



**President and Chief Executive Officer
Executive Search
LA's BEST**



The Organization

LA's BEST was created in 1988 by Mayor Tom Bradley and is a nationally recognized after school enrichment program serving more than 25,000 children in 200 Los Angeles Unified School District elementary schools. LA's BEST's mission is to provide a safe and supervised afterschool education, enrichment, and recreation program for children ages 5 to 12 in Los Angeles. A core value that permeates the organization at every level is the belief that after school all children need a safe place to be with caring, responsible adults and engaging activities that connect each child to his or her school, family, and community. The activities in LA's BEST programs are not an extension of the academic school day and are not seen as ends in themselves. Instead, they are vehicles for creating values, building skills, and solidifying peer and adult relationships. The core philosophy of the organization is that "nothing we do is as important as the effect it has on a child."

LA's BEST programs are located at schools with high rates of poverty and in neighborhoods most vulnerable to gangs, drugs, and crime. Programs are tailored to the unique needs of the schools and communities where they are based. That includes hiring staff from those same communities. It also means that parents are equal and accountable partners in improving student achievement and their views and priorities are solicited and respected.

Within LA's BEST, a unique organizational structure exists that includes a partnership with the Los Angeles Mayor's Office and a co-management arrangement with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Since its inception, LA's BEST corporate offices have been housed in City Hall, a legacy of the organization's origins as a pilot project of the Mayor's Office. While LA's BEST is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, it works hand-in-hand with LAUSD in providing the program through its Operations Office. There are nearly 2,400 operations staff members working at schools and in field offices. The Corporate Office, which is overseen by the President and Chief Executive Officer, is comprised of 15 staff members who are responsible for finances, communication and public affairs, fund development, and strategic relationships. LA's BEST has an annual budget of over \$37 million which comes from the following sources: State of California (74.8%); Federal Government (7.7%); City of Los Angeles (4.4%); and private fundraising (13.1%), which includes private foundations, individual donors, and fundraising events.

For more on LA's BEST's impact, please visit: <https://lasbest.org/our-purpose/impact/>



The Opportunity

This is a pivotal moment for LA's BEST. For over 33 years, LA's BEST has provided safe, supervised afterschool enrichment for elementary school students in neighborhoods with the highest needs and fewest resources. LA's BEST has made a significant impact on the lives of children and families throughout the region and has developed an exceptional reputation as a strong and trusted advocate for the expanded learning field. The organization has an important and unique mission that fills a critical need in the region. LA's BEST's boards and staff are passionate about this mission and want the organization to continue its great work and even increase its impact.

However, LA's BEST faces challenges to building on its success, including rising operating expenses, changes in donor behavior and shifts in funding, greater competition for top-quality staff, and increased need in the communities LA's BEST serves. To meet these challenges and better position the organization for the future, LA's BEST needs a leader with the experience, skills, and determination to further develop and drive strategies to:

- a. articulate a holistic, shared vision and actionable plan for its future;
- b. increase and diversify revenue, with an emphasis on maximizing and expanding public funding, increasing funds raised from individuals, foundations, and corporations, and exploring potential new revenue opportunities;
- c. elevate visibility and awareness of LA's BEST's programs and services, and the value and impact of the organization as a whole among key audiences, and build and maintain meaningful, lasting relationships within these audiences;
- d. maintain financial stability and increase operational efficiency, by enhancing current systems, resources, policies, procedures, and programs to identify opportunities for improvement across all segments of the organization;
- e. enable access to LA's BEST programming to the greatest number of children possible, while maintaining overall program quality and equity of access throughout the communities served;
- f. and continue to invest in staff and build a collaborative culture that values staff input and development, prioritizes diversity and inclusion, and better positions and markets LA's BEST as an employer of choice.





The Opportunity (CONTINUED)

To help realize its goals and further support its mission, LA's BEST is seeking a visionary and action-oriented leader to serve as its next President and Chief Executive Officer. The successful candidate will bring a genuine interest and deep commitment to LA's BEST's mission and will embody a caring, inclusive, and facilitative leadership style that inspires and empowers staff and volunteers, encourages collaboration, and fosters innovation.

The organization has engaged boards, a skilled leadership team, and a passionate, caring, and knowledgeable staff committed to the communities LA's BEST serves. With the search for a new President and Chief Executive Officer, LA's BEST is entering a transitional period, inviting new opportunities for innovative leadership with the advantages of a strong foundation and a tradition of organizational excellence.

This is an exceptional opportunity for a proven leader to build on the LA's BEST's rich history, foster mission and community alignment, inspire and enact collaborative growth and change, and make a lasting impact for one of the region's leaders expanded learning and afterschool enrichment.

Position Summary

The President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will serve as LA's BEST's lead executive and, in partnership with the Board of Directors, staff, the Mayor's Office, and LAUSD, will be responsible for the overall success of the organization. This includes leading and supporting the Board and staff through the development, refinement, and execution of a holistic and unified strategic vision and plan for LA's BEST, to maintain financial stability and increase internal operational efficiency; diversify and expand revenue; increase external visibility and awareness; elevate influence over policy development, enhance program quality and impact; and build a collaborative, cross-functional culture; all to strengthen LA's BEST's ability to better meet the needs of the families and communities it serves.

Reporting to the Governing Board of Directors, the CEO will lead a core staff of 15 and will work closely with the Advisory Board and BEST Friends Board. All three boards were established to represent a broad cross-section of the community, and to leverage additional expertise and resources for LA's BEST. Read more about LA's BEST's [boards](#) and [leadership team](#).

Externally, the CEO will serve as the lead spokesperson and advocate for LA's BEST to all audiences and will work to strengthen and expand relationships important to the organization, including those with potential funding sources, media, elected officials, government agencies, charitable foundations, corporations, individuals, and within the communities LA's BEST serves. Internally, the CEO will work closely with the Board, Board Chair, leadership team, and LAUSD, establishing policies, providing clear direction, and ensuring effective implementation of the mission, future strategic plans, and programmatic and revenue goals by engaging, inspiring, and supporting staff.

To accomplish all this, LA's BEST's next CEO will demonstrate integrity; a transparent and collaborative style; an enthusiasm for the mission of the organization; and a commitment to boldly pursuing sustainable growth and change to move LA's BEST forward.

Key responsibilities for the next CEO include the following seven priority areas:





Position Summary (CONTINUED)

1. Providing Visionary and Strategic Leadership to Sustain and Grow LA's BEST:

- Provide strategic leadership and vision for LA's BEST; serving as a champion for innovation, navigating issues, and increasing the organization's reach and impact on all communities it serves.
- Establish an inclusive and transparent planning process with the Board, staff, and LAUSD to develop a shared vision for the future of LA's BEST and use this unified vision to inform decision-making throughout the organization.
- Collaborate with the Board and staff to develop and implement a comprehensive strategic plan to move toward actualizing the vision; ensuring that the budget, staff, and priorities are aligned with LA's BEST's mission.
- Prioritize and expand efforts to center diversity, equity, inclusion, and access as they relate to the LA's BEST mission, and intentionally apply a social justice lens to all decision-making and strategic planning within the organization.
- Partner with the Board and LAUSD leadership to determine the pace at which priorities can be advanced, decide which projects deserve primary attention, and monitor the rate at which decisions are implemented.
- Monitor trends in nonprofit management to assure LA's BEST's plans and programs reflect best practices and anticipate potential challenges.

2. Representing and Advocating for LA's BEST Effectively with External Constituents:

- Serve as chief spokesperson, advocate, and relationship developer for the LA's BEST brand, on all issues important to the organization, its mission, and the communities it serves.
- Represent LA's BEST with various media outlets and at important functions such as community and fundraising events, public meetings, and national, state, and local forums on educational and after school enrichment programs to disseminate and share the impact and lessons learned from LA's BEST programs.
- Facilitate the integration of LA's BEST into the fabric of the communities it serves, expanding and strengthening its reach and impact through proactive marketing and direct involvement with political, business, and community leaders.
- Partner with the staff and boards to develop and implement comprehensive, targeted, and proactive marketing and branding strategies to raise awareness of LA's BEST and communicate the value of its programs and services to external audiences.
- Lead the boards and staff in building coalitions and developing and implementing comprehensive plans to elevate LA's BEST's role in advocacy and strengthen the organization's ability to drive policy change and funding to better support its mission.





Position Summary (CONTINUED)

2. Representing and Advocating for LA's BEST (Continued):

- Build and nurture cooperative external relationships to strengthen LA's BEST and expand its reach. Constituents could include, elected officials and policy makers (including the Mayor's Office), LAUSD, corporate, community, and civic leaders, foundations, other nonprofit leaders, the general public, media (traditional and digital), and donors.
- Encourage and empower the boards and staff to also serve as external ambassadors and relationship developers to further LA's BEST's mission.

3. Strengthening LA's BEST's Revenue and Resources:

- Ensure there is sufficient revenue to meet LA's BEST's operational needs and strategic goals by increasing the efficacy of current revenue sources and identifying opportunities to develop new sources.
- In conjunction with staff and board leadership, ensure an effective fund development program and the sustainability of a balanced mix of revenue sources and solicitation programs to include government funding; individual giving at all levels; planned giving and bequests; corporate and private foundation giving; and events.
- Participate actively in identifying, cultivating, and soliciting donor prospects; develop an understanding of the importance of revenue and a sense of urgency throughout the organization; and coach staff at all levels to imbue a culture of fund development as part of the daily responsibilities of the boards and staff.

4. Sustaining and Supporting a Vibrant Staff Culture:

- Provide consistent leadership and clear direction to members of the leadership team and staff at all levels. Define organizational and individual goals, specify responsibilities and accountabilities for management personnel, and evaluate staff performance regularly.
- Deploy resources efficiently and effectively, working with the leadership team to balance staff workload and effort, and provide regular feedback and development opportunities so staff can continuously grow and improve.
- Promote a culture that facilitates cross-functional collaboration and strengthens communications throughout the organization.
- Inspire and mentor staff, and promote a caring, professional, and efficient work environment that actively prioritizes diversity and inclusion, encourages innovation, supports professional development, and promotes the success of all staff in establishing, executing, and achieving goals that further the vision of LA's BEST.



Position Summary (CONTINUED)

5. *Facilitating Governance and Board Development:*

- Cultivate a strong and transparent working relationship with the Board of Directors and ensure open and regular communication about the measurement of financial, programmatic, and impact effectiveness against stated milestones and goals.
- Partner with board leadership to facilitate optimum performance by the boards and committees, while invigorating the participation and contributions of individual members.
- Help the boards and their fund development committees design, implement, and monitor viable fundraising plans, policies, and procedures, and guide and enable board members to participate actively in LA's BEST's fund development process.
- Collaborate with the boards and staff to maintain strong relationships with current strategic partners and funding sources and engage and empower board members to participate in efforts to build new relationships to benefit LA's BEST and its mission.
- Work toward the creation of more diverse and committed boards, helping to identify and recruit effective board members who represent a diverse range of demographics, including age, gender, ethnic and cultural background, industry, and area of professional expertise.



6. *Strengthening LA's BEST's Infrastructure and Operations:*

- Partner with LAUSD management to provide overall leadership and direction of all LA's BEST activities, managing day-to-day operations, finance, HR, IT, etc., to ensure the organization is operating in an effective, efficient, and fiscally responsible manner.
- Maintain the financial health of the organization, including developing long- and short-range financial plans, monitoring the budget and ensuring sound financial controls are in place; set financial priorities to support the needs and goals of LA's BEST programs, services, and staff.
- Analyze current operating practices and costs and identify and explore opportunities to increase efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and impact; using data and research to inform key decisions.
- Stay informed of best practices and innovations in fundraising, advocacy, communications and marketing, finance, human resources, and overall nonprofit management and governance, and as appropriate, adapt these to create maximum impact within LA's BEST and for the communities it serves.



Position Summary (CONTINUED)

7. *Supporting and Enhancing Program Development and Delivery:*

- Advance the mission of LA’s BEST by promoting programs that align with the mission and support a unified vision for the organization.
- Partner with LAUSD leadership to assure quality, effective implementation, and equitable distribution of all LA’s BEST programs and services, through regular assessment of program portfolio for efficiency and effectiveness, alignment with mission, potential for impact, sustainability, and funding.
- Ensure programs have strong outcomes, are responsive to the needs of parents and children served, and maintain the highest quality and integrity.
- Promote programs and services that are produced in a cost-effective manner, employing economy while maintaining a high level of service and responsiveness.
- Work in partnership with LAUSD leadership in exploring innovative new programs, services, and pilot projects consistent with LA’s BEST’s mission.



Candidate Profile

The successful candidate will be a collaborative, transparent, and proactive leader with the professional experience and leadership attributes to inspire respect and shared vision among LA’s BEST’s leadership, staff, all boards, and among LAUSD and the communities LA’s BEST serves. This leader will bring a servant leadership approach that prioritizes the needs of the community and staff, as well as an understanding and appreciation for LA’s BEST’s rich history and mission, along with a vision for its future.

The CEO will have demonstrated ability in organizational administration with ten or more years of relevant leadership and management experience. This executive will bring a deep passion and commitment to expanded learning, ideally gained through direct experience in organizations focused on afterschool programming, early childhood education, general youth education, and/or youth development. Experience in environments involving partnerships with both the public and private sectors preferred.

This leader will also have many, if not all, of the qualifications and attributes listed in the following seven priority areas, which match those listed in the Position Summary section:





Candidate Profile (CONTINUED)

1. *Visionary and Strategic Organizational Leadership:*

- An action-oriented leader, with proven success driving unified vision, change, and growth within an organization and translating broad goals into achievable steps.
- Exceptional deductive reasoning, critical thinking, analytic, strategic planning, and synthesis skills, with the intellectual curiosity and willingness to encourage and champion innovation, and the ability to generate buy-in and develop consensus and excitement for new ideas, while maintaining a sense of urgency and commitment to results to keep initiatives on track.
- An entrepreneurial, self-motivated, confident and influential style that is coupled with sensitivity and flexibility. A leader who is an advocate for growth and change and achieving results collaboratively.
- A forward-thinking outlook that embraces diversity, inclusivity, sustainability, technology, wellness, and a wide range of progressive strategies. A leader who considers issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in decision-making and strategic planning, and is mindful of biases in their own decision-making and in that of others within the organization.
- A humble, trustworthy, accountable leader, with a genuine interest, strong alignment, and commitment to LA's BEST's mission. A leader with the highest ethical and professional standards, as well as the ability to manage the most sensitive and challenging issues with tact, diplomacy, and discretion.

2. *External Relations, Advocacy, and Communications:*

- Strong written and oral communications skills, as well as the listening and interpersonal skills to serve as an enthusiastic, charismatic, and credible ambassador for LA's BEST. Must be comfortable with public speaking with and being interviewed by a range of media outlets.
- Proven ability to build and nurture meaningful, lasting relationships with internal and external stakeholders at all levels, and to educate, influence, and motivate key audiences who have an interest in the mission an organization.
- Deep experience and existing connections across a variety of sectors within Greater Los Angeles, and throughout California, including political, civic, and corporate leaders highly desired. Enthusiasm about utilizing relationships to advance the mission of LA's BEST.
- An understanding of the importance of civic and community engagement, with a community-centered approach that prioritizes including civic and community leadership in advocating for policies and funding to support a mission.
- Cultural humility and a commitment to equity and inclusion. Must embrace diversity of all kinds and be respectful of a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.





Candidate Profile (CONTINUED)

2. External Relations, Advocacy, and Communications (Continued):

- Track record of success partnering with staff and board members in developing and implementing strategies to increase visibility and awareness, and/or advocate for an organization, program, or individual. Experience, skill, and ability in advocacy, government relations, marketing, public relations, issues management, and/or social media marketing strongly preferred.
- Experience guiding and enabling staff and board members to serve as external voices and connectors for the organization.

3. Resource Management and Development:

- Demonstrated success increasing efficiency of existing revenue sources and/or developing and implementing new revenue-generating strategies.
- Track record of partnering with staff and boards in creating and implementing successful development plans and long-term fundraising campaigns through multiple revenue streams, including government funding, individual and major giving, corporate and foundation giving, planned giving, and events.
- Ability, willingness, and desire to fundraise and build relationships to secure the financial success of an organization, while promoting its mission.
- Experience building and leveraging relationships for the benefit of an organization, including utilizing relationships to identify and secure revenue.
- Success partnering with staff to identify prospects, cultivate new donor relationships, and close on individual gifts of \$10,000 plus and corporate sponsorships and partnerships of \$50,000 plus on a regular basis highly desired.

4. Staff Management and Support:

- Demonstrated success managing and motivating staff across a range of functional disciplines, with experience recruiting, developing, leading, evaluating, and retaining a diverse and productive team. Success building a unified organizational culture, with collaborative, cross-functional teams.
- An accessible, caring, facilitative leadership style, with the ability to mentor, inspire, and empower staff with respect and kindness; a commitment to transparency, collaboration, and fairness; and the ability to balance these with the needs for expediency, decisiveness, and accountability. Ability to demonstrate a strong sense of personal accountability and requires the same discipline from staff.
- Track record of prioritizing and promoting the professional development of staff, leadership, and of self.





Candidate Profile (CONTINUED)

5. *Governance and Board Development:*

- Experience partnering with a board in leading growth and/or change, including the skill and ability to deal effectively with demanding situations, assessing all factors, and developing and implementing successful solutions is highly desired.
- Track record of facilitating strategic alignment within a board, ensuring a fair and balanced planning process that prioritizes the mission of the organization.
- Success engaging a board to actively participate in fund development endeavors while also enhancing giving from individual board members.
- Experience identifying and recruiting effective and engaged board members that represent a diverse range of demographics is preferred.

6. *Operational and Administrative Leadership:*

- Demonstrated success integrating and coordinating diverse areas of management. Experience overseeing the following areas is highly desired: fund development; marketing and communications; advocacy; and finance. Working knowledge of general business operations in a nonprofit environment required.
- Strong business acumen, solid financial grounding, and a track record of effective budgeting and resource allocation, with the ability to identify and explore opportunities to increase operational efficiency and impact.
- Strong understanding and demonstrated track record of success utilizing technology for a range of functions, along with an appreciation for research and analytics and how data can inform and educate decision-making.
- Ability to oversee the management of day-to-day details while maintaining a big-picture organizational view. Prior experience successfully navigating an organization through growth and/or change desired.

7. *Program and Service Development and Delivery:*

- Track record of leading and/or influencing high-quality, productive, efficient, programs focused on expanded learning, youth development, and/or youth education preferred.
- Success partnering with program leadership and boards in assessing efficiency and effectiveness of programs and services and developing new programs to further an organization's mission.





Education and Certifications

Bachelor's degree or equivalent combination of relevant education and experience required. An advanced degree is preferred. Bilingual or multilingual a plus.

Procedure for Confidential Candidacy

Submit resumes or nominations, with assurance of confidentiality, to Berkhemer Clayton, Inc.:

Ben Lambert
Senior Vice President
Head of Higher Education, Healthcare, & Nonprofit Practice
213.621.2105
ben@berkhemerclayton.com

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

LA's BEST and Berkhemer Clayton, Inc. are committed to a process of diversity and inclusion. We welcome all qualified candidates for consideration.

LA's BEST is an Equal Opportunity employer, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, veteran status, genetic information, or any other characteristic which may be specified by law or organizational policy.

