RESEARCH DIRECTOR

SALARY: Based on experience
FLSA: Exempt
LOCATION: Boston, MA
CONTACT: jobs@naca.com
BENEFITS: Excellent single/family health, vision & dental, 75% employer contribution & 401(k)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
With more than 25 years of service directly on the front lines of the battle for economic justice, the Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America (NACA) fights on behalf of working people against the subprime and predatory banking industry, and ensures that its members are able to build strong, stable neighborhoods through affordable homeownership in urban and rural areas nationwide. NACA has a tremendous track record of success assisting hundreds of thousands of homeowners and homebuyers and has over two million members. In keeping with its deep roots in advocacy, NACA now looks to grow its Boston-based headquarters team and become an even greater force in the future, both at the state and national political levels. NACA is also growing its local offices nationwide and adding additional ones to significantly increase the number of people and communities it serves with its extraordinary mortgage programs.

NACA seeks to hire an experienced and creative National Research Director to significantly expand NACA’s research capability in support of its advocacy efforts and to prepare for a groundbreaking multi-state ballot initiative campaign. NACA has a rich history of effecting transformative change in homeownership and ethical and just bank lending practices through advocacy and direct action, and the Research Director will help build on that record of success to drive lasting, structural change on issues of economic justice by identifying and uncovering information that will help mobilize communities across the country.

NACA’s campaigns and advocacy efforts involve extensive research, targeted litigation, regulatory advocacy, legislative and ballot initiatives, and demonstrations and actions targeted against individuals, corporations, and government entities that are on the wrong side of fair lending and economic justice issues. NACA’s advocacy approach is based on confrontational, aggressive direct action to confront the CEOs and decision makers where they live and socialize. Timely, effective research is crucial to the success of these campaigns, by providing the factual “ammunition” for effective advocacy. Strong research has positioned NACA as a go-to source for media and others wanting credible, accurate information on companies, individuals, and issues. Led by the Director, the Research team will generate information and data on corporations, industry, government entities, and individuals. It will focus on in-depth, tactical research to be used directly and immediately in exposés and campaigns, rather than research papers and studies. Much of the research will involve detailed investigations of individuals, including corporate executives, politicians, and others who make decisions that personally impact our Members and the lives of working people. The department will also conduct background research into legal and regulatory issues, legislation, and other business and governmental subjects.

The ideal candidate will be an experienced leader in the field of corporate campaign research, investigations, and/or financial analysis and will have a proven record of using strategic research for accomplishing campaign objectives and targeting solutions. S/he will excel at leading and managing a high performing research staff to ambitious goals and will be a skilled communicator with strong interpersonal skills and the ability to operate in a high pressure, fast-paced, continually shifting environment. A personal and professional commitment to social and economic justice, strong work ethic,
relentless pursuit of success, and comfort pushing forward in ambiguous and uncertain situations are essential.

**JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:**
The Research Director will be based in Boston, report to NACA’s CEO, and join NACA’s growing senior leadership team to craft national campaign and advocacy strategies and priorities. The Research team supports NACA’s community organizers, communications staff, members, supporters, and others with ongoing research that supports local and national issues. While building the department, the Director will play a hands-on role serving as a lead researcher.

- **Set research strategy in partnership with the CEO, and implement all research-related projects.** Identify critical aspects of campaigns and research needs. Identify, obtain, and use all available resources to conduct thorough research of campaign issues, individuals, companies, etc. Establish systems for capturing and managing research and investigative data. Work with organizers, staff, community leaders and other organizations to develop information. Oversee polling, focus group studies, and public opinion research. Contact persons, borrowers, companies and others to execute investigations. Balance strategic goals and ad hoc projects.

- **Recruit and lead a highly talented research team.** Manage research staff to ambitious goals. Train and mentor research staff members and provide guidance and support to other teams for their research needs.

- **Support strategy development.** Provide thoughtful, proactive leadership from the research perspective to high-level strategy development. Work with the NACA management team to develop effective and successful ballot initiatives. Organize and assist in advocacy campaigns as necessary.

**CORE COMPETENCIES:**
S/he is expected to have all of the following personal characteristics and professional experiences:
- **Communication:** Communicate effectively and productively in both oral dialog and writing to work successfully with Members, NACA staff, community leaders, vendors, etc.
- **Professional Skills:** Detail oriented, well organized, ability to work under pressure, ability to work independently with only general supervision, adaptable with being receptive to change, and strong problem solving skills.
- **Knowledge:** Working knowledge of human resources law and business ethics. Knowledge of mortgage lending, real estate and financial counseling a plus.
- **Leadership:** Proven ability that demonstrates professionalism internally and externally. Creates a positive work environment while remaining alert to potential risks, concerns and violations.
- **Confidentiality:** Must understand the confidential nature of most of the human resources information and the sensitive nature of evaluations, conversations and investigations that it must conduct.
- **Management:** Strong supervisory and organizational skills where staff adhere to NACA’s performance requirements, operations and policies & procedures. Ability to take direction, and work well as a team player with the ability to prioritize and delegate.
- **Customer Service:** Provide effective solutions and follow-up with Members and others.
- **Computer Skills:** Strong data entry and typing skills with ability to work with Microsoft suites.
- **Mission Driven:** Energy and enthusiasm for NACA’s mission of community advocacy, neighborhood stabilization and fighting for economic justice. Willing and able to participate in NACA’s aggressive advocacy campaigns and activities.

**TIME DEMANDS:**
The Research Director must be able to meet the demands of the job that consists of 60+ hours a week. This is a very demanding leadership position requiring tremendous dedication and the willingness and ability to work long hours including evenings and weekends. Some national travel is expected.
COMPENSATION:
This is an exempt position with salary based on experience, skills, performance and certifications. The candidate’s performance evaluation and future compensation is largely based on meeting the Job Responsibilities, Competencies and Skills stated herein.

JOB QUALIFICATIONS:
NACA seeks leaders with a positive and open attitude, a strong work ethic and relentless commitment to success, attention to detail, and comfort with ambiguity. The ideal candidate will have at least a BA or BS degree (though an advanced degree is preferred) and a minimum of five years of leadership experience in the field of corporate campaign research, investigations and/or financial analysis. S/he is expected to have all or many of the following personal characteristics and professional experiences:

- A successful record of conducting and managing strategic research, investigations and/or financial analysis. Experience using strategic research for accomplishing campaign objectives and targeting solutions to problems with a proven ability to create strategic research products that are concise, targeted, and bold.
- Demonstrated experience managing research staff to ambitious goals with a keen eye for accuracy, detail, and facts. Experience building and training a coordinated and aligned research team.
- Understanding of print, broadcast, and online media and the intersection between research, media, and policy.
- Demonstrable focus, resilience, and the problem-solving skill to develop solutions under challenging circumstances. The judgment, maturity, and savvy to manage up and down effectively, working and delegating in order to meet aggressive deadlines and ambitious goals.
- Highly developed interpersonal skills, tenacity, and emotional intelligence, including a demonstrated ability to work in a fast-paced, politically-driven environment. Impeccable writing, presentation and oral communication skills, as well as an ability to synthesize and translate complicated information into clear, compelling language.
- Keen analytical skills, including the ability to think critically, make decisions, and justify recommendations based on data and analysis. Willingness to think entrepreneurially and creatively where necessary for success.
- The willingness and ability to work long hours including evenings and weekends. Some national travel is expected.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS:
- Bachelor’s degree – Required.
- Graduate Degree – Preferred.
- Certifications, training, and licenses that demonstrate important knowledge and credentials - Preferred.

EXPERIENCE:
- Seven (7+) years of research experience, including: significant experience successfully managing significant research operations.
- Four (4+) years of supervisory experience.
- Background in mortgage industry and/or non-profit helpful, but not required.

HISTORY AND OVERVIEW:
NACA (naca.com), is one of the most exciting organizations in the country. NACA is a national non-profit homeownership, HUD-certified housing counseling and community advocacy organization. We are a high-profile organization whose affordable mortgage programs and community advocacy are frequently featured in the national, international and local media. NACA is the largest and most effective housing services organization in the country and is rapidly growing with 40+ offices nationwide and a counseling
center in Charlotte. We are hiring many additional staff for existing and new offices nationwide, local organizers, and directors based in the Boston corporate office. NACA is the premier homeownership and advocacy organization that is both respected and feared. As a result of NACA’s large and growing membership nationwide, NACA is now increasingly focused on harnessing its power to demand economic justice for all.

Started in 1988, NACA has a strong track-record of successful advocacy against predatory and discriminatory lenders. NACA’s success is a result of its aggressive, confrontational advocacy. We have taken on campaigns against some of the country’s most powerful companies and individuals and won. NACA has revolutionized mortgage lending with its mortgage programs and advocacy. NACA continues its aggressive advocacy for working people and communities in the fight for economic justice and affordable homeownership for all. In addition to affordable homeownership, this includes taking on issues such as student debt, tax equity, voter access and other economic justice issues.

In addition to its advocacy efforts, NACA has established the national standard for homeownership programs. NACA’s industry-leading programs include:

- **Purchase** – For homebuyers who will be owner-occupants, the Purchase Program makes the right to affordable homeownership a reality for homebuyers. By basing its mortgage underwriting criteria on homebuyers’ overall circumstances and not on traditional risk-based pricing or credit scores, NACA provides broad access to its best-in-class mortgage -- a mortgage with no down payment, no closing costs, no fees, no requirement for perfect credit and always at a below-market, fixed interest rate. NACA has $13 billion in mortgage commitments from the country’s largest lenders to support this program.

- **Renovations** – For Purchase Program homebuyers whose property is in need of repairs, NACA’s Home and Neighborhood Development (“HAND”) department assists them throughout the repair and renovation process.

- **Homeowner Assistance** – For Purchase Program homeowners who experience financial difficulties, NACA’s Membership Assistance Program (“MAP”) provides services including mortgage modifications, payment agreements and financial assistance to help avoid foreclosure.

- **Home Save** – For homeowners with an unaffordable mortgage, NACA is the largest and most effective program in providing affordable solutions to over 250,000 at-risk homeowners nationwide. NACA has been able to restructure unaffordable mortgages by permanently reducing interest rates and reducing outstanding principle balances to achieve affordable mortgage payments.

For more information about NACA and its history and programs, visit [www.naca.com](http://www.naca.com).

**APPLICATION PROCESS:**
Send a cover letter, describing your interest and qualifications, and your resume to jobs@naca.com. If you are very interested in this position and want to expedite the process apply now. This application requires the completion of many questions that could take sixty minutes to complete.

NACA is an equal opportunity employer. Minority individuals are strongly encouraged to apply.

To follow-up and for inquiries regarding this and other positions contact NACA's HR Department at jobs@naca.com.

This job description is solely for descriptive purposes and the responsibilities may change. It does not constitute a contract for employment, and all employment at NACA is at-will.