

Lancaster County Chooses Love



Our Leadership Model: Executive Partners & Shared Leadership

At Lancaster County Chooses Love, we believe the way we lead should reflect the world we're working to build—one rooted in equity, collaboration, care, and sustainability. That's why we've embraced a shared leadership model guided by three Executive Partners who hold equal authority and responsibility in shaping the direction of the organization.

What is an Executive Partner?

An Executive Partner is a senior leader who shares decision-making power with one or more colleagues, ensuring that no single person carries the weight of leadership alone. This model is intentionally designed to distribute responsibility equitably and draw on the strengths of a diverse leadership team.

Key principles of our Executive Partner model include:

1. **Equal Standing:** All Executive Partners hold equal authority—no one leader is “above” another.
2. **Shared Responsibility:** The partners collectively guide the strategy, health, and direction of the organization.
3. **Complementary Expertise:** Each partner leads a specific functional area, leveraging their unique experience.
4. **Collaborative Decision-Making:** Decisions are made together, centering diverse perspectives and mutual accountability.
5. **Collective Accountability:** The team shares responsibility for outcomes and reports jointly to the Board of Directors.
6. **Unified External Representation:** Executive Partners speak and act in alignment when representing the organization publicly.

Our Executive Partners

- **Executive Partner, Culture and Operations**
Focuses on internal operations, human resources, volunteer management, policy development, and organizational culture. This role ensures that our internal practices reflect our external mission of building a world where LGBTQ+ people—especially trans youth—are safe, supported, and celebrated.
- **Executive Partner, Community Engagement and Advocacy**
Leads our outreach, partnerships, programming, and crisis response. This role builds strong relationships with community members and stakeholders and ensures our work remains responsive and rooted in care.

- **Executive Partner, Development and Strategic Initiatives**

Oversees fundraising, donor relations, and long-term strategy. This role ensures our financial sustainability and helps expand our capacity to meet the needs of our community.

How We Got Here

Shared leadership has been part of our organizational DNA from the start. Laura and Parker worked in close collaboration for two years as Director of Development and Operations and Executive Director, respectively. They informally practiced shared leadership, which allowed each of them to focus on their areas of strengths and support each other.

When the organization approached Jessica to join the staff as Director of Human Relations in September 2024, she proposed formalizing a shared leadership model before accepting. Having helped found two nonprofits and serving in leadership roles with multiple nonprofits, Jessica saw firsthand the toll traditional top-down structures often take on executive leaders, especially in times of crisis.

The board agreed. Together, the three leaders helped shape and test a leadership model that distributes power, fosters collaboration, and builds organizational memory and resilience. By ensuring that multiple viewpoints are naturally included in every major decision, we create stronger, more thoughtful outcomes for the communities we serve.