



Position Description

Vice President of Data Strategy

Vision + Relationships + Data = Results

The Context

Atlanta leads the nation in income inequality, and has one of the lowest rates of social mobility in the entire country. In fact, recent research suggests that a child living in poverty in Atlanta has about a four percent chance of moving out of poverty and into a higher income bracket in his or her lifetime.

Despite these odds, Atlanta's students have dreams for their futures and their families. In 2015, Achieve Atlanta (AA) was launched by a group of local leaders determined to support these dreams. Coming together initially with the goal of dramatically increasing the number of APS students who earn a degree, Achieve Atlanta today, inspired by the power of strategic, coordinated action, and using data as the spark for change, has expanded its vision for the future to include eliminating the degree attainment gap that separates low-income and high-income students in the city, and making Atlanta a place where ALL kids succeed and thrive.

The Work

Achieve Atlanta works to harness a broad array of community resources. Specifically, the organization:

- partners with college advising providers with proven results to serve Atlanta Public School (APS) students while they are in high school;
- establishes strategic formal relationships with post-secondary institutions that can successfully serve APS graduates, especially those who are first generation and who come from underrepresented populations;
- is progressing along a plan to mobilize broad community support by leveraging data to accelerate collaborations that further college access, persistence, and completion in Atlanta; and
- provides Achieve Atlanta Scholarships to students to eliminate financial barriers.

The Results

After just two years, it's clear that Achieve Atlanta's endeavors are yielding significant gains; driving an increase in college enrollment, creating greater access to financial aid and scholarships, securing meaningful commitments from partners, identifying and removing barriers to persistence, and supporting APS to institutionalize a culture that raises awareness of and encourages the pursuit of post-secondary education, thereby enhancing individual students' ability to realize their own potential.

The Opportunity

Achieve Atlanta is seeking an experienced analytical and strategic leader to guide the organization's data collection and analytics, to further strengthen the organization's data capabilities, and to provide actionable data insights to stakeholders across the city and state in service of the AA mission. With unprecedented access to data across the K-12 and post-secondary levels, fueled by data sharing

agreements with 13 distinct, cross-system partners, the Vice President of Data Strategy will have the opportunity to build systems and structures that make possible the sophisticated analysis of a large volume of formless data, and drive an organizational shift from ad hoc consideration of, to an ongoing conversation with, data.

The Vice President of Data Strategy will set the overall vision for AA's use and impact of data, and be responsible for its execution. Over time, the Vice President of Data Strategy will also work closely with AA's program team to provide regular data on partner success and individual student performance.

Specifically, the Vice President of Data Strategy will lead, support and develop the team that is responsible for:

- leading, designing, and continually refining AA's nascent risk segmentation tool (e.g., identify variables, appropriately weight variables, and develop descriptive and advanced statistical analysis and associated algorithms) to create a best-in-class tool that identifies and tracks intervention effectiveness for AA Scholars, and indicates when to prescribe different interventions;
- leading ongoing analysis and research that leverages public and private data sources to develop critical insights that help inform priorities;
- generating and monitoring strategic measures of success and ensuring the consistent reporting on these metrics to internal and external stakeholders;
- setting and implementing a vision for data visualization tools for activation with key education stakeholders in Atlanta;
- using data to help inform AA partner practices and drive decision-making;
- assisting leaders in other Atlanta-based partner organizations with the reporting process for college success;
- identifying "bright spots" in the region; and
- assisting with the secure maintenance of data and records for Scholars.

The Profile

First and foremost, the Vice President of Data Strategy must be a positive, energetic, and proactive leader who is thoroughly committed to Achieve Atlanta's vision and mission. At once a data hacker, analyst, communicator and trusted advisor, s/he will bring his/her considerable talents to bear in order to effectively execute against expectations.

Further, the successful candidate will have the following **experience**:

- 10+ years of project and task management experience inclusive of managing internal team projects and external vendors /contractors;
- understanding, and being proficient with, the full suite of advanced statistical techniques that could be used to create and refine the emerging AA data tools;
- significant years of experience in increasingly responsible management positions; and
- both an undergraduate and graduate degree in a relevant field.

S/he will also demonstrate the following **competencies**:

- understanding the field research on the drivers of post-secondary persistence;
- familiarity with relational databases/data warehousing, and experience or capacity for supporting database design and development; knowledge of data import, reporting, manipulation and extraction; analyzing database performance, making recommendations for improvements, testing and evaluating new database features;

- the ability to supplement field research with insights gained from AA college and RFP partners;
- the ability to perform descriptive/exploratory analysis to understand data relationships;
- the ability to compel others through personalized and polished communication which summarizes findings;
- comfort and agility with developing guiding frameworks, organizing ideas, and translating ambiguity into clear direction;
- demonstrated cultural competence, critical consciousness, and ability to work across lines of difference;
- the ability to cultivate and manage productive, trusted relationships with other executive directors, data providers, and various key constituents;
- emphasis on error-free output at all times; high degree of attention to detail;
- consistent follow-through, with ability to prioritize among many different projects and tasks at once;
- exceptional critical thinking and problem-solving skills; and
- the ability to develop compelling written communications and presentations, including slide decks, memos, and emails.

The successful candidate will reflect the following **characteristics**:

- intensely curious with natural analytical inclination; quick grasp of key takeaways from data sets and visuals, and strong intuition in designing effective analyses and graphical depictions that lead others to insight;
- self-starter requiring little management oversight;
- demonstrated flexibility to change course and integrate feedback to achieve more successful outcomes;
- sense of urgency;
- humility; and
- an insatiable desire to transform student achievement across Atlanta.

Finally, while no one person will possess all of the qualities below, the **ideal candidate** will also possess some combination of the following professional and personal characteristics:

- experience within a start-up/entrepreneurial environment will be beneficial given Achieve Atlanta's stage in development;
- experience working with parents, students, post-secondary institutions and/or nonprofit organizations;
- knowledge of tools and techniques that have been effectively used to increase post-secondary success, particularly with students who are 1st generation or come from underrepresented populations;
- four or more years of strategy consulting experience at a leading firm; and
- existing Atlanta-relevant relationships.

Organizational Culture

Achieve Atlanta is a values-driven organization. Each team member, including the Vice President of Data Strategy, must ground his/her work in the following core values:

Unwavering Belief: Belief in what's possible—for our students and the school community that surrounds them—is the inspiration and fuel for all we do.

Champion for Students: Our belief is backed by action. We never give up on students, and accept the charge to do whatever it takes to remove the barriers they face.

Expectation of Excellence: We expect excellence...from ourselves and from our community of stakeholders. This expectation shapes our ambition and sets our standard for execution day in and day out.

Intentional Collaboration: We don't presume to have all the answers. We're deliberate in our effort to tap the experience and knowledge of others as we work toward sustainable change.

Continuous Innovation: We understand that to get different results we have to try new things. It's important we always remain driven, humble, and nimble enough to pursue promising ideas.

Position Reporting Structure

The Vice President of Data Strategy will be a vital member of the Achieve Atlanta leadership team, reporting directly to Executive Director Tina Fernandez. S/he will oversee one Data Director.

Salary and Benefits

Competitive salary and health, dental, and retirement benefits.

Apply

The review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled. Applications, including a cover letter and resume, should be submitted *electronically*, and will be considered on a rolling basis. Nominations, applications, or inquiries about the position and/or the search process should be directed to leslie@bellwethereducation.org.

Achieve Atlanta is an equal opportunity employer and makes employment decisions on the basis of qualifications. Achieve Atlanta policy prohibits unlawful discrimination in any employment decision based on pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, religious creed, color, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law or ordinance or regulation.