



LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Chief Operating Officer

Society of St. Vincent de Paul USA

St. Louis, MO

"Help for today. Hope for tomorrow."

Executive Summary

For over 175 years, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has been a beacon of hope for individuals and families struggling with poverty. A global Catholic lay organization, the Society empowers volunteers to provide direct assistance to those in need, offering tangible aid while fostering spiritual growth. With a presence in communities across the United States, the Society addresses immediate needs while advocating for systemic change.

The National Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, located in St. Louis, Missouri, provides essential support and resources to nearly 90,000 Vincentians in over 4,000 local conferences and councils nationwide. As the Society pursues an ambitious path toward even greater impact, both locally and nationally, it seeks a dynamic and experienced Chief Operating Officer to help drive operational excellence and strategic alignment.

The opening of the [Society's advocacy office](#) in Washington, D.C., this past April, is emblematic of the organization's renewed efforts to marry its unwavering focus on service to individuals, with the opportunity and obligation that such a significant network has, to build relationships and influence policy in service to people in need.

To help unlock the Society's full potential, the leadership of SVDP USA has formalized the role of Chief Operating Officer. Reporting to the CEO and with significant visibility with the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, the COO will play a leading, pivotal role in streamlining operations, fostering collaboration, and empowering staff to achieve the organization's ambitious goals.

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The Organization

Each year, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul serves more than 5 million people living in poverty. It does so through a network of over 4,000 local conferences, 500 District Councils, and 156 Archdiocesan Councils. The national headquarters supports these efforts through national programs and initiatives, advocacy and public policy efforts, fundraising and resource development, training and formation programs, and communications and marketing.

The National Office of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul USA has an operating budget of about \$8 million, derived primarily from individual contributions and solidarity dues from SVDP's Councils and Conferences.

The headquarters staff of 30 is imbued with the same spirit of service that characterizes Vincentians' work across the country, except the headquarters supports Councils and Conferences rather than individuals. The staff is organized along traditional lines, with teams devoted to administration, finance, operations, governance, membership services, development, and marketing/communications.

For a full description of the Society's history, programs, and impact, visit the [Society's extensive website](#).

The Mandate

The Chief Operating Officer will be a key leader in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul USA, responsible for driving operational excellence and strategic alignment across the organization. This role requires a seasoned professional with exceptional organizational and interpersonal skills, and a demonstrated passion for the Society's core work.

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The Chief Operating Officer will be a key leader in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul USA, responsible for driving operational excellence and strategic alignment across the organization.

Reporting to the CEO, the COO will have significant visibility with the Executive Committee of SVDP's Board of Directors in undertaking several key responsibilities:

- 1. Operational Oversight**, managing day-to-day operations of SVDP's headquarters, ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in all areas.
- 2. Strategic Implementation**, working closely with the CEO and leadership team to implement the Society's strategic plan, driving progress toward key goals.
- 3. Team Leadership**, supervising and mentoring key staff members, fostering a high-performing and drama-free work environment that embodies Vincentian values and welcomes innovation and continuous improvement.
- 4. Human Resources Leadership.** Given the absence of a formal Director of Human Resources, the COO will have hands-on responsibility for HR functions appropriate to an ambitious 30-person national nonprofit, including professional development, employee relations and conflict resolution, compensation and benefits, recruitment and onboarding processes, performance management systems, and compliance.
- 5. Digital Transformation Leadership.** The newly appointed Senior National Director of Information Technology will lead the impending roll-out of a national technology platform supporting the Society's 90,000 volunteers, but a project of this size and the increasing importance of technology in the Society's work overall will certainly require the COO's regular attention as well.

Among the COO's opportunities and challenges:

- Breaking down silos and fostering synergy across departments
- Building trust and collaboration among staff members

- Ensuring clear expectations and mutual accountability across the organization
- Improving internal communications and transparency
- Leveraging the power of better information, better systems and processes, and better communications to help elevate the Society's profile and impact
- Overall, strengthening the agility and responsiveness of the headquarters team, freeing the CEO to focus on external issues and stakeholders critical to SVDP's mission and to the people it serves.

The Relationships

The Chief Operating Officer reports to the CEO, National Council of the US Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and will join three peers on the CEO's cabinet. The COO manages most of the national staff of about 30. In terms of key relationships, the COO:

SVDP's COO reports to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO, National Council of the US Society of St. Vincent de Paul
And will join three peers on the CEO's cabinet:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Financial Officer • Chief Advancement Officer • National Director, Vincentian Formation
While managing most of the national staff of about 30, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resources • Senior National Director, Information Technology • National Director, Governance & Membership Service • National Director, Poverty Programs • Director, Program and Strategic Development • Marketing and communications



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Prospects deeply experienced in roles that combine strategic focus with tactical excellence would be of special interest, as would encore careerists interested in moving “from success to significance.”

The Candidate

The ideal candidate for Chief Operating Officer will be a dynamic and experienced leader with a passion for SVDP’s mission. This individual will possess a unique blend of operational expertise, strategic thinking, and interpersonal skills, preferably gained in service to a faith-based or faith-informed mission.

The CEO and Executive Committee are open to candidates with a variety of backgrounds and career paths. Prospects deeply experienced in roles that combine strategic focus with tactical excellence would be of special interest, as would encore careerists interested in moving “from success to significance.”

Key qualifications and characteristics include:

- Senior-level operating management experience in organizations consistently punching above their weight
- Proven record of driving operational excellence while fostering a collaborative climate of mutual accountability and shared expectations
- Experience in change management and organizational development
- Exceptional leadership and communications skills; a proven knack for creating synergy, developing consensus, and fostering a culture of collaboration
- A charitable heart, as evidenced by active personal engagement (whether volunteer or paid) in organizations or activities that align in relevant ways with SVDP’s mission
- A clear record of servant leadership. The COO need not be a Vincentian or even of the Catholic faith, but an abiding commitment to Vincentian values will be essential.

The COO of the Society of St. Vincent De Paul USA must be a nimble manager, able to shift with ease between the minutiae inevitable in a small office servicing a national organization, as well as a higher calling.

Professional services contracts, HR matters, technology and communications upgrades, legal matters management, social media, and much more will be under the COO's purview, but the main goal is a cohesive team pulling together in support of

A network of friends, inspired by Gospel values, growing in holiness and building a more just world through personal relationships with and service to people in need.

The Location

The COO of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul USA will be based in the Society's headquarters office in Maryland Heights, MO, a suburb of St. Louis, the Society's US headquarters since 1845.

Metropolitan St. Louis (pop 2.8 million) is a family-friendly urban and suburban region with a cost of living about 6% lower than the national average.

It is home to the [Gateway Arch](#) and [Forest Park](#), one of the nation's greatest urban public parks, three research universities¹ and four professional sports teams.² Known for its blues and its barbecue, the area is ripe with walkable neighborhoods offering a variety of restaurants with unique charm and local personality.

¹ Washington University, St. Louis University, and the University of Missouri-St. Louis ² St. Louis Cardinals (baseball), St. Louis Blues (hockey), St. Louis BattleHawks (football), and St. Louis City SC (soccer)

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For potential consideration or to suggest a prospect, please email SVDPCOO@BoardWalkConsulting.com

or call Patti Kish, Diane Westmore or Sam Pettway at 404-BoardWalk (404-262-7392)