



# Advocates for Justice and Education, Inc.

The Parent Training and Information Center for the District of Columbia

## JOB ANNOUNCEMENT FOR FULL-TIME EDUCATION JUSTICE ATTORNEY

In 1996, Advocates for Justice and Education, Inc. (AJE) was created to increase parental participation in their children's education. AJE's mission is to empower families, youth, and the community to be effective advocates to ensure that children and youth - particularly those with disabilities and special health care needs - receive access to appropriate education and health services. AJE has designed all of its programs and services to increase parents' knowledge and capacity to advocate for their children and build community power to achieve systems change, eliminate barriers, and dismantle educational and health inequities in DC. We utilize a multi-strategy approach to achieve our mission: *Direct Services* to address a family's immediate issue; *Training* to increase parents' knowledge and capacity to self-advocate; and *Advocacy*, in partnership with families and other stakeholder partners, to bring about systemic changes through policy, legislation, and litigation.

### JOB SUMMARY:

AJE seeks an Education Justice Attorney to engage in policy work focused on protecting the civil and human rights of children in DC as well as advocacy and litigation focused on dismantling systems of oppression and discrimination in the DC educational system. The person selected will be expected to handle all aspects of litigation, including investigation and case development, discovery, motions practice, and trial as part of a team comprised of AJE staff, other legal services organizations, and/or private bar co-counsel. The attorney will also lead the assessment of request for assistance, provide direct legal services to protect the civil and human rights of children in DC to an appropriate education based on family-led goals, help increase the knowledge and capacity of families to advocate through Know Your Rights training; and to work in collaboration with families, coalition partners, and other stakeholders to bring about systemic changes that will eliminate barriers and create equity in DC's education and health systems.

### PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assess client intakes for appropriate services (advice and counsel, brief services, or extended services); Provide direct advocacy on critical cases involving rights in accessing public education; Analyze and determine AJE's case strategy to ensure effective and successful negotiation and litigation.
- Work as a team with families to assess individualized needs and to set goals; Represent students and families in the disciplinary hearing process, in matters involving legal rights to special education services (from early intervention to post-secondary transition), and other legal rights to accessing public education; maintain and update electronic case records; collect data and prepare monthly reports on client case matters.
- Work closely with AJE's staff attorneys and Director of Legal Services to identify cases ripe for impact legal action.
- Serve as lead or co-counsel in individual and class action impact litigation in local, federal, and administrative courts.
- Testify before the City Council, the DC State Board of Education, and other relevant bodies on issues impacting the families AJE serves.
- Track, monitor, analyze, and respond to federal and local education and special education issues that affect AJE families.
- Assist in the preparation of materials to communicate relevant policy issues to stakeholders.
- Conduct training on legal rights for parents, youth, community, and professionals and assist in providing in-service training to staff.
- Contribute to the monthly newsletter, websites, and other publications.
- Participate in groups or coalitions related to direct advocacy and support of families in educational and other related matters.

- Participate in organizational outreach efforts and develop relationships within the community.

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

- A member of the District of Columbia Bar or another state bar and eligible to waive in with pending bar admission.
- Three to Five years of relevant legal experience, including in family support advocacy, administrative and/or trial proceedings.
- A demonstrated commitment to public interest, social, racial and education justice.
- Must exemplify positive leadership and independence.
- Must possess strong legal, organizational, oral, and written communication skills.
- Must have excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work collaboratively with diverse communities, families, staff, partners, and other community stakeholders.
- Must demonstrate ability to handle multiple tasks and prioritize workload.

### **PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Familiarity with the unique challenges facing DC communities
- Experience working within the DC legal services community
- Fluent in Spanish

**WORK LOCATION:** Currently, AJE is a hybrid-remote office with required days in the office.

**SALARY & BENEFITS:** Salary ranges from \$75,000 - \$85,000 based on years of relevant experience. Benefits include employer-contributed medical, dental, and vision insurance, paid basic life insurance, 401k with employer contribution, paid annual and sick leave, and federal/local holidays off. Also, the DC Bar Foundation offers a Loan Repayment Assistance Program to qualified AJE attorneys, providing renewable one-year, interest-free, forgivable loans of up to \$12,000 per year. For more information, see <https://dcbfoundation.org/lrap/>.

**TO APPLY:** E-mail your resume, cover letter and three references to [information@aje-dc.org](mailto:information@aje-dc.org) with the subject line: **Staff Attorney Application – [your last name]**. We are looking for thoughtful cover letters that exemplify a commitment to our mission and the applicant's experience that specifically meets the qualifications, and responsibilities outlined above. We will accept applications until the position is filled.

**Advocates for Justice and Education is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We strongly encourage women, persons of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, persons with disabilities and persons from other underrepresented groups to apply.**