JOB POSTING: Staff Attorney, Phoenix

Title: Staff Attorney, Phoenix
Supervised by: Managing Attorney
Status: Full-Time, Exempt
Updated: July 2022

Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights invites applications for the full-time position of Staff Attorney to be based in Phoenix.

This position is a unique opportunity for an attorney to join a passionate team, made up of social workers, attorneys, and administrative staff, to engage in interdisciplinary written and oral advocacy on behalf of children in immigration removal proceedings. Young Center is appointed as independent Child Advocate for unaccompanied and separated immigrant children and advocates for their best interests with respect to their custody, conditions of release, and their immigration proceedings. Young Center does not directly represent children in immigration matters but works closely with the legal service providers who may represent the children. The Staff Attorney will help recruit, train, and supervise bilingual and bicultural volunteer Child Advocates—teachers, law students, social workers, community members—who will work one-on-one with children. Young Center team is a passionate and collegial group of professionals committed to ensuring that children receive the full protection of federal immigration law, domestic child welfare law and international human rights law.

ABOUT YOUNG CENTER:
Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights is a national organization dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights and best interests – safety and well-being – of immigrant children in the United States. The immediate focus of the Young Center’s work is to serve as Child Advocate for unaccompanied and separated immigrant children pursuant to the 2008 Trafficking Victims Protection and Reauthorization Act and the 2013 Violence Against Women Act. Our role is to identify and advocate for the best interests of immigrant children both while they are in federal custody and after they are released, applying federal and state law and long-recognized principles of the best interests of the child. Young Center also engages in policy work, advocating with legislators, federal agencies, and other stakeholders to promote consideration of the best interests of the child in all decisions concerning immigrant children and to create a dedicated juvenile immigrant justice system that treats children as children. Young Center has programs in Houston, San Antonio, Harlingen, Chicago, New York, Washington DC, Phoenix, and Los Angeles.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:
- Advocate for children’s best interests before government or other interested parties
- Supervise volunteers appointed as Child Advocate for unaccompanied and separated children in federal custody in or near Phoenix and across the United States as needed
- Serve as Child Advocate to a limited number of cases or as needed
- Visit children as needed and communicate with caregivers, family members and stakeholders
- Provide internal case consultation and case support involving the state, federal, and international best interests legal principles and immigration law for the Phoenix office
- Support the local and national efforts to recruit, train, and retain volunteer Child Advocates
- Participate in internal and external working groups
• Meet regularly with local stakeholders (facility staff, immigration judges, ICE officers, and legal service providers); collaborate on presentations to local stakeholders; attend case staffings or other stakeholder meetings; and speak about the Child Advocate Program at local, regional, and national events
• Develop and maintain relationships with stakeholders or organizations in the community
• Assist the team in meeting case goals and other deliverables for the government contract and private grants
• Assist with accurate and timely reports to the government, other funders, and internal Young Center departments regarding children served, case outcomes, and current trends
• Participate in a supportive, collaborative work culture that allows for creative, thoughtful, high-quality, and effective interdisciplinary advocacy
• In collaboration with the Deputy Program Director (Social Worker), consult with social worker colleagues to develop child-centered advocacy through a trauma-informed lens that identifies and advocates for the best interests of unaccompanied and separated children
• Under the supervision of the Managing Attorney and the Deputy Program Directors (Attorney and Social Worker), draft and submit best interests determinations to immigration judges, asylum officers, attorneys, and federal agencies, applying state, federal, and international law and incorporating social science research and social work best practices, including, but not limited to trauma informed and culturally sensitive approaches
• Actively engage with colleagues and supervisors in developing and editing interdisciplinary best interests determinations
• Accompany children to court hearings and interviews related to their immigration case
• Under the supervision of the Deputy Program Director (Social Worker), assess which children may need additional supportive and/or mental health services and accompany them to appointments as needed
• Other duties as assigned

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:
• J.D. and license to practice law or ability to receive license to practice law within a year of employment
• Generally, has prior experience working with children and/or youth, trauma survivors, or migrant/refugees/unaccompanied children to demonstrate an understanding of the population we serve. This may be first-hand experience or demonstrated interest in the field (coursework, internships, volunteer opportunities, etc.).
• Effective communication skills, including ability to liaise with various stakeholders, colleagues, and volunteers
• Excellent case management skills
• High-level organizational skills
• Ability to work independently, take initiative, and proactively address case needs
• Demonstrated ability to work effectively and creatively as part of an interdisciplinary team
• Ability to work in a flexible, evolving environment, adapt to situations, and manage change effectively
• Commitment to a comprehensive culture of feedback, including seeking and providing positive and constructive feedback
• Desire to learn, both as an individual and as part of an organization, and apply diversity, equity, inclusion, and/or anti-racism principles
• Ability to effectively engage across different culture, identities, and ethnicities
• Strong writing skills
• Aptitude and thoughtfulness in working with children and promoting child-centered advocacy
• Proficiency with Microsoft Office products, Zoom, Adobe Acrobat, and willingness to learn new technology and/or platforms
• Spanish/English bilingual (oral and written)
• Valid driver’s license and access to a car

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:
• Lived experience that lends insight into supporting children and their families
• Understanding of the impact of trauma on children and familiarity with a trauma-informed approach to advocacy
• Background and/or demonstrated interest in immigration law, juvenile law, or other areas of law impacting children

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:
Physical demands include regular attendance; keyboarding; sitting for long periods (at least 5 hours a day); driving. Ability to use a computer, telephone, and copy machine. Ability to travel by plane, car, and other conveyances within U.S. Occasional lifting for event setup/preparation. May be requested to work weekends for child advocate trainings or other special events as needed.

COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS:
All employees must be fully vaccinated prior to first day of employment.

APPLICATION DETAILS:
Young Center is an "at-will" and equal opportunity employer that does not discriminate in its hiring practices and actively seeks a diverse applicant pool. Young Center encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, ancestry, marital or parental status, pregnancy, citizenship, non-disqualifying physical or mental disability, genetic information, or veterans’ status. Reasonable accommodation will be made so that qualified applicants with disabilities may participate in the application process; no applicant will be penalized for requesting an accommodation. Please advise in writing of special needs at the time of application.

Salary is commensurate with experience. For this role, salaries will start in the mid 60’s to low 70’s based on geographic location. Young Center provides excellent benefits, including health/dental/vision insurance (employee & dependents) at no cost to the employee, paid vacation, sick time, and a 401(k) plan with employer match.
For roles working directly with children, clearance of fingerprint-based criminal background check, child abuse and neglect check (CANS), and tuberculosis test is a condition of employment.

Review of candidates will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Please apply on the Young Center website with a cover letter, resume, writing sample and three references. Only complete applications will be considered. To learn more about the Young Center’s work, please visit www.TheYoungCenter.org.