

Vice President of Programs

Position Profile

Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California

Location: Los Angeles or Orange County, CA (Hybrid)



About AJSOCAL

For over 40 years, Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California (AJSOCAL) has been a leading force in protecting and advancing the civil and legal rights of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities. As one of the nation's largest AAPI legal and civil rights organizations, we are committed to uplifting the most vulnerable members of our communities through free legal services, impact litigation, and policy advocacy to advance justice for AAPIs.

With staffing in Los Angeles, Orange County, and Sacramento AJSOCAL serves nearly 15,000 individuals and organizations annually—championing justice, equity, and systemic change. Our 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 network of national affiliates in Chicago, Atlanta, and Washington D.C.

Our Programs include:

- **Direct Services** – We provide free legal aid and other direct services in eight Asian languages and dialects, including in housing, immigration, domestic violence, voting rights and protection, and healthcare access.
- **Impact Litigation** – We fight systemic injustices in areas such as housing and worker's rights, immigration, language access, and anti-Asian hate through legal action that empowers our communities.
- **Policy Advocacy** – We push 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** – We host workshops, forums, and educational events to inform and empower AANHPI communities about their rights and available legal resources.



About AJSOCAL (cont'd)

- Demographic Research – We conduct and distribute data-driven research to highlight ethnic and language-specific challenges and ensure policies reflect the real needs of our communities.

At AJSOCAL, we are more than an organization—we are a movement. Our work is guided by compassion, courage, collaboration, and a deep commitment to community responsiveness. These values drive our advocacy, shape our partnerships, and fuel our team and mission to create a more just, inclusive, and equitable future for all.

To learn more, please visit: <https://ajsocal.org/>



The Opportunity

The Vice President of Programs is a connector, strategist, and catalyst for change who is passionate about protecting and strengthening the rights and dignity of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities. They are a steadfast and inspiring leader who will strengthen the organization's internal culture, develop high-performing teams, and drive programmatic strategy that is bold, responsive, and rooted in community needs. This is an opportunity for a leader with vision, operational expertise, and a passion for justice to help shape AJSOCAL's future and deepen its impact.

This executive leader will oversee AJSOCAL's direct services, impact litigation, policy advocacy, community engagement, and demographic research, ensuring these programs are strategic, effective, and responsive to community needs. The ideal candidate will provide unifying leadership to a rapidly growing and highly talented team, fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability, and shared purpose. This leader will ensure cross-functional alignment across programs, enhancing operational efficiency and strengthening AJSOCAL's impact.

Reporting directly to the CEO, this role will work in close partnership with the Executive Team and Program Leadership to evaluate, improve, and scale multiple programs. Managing a team of five direct reports and a total program staff of 60, this leader will provide calm, inspirational, and strategic guidance in challenging times and ensure that AJSOCAL remains at the forefront of advocacy and legal protection for AAPI communities.

Location

We have offices in Los Angeles, CA and Anaheim, CA, and this role is open to candidates at either location. We work in a hybrid environment. Our hybrid schedule allows continued flexibility for our staff with the option to work 3 days/week in the office and the remaining days working at home/remotely. First six months may require more in person and will progressively decrease as there is comfort and confidence in the role and with the team.



Candidate Profile

Strengthening Culture Through Communication & Collaboration

AJSOCAL has grown rapidly, and with growth comes the need for strong, steady leadership that fosters a unified, collaborative culture. The VP of Programs will be the glue that brings together teams and builds bridges between people and departments. They will create clear accountability structures, establish cross-team alignment, and ensure that everyone is moving forward together—not in silos. By harmonizing diverse personalities, fostering trust, and inspiring a sense of shared purpose, this leader will create an environment where staff feel valued, engaged, and empowered to do their best work.

Building a High-Functioning, Aligned Team

The VP of Programs will ensure that AJSOCAL's programmatic teams are not just effective, but exceptional. They will fill key leadership vacancies, cultivate emerging leaders, and create professional development pathways that retain top talent and inspire excellence. Acting as a critical link between the Executive Team and Program Teams, this leader will provide clarity, coordination, and momentum—ensuring that each program functions effectively on its own while contributing to a broader, collective impact.

Developing and Executing Program Strategy

In a time of political and social uncertainty, AJSOCAL needs a leader who can see beyond the moment and anticipate the challenges ahead. The VP of Programs will not only analyze national trends and local community needs, but also set bold, strategic priorities that allow AJSOCAL to stay ahead of the curve and drive meaningful change. As a calm and decisive presence, this leader will guide the organization through complex and evolving landscapes, ensuring that AJSOCAL remains steadfast in its mission and clear in its direction.

Creating Streamlined, Client-Centered Operations

Our programs will not only serve the community but do so with maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and impact. The VP of Programs will streamline operations, enhance internal systems, and optimize the use of resources to ensure that every program is delivering the highest quality services in the most effective way possible. They will translate data and community feedback into action, ensuring that AJSOCAL's services are not just well-intended, but well-executed and deeply responsive to the needs of those they serve.

Key Responsibilities

- **Strategic Leadership:** In partnership with the CEO and the executive team, develop and articulate organizational strategic priorities.
- **Program Leadership:** Develop and implement the strategic direction for all programs in alignment with the organization's mission and goals and facilitate effective decision-making processes.
- **Team Management:** Supervise, hire, and support a working environment where employees can grow and thrive and a culture that attracts, keeps, and motivates a diverse staff committed to the mission.
- **Culture Ambassador:** Model and nurture an organizational culture of deep trust and belonging, excellence, collaboration, innovation, transparency, and mutual accountability. Strengthen cross-department collaboration to increase efficiency and support a cohesive, mission-driven team culture.
- **Financial Oversight:** Impart fiscal leadership through sound financial management practices, including oversight over \$10M program budget and effective grant management and reporting.
- **Operational Execution:** Lead the ongoing program operations by collaborating with the managing directors to execute and evaluate programs and ensure all programs remain relevant, culturally responsive, and aligned with AAPI community needs.
- **Public Relations and Partnerships:** Represent the organization at external events, conferences, coalitions, and in the media. Expand relationships with diverse community stakeholders, such as other nonprofits, government officials, policy makers, community leaders, and community members, to advance initiatives and partnerships.
- **Fundraising Support:** Work closely with the Development team to support fundraising efforts, grant proposals, and reporting.
- **Continuous Learning:** Stay informed on emerging trends in civil rights law, policy, and social justice movements to inform program strategies.



Qualifications

The Vice President of Programs will be an innovative, collaborative, and solutions-driven leader with a proven record of shaping and executing high-impact program strategies in social justice or nonprofit organizations. They will bring clarity to complex challenges and empower teams to deliver measurable results. With a bold vision and the ability to manage change with flexibility and poise, they will ensure AJSOCAL's programs are both strategic and operationally strong.

While it's understood that no single candidate will bring every single competency, strong candidates will offer the following skills, characteristics, and experiences:

- Passion for immigrant rights, racial justice, and legal advocacy for AAPI communities
- Minimum 8 years of progressive leadership experience, preferably in legal aid or social justice work
- Significant experience with an organization that works with low-income immigrants, AAPI communities, policy advocacy, impact litigation, or non-profit that provide direct services are strongly preferred
- Demonstrated track record of leading program strategy and execution for a \$15M organization going through periods of growth, change and direction setting.
- Seasoned executive leader with strong management acumen, with demonstrated expertise setting clear expectations and accountability measures for deliverables while encouraging innovation and initiative.
- A strong, proactive problem solver who can bridge the gap between strategy and execution.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills; experience in effectively communicating key information to diverse audiences (i.e. CEO, Executive team, general public, media, lawyers, advocates, funders, board members, and direct reports).
- High emotional intelligence (EQ) evidenced by thoughtful listening skills, compassion in interactions, and empathy with others' reaction and feelings.
- Intellectual curiosity and a growth mindset that actively supports the mission and vision
- Bilingual ability (preferred): Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Tagalog, Thai, or Vietnamese.
- Juris Doctorate (JD) preferred; be an active member of the California State Bar.



Compensation & Benefits

Salary is based on a variety of factors including, but not limited to, skill set level and years of previous/applicable experience. Salary range for this role is between \$150,000-\$200,000, with a generous benefits package, which includes medical, dental and vision insurance, Life and AD&D insurance, paid sick days, floating days, holidays and an end of the year holiday break. Employees are eligible to contribute to their 403(b) on date of hire and will receive the employer match (4%, increases based on tenure) after their one-year anniversary.

How to Apply

[Maneva Group](#), a woman and minority owned national executive search firm that specializes in mission-driven searches, has been exclusively retained for this engagement. To express interest in this role, please submit your resume to this [Application Link](#). All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential. This position is available immediately.

