

EXECUTIVE SEARCH

Chief Executive Officer



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

A NATION WHERE ALL CHILDREN ARE PREPARED TO LEAD HEALTHY, PHYSICALLY ACTIVE LIVES

STERLING|MARTIN
associates
A zrg COMPANY

WHEN TIME MATTERS MOST, SO DOES WHOM YOU TRUST.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

(Fully Virtual - United States)

COMPANY OVERVIEW

SHAPE America - Society of Health and Physical Educators - is the national voice for more than 200,000 health and physical education professionals across the United States. Its community includes educators, advocates, supporters, and a network of more than 50 state affiliate organizations.

Founded in 1885, SHAPE America has helped define excellence in school-based health and physical education for more than 140 years. Its National Physical Education Standards and National Health Education Standards provide a foundation for high-quality, skills-based instruction that supports the health and well-being of PreK-12 students.

Mission: To advance professional practice and promote research related to health and physical education, physical activity, dance, and sport.

Vision: A nation where all children are prepared to lead healthy, physically active lives.



Advancing professional practice across health and physical education, physical activity, dance, and sport.

SHAPE America at a Glance

Founded	1885
Community	200,000+ professionals; 50+ state affiliates
Staff	Approximately 20 employees
Operating Model	Fully virtual, nationally distributed organization
Tax Status	501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

POSITION OVERVIEW

SHAPE America is seeking a Chief Executive Officer to provide strategic, operational, and external leadership at a pivotal time for the organization and the broader health and physical education field. The CEO will serve as the organization's senior staff leader and public face, lead a professional staff team, oversee financial and operational performance, and build strategic partnerships across education, public health, government, philanthropy, and the private sector.

The next CEO will build on a strong foundation, newly revised national standards, significant federal cooperative-agreement funding, and a Board-approved 2026-2029 Strategic Direction organized around four priorities: Advocacy, Community, Knowledge & Practice, and Sustainability.

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WHO WE ARE SEEKING

SHAPE America seeks an accomplished nonprofit or association executive who combines strategic vision with operational discipline and a genuine commitment to the mission. The strongest candidates will be sophisticated relationship-builders: credible with volunteer leaders and members, comfortable representing the organization externally, financially astute, collaborative in style, and able to lead a distributed staff in a fully virtual environment.

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership & Governance

- Provide strategic leadership and direction in alignment with SHAPE America's mission and Board-approved strategic direction.
- Partner with the Executive Committee and Board of Directors to establish and implement long-range goals, strategies, plans, and policies.
- Maintain transparent, timely communication with the Board, Presidents, and Executive Committee; attend all Executive Committee meetings and provide regular Board reporting.
- Implement Board-approved programmatic and operational initiatives and recommend new initiatives that advance mission and strategic goals.

External Representation & Advocacy

- Serve as chief spokesperson and external representative to members, partner organizations, government agencies, media, and the public.
- Advocate on behalf of SHAPE America's professional positions before governmental agencies and other constituencies, with sound judgment in a dynamic policy environment.
- Develop and maintain relationships with government and international agencies, professional associations, coalitions, and aligned partners.
- Position SHAPE America as a leading and unifying national voice for health and physical education.

Financial Management & Sustainability

- Oversee financial management, budgeting, forecasting, and long-term organizational sustainability.
- Prepare and oversee the annual budget and provide forward-looking financial plans to the Board.
- Diversify and grow revenue through partnerships, sponsorships, grants, publications, professional development, membership, and other mission-aligned products and services.
- Cultivate relationships with corporate sponsors, foundations, and public-sector funders.

Organizational & Staff Leadership

- Serve as chief operating/administrative officer, with responsibility for hiring, supervision, direction, evaluation, and development of staff.
- Lead and retain a high-performing, collaborative team and manage the organization's compensation program.
- Provide, directly or through delegation, effective day-to-day operational oversight of a fully virtual organization.
- Ensure compliance with applicable legal, regulatory, financial, and governance requirements.

Member & Stakeholder Engagement

- Strengthen member value, services, professional development, engagement, and retention.
- Support the work of SHAPE America's constituent bodies, including the National Convention, Board activities, committees, task forces, councils, special interest groups, and state affiliates.
- Build trust across members, volunteers, educators, staff, state affiliates, and external partners through consistent listening, transparency, and follow-through.

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- Maintain a commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging across programs, services, and leadership practices.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

First 12 Months

- Build strong relationships with staff, Board members, state affiliates, volunteer leaders, members, and strategic partners.
- Listen and learn before making major changes; develop a clear strategic roadmap with measurable outcomes tied to the 2026-2029 Strategic Direction.
- Identify and begin advancing new revenue opportunities while safeguarding financial stability.
- Strengthen organizational culture, employee engagement, and communication transparency.
- Increase the CEO's visibility and credibility as an effective national representative of SHAPE America.

Years 1-3

- Demonstrate measurable membership growth, retention, satisfaction, and engagement.
- Improve financial sustainability through diversified revenue and disciplined stewardship.
- Advance nationwide adoption and implementation of SHAPE America's National Physical Education Standards and National Health Education Standards.
- Expand leadership development and professional learning opportunities for current and future professionals.
- Increase SHAPE America's recognition and influence as a national leader in health and physical education policy and practice.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIP

The Chief Executive Officer reports directly to the Board of Directors and serves as an ex-officio member of the Board. The CEO's work is subject to the direction of the Board and is carried out within SHAPE America's Bylaws, Standing Rules, and Board policies. Between Board sessions, the CEO maintains ongoing communication with the President, Executive Committee, and individual Directors as appropriate.

STAFF & RESOURCES

- Approximately 20 employees working in a fully virtual, nationally distributed model.
- FY2024 total revenue of approximately \$4.50 million and total expenses of approximately \$4.17 million, with year-end net assets of approximately \$5.17 million.
- Principal revenue sources include contributions and grants, program services, the National Convention & Expo, publications/periodicals, investment income, and membership-related revenue.
- An extensive volunteer leadership network that includes the Board of Directors, committees, councils, special interest groups, and 50+ state affiliates.

KEY INTERNAL OPERATING RELATIONSHIPS

- Board of Directors, including the President, President-Elect, Past President, and other Directors.
- Executive Committee and volunteer leadership bodies.
- Senior staff leaders responsible for finance/business operations, programs, partnerships, membership, communications, and related functions.
- Broader professional staff, state affiliate leaders, committees, councils, and other member-led groups.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

SHAPE America will offer a competitive executive compensation and benefits package designed to attract an outstanding leader. Final compensation will reflect the selected candidate's experience, qualifications, and the market for comparable association and nonprofit executive roles.

LOCATION

SHAPE America is a fully virtual organization with no central headquarters office. The CEO may be based anywhere in the United States and should expect regular travel for Board meetings, the National Convention & Expo, state affiliate engagement, government relations, partner meetings, and other stakeholder events.



CANDIDATE PROFILE

EXPERIENCE BASE

- Bachelor's degree required; a master's degree or higher in a relevant field is strongly preferred.
- A minimum of ten years of executive-level work experience in a senior management position; prior Executive Director or Chief Executive Officer experience is preferred.
- At least ten years of experience working in an education association or education environment; experience with a health-related mission is preferred.
- Proven leadership experience in a nonprofit, association, or other mission-driven organization, including work with volunteer boards and complex governance structures.
- Demonstrated financial and program management expertise, including responsibility for multimillion-dollar budgets and long-term financial planning.
- Experience growing membership, enhancing programs and services, and developing non-dues revenue through fundraising, partnerships, grants, sponsorships, or other channels.

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- Experience implementing successful marketing, fundraising, partnership, or business-development initiatives.
- Knowledge of public education and/or health and physical education is preferred, including an understanding of how national standards fit into the P-12 education landscape.

SKILL SET

- Strategic planning and execution; ability to translate Board direction into measurable organizational priorities and results.
- Strong financial acumen, analytical judgment, and comfort making difficult resource-allocation decisions.
- Outstanding oral and written communication, public speaking, advocacy, and media/public representation skills.
- Partnership development, fundraising, sponsorship, and government relations capability.
- Ability to lead organizational change while respecting institutional history, member culture, and volunteer governance.
- Strong talent leadership skills, including team development, performance management, delegation, and culture-building in a virtual environment.
- Consensus-building and diplomatic skill across diverse stakeholder groups, including practicing educators, academics, state affiliates, volunteers, and external partners.

PERSONALITY PROFILE

- An exceptional listener who makes people feel heard and respected.
- High integrity, transparency, and sound judgment; communicates openly and builds trust.
- Collaborative and servant-oriented rather than authoritative; empowers staff and volunteer leaders.
- Diplomatic and politically astute, with the courage to make difficult decisions without becoming combative or ego-driven.
- Visible, energetic, and credible as the public face of the organization.
- Genuine passion for SHAPE America's mission and respect for the profession, membership, volunteers, and partnerships that constitute the organization's core strength.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

SHAPE America is an equal opportunity organization. Employment decisions are made without unlawful discrimination on the basis of any protected characteristic, and the organization encourages candidates of all backgrounds to apply.

SEARCH LEADERS

Sterling Martin/ZRG is conducting the national search for SHAPE America's next Chief Executive Officer. Confidential inquiries and expressions of interest may be directed to:

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