

## **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Position Description**

### **Overview**

NAVREF is a national not-for-profit organization, whose office and staff are based in the Washington, DC, area. NAVREF's mission is to advance the success of its 75 member not-for-profit corporations (NPCs) established and managed under 38 USC §§ 7361-7366 in support of the research and education missions of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers.

Established nearly 30 years ago, NAVREF provides resources, programs, and services to NPC boards and staff members. Additionally, NAVREF engages in partnership with the VA and other not-for-profit and public and private for-profit organizations, advocating for the goals and missions of NPCs.

NAVREF's programs and services are designed to promote high quality NPC management and effective governance while fostering NPC growth and maximizing opportunities to support VA research and education. NAVREF serves as a resource for a variety of stakeholders, a forum for peer networking, a leader for advocacy, and a focal point for partnering. Its key programs and services are:

- Hosting an annual conference, workshops, and other educational programs to promote NPC management and governance proficiencies and business development resources
- Mentoring, consultation, and facilitation of peer-to-peer information sharing through formal and informal networking
- Providing tools, resources, and solutions to assist NPCs in attaining high management standards including a website, newsletters, timely updates, and management consultations
- Identifying resources for NPC operations including insurance and investment programs

Historically, the vast majority of NAVREF's operating revenue comes from membership dues. A 13-member Board of Directors comprised primarily of individuals who lead or govern NPCs, presides over the organization. The Board meets quarterly in a different U.S. city. With a highly engaged Board and membership, NAVREF is an extremely vibrant organization that is poised to meet new challenges and opportunities.

## **Responsibilities**

The overarching responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer is to lead NAVREF and support its members in reaching new levels of achievement. NAVREF has experienced considerable success since its creation. From an initial membership in 1992 of 11 NPCs, it now has 75 NPC members administering \$270 million in public and private annual funding for VA research and education. Its advocacy efforts have resulted in important improvements to the NPC authorizing statute and have contributed to significant growth in the VA research appropriation. It has been effective in influencing VA policy pertaining to NPCs and has gained respect as an authoritative and reliable voice for NPCs.

It is the Board's desire that the CEO will build upon this foundation while exploring new approaches and directions. The CEO will be expected to embrace NAVREF's core values and its mission; maintain strong relationships with its members, partners, and the general public; and build on currently successful strategies and programs. The Board will rely on the CEO to strengthen NAVREF's programs and infrastructure; identify opportunities to broaden NAVREF's funding base; create long-range goals and plans; increase public understanding and visibility of NPCs; and take advantage of evolving social media.

### **Specific tasks include:**

- Serving as NAVREF's lead visionary and strategic thinker
- Constantly monitoring and assessing NPC activities and their environment as well as the greater realm of not-for-profits to recognize, anticipate, and address challenges
- Develop value added programs to support the NPCs
- Staying current on statutes, regulations, policies, and guidance applicable to not-for-profit organizations and their operations generally as well as those VA laws and regulations that are specific to NPCs
- Leading efforts and serving as the key spokesperson to create new alliances and collaborations with other organizations and individuals in the not-for-profit, private, and public sectors that will help NAVREF and NPCs advance their missions
- Understanding, anticipating, and analyzing the ever-evolving environment in which NAVREF and NPCs exist, and working with the Board and staff to position both to grow and thrive
- Engaging and working in collaboration with the Board on matters of governance, mission, vision, and strategy
- Responding promptly and thoroughly to the individual and collective needs of NPCs
- Elevating the brand of NAVREF and NPCs
- Managing day-to-day activities associated with membership services and support and providing other educational opportunities
- Overseeing arrangements for the annual meeting and other NPC meetings;

- Managing NAVREF's financial assets including developing and monitoring an annual operating budget that reflects the strategic goals for the organization.
- Generating revenue by sustaining the value of NAVREF's current programs and seeking new sources of income to support NAVREF's mission-based programs and services.
- Assess membership dues that are consistent with other not for profit organizations offering similar services and are not overly burdensome to NPCs.
- Coordinating programs for assisting NPCs through peer site visits as requested
- Communicating with members and external audiences effectively in a variety of forums
- Mentoring staff to ensure that they are effectively trained and prepared for their current and future roles
- Managing staff to support daily operations and external communications

**NAVREF's CEO should have the following skills and characteristics:**

- A keen interest, genuine passion for, and deep personal commitment to NAVREF's mission to advance the success of NPCs in fulfilling their purpose of supporting research & education that benefits the health and well-being of veterans
- The ability to articulate, communicate, and implement the vision, goals, and decisions established by the Board
- Proven strategic planning and strategy execution skills with demonstrated success
- Experience in elevating the national brand of a not-for-profit organization
- Expertise in engaging and supporting an active and deeply engaged Board
- Experience developing and supporting annual conferences including program development, fundraising, and recruitment of strategic presenters.
- Outside-the-box creative thinker, entrepreneurial, and eager to improve existing programs and services while launching new ones, and to reach out to new constituencies and establish strategic alliances
- A strong public presence and the ability to represent NAVREF and NPCs effectively before a wide range of audiences both verbally and in writing
- Ability to develop and maintain strong working relationships with high-level government officials and congressional staff
- Highly responsive and supportive to NPC executive directors and other leaders
- A good listener and a creative problem solver who is politically savvy, patient, collaborative, and able to reconcile and support divergent points of view and management or governance styles
- Solid up and down communications skills; must have a transparent management style with a "no surprises" mind-set
- Strong work ethic and experience succeeding within a diverse, multi-cultural community
- Energetic, self-directed, and well organized in order to handle multiple tasks, select priorities, and to focus on as well as advocate for the matters that will

- contribute most to the growth and success of NAVREF and NPCs
- Attention to detail and commitment to excellence
- Sensitive to the needs of others
- Unquestioned integrity/ethics
- In control ego, collaborative style, and a healthy sense of humor

Interested individuals seeking more information or wanting to nominate should contact  
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