



Major Gift Officer Midwest Region

Chicago, IL

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Founder + Principal

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About Lambda Legal

Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, and everyone living with HIV through impact litigation, education, and public policy work.

Since 1973, Lambda Legal has used impact litigation and other advocacy tools to decriminalize same-sex relationships; challenge discrimination against LGBTQ people and people living with HIV in the workplace, in the home, in schools, in health care, and in the military; and protect LGBTQ families, including by winning and defending marriage equality. Clients are not charged for legal representation or advocacy, and Lambda Legal receives no government funding. Headquartered in New York City, Lambda Legal has regional offices in Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas, and Washington, D.C.

Lambda Legal believes that serving the full breadth of the LGBTQ and HIV communities requires cultural competency and enthusiasm for diversity of all kinds. To be successful, the organization approaches its work with an understanding that discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity is not the only obstacle to achieving full formal and lived equality for LGBTQ people and everyone living with HIV; rather, it recognizes the intersectional nature of discrimination, specifically including biases based on race, religion, national origin, gender, disability, education, and class. In light of this reality, Lambda Legal prioritizes awareness and proactive commitment to counteracting these biases and their compounding effects.

Position Summary

Lambda Legal seeks a dynamic **Major Gift Officer (MGO)** to join its Development Team. This position is primarily responsible for acquiring, cultivating, and soliciting assigned individual donors and prospects with the potential to give \$1,500 or more annually, with a heightened focus on individual giving and upgrading donors to Major Donor levels (\$5,000+).

The MGO will work to expand Lambda Legal's Liberty Circle (\$1,500+) Donor Program and volunteer activities in their assigned area/market. This role will also be responsible for managing relationships, communications, and individual giving plans with leadership donors and managing volunteer leadership committees in their assigned markets.

The successful candidate will be an experienced nonprofit fundraising professional with a track record of building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with individual donors. This is an exciting opportunity for a fundraiser that is prepared to excel in a fast-paced environment. This role requires the ability to work collaboratively and the confidence to operate independently.

Chicago and Indianapolis are primary markets for this MGO necessitating a familiarity with either or both markets and a drive to build upon a well-established foundation of support from donors and highly engaged volunteers and board members as partners in fundraising.

Reporting Relationships

The MGO reports to the NYC-based Deputy Director of Development for Major Gifts in partnership with the Midwest Regional Director located in Chicago, IL. The MGO has no supervisory responsibilities.

Essential Job Functions

The MGO role requires a "roll up your sleeves" approach and keen attention to detail and donor moves management processes, reporting, metrics-driven workflow. The following is a list of the core responsibilities of the MGO:

- » Manage Leadership Donor fundraising programs in assigned markets, including acquiring, cultivating, and soliciting donors and prospects with the potential to give \$1500 or more annually, with a heightened focus on individual giving and upgrading donors to Major Donor levels (\$5,000+). This includes face-to-face meetings and interaction with donors, including direct solicitations and managing cultivation events/touchpoints, including house parties.
- » Work to increase planned giving in the areas covered and is responsible for increasing Leadership Donor revenue in each assigned market and overall portfolio. The MGO works as a team with other staff under the leadership of the Deputy Director of Development for Major Gifts to plan and execute a wide variety of development relationships and activities.
- » Serve as the "point person" for individual donors and prospects, local corporate and law firm event sponsors, and volunteer fundraising committees in their assigned markets areas; and other markets and Leadership Donors nationally, as assigned.
- » Work with Lambda Legal staff, Board, National Leadership Council (NLC) members, and other volunteers to execute fundraising and cultivation events in assigned markets and additional ones, as determined. The MGO will also manage volunteer leadership committees and Leadership Donor fundraising plans, including identifying and securing event sponsorships (individual and firm/corporate) in assigned markets and others, as determined.
- » Support and manage annual solicitation of donors in assigned portfolio by the Chief Executive Officer, Board, NLC members, other key volunteers, and other Lambda Legal staff. This includes identifying and securing major donor prospect meetings for senior staff and organizational leadership. The MGO will acknowledge contributions and coordinate annual report recognition for gifts received from donors in the assigned portfolio and work with national staff to coordinate input into grant proposals for local foundations and prospective foundation grantors.
- » Additional duties as assigned.

Qualifications

Skills + Competencies

- » 3+ years of demonstrated success in a major gift or planned gift fundraising function and experience coordinating fundraising events desired.
- » Proven experience having expanded and cultivated existing donor relationships over time; campaign and annual giving experience is a plus.
- » Demonstrated experience working with racially and gender diverse volunteers and groups.
- » Experience working closely with Board and key volunteers and knowledge of LGBT and/or philanthropic communities in assigned areas is required.
- » Excellent communication skills, both written and interpersonal; ability to influence and engage a wide range of donors and build long-term authentic relationships.
- » Flexible, adaptive, and innovative work style; a collaborator who can positively impact both strategic and tactical fundraising initiatives.
- » Ability to work independently without close oversight and as a team player who will productively engage with others at varying levels of seniority within and outside the organization.
- » High energy and passion for Lambda Legal's mission are essential.
- » Strong organizational and time management skills, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, with exceptional attention to detail.
- » Highly proficient with Microsoft Office applications and Raiser's Edge database.
- » Ability to interact with all levels of the organization and to excel in an environment that emphasizes teamwork and collaboration.
- » Some travel is required for this position.
- » Bachelor's degree required.

Working at Lambda Legal requires a demonstrated awareness of and commitment to the concerns of the breadth of the communities that Lambda Legal serves. Prior work on behalf of the LGBT community and/or people living with HIV is highly desirable. Some experience working with historically marginalized communities (in a professional or volunteer capacity) is also desirable. Any successful candidate will welcome the opportunity to work in a gender-diverse and racially diverse environment.

Leadership + Key Colleagues

(Please do not contact the organization or its leaders directly)

Kevin Jennings **Chief Executive Officer**

Formerly president of the Tenement Museum, Kevin's contributions to the LGBT movement began in 1988 when he helped students create the first school-based Gay-Straight Alliance club, leading him to found and lead the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) for 18 years. He then served as an Assistant Secretary of Education for President Obama, after which he led the Arcus Foundation, the world's largest foundation for LGBT rights organizations, for five years.

He has received several awards, both national and international recognition, including the "Friend of Children" Award from the National Association of School Psychologists, the Human and Civil Rights Award of the National Education Association, the Distinguished Service Award of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the Diversity Leadership Award of the National Association of Independent Schools, the Bob Angelo Medal from COC Netherlands, and the "Appalachian Hero" Award from the Appalachian Community Fund, where he established the Alice Jennings Fund, which provides support to organizations serving low-income and battered women in the South.

Kevin is a Lambda Literary Award-winning author of seven books. His memoir, *Mama's Boy, Preacher's Son: A Memoir*, was named a Book of Honor by the American Library Association in 2006. He also helped write and produce the documentary *Out of the Past*, which won the 1998 Sundance Film Festival Audience Award for Best Documentary and is an Executive Producer of the documentary *The Lavender Scare*.

Kevin is actively engaged in nonprofit and community causes. Currently, he chairs the Boards of the Ubunye Challenge and Muslims for Progressive Values. He is a past Board Member of the Harvard Alumni Association, Union Theological Seminary, Marjorie's Fund, the You Can Play Project, and was the founding Board Chair for the Tectonic Theater Project, which created *The Laramie Project*. He is the Founder of the Pride Fund of the Connecticut Community Foundation.

Kevin is a graduate of Harvard College. He also received a Master of Education from Columbia University's Teachers College, from which he received the Distinguished Alumni Award in 2012, and an MBA from NYU's Stern School of Business.

Josh Pushkin **Chief Development Officer**

Josh Pushkin is the Chief Development Officer (CDO) for Lambda Legal, the oldest and largest national legal organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, and people with HIV.

Over the last 18 years of his philanthropy career, Pushkin has served in both consultative and full-time roles leading development teams on fundraising strategy, donor engagement, and philanthropic goal alignment to exceed targets and advance mission-driven social justice work. As an advisor who helps charities craft cases with measurable impacts, Pushkin has had a special focus on organizational leadership development, major gifts strategy, corporate social responsibility, and board development.

After completing both a Master's in Public Administration and Bachelor of Science in Human Development at Cornell University, Pushkin began his career with CCS Fundraising directing feasibility studies and capital campaigns where he worked with organizations such as the US Fund for UNICEF, Theatre Development Fund, and The World Union for Progressive Judaism. Later as an independent consultant, Pushkin led partnerships with various charitable institutions, including Housing Works, Kaufman Center, The New York Public Library, New York Public Radio, Rainforest Alliance, and The New York Psychoanalytic Society and Institute, among others.

Prior to joining Lambda Legal, Pushkin served for three and a half years as the Vice President of Development for Ms. Foundation for Women – the world's first women's foundation, co-founded by Gloria Steinem. Originally from Charleston, WV, Pushkin is an avid scuba diver, skier, and traveler.

Sara Beinert, CFRE
Deputy Director of Major Gifts

Sara Beinert has dedicated her professional life to fundraising for social justice, with a background in legal organizations. Sara joined Lambda Legal in May 2020 as Deputy Director of Development for Major Gifts, where she oversees the Major Gifts program as well as legacy giving and law firm fundraising. Before Lambda Legal, she was Chief Development & External Affairs Officer at Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT), responsible for all fundraising streams, government relations, and communications for this legal services provider specializing in New York Family Court. Through the 2016 election, Sara was the Development Director at Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice/Bend the Arc Jewish Action.

From 2007-2015, Sara served as Associate Director of Development for Individual Giving at the Center for Constitutional Rights, where she directed the major gifts, annual fund, and planned giving programs. Prior to joining CCR, she was Manager of Individual Gifts at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law. She began her career organizing special events at the Ms. Foundation for Women. Sara holds a BA in Psychology and Sociology from the State University of New York at Geneseo, and a Certificate in Fundraising from New York University. She served two terms on the Board of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program Alumni Association of New York. Sara is a proud Brooklyn native.

Compensation + Benefits

Salary is based on the Collective Bargaining Agreement. **The annual salary range starts at \$75,366.**

A competitive benefits package is provided, including:

- » Medical
- » Dental
- » Life and long-term disability insurance
- » Short- and long-term disability insurance
- » Employer contributions and match to 403(b) retirement account
- » Substantial vacation

Location

This position is situated in the Midwest Regional Office (MRO) located in Chicago, IL. The successful candidate will reside in the Greater Chicago Area.

Travel + COVID Statement

During the COVID-19 pandemic, travel will be minimal. In the future, however, some amount of travel (~30%) may be required.

The health and well-being of our employees and their loved ones are of the utmost importance to us. During the pandemic, we have chosen to close our offices. Our employees are all working from home, and only visit the office voluntarily, only if absolutely necessary. We follow CDC and Department of Health guidelines to ensure the safety of employees who occasionally need to work from the office. We have an employee task force that is continually evaluating and assessing when we can re-open. At this time, we do not foresee re-opening our office in the next several months.

EEO + Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Lambda Legal is committed to further building and maintaining a staff that reflects the full range of LGBT, HIV-affected, and allied communities and is an equal opportunity employer. People of color, transgender and gender-diverse people, women, people with abilities in multiple languages, immigrants, people living with disabilities, and individuals living with HIV are encouraged to apply.

Background Checks

Before sending your resume for this position, please read it over for accuracy. Cooper Coleman verifies its candidates' employment and academic credentials at the time of offer, and our clients frequently conduct background checks before finalizing an offer.

Submission Instructions *(read carefully)*

The position is open until filled.

[Cooper Coleman](#) is leading this search on behalf of Lambda Legal. To apply, please [visit this link](#) (www.coopercoleman.com/lambda-legal-jobs). Inquiries and nominations of qualified candidates can be sent to:

Johnny Cooper, Principal
lambdalegal@coopercoleman.com

Kindly use the position title as the subject line of your email. All inquiries will be held in confidence.

A cover letter is not required with your initial application. Candidates invited for interviews will be asked to provide a thoughtful letter of interest indicating their specific qualifications for the opportunity, desire to join Lambda Legal, and connection to its mission.

Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

Cooper Coleman LLC is committed to providing equal employment opportunity to all qualified candidates and will refer candidates without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or identity, age, ability, veteran status, or any other legally protected basis.

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About Cooper Coleman

Cooper Coleman is a full-service recruiting and consulting firm partnering exclusively with nonprofit organizations, foundations, and research and academic institutions to drive meaningful growth. We move organizations *forward* by placing the right leaders in the right roles at the right time, and we help to strengthen management and fundraising capacity to amplify their mission and impact.

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