

Position Title: Director, State-Wide Child Care Initiative

Background:

For decades, a committed group of early childhood organizations, funders, advocates, and champions across Colorado have been working to provide every child with the early care and learning opportunities needed for a successful start. We have made great strides, including full-day Kindergarten, Universal Pre-K, the creation of the Colorado Department of Early Childhood Education, support for providers, and progress in supporting the child care workforce. We've demonstrated the power of what we can do when we come together with a shared vision, commitment, persistence, and collective power.

While we've come far, affordable child care remains a significant pain point for families, ranking next to (and in some cases) above housing costs. Last fall, a group of funders, early childhood organizations, providers, advocacy organizations, and national partners came together to explore what it might take to unlock public dollars to make child care significantly more affordable for families. The work involved exploring policy options and revenue sources, polling, and extensive learning from successful child care campaigns in other states. It has evolved into a proposed multi-year initiative to pass a child care funding measure in 2026.

Position Summary:

Gary Community Ventures, in partnership with a group of Colorado funders, is seeking a dynamic and visionary Director to lead a multi-year statewide initiative aimed at making child care more affordable for low- and middle-income families in Colorado. This multi-year initiative aims to elevate the need for affordable child care and build the public and political will among stakeholder groups to support child care affordability leading up to and through the eventual passage of a 2026 ballot measure to unlock approximately \$400M-\$600M in annual public revenue dedicated to lowering the cost of childcare.

The Director will lead all phases of this initiative from design and pre-launch, to stakeholder engagement through successful voter adoption and policy launch, with support from initiative staff, consultants, and campaign experts. This role reports to the initiative core funders with day-to-day contact and support from Gary Community Ventures. This role will require strong execution, creativity, and the ability to lead diverse stakeholders.

Note we do not expect the Director to lead the political campaign. The political strategy will be led by political consultants and executed in partnership with the Director and all of the components built as part of this multi-year initiative.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Strategic Leadership & Planning:

- Develop and execute a comprehensive strategy designed to build public and political support for and adoption of child care affordability in Colorado.
- In collaboration with initiative funders, identify, recommend and oversee management of a team of staff and/or consultants to support the child care affordability strategy across workstreams including, policy design and revenue development, stakeholder engagement, communications, polling, ballot campaign,, and potential policy implementation.
- Work in partnership with the initiative core funders and Gary Community Ventures to strategically leverage the expertise and resources of these organizations to take on key pieces of the work, as appropriate.

- Provide dynamic leadership of the initiative, using data, campaign metrics, polling results, landscape analyses, and other tools to continuously refine the initiative's strategy for success.
- Provide regular communication and feedback to the initiative's governance structure, adjusting work as needed.

2. Management & Execution:

- Lead the initiative's daily operations and budget, ensuring timelines, deliverables, and team collaboration are on track.
- Ensure all of the initiative's elements—including outreach, organizing, policy design, and revenue development—are advancing in coordination.
- Manage initiative staff., consultants, and funded partners to ensure alignment with initiative goals and effective execution of organizing and outreach strategies.

3. Policy Design & Revenue Development:

- Oversee the development of policy proposals and revenue sources in partnership with key stakeholders, ensuring they are realistic and impactful, and can withstand voter scrutiny and expert review.
- Ensure deadlines are met for policy and revenue development and that the process is inclusive of input from key stakeholders and communities.

4. Stakeholder Engagement:

- Hire and manage a statewide engagement lead responsible for organizing and mobilizing statewide field operations and coordinating grassroots and grasstops strategies that engage diverse constituencies.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders, including early childhood organizations, funders, advocacy groups, early childhood providers, and grassroots organizations.
- Work with organizing lead and/or funded partners to engage and involve the business community, recognizing their stake in a well-functioning child care system that supports workforce participation.
- Ensure that the initiative incorporates the perspectives of parents, child care providers, low-income and BIPOC families, and other key communities.

5. Communications & Narrative Change:

- Hire and manage a team of consultants to support the initiative's communications strategies, including effective outreach through multiple channels including digital, print, and in-person engagement.
- Support the development of narrative change efforts in partnership with consultants and/or other partners to shift public perception and increase support for child care funding.

6. Polling, Message Testing, & Adaptability:

- In partnership with initiative funders, engage and oversee a firm(s) that will conduct regular polling and message testing to refine the overarching strategy as well as the voter campaign, ensuring alignment with voter attitudes and perceptions.
- Adapt the campaign strategy as needed based on data, political developments, and stakeholder feedback to keep the campaign on track.

Required Skills:

- Organized: Proven ability to manage multiple moving parts and ensure all elements of the initiative are advancing effectively.

- Creative: Ability to bring fresh, dynamic ideas to build a unique strategy, tailored to Colorado's needs and informed by successes in other states.
- Adaptive: Capable of adjusting the initiative's course based on new information, shifting political landscapes, or feedback from polling and message testing.
- Executer: Track record of setting clear milestones and driving progress toward tangible outcomes in complex, multi-year initiatives.
- Collaborative: Strong team leader who can engage with and leverage the strengths of a wide variety of stakeholders, including parents, providers, and business leaders.
- Inspirational: ability to build a coalition of supporters
- Spokesperson: ability to communicate with media, public officials, and diverse groups of people.
- Leader: proven track reform of leading complex teams, multifaceted efforts.

Preferred Qualifications:

- 8-10+ years of experience in leading issue or political campaigns or similar relevant experience.
- Proven experience leading large-scale political or issue-based initiatives, ideally ballot initiatives.
- Strong understanding of grassroots organizing, field strategy, and coalition building, with a track record of engaging diverse stakeholders/communities.
- Experience working on early childhood education or child care issues is a plus, but not required.
- Excellent communication, leadership, and organizational skills.
- Experience managing consultants, polling firms, and complex budgets.
- Experience in and/or knowledge of Colorado, preferred, but not required

Location: Colorado preferred, open to out-of-state with knowledge that regular travel to Colorado will be needed.

Contract details: This contracted position will be funded up to \$175K annually (2025, 2026, 2027) subject to a check-in on strategy and progress at the end of June 2025 and regular contract reviews.

Application

To apply, please provide the following information:

- 1) Cover letter addressing how you meet the required and preferred qualifications.
- 2) Resume
- 3) Examples of campaigns you've participated in and the role you played and outcomes
- 4) References (3 references)

Please submit your application to coloradochildcare@garycommunity.org. Questions can also be directed to coloradochildcare@garycommunity.org.

Timeline:

- Responses Due: December 2, 2024
- Interview to be scheduled between December 9-13, 2024
- Selection Decision: December 18, 2024
- Contract begins: January 2, 2025
- Contract ends: December 20, 2027