

# HARRIS RAND LUSK

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## Comunilife President and Chief Executive Officer Job Description

**Background:** Founded by Rosa M. Gil, DSW, Comunilife is one of New York City's most respected and innovative community-based health and housing service providers. Since its founding in 1989, Comunilife has understood that housing is a key social determinant of health for the Hispanic and African American communities. Ninety percent (90%) of Comunilife clients are African American and Latinx, and 50% have Spanish as their primary or sole language. Further, it has been clear to Comunilife that to truly help New York City's Latino community, treatment interventions needed to be grounded in their culture and language. These have been Comunilife's guiding principles for 34 years and are reflected in its mission -- without a permanent place to live it is impossible to overcome the health and social issues that plague our community.

In 2022, Comunilife served more than 3,000 low-income and diverse chronically ill New Yorkers through innovative programs centered on culture and achieving results:

- **Housing:** Since 1992, Comunilife has been one of New York City's leading developers and providers of affordable and supportive housing, and currently operates over 3,000 units of housing for homeless and low-income New Yorkers. Comunilife's continuum of housing includes transitional and permanent housing and ensures that seriously mentally ill and HIV/AIDS homeless New Yorkers receive the appropriate level of care they need to remain stably housed.
- **Medical Respite Program:** Comunilife established the first ever medical respite program in New York 12 years ago and demonstrated the efficacy of integrating health and housing to reduce unnecessary hospital expenses and improve health outcomes. This innovative program has grown significantly in the past five years and provides short term housing to 68 hospital patients who are medically cleared for discharge but have no home in which to complete their recovery.
- **Life is Precious™ Program:** Suicide remains the second leading cause of death for Latina teens. With its Life is Precious™ (LIP) program, Comunilife is a leader in the field of Latina adolescent suicide prevention. Since 2008, LIP has provided non-clinical, culturally competent and community informed services to girls 12 to 17 in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan. In 2023, LIP expanded into Poughkeepsie and Yonkers.
- **El Borinquen Residence:** In the "architectural desert" of the Bronx, El Borinquen stands out as an architectural oasis, designed to integrate the diverse cultural and artistic idiosyncrasies of the Latinx community. It has received multiple Architectural Awards,

including, NYCxDesign Award and NYSHFA Project of the Year, Downstate Region, 2023. The Residence houses 148 in affordable and supportive housing, including seniors, formerly homeless and youth aging out of foster care.

**The Position:** Comunilife is looking for a recognized and exceptional leader with expertise in health care, especially in the field of behavioral health, and affordable and supportive housing development to be its next President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). They will be a seasoned manager, with a deep knowledge of the issues surrounding supportive and affordable housing, social services, and behavioral health. The ideal candidate will not only be a highly experienced and effective leader but will be committed to Comunilife's mission of providing vulnerable communities with housing and culturally sensitive supportive services.

The President and CEO will report to and work closely with the Board of Directors to engage in charting a strategic course for the organization, and will be responsible for its overall performance, including financial management and strong quality outcomes. Strong community and legislative relationships will be key to ensuring Comunilife's growth and long-term effectiveness and viability. The President and CEO must be able to work closely with the Board and staff in a transparent, honest fashion that promotes inclusiveness, cooperation, and teamwork. They must be committed to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and justice.

### **Specific Responsibilities**

- Report to and work closely with the Board of Directors to achieve the organization's mission, goals and objectives.
- In collaboration with the executive team and senior managers, shape the organization's strategic vision and direction, overseeing its implementation consistent with Comunilife's mission, vision, and values.
- Provide hands-on strategic and operational direction and leadership in the execution of the organization's mission and implementation of its annual goals and objectives.
- Promote a culture that reflects the organization's values, encouraging high level performance, and rewarding productivity. Work with the executive and senior staff to develop and implement inclusive policies and procedures for the management and operations of the organization.
- Oversee and ensure the organization's financial solvency, viability, and sustainability with a strong emphasis on achieving growth and expanding services.
- Together with the CFO, prepare the organization's annual budget for approval by the Board of Directors ensuring adherence to budget guidelines in accordance with current laws and regulations.
- Oversee human resources operations to ensure appropriate and effective operations of the organization. Ensure that all personnel related practices, policies and procedures conform to applicable laws, regulations and industry practices.
- Oversee the real estate development of affordable and supportive housing. Build strong relationships with NYC and NYS housing authorities, lending institutions, tax credit investors, and banks.
- Promote the organization by serving as the chief spokesperson for Comunilife, using media strategically to position the organization.

- Together with the VP of Development and Communications, oversee the development of marketing and publicity materials, including advertising opportunities and press.
- Build strong relationships within the community and establish and maintain effective working relationships at the highest level of local, state and federal government, as well as with the business and foundation sectors.
- Ensure adequate risk management protection for the organization and its properties, employees, executive and senior management, and the Board of Directors.
- Assure that the organization and its mission, programs and services are consistently presented in a strong and positive image to relevant stakeholders. Actively advocate for the organization, its beliefs, and programmatic vision.
- Ensure that the organization has an effective quality improvement and compliance program that encourages ethical conduct and facilitates easy access to compliance procedures. Monitor regularly all reports of issues affecting quality and compliance and provide effective communication throughout the organization of corrective and preventive measures.
- In collaboration with the VP of Development and Communications, lead the organization in fundraising activities and events, stewarding existing funders and cultivating potential government, foundation, corporate and individual funders and donors. Serve as the primary person in donor relationships and individual fundraising solicitations.
- Represent Comunilife on key local and regional task forces, commissions and other policy bodies, as appropriate.

### **Qualifications**

- Fifteen (15) or more years of senior-level experience in the public or nonprofit sector, and/or equivalent business organization.
- Advanced degree in policy; planning and administration; business administration; management; public administration; social work; psychology; or healthcare discipline.
- Demonstrated leadership of large, complex, metropolitan social impact organizations, focused on integrative behavioral and physical health services and supportive housing.
- Business acumen and experience maintaining a financial stable and sustainable organization. At least ten (10) to fifteen (15) years of experience negotiating contracts and managing and overseeing the finances, budgets, housing development financing, and programs of organizations with at least \$50 million in revenue.
- Strong leadership abilities, entrepreneurial skills, innovative leadership approaches, and hands-on management style.
- Demonstrated track record of success working with a Board of Directors to develop and execute a strategic vision.
- Excellent interpersonal, professional, oral and written communication skills, including extensive experience in public speaking at diverse forums. Demonstrated skill to communicate and effectively interact with a wide range of stakeholders, including public officials at all levels of government, especially leaders and funders such as NYS-OMH, NYC-DOHMH, Medicaid and Medicare, HRA/HASA, DHS, OTDA, AIDS Institute, SAMHSA, HUD, HPD, HCR, banks, investors, foundations, and a wide range of stakeholders in culturally and ethnically diverse communities.

- Extensive knowledge of budget development, including financial management and key principles of grants management, such as GAAP, CFR, etc. Experience with LIHTC regulations.
- Evidence of success in identifying and securing funding/revenue sources, including philanthropic funding.
- Knowledge of risk management requirements and the ability to identify and mitigate risks to protect the organization, including its Board of Directors, officers, employees and properties.
- Demonstrated data-driven decision-making processes. Fluency using and understanding data to inform decision-making.
- Proven experience in strategic planning and its execution. Ability to establish priorities that align with a strategic plan, motivate teams and simultaneously manage several programs and agendas effectively.
- Demonstrated success in motivating teams and simultaneously managing multiple projects. Supports staff at all levels toward a unified vision to continuously strengthen and grow the organization.
- Demonstrated outcome-driven skills in the evaluation of programs, services, and systems in order to enhance them and an ability to advocate for these changes.
- Knowledge of human resource principles and practices to guide the organization's human resources in the development of effective recruitment strategies, reward systems, and performance management.
- Demonstrated commitment to Comunilife's mission, vision, and values, and ability to inspire employee loyalty and dedication to the organization and its clients within a culture that inspires excellence and advocates to reduce housing, social and health disparities among clients from ethnic and racial minorities.
- Evidence of cultural competencies in the delivery of health, housing and social services. Strong preference for bilingual English-Spanish skills

**Compensation:** Comunilife is based in New York City and offers a competitive salary and benefits package. Salary is expected to be in the \$350,000 to \$425,000 range.

*Comunilife is an EEO employer and provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.*

For more information about Comunilife, please visit their website at <https://comunilife.org/>.

**To Apply:** Comunilife has retained the services of Harris Rand Lusk (HRL) to conduct this search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed in confidence to Miriam Martinez, PhD – HRL's Senior Director. Send resume and cover letter expressing your interest in the role to [ekirschner@harrisrand.com](mailto:ekirschner@harrisrand.com). The subject line of your email should read "Comunilife President/CEO"