



WESTERN NEW YORK
LAND CONSERVANCY

Executive Director Opportunity

The Western New York Land Conservancy is a nationally-accredited land trust and one of the leading environmental organizations in the eight-county Western New York region. Since our founding in 1991, we have protected more than 7,000 acres on nearly 100 properties with significant conservation value for future generations. Right now, we are seeking a new Executive Director. By joining us, you will take a leadership role in driving the renaissance of the entire region.

The Opportunity

Western New York is home to some of the most diverse ecosystems in North America. It borders two Great Lakes, through which 84% of North America's surface freshwater flows, and Niagara Falls, one of Earth's most iconic natural wonders. Rolling hills, meandering streams, and vast forests support incredible wildlife migrations, through the air, on land, and in the water. Our farm soils are some of the most fertile in the world. Our cities, towns, and villages are vibrant with activity, full of history, and are wonderful places to live.

Together with our members, we help individuals, families, and entire communities permanently protect our most cherished lands—deep woods, colorful meadows, clear creeks, and thriving farms. These places bring meaning to our lives, they support our incredible plants and animals, and they provide the food that sustains us. We envision a future in which forests, farms, meadows, and waterways are connected, cherished, and protected. We believe our clean air, clean water, and fertile soils will equitably support the health and wellbeing of future generations of every living thing. To reach our goals, we are committed to developing projects with the potential to achieve the greatest impact in Western New York. Our team utilizes the best-available science in our work, and through our projects, programs, and publications we strive to foster deeper connections to the natural world in our community. Many of our preserves are open to the public.



**Board member Kayla Stocking
with her son, Danny, at the
Mossy Point Preserve in Wales.**

Kara Frisina

As the new Executive Director, you will guide exciting work. With our team, you will create the Western New York Wildway by protecting and connecting our largest forests. The Wildway will allow plants and animals that have disappeared from our region to return home, it will allow wildlife to roam across the landscape once again, and it will allow them to move around to find suitable habitat as the climate changes. The Wildway ensures our region is connected to the larger landscapes throughout the Eastern United States. You will also create new nature preserves along our Great Lakes and the Niagara River. You will restore the incredibly diverse forests of the Niagara Gorge. And you will protect the most important farms throughout our region.

Equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice matter to us, and our projects reflect that. Near downtown Buffalo, you will create The Riverline, a new nature trail and greenway along an unused railroad corridor. At The Riverline, you will connect diverse communities to each other, to the waterfront, and to nature. Working with the Providence Farm Collective – a farm where nearly 300 refugee, immigrant, and Black farmers grow healthy, culturally appropriate food for their families and communities – you will support the farmers' efforts to buy the land they currently lease and protect it as farmland in perpetuity. You will also have an opportunity to strengthen collaboration with our region's indigenous communities, finding creative ways to protect and restore our landscapes, together.



**Children near the future site of
The Riverline.**

Overview

The Executive Director has overall strategic and operational responsibility for the Land Conservancy's staff, programs, and the execution of its mission. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors, manages five direct reports, and oversees a total staff team of 16. This position is based in our East Aurora, New York office.

Core Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Lead the Land Conservancy in the development of our vision, strategic plan, and annual plans to deliver on our mission by identifying promising opportunities and making strategic decisions.
- Collaborate effectively with the Board of Directors, providing accurate and timely reports on the Land Conservancy's activities, and providing guidance on nonprofit best practices. Support the role and ongoing development of the Board to improve its effectiveness.
- Provide oversight of the Land Conservancy's Management Team which includes the Deputy Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Director of Conservation, the Operations & Finance Director, and The Riverline Director.

Organizational and Financial Management

- Provide leadership for the daily operation of the organization, including fiscal management, coaching and development of staff, and hiring.
- Ensure the fiscal integrity of the Land Conservancy by coordinating the preparation and implementation of an annual budget and overseeing accurate monthly and annual financial reporting.
- Support and contribute to ongoing and new land protection projects, stewardship and restoration efforts, The Riverline, and other projects as needed.
- Ensure that the Land Conservancy's practices and procedures align with the Land Trust Alliance's Standards & Practices to maintain our accreditation status, and ensure compliance with the Land Conservancy's policies and IRS requirements to maintain our nonprofit status.

Fundraising and Donor Engagement

- Lead the Board and the Development & Communications Team in building, managing, and expanding the Land Conservancy's development program.
- In coordination with the Deputy Executive Director, lead the organization's planned giving and major donor efforts by cultivating and strengthening relationships with individual donors.
- Engage individual members and community partners, including funders, elected officials, and other organizations.
- Support appropriate grant application efforts to enable the organization to deliver on its mission.

Community Engagement

- Serve as an effective public face of the Land Conservancy, including demonstrated professional executive presence, excellent verbal communication, public speaking, and articulate written communication skills.
- Lead membership growth, resource development, and advocacy on behalf of the organization, with a commitment to becoming a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable organization.
- Effectively communicate the mission and goals of the organization to a diverse audience, maintain and develop new partnerships, and build and mobilize financial, community, and political support.

Brendan Bannon



**Farmer and mentor
Mahamud Mberwa with his
daughter at Providence
Farm Collective**

Qualifications

The Western New York Land Conservancy is a prominent, respected, and trusted organization. It is also a great place to work. Integrity and ethical decision-making guide our projects. We build strong and lasting partnerships with community groups, local leaders, and funders. We are respectful, passionate, and collaborative. Through strong interpersonal skills, diplomacy, patience, and a sense of humor, you, as the Executive Director, should continue to foster this cherished organizational culture.

Required Qualifications

- At least five years of progressive, successful, high-level senior management experience with a focus on staff coaching, support, development, and empowerment.
- A deep commitment to conservation.
- Experience with and a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice.
- Expertise in fundraising and organizational development.
- Experience developing and administering budgets with diverse sources of revenue.
- Experience with community engagement and public speaking.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience with land trusts and/or a background in conservation, natural resource or land management, environmental science, environmental law, or related field.
- Expertise working with a nonprofit board of directors.
- Experience in nonprofit accounting standards and management policies and procedures.

Compensation and Benefits

- Start Date: January 2023
- Salary: \$100,000- \$130,000 commensurate with experience.
- Location: East Aurora, NY office. Remote work is possible, but the new Executive Director must live in Western New York and be in person as needed.
- Sabbatical: After seven years, employees are eligible to take a sabbatical of up to eight weeks.
- Additional benefits: generous health insurance (medical and dental), paid time off, Simple IRA Retirement Plan with 3% employer matching contributions, and flexible schedules.

To Apply

To apply, please email a cover letter, resume, and three professional references with “Executive Director” in the subject line to jobs@wnylc.org. The position is open until filled. Interviews will start in August 2022. No phone calls please.

We are committed to enhancing diversity and inclusion in our organization and in land conservation as a whole. Multiple perspectives and experiences help strengthen our work as an organization and enhance our relevance throughout communities currently underrepresented in the land conservation field. People of color, women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and people with disabilities are encouraged to apply.



P.O. Box 471 East Aurora NY, 14052

716-687-1225

wnylc.org