon Boat Festival and annual membership drive support unfunded programs, and School Readiness Tax Credits support early childhood learning. The civic and corporate leadership of Monroe are committed to and vested in the Children’s Coalition’s role in the community, and it enjoys broad based awareness and support of its work and needed outcomes in Monroe/West Monroe and the parishes in the service area. State and federal grants comprise approximately 80% of funding and of those, approximately $4 million are either multi-year awards or regularly renewable.

Of special note, the Children’s Coalition opened a Family Garden in June 2018 to promote healthy eating, positive family interactions and garden-based learning and play. The garden is open every third Saturday of the month, where families, church groups, youth, garden enthusiasts and all interested participate in garden-based activities, including healthy cook demonstrations using fresh produce grown locally and community resources. It’s a major event that brings out hundreds of people within the area.

The current Executive Director was recruited in 2014 when the Children’s Coalition had $1.2 million in revenue and 23 employees. In 2018, the Children’s Coalition co-located all its programs into one location downtown seeking to create a one-stop-shop for children and families. After significant growth and expansion, the Executive Director has decided to depart the Children’s Coalition in Spring 2020, and the Board of Directors is seeking the next leader.
The Children’s Coalition for Northeast Louisiana is seeking a visionary Executive Director with a “builder” mindset to lead the organization and strengthen the organizational culture after recent, rapid growth. The ideal Executive Director will bring an entrepreneurial mindset that anticipates and responds to community needs and builds coalitions toward serving the region’s most pressing issues. They will align staff, programs and the community to ensure programs are funded and sustainable.

Working with the board and staff, the Executive Director ensures the mission is vibrant, and develops and implements vision, goals, and plans that align with the mission. The Children’s Coalition seeks a leader who will continue to grow funded partnerships and programs that expand essential services across the region so that children and families can have access to the resources they need to thrive.

Reporting to the Board of Directors and leading 10 direct reports, the Executive Director will bring a combination of executive presence and warmth, demonstrated by the ability to create and maintain highly productive relationships with board members, funders, donors, community partners, and the youth and parents served in the program. The new leader will have experience in an array of funding streams and bring skills in working with community, governmental and civic leaders.

Performance will be benchmarked and evaluated by progress in the accomplishment of the primary Performance Expectations outlined below. The ED will be expected to refine the programs that are in place while keeping a keen eye on sustainable growth and the future funding mix. Areas with metrics noted below are a priority, and the others will be determined in collaboration with the new Executive Director by the 90-day mark.
Visionary Leadership & Growth

• Work with board, community and leadership staff to develop and maintain a strategic planning process with long-range and short-range objectives that identify the outcomes for children and families in the northeast region of Louisiana.

• Anticipate and meet demand for local community needs for early childhood and youth services and foster a climate of innovation and evidence/outcome-based approaches, always ensuring that programs are mission-driven and integrated.

• Elevate the profile and work of the Children’s Coalition on a local, regional, state and national level.

• Explore opportunities for increasing organizational resources and generating an overall revenue plan, including future partnerships, new funding relationships, capacity building, and individual, corporate and foundation partnerships.

• Communicate effectively and promptly with the Board of Directors, whether the issues be of broad impact, local focus, or immediate and long-term impact on the work of the Children’s Coalition.

• Provide guidance and information leading to planning initiatives and policy adoption. Oversee the implementation of adopted plans, policies, and initiatives.

Revenue Development & Sustainability

• Strategically align grant opportunities with programmatic priorities, with a focus on recurring revenue streams and sustainability. Approximately 5 - 10 new grant opportunities are pursued annually, with an additional 20 renewals; the Executive Director is the key relationship connector for these partnerships.

• Follow state and national initiatives that impact the current programmatic areas of service, and continually seek new funding opportunities that enhance current impact.

• Provide top leadership for the Children’s Coalition’s philanthropic efforts, maximizing community partnerships and cultivating top donors and community leaders, including development and implementation of fundraising plans that support strategies and priorities adopted by the organization.

• Work with the board to ensure an overall culture of philanthropy and community partnership. Foster board involvement in friend-raising and donor stewardship.
Community Leadership & Coalition Building

• Serve as a voice of children from Northeast Louisiana in local, statewide and national groups that promote the missional aspects of the Children’s Coalition.

• Ensure the needs and accomplishments of the Children’s Coalition are promoted and visible to all audiences that impact and influence decisions related to the work of the Coalition.

• Represent the mission by building and maintaining relationships with other organizations and entities whose programs intersect with that of the Children’s Coalition to achieve a collective impact.

• Serve as the primary spokesperson of the Children’s Coalition to constituents, the media, other agencies and organizations, and the general public, representing the programs and point of view of the Coalition.

• Work with Development Director and Board of Directors to create a strong and polished message about the work of the Children’s Coalition and ensure consistency and strong positioning in the community, with an intentional focus on raising the profile to a broader and wider group of stakeholders and partners.

Management & Administration

• Work with leadership team to oversee daily operations (COO), fiscal responsibility (CFO), ensure grant compliance (Dir. Grants and Budgets) and develop equitable policies and procedures (HR Director).

• Lead and manage staff through a lens of flexibility, openness to suggestions and the ability to resolve/mitigate conflict, ensuring a healthy workplace culture and effective staff organization.

• Empower staff and leaders to participate in local, regional, statewide and national initiatives on behalf of children and families.

• Assure leadership development of staff with an emphasis on professional development, cross-sector training, program viability and impact, and diversity-equity-inclusion in order to build a pipeline of leadership.

• Behave in a manner that engenders respect among team members and brings unquestionable integrity and transparency.
Specific Requirements Include:

• Experience in a dynamic, energizing environment with the entrepreneurial drive to chart a course for the region’s children and families.

• Demonstrated ability to build strong external relationships with a variety of volunteers, public leadership, partner organizations and other stakeholders, as well as ensuring collaborative partnerships are advanced and sustained among all correlated stakeholder groups.

• Enthusiastic and motivating approach to building strong and productive work teams with a focus on mentoring and nurturing staff development.

• Proven record in revenue generation via grants and funded partnerships, and direct donor appeals for fundraising.

• Strong organizational abilities including planning, delegating, program development and task facilitation.

• Ability to oversee or directly implement budget management functions, including budget preparation, analysis, decision-making and reporting.

• Strong analytic and strategic-thinking skills, with demonstrated ability to create, implement, and monitor complex plans, and translate those plans into goals and concrete strategies while remaining flexible in the face of uncertainty and conflict.

• Excellent writing, editing and analytical skills. Ability to collect, review, synthesize, disseminate and present information and findings to broad and diverse audiences. Strong public speaking ability.

• Talent in building, motivating and collaborating with volunteer leadership, boards and community volunteers.

• Career track record that shows stability with an organization and capacity to develop and nurture relationships culminating in overall success.

• Background or related experience in youth services or education required, with a focus in one of the Children’s Coalition core areas strongly preferred.

• Master’s and/or Terminal License required in related fields of Human Services, Social Work, Education, Nonprofit/Business, Early Childcare, Healthcare Management, etc.

• A minimum of five years of progressive experience in leadership and senior management, with documented ability to manage staff and lead teams.

THE QUALIFIED CANDIDATE

The Executive Director will exhibit astute relationship development skills, with political savvy and the ability to think creatively, and lead the generation of revenue streams (e.g. grants, earned income and philanthropy) with the board and staff. As a team and relationship builder, the Children’s Coalition’s Executive Director will bring a collaborative approach to all interactions and create a supportive and empowering environment internally while managing the varying external complexities as the face for the organization. The Executive Director will be approachable, relatable, and flexible with business acumen to lead an evolving and growing organization that is a major part of northeast Louisiana. They will value the diversity of all people within the organization and the communities it serves. Knowledge of Louisiana, and/or rural communities will be critical as the Executive Director serves as the main spokesperson of the Children’s Coalition across multiple audiences. Most of all, the Director will unapologetically advance the mission to ensure that children have every opportunity to thrive.

The Executive Director will have a minimum of five years of progressive senior leadership experience, preferably in the social work, education and/or healthcare fields with an organization that is comparable to the mission and size of the Children’s Coalition. Experience working with or reporting directly to a Board of Directors is required.
This position offers a competitive salary with strong benefits. All inquiries will be held in strict confidence.

The Children’s Coalition for Northeast Louisiana is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria.

To assure confidential tracking of all applicants, no applications will be accepted via email. ALL INQUIRIES WILL BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.

This search is being managed by Heather Eddy, President and CEO, and Octavia Daniels, Project Manager of KEES. Questions may be addressed to odaniels@kees2success.com.

KEES is a retained executive search and consulting firm that builds transformative teams and leaders in the nonprofit sector. KEES was founded in 2013 as an expansion of Alford Executive Search. For more information, please visit www.kees2success.com.
Northeast Louisiana’s twin cities, Monroe and West Monroe, offer a range of living options. Those moving to the area from larger urban centers find they can purchase more square footage and larger lots than expected. New residents also enjoy efficient commutes to work, leaving more time to enjoy Greater Monroe’s vast leisure activities, including organized and recreational sports in nearby parks, an assortment of visual and performing arts, and a variety of classes and workshops from ceramics to yoga.

Monroe and West Monroe are separated by the picturesque Ouachita River, a defining feature in the community. Both cities have downtown retail districts, including outdoor markets which, between the Farmer’s Market in West Monroe and the River Market in Monroe, host a variety of local vendors. Neighborhoods in Monroe range from the century-old Garden District and its eclectic and elegant housing, to West Monroe’s scenic planned developments, such as Indian Lakes and Parkwood Estates.

Year-round mild weather makes it possible for residents to enjoy the community’s centrally located parks as well as boating, fishing and watersports in Bayou DeSiard and the Ouachita River. The popular urban waterways along with numerous lakes in the area provide satisfying outdoor recreational opportunities that are often just minutes away.

Conveniently situated near the northernmost point of the state, residents enjoy proximity to several cities all within a five-hour drive of Monroe, including Memphis, New Orleans, Little Rock and Dallas. A few notable destinations include the AT&T Performing Arts Center in Dallas, French Quarter dining and shopping in New Orleans, and the Memphis Zoo. Sports fans benefit from living near several cities with professional and collegiate teams, while festival goers are able to enjoy access to some of Louisiana’s top festivals and events within a short drive from home.

The region continues to expand as a cultural hub. Museums and galleries in the region house everything from paintings and sculptures to ceramics and photography. The area brings tax-exempt art, classes from pottery to painting to dance, as well as an evolving streetscape through improved sidewalks, roadways and bike paths. Additionally, the Monroe Symphony Orchestra not only provides the region with seasonal concert series each year, it also strives to enrich the community through educational music programs, such as its Sound Safari series for elementary students.

There are several higher education institutions in this area, including community colleges, trade schools and acclaimed universities. Each provides students with a range of degree programs and a variety of experiences through research and community service, as well as an expanding list of online courses that follow leading national trends for distance learning. And, children can start kindergarten at an A-rated parish campus and then progress to highly regarded middle and high schools within the same local community.

The region maintains deep roots in industries such as advanced manufacturing, and many of the area’s top companies are considered leaders in their respective fields when it comes to incorporating new and emerging technologies. Telecom giant, CenturyLink, is the nation’s second largest communications provider that employs nearly 1,900 at its Monroe headquarters. The region is home to a highly skilled workforce and thriving advanced manufacturing industry with top area companies ranging from Gardner Denver Thomas. Healthcare, including St. Francis Medical Center, is the largest healthcare provider and overall employer in the region with 2,200 employees across its Monroe campuses. (Louisiana Economic Development)