



Health. Wellness. And Wonders.

**Chief Admissions Officer**

*New York City or Monticello*

The Center for Discovery is an internationally renowned specialty center for the treatment of individuals with complex conditions, including autism spectrum disorders (ASD), and medical frailties. The Center, highly regarded for its innovation, biodynamic farming practices, and whole-body approach to care, has grown from its roots as a provider of services for children with Cerebral Palsy (CP) to become a magnet institution that draws individuals and families from around the State of New York and the world who seek highly advanced care and access to groundbreaking research and treatment.

Differentiated by a philosophy that celebrates the abilities of an individual rather than focusing on his or her disabilities, The Center not only strives to prepare the individuals and families it serves for the world, but also to create a more inclusive world by revolutionizing how society lives with and prepares for the growing number of people impacted by disabilities. They do this through innovative educational, clinical, social, creative arts, and recreational experiences designed to enrich lives through personal accomplishments.

Located on a multi-campus setting in the Catskill Mountains and with a satellite business office in Manhattan, The Center cares for an ethnically and demographically diverse population of children and adults through residential and educational programs, health and clinical services, and family support services. Its integrated and holistic approach to life-long learning enlists the talents of a dedicated team of nearly 1,800 highly trained staff who provide year-round support, 24 hours a day. Included are a medical staff of physicians and specialists, registered and licensed practical nurses, as well as classroom teachers and teacher aides, dietitians, occupational therapists, and many more.

To amplify its reach and potential to assist more families, The Center for Discovery is seeking a Chief Admissions Officer (CAO) who will drive growth by transforming, elevating, and accelerating the recruiting and admissions process. Focusing on The Center's Pediatric Services, the CAO will expand existing residential and day-

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## THE CENTER FOR DISCOVERY

At The Center for Discovery, people with disabilities work hard to find a way forward as they shape lives of meaning. The supports we offer are grounded in the land and our community of care and education, which for many years has integrated food and farming, science and research, and health and wellness.

We are a vibrantly successful program that encourages people with intellectual and physical challenges to defy expectations, while simultaneously evolving new models for living.

What happens here matters everywhere.

<http://www.thecenterfordiscovery.org/>

Autism is a complex disorder that affects 1 in 68 children, and rising. Families in search of support and guidance are often left feeling confused, alone and helpless as they advocate for their child. They must decipher complicated educational, health, and governmental systems and agencies for help, all while trying to understand their child's multiple, co-occurring medical conditions. Finding the right care that treats the whole person and an education that provides real world application is vital to improving quality of life.

The Center for Discovery was one of the first to recognize the complexities in autism, and it respectfully helps families navigate those complexities. The Center is a major research and specialty institution providing outstanding residential, health, and educational services to more than 1,200 children and adults with significant developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and complex medical frailties. It was recently named a Center of Excellence for the Treatment of Autism and Other Complex Conditions – a testament to their advanced practices and ability to serve as a resource to other health care providers, schools, governmental agencies, and most importantly to individuals and families.



school programs, and prepare for the launch of a children’s specialty hospital that will serve families from around the country and the world.

As the largest provider of care for children with significant disabilities in New York State, The Center serves more than 170 children ages 5 to 21 who live in beautiful, universally-designed residences and have access to advanced rehabilitation technology, adaptive physical education, music, and art therapy. The Center also provides special education services to school-age children, including 100+ day students from school districts throughout the region.

In 2018, The Center will break ground on an 18-bed specialty hospital for children with ASD as well as those who are medically fragile. The hospital will operate a three-to-six-month intensive assessment and intervention program that will include full biomedical and psychiatric evaluations, as well as equip each child with the necessary skills to engage with the world around them in more meaningful ways. The program will seek to involve the child’s family in different ways. Depending on the needs of the child and the family, the program will help stabilize the home environment to facilitate the child’s return, or prepare families for a transition within their home community. From the first day of admission, the team of medical and behavioral specialists will work with the family toward the goal of transitioning the child back home.

The CAO will proactively pursue admissions for The Center’s residential program, day school, and new specialty hospital. S/he will knit together family members, healthcare providers, school systems, state health and education agencies, the community, and The Center for Discovery, as all parties strive to deliver the best care possible for children and young adults with developmental disabilities. The CAO will interact and build lasting relationships with individuals from all walks of life and perspectives in order to introduce the country and the world to the capabilities of The Center and its incredible staff.

Reporting to the Associate Executive Director, Dr. Theresa Hamlin, the CAO will develop an ambitious recruiting and admissions strategy and framework; create and oversee streamlined admission and transfer processes for the residents and staff within the care continuum; invent and execute integrated marketing campaigns for The Center and its Pediatric program areas, in concert with The Center’s Marketing team; build and lead an externally-facing admissions team that is eager to bring the message of The Center to the public; and help to design a data-capture system that establishes evidence-based outcomes and supports predictive analytics.

The ideal candidate will be a compelling leader with an executive presence who possesses an authentic and compassionate demeanor. S/he will be a gifted communicator who can utilize all external channels, including public speaking, to effectively broadcast The Center’s mission and offerings to the appropriate audiences. S/he will have exceptional relationship management skills to nurture and sustain new and existing partnerships, and a proven ability to collaborate with a range of stakeholders with competing priorities.

In addition to having knowledge about children with complex conditions, the successful candidate will offer a strong business acumen and strategic sense of how to create and manage a steady enrollment pipeline that best serves The Center’s families. A bachelor’s degree in business administration, marketing, external relations, or a related area, plus five-to-seven years’ experience in admissions and recruiting at

the national level, and demonstrated success in complex, dynamic human services organizations is required. Preference will be given to candidates who have prior experience with ASD and/or other developmental disabilities.

### **Responsibilities of the Chief Admissions Officer**

***Evangelize and promote the advantages of The Center to a diverse audience, and build enduring relationships.***

An articulate and passionate public speaker, the CAO will effectively represent The Center and promote its mission at local, statewide and national events, forums and conferences to increase opportunities for recruitment and raise The Center's public profile. S/he will educate prospective families on available programs, provide tours of the facility, and offer information and guidance around the funding process. Internally, the CAO will partner with The Center's Marketing team to create updated content and collateral, as well as execute integrated marketing campaigns to build awareness for and interest in The Center. Further, s/he will serve as the primary point of contact for nationwide inquiries or referrals from families, school districts, educational consultants, hospitals and healthcare providers, state and county agencies, and the federal government—and must maintain meaningful relationships with this diverse group of constituents.

***Create an admissions process that is dynamic and proactive, and ensures a positive family experience and a steady enrollment pipeline.***

The CAO will lead the creation of both short- and long-term strategic plans by working with senior staff to determine the admissions priorities for the next twelve months through the next ten years, and establish operational benchmarks, timelines, and resources to achieve objectives. It is imperative that a framework is quickly established to allow The Center to scale and meet the immediate enrollment needs of the specialty children's hospital opening in 2018, and ultimately ensures that The Center will consistently operate at optimal capacity across all program areas. Additionally, the CAO will design an enrollment process that enhances the family's experience with The Center, keeping a high level of communication from the CAO and the admissions team and meaningful touch points throughout the journey as top priorities.

***Attract, develop, and lead a high-caliber, collaborative admissions team.***

Contributing to the productive, collaborative, and respectful organizational culture that exists at The Center, the CAO will give attention to the quality of his/her own staff development. Building out a team of high-caliber, proactive, and confident admissions professionals will help ensure that The Center's message is brought to the public with enthusiasm. The CAO will manage day-to-day recruitment and admission activities of the team and instill a sense of accountability for attaining specific metrics and key performance indicators. Internal collaboration is critical as the CAO and his/her team works closely with the Admissions Committee that screens potential students and leads the decision-making process. The success of the admissions team will also depend on its transparent working relationship with other departments including clinical services, health services, psychology, education, and business functions.

***Build mechanisms to track and monitor data that establishes evidence-based outcomes and supports forecast enrollment activity.***

Anchoring The Center's future in meeting the critical needs of children with development disabilities, the CAO will begin capturing necessary data to measure and improve outcomes within each respective program area of Pediatric Services. The Center will seek to establish evidence-based outcomes, improve outcomes, forecast enrollment activity in the years ahead, and utilize predictive analytics to assess and evaluate its future state.

**Attributes of the Ideal Candidate**

While no one person will embody all the qualities enumerated below, the ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes, and experiences:

- Demonstrated commitment to and empathy for individuals with developmental disabilities; an unshakable belief that all children deserve success and opportunities regardless of their social, economic or learning history or their abilities;
- A Bachelor's degree is required; preference will be given to candidates with experience in admissions, marketing, and external relations; an advanced degree is preferred;
- Strong relationships with State-level agencies and an in-depth understanding of compliance policies and procedures; familiarity with the New York State Education Department (NYSED), Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), and the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) is helpful;
- An existing network of colleagues in school districts, state agencies, and the healthcare community is desired, as are the skills necessary to network with and develop collaborations with schools, special education departments, clinicians and medical professionals, and the ability to build upon and nurture an existing set of partnerships;
- Demonstrated ability to work respectfully with board, staff, families, and partners, recognizing that systems may need to be put in place to better nurture staff and support constituents; proven ability to meet multiple deadlines, balance numerous projects, and work independently within the confines of limited resources;
- Highly collaborative and transparent nature that recognizes that the care of the children and families being served is the only agenda; a true partner who proactively and humbly seeks advice and counsel from colleagues and leadership;
- Ability to successfully operate within ambiguity and comfortable moving through change; the aptitude to be part of a fast-paced environment that operates in a mode of continuous improvement;
- Superb writing, editing, and oral presentation skills; the gravitas to speak as the public voice of the organization and the desire to strategically and deliberately build a reputation of excellence and sophistication;
- Desire to dream big and craft a manageable growth plan for expansion and enhancement of services and scope; a steadfast commitment to helping families and children manage the complex and often daunting realities posed by developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum disorders.
- The flexibility to travel domestically and internationally, as well as between The Center's Manhattan satellite business office and Monticello campus.



### **How to Apply**

The Center for Discovery has retained Talent Citizen to assist in this recruitment. Associate Vice President Adele Mezher is leading the search.

Please submit your resume and a cover letter outlining your interest, the reasons why you are best suited to lead the admissions team and would be a strong fit for the organization, and where you learned of the position. Applications should be sent to: [tcf-d-cao@talentcitizen.com](mailto:tcf-d-cao@talentcitizen.com)

The Center for Discovery is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Candidates of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.