

## MARY JOHNSON CHILDREN'S CENTER INFORMATION OPERATIONS MANAGER SEARCH

Mary Johnson Children's Center seeks an Operations Manager to join the leadership team of this well-established non-profit that has served the families of Addison County for over fifty years.

Since its beginning in 1970, Mary Johnson has been committed to encouraging and celebrating families, and providing high-quality early childhood and school age programming. MJCC is fortunate to have a history of stable and committed leadership. Staff turnover across the organization is unusually low, resulting in a strong and reliable organization where staff feel valued and supported, and where the work is rewarding.

The board of directors is cognizant that matching the organization's needs and culture with the right manager is critical to continuing this successful track record. MJCC is seeking a candidate who can work in partnership with the ED, board, staff, community partners, and funders (current and prospective) to design and execute a plan for financial structure and development that leads to the Center's fiscal health and ability to grow in the future.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CENTER

In 1970, a group of concerned Middlebury residents decided that the community needed a safe, supportive program for the children of families who needed to work outside of the home. Now, 50 years later, the Center offers a wide array of services to children and families in Addison County and oversees initiatives that cover early childhood and school age systems locally and statewide.

### CURRENT PROGRAMS

#### •Early Childhood

Currently the Center operates three early childhood programs, each serving families who represent the economic and social diversity found in our community. Approximately 50% of the children enrolled in the Center's early childhood programs receive state child care subsidy support. The programs also have long established Universal Pre-K partnerships with local school districts, which supports a portion of the tuition for qualifying children.

(1) Mary Johnson Children's Center, 81 Water Street, Middlebury

This program serves 70 children three months to kindergarten age year-round. The Water Street location is the original Center location and houses the administrative offices. The Center has been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children for longer than any other licensed center in the state of Vermont.

The Center uses a model of therapeutic child care that supports children who struggle with social, emotional and behavioral challenges. The Center has formed a partnership with our local mental health agency that provides regular, ongoing supervision and support for classroom teaching staff doing direct service. The Center has fifteen children currently served by this model.

(2) Middlebury Cooperative Nursery School, 391 East Main Street, East Middlebury

This program serves 3-5 year old children year-round in a 1900's two-room schoolhouse. Founded in the 1930s as a part day parent cooperative nursery school, the Co-Op was acquired by the Center after it became clear to the parent led organization that the time

needed to operate the non-profit had moved beyond their capacity.

(3) Orwell Early Education Program, Orwell Village School, Orwell Vermont

This program is housed in the Orwell Village School and serves 3- 5-year-old children in an academic year full and half-day program. This is a unique partnership between a public school system and MJCC to serve the community need in a rural area.

•School Age Programs: MJCC offers after school care at elementary schools in Weybridge and Middlebury for children 5-12. A variety of school year, summer, and enrichment programs are offered. The number of sites fluctuates in response to community needs.

•STARS: STARS is Vermont's quality recognition system for childcare, preschool, and afterschool programs. MJCC has administered the program for the State of Vermont since 2010.

•Referral Services: Families seeking care can receive current information about available child care openings throughout the county.

•Child Care Financial Assistance Program: Qualifying families can access assistance with child care costs through this state funded program.

•Child and Adult Care Food Program, Middlebury Nourishes, Rural Fun Delivery (RFD) & Midd Summer: MJCC provides meals and snacks to children in its programs. MJCC takes on a variety of evolving roles in summer food programs that provide lunch and activities in the area. Making sure children are well fed and nourished is a priority in supporting a healthy community.

•Strengthening Families Program: This state funded program provides outreach and support services to families, to enhance child development and to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. SFP also provides professional development and mentorship to teaching staff.

From the outset Mary Johnson Children's Center developed a reputation as a valuable resource for all parents and guardians across Addison County.

#### WHERE THE CENTER IS TODAY

The Center's reputation, both locally and at a state level, is of an organization known for the high quality of its services and programs. The programs are supported through a myriad of funding streams, including state and private grants, private tuitions, and state subsidies and fundraising. Most grants are renewed annually, but remain vulnerable to state and federal fiscal realities and pressures.

#### Projects:

In addition to these core programs, the Center develops both short-and-long term projects to meet emerging needs. Examples of the innovative responses to those needs include the RFD Program and Middlebury Nourishes.

•The Center has been explored the opportunity to work on creating a new early childhood program in Vergennes in past years. Draft architectural plans have been completed with the help

of a planning grant from the Vermont Community Development Program. Research and planning need to be explored before moving forward with this idea.

#### Fundraising:

An annual campaign mailing goes out to donors each spring. These efforts have realized some success with individual donors having increased both the amount and frequency of giving.

#### OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE OPERATIONS MANAGER

The successful candidate will possess a combination of skills, knowledge, and attributes that will assure the Center fully leverages emergent opportunities, and skillfully and nimbly navigates anticipated and unforeseen challenges.

The Operations Manager will assure the long-term fiscal health of the organization, as well as the success of children and families across Addison County.

Over its 50-year history, the Center has grown organically in response to emerging needs and opportunities. The Center now needs to undertake a comprehensive strategic planning process to help identify the community's current needs, as well as its opportunities for growth. A part of this work should include an updating and revision of its mission and vision.

The work to support the organization fits under three broad categories.

#### Finance and sustainability:

The Center operates on a tight budget with pressures on many fronts. About 38% of the budget comes from one state department, and those grants and contracts have been level-funded for many years. There is a great opportunity for the Operations Manager to increase grant funding as well as to improve fundraising platforms to add financial stability to the Center. With many moving parts, the Operations Manager will balance the inevitable tensions between prudent fiscal management and the needs of a professional workforce.

#### Human Resources:

With over 50 full and part time employees, the Operations Manager will coordinate recruitment, selection and retention of staff to support the numerous programs and projects under its umbrella. Duties will include ensuring that policies, procedures, and HR programs are consistently administered, aligned with organizational goals, and in compliance with professional standards, and state and federal regulatory requirements and laws.

#### Facilities and Technology:

The Center owns three properties, two adjoining properties on Water Street and the Middlebury Children's Cooperative in East Middlebury. While several large projects have been completed on each of these properties over the past few years, as with old buildings everywhere, there are on-going maintenance and capital improvements needs.

The Center has maintained an upgraded computer system, both hardware and software. Staying relatively current with those systems and ensuring digital and data security will continue to be important priorities for the Operations Manager and the organization's leaders.

THE OPERATIONS MANAGER WILL HAVE DEMONSTRATED COMPETENCE IN THESE AREAS:

- Managing people and money
- Communicating orally and in writing
- Navigating Vermont's human service system, especially in early childhood and youth services arenas
- Using data to measure program performance and whole population well-being
- Negotiating contracts
- Fundraising and grant writing
- Planning strategically
- Leading teams
- Supporting a work and organizational culture that is rooted in respect, inclusion, accountability, humor, and empowerment.