

A photograph of a man and two children smiling and hugging each other under a spray of water. The man is in the center, with a young boy on the left and a young girl on the right. They are all smiling and appear to be enjoying the water. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

We Fight to Keep Families Together

**Bronx Defenders**  
**Executive Director**  
Bronx, New York



**The Bronx  
Defenders**

## Background

The Bronx Defenders – an innovative, progressive, holistic indigent defense office in the South Bronx – seeks a passionate individual to lead the organization as the Executive Director.

The Bronx Defenders is a public defender non-profit that is radically transforming how low-income people in the Bronx are represented in the legal system, and, in doing so, is transforming the system itself. BxD seeks thoughtful, creative, energetic individuals with a strong commitment to social justice to join our dynamic and diverse staff. Our staff of over 400 includes interdisciplinary teams made up of criminal, civil, immigration, and family defense attorneys, as well as social workers, benefits specialists, legal advocates, parent advocates, investigators, and team administrators, who collaborate to provide holistic advocacy to address the causes and consequences of legal system involvement. Through this integrated team-based structure, we have developed a groundbreaking, nationally-recognized model of representation called holistic defense that achieves better outcomes for the people we represent.

Each year, we defend more than 27,000 low-income Bronx residents in criminal, civil, child welfare, and immigration cases, and reach thousands more through our community intake, youth mentoring, and outreach programs. Through impact litigation, policy advocacy, and community organizing, we push for systemic change at the local, state, and national levels. We take what we learn from the people we represent and communities that we work with and launch innovative initiatives designed to bring about real and lasting change.

## Position

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director (ED) is the senior-most executive at the Bronx Defenders. The ED is BxD's chief strategist and is responsible for innovating BxD's work to build on its record as a leader in public defense.

The ED will lead and empower more than 400 employees, overseeing all aspects of the organization, collaborating closely with the professional staff and Board to create and fund programs and projects, manage the organization's finances, increase its influence and impact, and strengthen the organization's mission-driven culture.

The ideal ED will be a visionary leader who sees the big picture while also knowing how all decisions affect the dedicated BxD staff and clients. The ED will continue to build out the talented team of attorneys, client advocates, social workers and administrative professionals. The ED must build trust with all internal and external stakeholders from interns to city officials, have a deep understanding of organizational design and workflow management that recognizes the intense nature of BxD's impactful work and the importance of balancing growth, clients, and capacity.

The ED will be responsible for generating new sources of revenue for sustainable and long-term growth; collaboratively defining a DEI vision and agenda for BxD; and for setting organization-wide strategy to strengthen BxD's work. An integral component of the ED's role is building relationships with union leadership to foster a constructive partnership and a collaborative and positive work culture.

## Responsibilities

### Executive Leadership and Management

- Provide strategic vision, direction, and leadership to the organization
- Build a bold, innovative strategy that imagines new possibilities for ever-more effective delivery of legal services, policy advocacy, and community organizing at the local, state, and national level
- Provide inspirational leadership and direction to the senior team and ensure the continued development and management of a professional and efficient organization
- Advocate for resources to promote and support the expansion of high-quality legal services across all communities and practices
- Expand and elevate BxD's state and local advocacy work in collaboration with community partners and coalitions
- Represent the organization externally to bolster its relationships with partners, organizations with symbiotic goals, and to develop new relationships to increase its visibility and influence
- Establish effective decision-making processes that will enable BxD to achieve its long- and short-term goals and objectives
- Lead BxD on its journey to demonstrate its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion values and strive to be an anti-racist and anti-oppressive organization for BxD clients and staff
- Build and develop trusting, productive relationships with union leadership
- Support, develop and manage the senior leadership team, including conducting annual reviews and setting annual goals with direct reports

### Communications

- Serve as a primary BxD spokesperson for government agencies, media, private funders, stakeholders, and partners
- Collaborate with members of BxD's staff to build out BxD's strategy and communicate ideas, plans, and vision to the team and external stakeholders for feedback and buy-in
- Elevate BxD's profile, highlighting the outstanding client representation and advocacy work of the organization and vision for the future
- Advocate for the interests of BxD and its clients before City, State, and Federal officials
- In conjunction with the BxD Board of Directors, build relationships with key stakeholders to promote and strengthen the organization's ability to serve the people of the Bronx

## Fundraising & Financial Management

- Build upon strong relationship with BxD's current government funding agencies
- Diversify and expand funding streams
- Develop relationships with external stakeholders to foster meaningful partnerships, and generate opportunities to speak to a wide and diverse audience about BxD's work
- Ensure sound financial systems and practices that support efficient cost management

## Operations

- Set the tone for the importance of advancing internal policies, procedures, and systems that will ensure a safe, equitable, and healthy work environment
- Create and promote a positive, productive, enjoyable work environment with clear, equitable, and compassionate HR policies and practices
- Ensure commitment to and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations across the organization
- Streamline operations and create uniformity and efficiency across the organization
- In conjunction with the leadership team, place the highest priority on developing robust retention and recruitment strategies for all BxD current and prospective team members with an emphasis on increasing and promoting diversity
- Champion the strategic use of data and technology for effective decision-making across BxD and to surface and tell compelling client stories
- Facilitate cross-departmental collaboration and increased internal communications among staff members throughout the organization
- Ensure programmatic excellence and consistent quality of fiscal management, administration, fundraising, strategic communications, and work systems
- Ensure the delivery of high-quality services while managing for current and future growth

## Culture

- Build a community of extraordinary professionals and passionately advocate for their continued growth and development
- Promote a culture of inclusion and belonging across the workplace and in its external relations work as embodied in BxD's mission and values
- Reinforce BxD's values and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in its recruitment, hiring, learning and development, advancement and retention of staff, and operations work, internally and in external relations
- Model an understanding, sensitivity, and responsiveness to the social, economic, and cultural differences between staff and clients
- Develop strong relationships with BxD employees across the organization and all stakeholder groups, including union members, to seek input, problem solve, inform, and ensure all voices are heard

## Board Governance

- Identify, develop, and expand the board to include additional expertise, financial support, and relationships
- Cultivate a transparent and effective working relationship with the Board of Directors and ensure open communication about the measurement of financial, programmatic, and impact performance against stated milestones and goals
- Support the building of a diverse and inclusive Board of Directors representative of the community that is highly engaged and willing to leverage and secure resources

## Qualifications

- Relevant work experience and JD strongly preferred; public interest law experience preferred, and indigent defense experience preferred
- Substantial nonprofit managerial experience with proven readiness to lead an organization of professionals that perform at the highest level of their profession
- Enthusiastic commitment to BxD's mission of equal justice under the law and deep alignment with BxD's service of clients
- Demonstrated ability to develop and implement strategic plans, manage organizational finances, and undertake successful fundraising
- Demonstrated commitment to fighting for racial and social equality and against institutionalized racism within organizations
- Experience working with or on behalf of members of low-income communities, communities of color, or other groups that are disproportionately impacted by the criminal legal system
- Exceptionally strong writing skills and superb oral communication capabilities
- Proven ability to serve as a spokesperson to a wide variety of partners and audiences
- History of success in managing organizational change and systemic culture shifts in consultation with internal stakeholders, including unions
- Demonstrated experience in building and collaborating with a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and multi-cultural community
- Proven fundraiser from public and private sources
- Exceptional team building and management skills; outstanding communicator and avid listener
- Ability to set clear priorities and has sound decision-making skills
- Excellent coalition building skills with an ability to communicate and work effectively with all internal and external stakeholders

## Salary

The salary range for this position is \$300-\$350K. BxD offers all full-time employees competitive benefits package including:

- Medical, dental and vision coverage
- A 403(b) plan with employer contribution

- A generous vacation, sick leave, and parental leave policy
- A professional development fund

This position description is based upon material provided by the Bronx Defenders, an equal opportunity employer

To apply for this position, please click [HERE](#).

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