

CSAC



THE CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION

IS
SEEKING
AN

**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

This an exceptional opportunity for a dynamic relationship-builder and astute leader to continue the California Student Aid Commission's (CSAC) mission of "Making education beyond high school financially accessible to all Californians."



VISION

A California that invests in educational opportunity, fosters an active, effective citizenry, and provides a higher quality of social and economic life for its citizens.

THE COMMISSION

CSAC is an independent state agency responsible for policy leadership on student financial aid issues and is the primary agency responsible for administering financial aid programs for students attending public and private universities, colleges, and vocational schools in California. The Commission's major programs include Cal Grants, the Middle Class Scholarship Program, the California Dream Act, and outreach programs including Cal-SOAP and Cash for College. The Commission also provides financial aid policy analysis and leadership, in partnership with California's colleges, universities, financial institutions and financial aid associations. CSAC works toward a California that invests in educational opportunity, fosters an active, effective citizenry, and provides a higher quality of social and economic life for its citizens.

Annually, CSAC:

- Awards \$2 billion in financial aid to over 300,000 students
- Processes over 1.5 million FAFSA and California Dream Act applications
- Notifies over 426,000 students of their eligibility for financial aid programs
- Provides thousands of high school counselors, teachers and outreach personnel with training on the FAFSA and financial aid processes
- Answers thousands of calls and emails regarding eligibility for 11 programs.

The Commission was created by the Legislature in 1955, it consists of 15 appointed members. Eleven of the commissioners are appointed by the Governor and represent students, segments of the State's higher education community, and the general public. The Senate Rules Committee and the Speaker of the Assembly each appoint two members.

**For further information about CSAC,
see its web site at: www.csac.ca.gov.**

THE POSITION

Appointed by and reporting to the 15-member Commission, the Executive Director is the chief executive officer of CSAC. The relationship of the Executive Director to the Commission is similar to that of a college or university president to a board of trustees. This complex position carries important political, policy, leadership, managerial, budgetary, public relations, and community

affairs responsibilities, including obligations and accountability for statewide, national and international matters. The Executive Director carries out his/her duties with the support of approximately 100 staff and an annual operating budget of \$12 million.

While fully responsible to, and in collaboration with the Commission, the Executive Director must conform to state and federal policies, legislative intent, budgetary constraints, and must carry out her/his responsibilities impartially in regard to all sectors and segments of California higher education. The position is responsible for representing the Commission before the Governor, Legislature, the federal Administration, including the United States Department of Education, Congress, international consulates, higher education segments, and the public on higher education policy and financial aid issues affecting the Commission's programs, student access, affordability, and accountability.

The Executive Director provides executive-level leadership and vision to ensure that operations of the Commission are conducted professionally, with integrity, and accountability to the students, the institutions served and the general public. The Executive Director exercises a high degree of sensitivity in making judgments on behalf of the Commission to the programs the agency administers and oversees.

This position requires the incumbent possess a vast knowledge of state government and California's higher education system, policy acumen and political sophistication, the ability to advocate effectively and credibly for Commission policies and positions with members of the Legislature and the highest levels of the Administration, and expertise in state and federal budgeting and financing of higher education, enrollment and enrollment management, tuitions and fees, and financial aid funding mechanisms for higher education.

The Executive Director serves four key audiences and the essential duties within each are as follows:

The Commission

- Provides informed and reliable expert policy and sophisticated, strategic political advice on statewide, national, and international developments in higher education and student financial aid matters, and practical administrative advice to the Commission, in support of the Commission's oversight of CSAC programs and development of policy and strategic goals.
- Creates and follows an organizational Strategic Plan which will set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment.
- Ensures timely communication of significant policy, political, administrative, and organizational information to the Commission.





- Ensures full fiscal accountability of the Commission, including securing staff resources, improving reporting processes, and maintaining effective relationships with Department of Finance.
- Develops, maintains and furthers effective political relationships, and advocates on behalf of the Commission, *statewide* with the Administration and the Legislature; *nationally* with the United States Department of Education, the President's Administration, and Congress; and *internationally* with representatives of foreign governments.
- Ensures the implementation of policies adopted by the Commission and programs authorized by the Commission, and the development and implementation of appropriate and effective policies and procedures affecting day-to-day operations of CSAC programs.
- Ensures that CSAC programs are implemented in compliance with state and federal law and State of California administrative practices and procedures.
- Maintains effective operations for the Cal Grant and other specialized programs.
- Efficiently delivers a system for the Cal Grant program and effectively manages and deploys staffing through strategic planning.
- Ensures compliance with all laws, rules, regulations that the Commission must adhere to, and ensures all staff follow these requirements.
- Manages, directs, and motivates civil service executive, professional, and support staff in accordance with CSAC's objectives, and within state personnel policies and regulations.
- Develops and maintains a professional, motivational atmosphere that encourages employees to strive for the highest quality performance, personal and professional growth, and enhanced responsibilities.
- Develops and maintains a workforce development plan as part of the Strategic Plan for staff development of talents at all levels.
- Continually develops new vehicles of media, information systems, and communications for the Commission's programs to provide access to information about institutional performance and Cal Grant eligibility.

The State (Governor, Legislature, Higher Ed Segments)

- Participates directly at the federal level in policy deliberations concerning the development and implementation of laws and regulations, and operational practices concerning federal financial aid policy.
- Supports the state by continually identifying and analyzing new and cutting-edge issues and potential policies, developing data and other information to inform the state about those issues and policies, and implementing adopted policies and goals to meet the direction and vision of California's higher education goals.

- Provides executive-level leadership and vision for the administration of CSAC programs statewide.
- Ensures that state and federal audit requirements are met and provides critical reports to the Commission and other state agencies.
- Ensures that all requests for legislative actions are addressed and appropriate follow through and action is taken.
- Develops, maintains and furthers effective working relationships with state agencies, higher education leaders, student organizations, private foundations, community-based organizations, postsecondary education segments and institutions, CSAC program partners and constituent groups.

Stakeholders

- Raises public awareness of student access to and affordability of higher education provided by CSAC and its programs, the accountability provided by CSAC and its programs, and statewide and national developments in higher education and student financial aid matters, through the media, other communication modes, and through participation in national and statewide conferences and programs. Implements and expands public awareness of new legislation and benefits affecting CSAC, including the California Dream Act and the Middle Class Scholarship.
- Provides outreach and information about financial aid and higher education throughout California, primarily through the Commission's Cash for College and Cal-SOAP programs.
- Partners with the Consulates General of Mexico on outreach programs for Hispanic youth throughout the state by working with the Consulates General and members of the Consulate staff to plan, organize and staff events.

The CSAC office is located in Rancho Cordova CA, a suburb of Sacramento.

THE REGION

The capital of California, Sacramento is conveniently located halfway between the Pacific Ocean (San Francisco) to the west, and the Sierra Nevada Mountains (Lake Tahoe) to the east. With a population of approximately 470,000, Sacramento is the 7th largest city in California.

Sacramento offers some of the lowest housing prices of major cities in the state. Many new residents have relocated from the San Francisco Bay Area and Southern California to take advantage of Sacramento's employment opportunities, moderate housing prices, reasonable cost of living, and competitive salaries.

Sacramento has been called a snapshot of Wild West history in a modern, world-class city. Peacefully located in a leafy valley of scenic rivers and canopies of trees, today's Sacramento is a cosmopolitan convergence of tall, gleaming buildings,





hearty Victorians, splendid restaurants and shops, and a vibrant arts scene. Annual events held in California's capital include the Sacramento Music Festival & Jubilee, California State Fair, California International Marathon, Pacific Rim Streetfest, Juneteenth Celebration, Gold Rush Days, Farm to Fork Celebration, Grape Escape, and New Year's Eve Sky Concert.

The Sacramento region also offers amenities that are attractive to those with an active lifestyle. Hiking, biking, golfing, snow-skiing, water-skiing, house-boating, and other sports and recreational opportunities abound. In addition, educational opportunities are plentiful, with the Sacramento region being home to California State University - Sacramento; University of California at Davis; Sacramento City College; McGeorge School of Law and other community and four-year colleges.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate is a seasoned management professional, policy expert and effective leader who brings a blend of creativity and initiative to this position. Successful candidates will have a strong familiarity with state/federal financial aid issues and programs coupled with an understanding of the economic challenges faced by low-income and under-represented student populations in achieving their higher education goals. The next Executive Director will possess exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to quickly form strong, collaborative relationships with a multitude of agencies and diverse stakeholders and aptly articulate the vision and mission of CSAC. He/she will be decisive but appreciate and encourage input and feedback, while exhibiting flexibility and political astuteness. Previous experience working with or reporting to a Board or Commission is highly desirable. A track record of successfully leading change and the demonstrated ability to both empower employees while holding them accountable will be considered favorably. Working knowledge of California civil service rules, state contracting, information technology, and procurement processes is a plus. Individuals who thrive in a fast-paced environment and are undeterred in achieving their goals when faced with opposition or criticism will find this role challenging and fulfilling. A professional demeanor and a proven track record of sound fiscal, technical and personnel management are expected and essential.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The current annual salary range for the Executive Director goes up to **\$153,948.00**. The appointee will be offered a specific salary based on his/her qualifications. As an employee of the State of California, the Executive Director also receives a comprehensive benefit plan including, but not limited to:

Retirement

California Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS); employee contribution required.

Insurance

Health, dental, vision, and life insurance programs provided. Employee contributions may be required depending on programs selected.

Leave Allowance

- Vacation and sick leave benefits provided
- 13 holidays observed

Additional information about benefits available can be viewed at http://www.dpa.ca.gov/jobinfo/ex_cea.shtm

APPLICATION PROCESS AND RECRUITMENT SCHEDULE

The final filing deadline is **5:00 PM Monday, September 28, 2015**. To be considered for this position, please immediately submit a resume (including dates of employment and staff and budgets managed) cover letter, current salary, and the names of six work-related references, directly to:



Pam Derby
CPS EXECUTIVE SEARCH
Tel: 916 / 263-1401
Fax: 916 / 561-7205
Email: resumes@cpshr.us
CPS web site: www.cpshr.us/search

Resumes will be screened in relation to the criteria outlined in this brochure. Candidates with the most relevant qualifications will be given preliminary interviews by the consultant. Candidates deemed most qualified will be referred to the Commission. Selected candidates will be invited to participate in further interview and selection activities. An appointment will be made following comprehensive reference and background checks.

