



Chief Development Officer

Litchfield, Connecticut





About CJR

Nurturing Change. Creating Possibilities.

CJR believes every young person should have the opportunity to thrive. Founded in 1904 through the vision of Litchfield resident Mary T. Buel, CJR has provided care, treatment, education, and opportunity for thousands of children and families across Connecticut for more than 120 years. In 2023, CJR rebranded, adopting the dragonfly as its new symbol of happiness, new beginnings, and change.

Today CJR serves more than 2,400 individuals across 10 Connecticut locations through Education, Residential, Wellness, and Community services. With over 300 staff and an annual budget of nearly \$30 million and net assets of \$40 million, CJR is one of Connecticut's most enduring and impactful youth service organizations.

Accreditations: CJR is accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) — the longest continuously accredited organization in COA's history, reaccredited in January 2024 — and by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

Governance: CJR's 22-member board governs a four-entity nonprofit structure comprising Mary Buel Memorial, Inc. (holding company), Connecticut Junior Republic Association, Inc. (operations), CJR Fund, Inc. (investments and sustaining fund), and Buel Real Estate, Inc. (property).

Mission & Values

Mission: To provide the necessary therapeutic treatment, education, and support for young people and their families to promote positive change and transform lives.

Vision: Every young person should have the opportunity to thrive.

Values

- ❖ **Nurturing:** We provide encouragement, tools, and resources in a safe, warm environment.
- ❖ **Committed:** We have a strong, unified culture that focuses on collaboration, respect, and creative personalized solutions with an unwavering commitment to help each individual child and his or her family succeed.
- ❖ **Results-Oriented:** We offer comprehensive services that incorporate evidence-based practices and focus on changing behavior and reducing recidivism by providing support for the entire family.
- ❖ **Optimistic:** We hold a steadfast belief that we can help children and their families make better choices and live better lives.

Trustworthy: We believe that earning and preserving trust, honesty, and integrity are fundamental to who we are and how we serve our families.



The Opportunity

Reporting to the President and CEO, the Chief Development Officer (CDO) provides strategic leadership for all fundraising and external relations at CJR. This is a pivotal moment for the organization: a new CEO takes the helm on June 1, 2026, and the CDO will be a key partner in building the philanthropic foundation to support CJR's next chapter. The CDO oversees a comprehensive, relationship-driven development program with a focus on major gifts, donor stewardship, technology-enabled fundraising, and board engagement across a four-entity nonprofit structure.

CJR's New CEO

Cassandra Reyes, LCSW, has been appointed President and CEO, effective June 1, 2026, succeeding Daniel Rezende who retires after more than four decades of service. Reyes first joined CJR in 2008 as an intern and has advanced through roles including case manager, clinician, program director, and Director of Residential Services. She has extensive experience working with state partners including the Connecticut Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division and the Department of Children and Families, has led legislative engagement and fundraising initiatives, and served as Ombudsman for youthful offenders with the Connecticut Department of Correction since 2020. The CDO will be her closest strategic partner from day one.

Development at CJR

In FY2025 the development team raised \$2.9 million (\$200K annual fund; \$200K events; \$400K special projects; \$1.28M bequests; \$835K grants). CJR uses Raiser's Edge as its CRM and holds a sustaining fund valued at approximately \$30 million.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership & Planning

- ❖ Partner with the President and CEO and senior leadership to identify funding priorities and align development strategies with organizational goals.
- ❖ Develop and implement a comprehensive, multi-year fundraising strategy centered on donor engagement and relationship-building.
- ❖ Establish measurable goals, benchmarks, and performance metrics for fundraising and donor retention.
- ❖ Utilize data and analytics to evaluate performance and inform strategy adjustments.
- ❖ Provide regular reporting and insights to leadership and the Board on fundraising progress and donor trends.
- ❖ Lead the cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of individual donors, with an emphasis on major gifts and long-term relationship development.

Donor Engagement & Relationship Management

- ❖ Build and maintain a portfolio of key donors and prospects, developing personalized engagement strategies.
- ❖ Support and guide the President and CEO and Board in donor relationship development and solicitation efforts.
- ❖ Strengthen donor retention through thoughtful stewardship and ongoing engagement.



The Opportunity - Continued

Fundraising & Revenue Development

- ❖ Oversee all fundraising initiatives, including individual giving, corporate partnerships, foundation support, and planned giving.
- ❖ Integrate traditional fundraising approaches with digital and technology-driven strategies.

Board & External Relations

- ❖ Ensure data integrity, reporting accuracy, and effective use of development systems across the team.
- ❖ Engage and support the Board of Directors in fundraising activities and relationship development.
- ❖ Develop and maintain partnerships with community stakeholders, government entities, and philanthropic organizations.

Technology & Data-Driven Development

- ❖ Develop and implement targeted campaigns using email, digital platforms, and donor management systems.
- ❖ Expand and diversify revenue streams through innovative fundraising approaches and outreach methods.
- ❖ Oversee the use and optimization of donor management systems (CRM) to track engagement, manage pipelines, and support strategic decision-making.
- ❖ Utilize data segmentation and analytics to tailor outreach and improve donor acquisition and retention.
- ❖ Leverage technology to enhance donor communication, including email campaigns, digital outreach, and online giving platforms.

Team Leadership & Compliance

- ❖ Lead, supervise, and develop Development Department staff; foster a collaborative, results-oriented team culture.
- ❖ Ensure ethical fundraising practices and compliance with all applicable regulations and reporting requirements.
- ❖ Maintain strong stewardship practices to ensure donor trust, transparency, and long-term engagement.

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The Candidate

The next Chief Development Officer at CJR will be a relationship-driven, mission-aligned fundraising leader with a demonstrated track record of building major gift programs, cultivating donor portfolios, and leveraging technology to grow philanthropic revenue. This individual brings deep experience working with nonprofit boards and CEOs, and approaches development with both strategic vision and personal warmth. Above all, they will be energized by CJR's mission and the transformative impact the organization has on young people and families across Connecticut.

Qualifications

- ❖ Seven or more years of progressive experience in fundraising, development, or external relations, including demonstrated success in relationship-based fundraising and securing major gifts.
- ❖ Bachelor's degree required; MBA, CFRE certification, or advanced degree preferred.
- ❖ Experience utilizing CRM systems (Raiser's Edge preferred) and digital fundraising tools.
- ❖ Experience working with senior leadership and Boards of Directors in donor engagement and solicitation.
- ❖ Familiarity with planned giving, capital campaigns, and donor segmentation strategies.
- ❖ Experience in a nonprofit, human services, or education environment strongly preferred.
- ❖ Strong interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to build and sustain meaningful donor relationships.



To learn more and apply, please visit:

<https://driwaterstonehc.com/position/chief-development-officer-cjr/>

Salary Range: \$150,000 to \$170,000 commensurate with experience

Location: Litchfield, Connecticut

Travel: Local and statewide travel required

Equal-Opportunity Employer: CJR is an equal opportunity employer committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We recruit, employ, train, compensate, and promote regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, veteran status, and other protected status as required by applicable law.

DRiWaterstone has been exclusively retained for this engagement. All first-round interviews for this position will take place via video conference with DRiWaterstone.

About DRiWaterstone

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