



ASIAN AMERICANS
**ADVANCING
JUSTICE**
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

POSITION PROFILE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

AJSOCAL
LOS ANGELES /
ORANGE COUNTY, CA



MANEVA

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW:

ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

As one of the nation's largest AAPI legal and civil rights organizations, AJSOCAL is committed to uplifting the most vulnerable members of its community through free legal services, impact litigation, and policy advocacy to advance justice for AAPI individuals.

With staff in Los Angeles, Orange County, and Sacramento, AJSOCAL serves nearly 15,000 individuals and organizations annually—championing justice, equity, and systemic change. Its work is deeply rooted in the belief that every person deserves dignity, representation, and the power to advocate for their rights. AJSOCAL is part of a powerful national network of affiliates that include sister organizations in Chicago, Atlanta, and Washington, D.C.

For more than four decades, AJSOCAL has fought for language access, defended voting rights, expanded immigrant protections, and stood firmly against anti-Asian hate and discrimination. While focused on Los Angeles and Orange Counties, the work of its team of advocates, attorneys, organizers, and researchers reaches throughout California to build a more just and inclusive society. This next chapter is not a reinvention, but a continuation of that deep legacy: a chance to honor the organization's roots while embracing a bold, visionary approach to future growth, grounded in cultural authenticity and community trust.



ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW CONTINUED:

ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

In this moment of national uncertainty and heightened challenges for civil rights organizations, AJSOCAL is seeking a courageous, strategic leader to steer the organization through the shifting winds of a volatile federal landscape. As funding streams fluctuate and operations face increased scrutiny, this leader will need to bring clarity, conviction, and vision to ensure AJSOCAL continues to meet the urgent needs of the communities it serves. AJSOCAL has a proud history of rising to meet difficult moments—from launching the nation's largest Asian multilingual legal hotline to advancing policy change and standing firmly against anti-Asian hatred.

Leading this organization is more than a role; it is a calling to steward a deeply respected institution that has long stood at the forefront of justice and movement building. Now, the organization needs a leader who can build on its historic foundation, navigating complexity with resilience and purpose while charting a path forward that is bold, steady, and just.

The next CEO follows the footsteps of visionary AAPI leaders who leave a powerful legacy at AJSOCAL, formerly known as the Asian Pacific American Legal Center. AJSOCAL's founder, Stewart Kwoh, is a nationally recognized leader in Asian American activism and was the first Asian American attorney and human rights activist to receive the prestigious MacArthur Foundation Fellowship, often referred to as the "genius grant." AJSOCAL's former Litigation Director Julie Su would also receive the MacArthur Foundation Fellowship during her tenure at the organization following the 1995 El Monte Thai Workers case – the first case of modern-day slavery in America – and later become the Acting Secretary of Labor in the Biden Administration.

Most recently, Connie Chung Joe is stepping down as CEO after five years, during which AJSOCAL emerged as a leading voice for immigrant justice, guided the community through the COVID-19 pandemic and the Monterey Park Lunar New Year tragedy, and played a critical role in combating anti-Asian hate. She leaves behind a strengthened organization that is financially stable, deeply rooted in community, and poised for continued growth.



ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW CONTINUED:

ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

For more
information
visit their
[website](#).

AJSOCAL Programs include:

- **Direct Services** – Providing free legal aid and other direct services in eight Asian languages and dialects, including in housing, immigration, domestic violence, and healthcare access.
- **Impact Litigation** – Fighting systemic injustices in housing, worker’s rights, immigration, language access, voting rights and anti-Asian hate - through legal action that empowers the community.
- **Policy Advocacy** – Pushing for legislative and administrative reforms at local, state, and national levels, including through bills, budget procurement, and regulations to advance policies for AAPIs, other BIPOC communities, immigrants, women and LGBTQIA+ communities.
- **Community Engagement** – Hosting linguistically accessible and culturally sensitive workshops, forums, and educational events to inform and empower AAPI communities about their rights and available legal resources.
- **Demographic Research** – Conducting and distributing data-driven research to highlight ethnic and language-specific challenges and ensure policies reflect the real needs of our communities.

AJSOCAL is more than an organization—it’s a movement. Its work is guided by compassion, courage, collaboration, and a deep commitment to community responsiveness. These values drive its advocacy, shape its partnerships, and fuel its team and mission to create a more just, inclusive, and equitable future for all.



POSITION SUMMARY:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

AJSOCAL seeks a bold, visionary, and justice-driven Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to lead the organization into its next era of impact. The CEO will guide strategic vision, deepen community trust, lead a committed and multifaceted team, strengthen financial sustainability, and shape a thriving organizational culture rooted in courage and care.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO will oversee a \$15M budget and a staff of 100, with seven direct reports. They will be expected to maintain and grow key relationships with funders, public agencies, movement allies, and the diverse communities AJSOCAL serves. This is an urgent opportunity to lead one of the nation's most respected AAPI civil rights organizations at a critical juncture—when the stakes for immigrant justice, racial equity, and civil liberties have never been higher.

This opportunity calls for someone energized by challenge and inspired by possibility.

The ideal candidate is a seasoned leader with a track record of navigating complexity with clarity, building trust across differences, and making tough decisions anchored in mission. They are energized by strategic challenges and see uncertainty not as a threat but as a call to lead. They bring sharp financial acumen, a commitment to operational excellence, and the cultural humility to lead in partnership with the staff and community. The ideal candidate will have a legal background, ideally in litigation, social justice, direct services, or deep fluency in those functions—even if not currently practicing.



POSITION SUMMARY CONTINUED:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Key Responsibilities

- **Strategic Leadership:** Set and communicate a clear, forward-thinking vision that aligns staff, board, and community partners around shared goals. Anticipate and respond to shifts in the political, legal, and philanthropic landscape with courage and serve as a leader in matters relating to crisis response, media engagement, and public representation.
- **Executive Management:** Oversee a complex, multi-department organization with professionalism, maturity, and emotional intelligence. Lead and develop a high-performing senior leadership team, fostering strong internal alignment, accountability, and collaboration.
- **Fundraising and External Relations:** Serve as a key ambassador and relationship-builder with philanthropic partners, public agencies, and coalitions. Guide fundraising strategy in partnership with a strong development team, with an eye toward long-term sustainability and diversification.
- **Public-Facing Advocate:** Represent the organization in media, coalitions, and high-impact platforms—amplifying the voices of AAPI communities and reinforcing AJSOCAL's role in the midst of community need.
- **Organizational Culture and Team Health:** Foster a unifying and supportive culture that reflects the organization's values, prioritizes staff wellness, and promotes equity, trust, and transparency. Address internal silos and ensure departments work cohesively toward common goals.
- **Legal and Justice Thought Leadership:** Serve as a thought leader on legal and justice issues impacting AAPI communities, grounding the organization's work in a clear equity framework. Ensure the organization remains a leading voice in impact litigation, policy reform, and systemic change.
- **Financial Oversight:** Ensure the organization remains fiscally strong and agile amid a shifting funding landscape, partnering with senior leaders and board to make data-informed decisions that align with mission and values.
- **Operational Oversight:** Ability to modernize and align infrastructure, staff roles, and systems. This includes the ability to work effectively with the union that represents a portion of the staff.
- **Board Engagement:** Partner closely with a committed Board of Directors to ensure strong governance and organizational alignment.



LEADERSHIP & COMPETENCY EXPECTATIONS

The ideal candidate will be outcomes oriented and have a deep commitment to AJSOCAL's mission, demonstrating genuine care for the well-being of the populations served.

While no single candidate will bring every single competency, strong candidates will offer the following skills, characteristics, and experiences:

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ROOTED IN PURPOSE

The next CEO will be a bold mission-driven leader who sees opportunities in moments of crisis. Grounded in deep commitment to the AAPI community, they will bring the conviction to make difficult decisions in the current fiscal and political climate and the determination to lead through complexity. A decisive leader with a visionary mindset and a bias for action, this leader will guide AJSOCAL through turbulent times (political attacks, economic instability, and operational pressures) with resilience and resolve. They will infuse positivity into the organization, shifting mindsets from scarcity to possibility, and galvanizing staff, board, and partners around a bold, shared vision for what's possible in this pivotal moment for the AAPI community.

COMPELLING SPOKESPERSON AND ADVOCATE

As AJSOCAL's most visible ambassador, the CEO must represent the organization with authenticity and clarity. Whether in public speaking, media, coalition spaces, or policy arenas, they must be a confident communicator who can elevate the organization's voice, history, and vision for the future. They will build alliances, engage key stakeholders, and cultivate the relationships and visibility necessary to protect and advance the interests of the AAPI community. This leader must bring both presence and substance to the role, capable of navigating high-stakes conversations and positioning AJSOCAL as a leader in a shifting sociopolitical landscape.



LEADERSHIP & COMPETENCY EXPECTATIONS CONTINUED:

CULTURE BUILDER AND UNIFIER

The CEO will earn trust through transparency, builds credibility through action, and fosters a culture of excellence, respect, and care. In a unionized environment, they will inspire staff across every level, promoting a sense of cohesion and shared purpose, and serving as a consistent presence through times of change. This leader must lead with heart and backbone: offering compassion and humanity while also making the tough operational and personnel decisions required to uphold standards and drive performance. They will build a culture where people feel seen, valued, and aligned to a greater mission.

STRATEGIC VISION WITH THE DRIVE TO EXECUTE

AJSOCAL's next CEO must be both architect and builder—crafting a long-term strategy while executing with urgency. They will bring strong instincts for aligning teams around shared priorities, responding quickly to external events, and grounding the organization in stability. Resourceful, driven, and entrepreneurial, they will lead with clarity and decisiveness, seizing on the organization's rich legacy as a platform to innovate, grow, and deepen impact. From program strategy to fundraising, they will bring professional polish and operational savvy to the leadership of AJSOCAL's programs and advocacy work.

BOARD PARTNERSHIP & FUNDRAISING PROWESS

The CEO will have a track record of securing and stewarding diverse revenue streams—including philanthropic, individual, government, and institutional support—and the creativity to pursue bold, mission-aligned growth. This leader will cultivate donor relationships with purpose, presenting AJSOCAL's mission as a compelling funding narrative rooted in community impact. In close collaboration with the Board of Directors, they will provide clarity and strategic guidance, strengthening governance and aligning resources to long-term goals. A natural relationship-builder, this leader will invite new champions into the organization's orbit while deepening the commitment of existing supporters. Above all, they will bring the energy, leadership, and partnership to grow AJSOCAL's reach, relevance, and resilience.



LOCATION, COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

AJSOCAL has offices in Los Angeles and Anaheim, California. This role is open to candidates based in either location and operates within a hybrid work environment. The hybrid schedule provides flexibility, with staff expected to work in the office or in the field three days per week and remotely for the remaining days. Given the highly external-facing nature of the CEO role, a great deal of time will be spent in the community—meeting with partners, funders, elected officials, and other stakeholders across the region and the country. The CEO role will also include occasional travel on an as-needed basis.

Salary is based on a variety of factors including, but not limited to, skill set level and years of applicable experience. **The salary range for this role is between \$240,000 - \$300,000** with a strong benefit package.

HOW TO APPLY

To express your interest in this opportunity, please submit your resume and cover letter [here](#).

All inquiries and discussions will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. This position is available immediately, and applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the role is filled.

We look forward to hearing from you!



ABOUT MANEVA GROUP

Maneva Group is a leading woman and minority owned executive search firm dedicated to connecting exceptional talent with organizations committed to making a meaningful impact. Through a consultative and client-focused approach, Maneva Group partners with mission-driven organizations to build transformative leadership teams.

Our name, Maneva, comes from the combination of two Sanskrit words: **“Mānav”** meaning mankind & **“Sevā”** meaning service. We are driven by the ideal of our name - **service to humanity**.