



**BoardWalk**  
CONSULTING



## LEADERSHIP PROFILE

**Chief People Officer  
Year Up United**

**New York, NY**

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At Year Up United, we're on a mission to end the Opportunity Divide and ensure that every young adult has the skills, experiences, and support to break through barriers and achieve their full potential in their careers.

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# The Opportunity

Year Up United is on a mission to end the Opportunity Divide—the divide between business hiring needs and untapped talent—and ensure every young adult has the skills, experiences, and support to break through barriers and achieve their full career potential. Year Up United delivers comprehensive solutions that empower young people and connect them to real opportunities. Their work doesn't just educate and train young adults; it builds communities committed to transforming business and driving lasting societal change.

In its nearly 25-year history, Year Up United has provided pathways for tens of thousands of young people to earn successful careers with strong growth potential. Leading companies rely on Year Up United as a source of qualified, motivated talent to fill in-demand, middle-skill positions. Year Up United has had the most significant impact on wages of any workforce development organization in U.S. history, with an average starting salary of \$52,000 for 2023 graduates. Year Up United has served over 49,000 young adults in partnership with more than 250 top employers.

Year Up United has undergone a profound business transformation. It has standardized, streamlined, and enhanced its offerings. It also combined its traditional Year Up training with community partnerships, its alumni network and placement staffing solution, and its skills-first advisory services to form Year Up United. As a united organization, it will guide companies as they shape their approach to talent and culture. Year Up United is poised to take on even greater market opportunities. The organization seeks an experienced Chief People Officer (CPO) to build a best-in-class Human Resources (HR) operation that maximizes Year Up United's greatest asset—its people—aligns with the current business needs and positions the organization for future growth.



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## The Mandate

In the midst of transformation, the human resources team stands at a pivotal moment. The past four years have brought substantial leadership changes, creating both challenges and opportunities. While the organization has made meaningful progress in evolving its HR capabilities, it's now ready to build something extraordinary on this foundation.

The organization seeks a visionary Chief People Officer who will:

- Architect the essential processes and frameworks needed to deliver consistent, world-class HR services.
- Partner and collaborate with the CEO and accomplished executive team as a trusted strategic advisor.
- Drive organizational excellence and build an excellent HR department.
- Lead change in a collaborative and decisive manner.

This role offers the rare opportunity to shape the skills-first people strategy of a dynamic organization at a critical inflection point in its growth journey. The successful candidate will have the canvas to create a lasting impact while working alongside passionate leaders committed to excellence.

# The Responsibilities

## Strategic Leadership

- Partner with the CEO and executive team to align people strategies with organizational priorities and mission.
- Build a high-performing HR team capable of supporting a complex, multi-site organization of approximately 700 employees.
- Lead organizational change management initiatives with a focus on transparency, accountability, and operational excellence.
- Serve as a trusted advisor to the executive team on all people-related matters.
- Support the Human Capital Committee of the Board.

## HR Infrastructure and Systems

- Address comprehensive HR policies, establishing a cadence for periodic review and revision as appropriate.
- Lead improvement initiatives for HR systems, including Workday, to enhance data accessibility and reporting capabilities.
- Develop a robust people analytics function to support data-driven decision-making.
- Create and implement standard operating procedures and best practices for timely resolution of HR matters.

## Total Rewards and Talent Management

- Oversee the design and implementation of competitive compensation and benefits programs.
- Lead performance management systems that drive accountability while supporting employee development.



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The CPO will be grounded in the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, with evidence of embracing, developing, and growing a diverse workforce.

- Develop and execute strategic talent acquisition and retention strategies.
- Create career pathways and promotion criteria that align employee growth opportunities with organizational needs.

### Culture and Organizational Development

- Design and implement leadership development programs that strengthen management capabilities at all levels.
- Foster a culture of belonging, feedback, and continuous improvement.
- Drive initiatives that support Year Up United’s commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging without othering.
- Lead change management efforts that help staff navigate organizational transitions.

### Employee Relations and Compliance

- Ensure timely and appropriate resolution of employee relations issues, including contributing to the Ethics Committee
- Oversee the development and implementation of critical workplace policies, including:
  - Work location and remote work guidelines.
  - Office requirements and standards
  - Geographic employment eligibility
- Maintain compliance with employment laws and regulations across all operating locations.

## The Candidate

The CPO will be an experienced Human Resources executive who has led organizations through change. The CPO will be grounded in the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion

and belonging, with evidence of embracing, developing, and growing a diverse workforce. The attributes of the ideal candidate include:

### Professional experience:

- 15+ years of progressive HR leadership experience, including significant experience as the lead human resources executive in organizations of similar or greater complexity.
- Proven track record in leading through significant organizational change.
- Proven track record building capacity within and leading high-performing HR teams.
- Demonstrated success in policy development and implementation.
- Strong business acumen and understanding of organizational strategy.
- Expert knowledge of best practices across all functional areas within HR.
- Experience implementing and operating with HR technology systems, particularly Workday.
- Experience working with a Board of Directors.
- Experience in both for-profit and nonprofit sectors.
- A deep understanding of employment law is essential. [Law degree would be a plus]

### Personal assets:

- Experienced professional who performs as both an excellent functional leader and executive team member with responsibility to the whole organization.
- Strong leadership presence. Approachable, collaborative and transparent. Invites feedback, acknowledges it and responds appropriately.



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Year Up United has high expectations and high support ethos and provides the skills, experiences, and assistance to empower young adults to reach their potential through careers and higher education.

- Highly analytical, detail-oriented, strategic thinker who exercises good judgment in forming policy, implementing practices and communicating ideas.
- Very effective communicator in small and large group settings.
- Compassionate leader with demonstrated ability to constructively navigate through interpersonal and organizational conflict.
- Exceptional interpersonal skills with the ability to establish credibility quickly across all levels of the organization.
- Process-oriented leader who embraces technology to enhance HR effectiveness, productivity and data-driven decision-making capacity.

## The Organization

Founded in 2000, Year Up United is a social enterprise focused on economic mobility in the U.S. Year Up United has a powerful combination of capabilities that extend beyond its training programs and enable Year Up United to catalyze change at a systems level and create pathways to opportunity at a broader scale. Its foundational program is a tuition-free job training program that includes wrap-around support, a corporate internship with a respected company, and the ability to earn money while learning with regular stipends during training and internships. Year Up United offers several different areas of training, including information technology, software development, business and financial operations, banking, and customer success. Year Up United has high expectations and high support ethos and provides the skills, experiences, and assistance to empower young adults to reach their potential through careers and higher education.

Year Up United stands out in the field, with unparalleled capabilities; from a leading Research & Evaluation team to a best-in-class employer advisory practice, an award-winning skills-first talent agency (YUPRO Placement), and an innovative Talent Networks business unit that is developing more flexible, cost-effective pathways to careers for young adults. Through its unique strengths, Year Up United is increasing access to economic opportunity and maximizing its impact on the Opportunity Divide.

Year Up United has other strong central functions, including development, enrollment, revenue operations, corporate engagement, technology and transformation, and program delivery. Our Corporate Engagement team has twenty years of relationships with some of our nation's leading corporations, such as Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, and Salesforce. The team collaborates with employers to solve talent needs and provides unparalleled access to talent nationwide. Year Up United also has an extensive and well-connected alumni network. Year Up United alumni have access to career coaching and education support.

The Year Up United portfolio of offerings includes an advisory practice through [Grads of Life](#), which advises employers across a wide range of industries on how to implement skills-first talent strategies to make opportunities available to all and deliver business benefits and social impact. It also includes [YUPRO Placement](#), a skills-first talent agency that places and supports traditionally overlooked talent in good jobs. YUPRO Placement is a wholly owned, for-profit subsidiary of Year Up United. A portion of its profits are returned to Year Up United to support the mission.

Year Up United colleagues are expected to develop a genuine grasp of the opportunity divide in the United States, which is highly correlated with the history of race and racism in America. Our mission and culture require a sustained

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Year Up United has a national staff of roughly 700 individuals across 21 sites nationwide.

commitment to the systemic fair treatment of people diverse in race, color, ethnicity, sex or national origin, among other personal identity considerations. In order to have a culture of operational excellence and continued innovation, the President and CEO of Year Up United, Ellen McClain, has committed to advancing belonging without othering as an organizational norm, in keeping with our core values:

- Respect and value others
- Build trust, be honest.
- Be accountable.
- Engage and embrace diversity.
- Strive to learn.
- Work hard and have fun.

Year Up United has a budget of approximately \$200M. Revenues are split equally between philanthropy and earned income, including internship and advisory practice fees. Year Up United has a national staff of roughly 700 individuals across 21 sites nationwide.

# The Relationships

<p><b>The CPO will report to the CEO and manage a team of ~ 35, including the following direct reports:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Senior Director, People Operations</li><li>• Senior Director, Total Rewards &amp; Payroll</li><li>• Senior Director, Talent, Performance, &amp; Development</li></ul>
<p><b>The CPO will partner with:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chief Financial &amp; Administration Officer</li><li>• Chief of Staff</li><li>• Chief Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Officer</li><li>• Chief Operating Officer</li><li>• Chief Revenue Officer</li><li>• Chief Talent Networks Officer</li><li>• Chief Marketing Officer</li><li>• Chief Information Officer</li></ul>

# The Location and Salary

The position is ideally based in New York, Boston, or Washington, D.C., but the successful candidate should be able to travel regularly to Year Up United locations across the country (approximately 20% travel is expected). The successful candidate should be willing to maintain a regular in-office presence and help drive the organization’s return-to-office initiatives.

This position offers a competitive salary and includes a comprehensive benefits package. We actively welcome all candidates from various backgrounds with the skills to fulfill this role. Compensation is based on experience and location and is expected to be \$325,000 - \$350,000.

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For potential consideration or to suggest a prospective candidate for the position, please email: [YUUCPO@BoardWalkConsulting.com](mailto:YUUCPO@BoardWalkConsulting.com) or call **Crystal Stephens** or **Terri Kohan** at 404-BoardWalk (404-262-7392).

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