



Position Specification

The Pat Tillman Foundation
Chief Executive Officer

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Executive Summary

[The Pat Tillman Foundation](#) (PTF) was founded by friends and family of former Arizona Cardinals safety turned U.S. Army Ranger Pat Tillman to honor his principles and service. This is an opportunity to serve and lead an outstanding organization dedicated to uniting and empowering remarkable military service members, veterans and spouses as the next generation of public and private sector leaders committed to service beyond self.

This is an exciting time in the Foundation's history, nearing the extraordinary milestones of 1,000 Tillman Scholars strong and 20 years of service. To date, PTF has invested \$34 million in leadership and academic support.

PTF is seeking a mission-driven, passionate, entrepreneurial, service-minded leader who has the strategic acumen and capability to successfully drive continued positive impact, diversify revenue streams to support existing and future programs, and serve as a key leader in charting the Pat Tillman Foundation's future for years to come.

The CEO is responsible for recruiting and retaining high performing team members to deliver PTF's mission, building and stewarding key partnerships, convening and connecting the nearly 1,000 Tillman Scholars, and evolving and scaling programs to ensure PTF is well-positioned to deliver for the next 10, 20, 30 years on supporting future generations of leaders. The CEO is joining a passionate, vibrant, extraordinary network of Scholars, PTF staff, Board Members, and partners all rallied around making a positive impact in their organizations, communities, and the world at large.

In partnership with the Board, the CEO will help set the course for the future of PTF, aligning on the most important priorities and strategies to deliver for the hundreds of Scholars and partners globally engaged with, or reached through, PTF programming. The CEO is responsible for reporting what achieves greatest impact against PTF's mission and how to accelerate opportunities for new partnerships and revenue. This is an opportunity to lead significant, transformational impact at scale, while building on PTF's success making positive change, which includes the [Tillman Scholars](#), who are tackling challenges across national security, healthcare, technology, civil rights, education, and more; the [Tillman Leadership Institute](#), a strategic initiative that empowers professionals, students, and global citizens to lead through action and develop teams and communities that do the same; [Pat's Run](#), and [Tillman Honors](#).

The ideal candidate comes with passion for the mission, a track record of success in leading strategy and partnering with a Board of Directors, driving new and diversifying revenue, building authentic relationships with diverse constituents, recruiting and retaining a world-class team, inspiring others to rally around a vision and strategy, and effectively communicating with and listening to constituents. This CEO will build on a strong foundation of PTF's values and successful impact to date and carry the best of the organization's history forward as they work alongside others to chart an ambitious and meaningful path for years to come.

Our Client

Carrying on the Legacy of a Leader

Pat Tillman was born in 1976 in San Jose, California. He led his high school team to a championship after he was told he was too small to ever play football. What Pat lacked in size, he more than made up for in intensity—he led Arizona State University to the 1997 Rose Bowl after an undefeated season. Between games, Pat earned a B.S. in Marketing, graduating Summa Cum Laude. The Arizona Cardinals selected Pat in the 7th round of the 1998 NFL Draft. Despite skepticism about his ability, he became the team's starting safety and broke the franchise record for tackles in 2000 with 224. However, Pat's NFL success did not go to his head. He drove to games in the same beat-up truck he had in college. In the off-season, he challenged himself with marathons and triathlons while pursuing a master's degree in history from ASU. He volunteered with Boys and Girls Clubs, the March of Dimes, and local schools. In the spring of 2002, Pat married his high school love, Marie. He then decided to place his NFL career on hold, turning down a \$3.6 million contract to enlist

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in the U.S. Army. Pat and his brother Kevin joined the U.S. Army that July, committing to a three-year term. They were assigned to the second battalion of the 75th Ranger Regiment, and served tours in Iraq in 2003 and in Afghanistan in 2004. On April 22, 2004, Pat's unit was ambushed. His heroic efforts to provide cover for fellow soldiers led to his tragic death via fratricide. While the story of Pat's death may have been more publicized, it is Pat's life, principles and service that are his true legacy—and this foundation's inspiration.

The Foundation

The Pat Tillman Foundation exists to unite and empower remarkable veterans and military spouses who will undoubtedly become the next generation leaders. For nearly 20 years, PTF has developed leaders through the Tillman Scholars program, supporting their impact as they carry on Pat Tillman's legacy of service beyond self. To date, PTF has invested \$34 million in leadership and academic support.

The tenets of the Tillman Scholars program are:

- **Scholarships:** Annual funding for academic expenses, including tuition, books, and living expenses
- **Leadership Development:** Opportunities to advance knowledge, skills, and experience
- **Global Community:** Access to a community of high-performing peers, mentors and industry leaders

The Tillman Scholar community has grown to over 850 Scholars. [See here for 2023's class](#) of 60 Scholars selected from a group of thousands of talented applicants.

In 2023, PTF expanded its vision of a new generation of leaders with the launch of the Tillman Leadership Institute, which brings PTF's values and the unique perspectives of Tillman Scholars to leaders at all types of organizations. Built with research on the leadership gap from McKinsey & Company's Chicago Community Consulting Team, as well as financial support from the National Football League, TLI's programming will help leaders at all levels make an impact at their organizations, in their communities, and in the world at large. TLI is primarily focused on three audiences: high potential early to mid-career professionals, executive leadership, and student athletes.

[To read more about the PTF's programs and impact, see here.](#)

PTF's Mission

To unite and empower remarkable military veterans and spouses as the next generation of public and private sector leaders committed to service beyond self.

Values

- **Service:** Dedicated to service beyond self in and out of uniform
- **Scholarship:** A lifelong learner, passionate about intellectual growth
- **Humble Leadership:** Selflessly committed to leading by example
- **Impact:** Determined to unite others and advance ideas that change the world

The Role

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO will set the Foundation's strategic direction. In addition, the CEO will direct and oversee the day-to-day activities of the PTF including leading the team, Scholar engagement, outreach to and stewardship of donors and partners, and ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

The CEO will be accountable for the overall strategic, operational, and financial success of the organization. They will work with the Board of Directors to deliver excellent programming to Scholars and partners. Central to the CEO's success

Position Specification

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will be their ability to engage a broad range of Scholars and partners in ensuring the mission of preparing the next generation of leaders is being realized across sectors and fields. They will be responsible for defining, strengthening, and managing engagement activities of the PTF including Leadership Summit, Leadership Institute, Pat's Run, and Tillman Honors. The CEO will maintain a commitment to the core values and mission of the PTF, providing a high level of programs and services to Scholars and external constituents.

The CEO oversees 25 full-time employees who provide programs and services to Tillman Scholars, partners, and supporters. PTF has a total annual revenue of \$5 million.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- **Strategic Planning and Management:** shape and manage the organization's strategic plan; design and implement new initiatives and approaches to achieve it. Drive transformational efforts within the organization to grow impact, diversify resources, in close collaboration with the Board of Directors.
- **Programs & Services:** oversee all aspects of the development, planning and execution of the PTF's engagement activities – both in-person and virtual. Continue to drive increased engagement and participation across existing and new programs.
- **Leadership and Team Management:** promote a culture of high performance, inclusion and belonging, and continuous improvement that values learning, collaboration, and commitment to quality and impact and a commitment to embodying the PTF's core values. Hire, retain, and develop top talent.
- **Fundraising and Relationship Building:** serve as PTF's chief fundraiser and ambassador; establish new and maintain productive relationships with a range of donors and partners. Amplify PTF's story and champion PTF to a wide range of audiences to inspire, motivate, and grow impact.

Candidate Profile

PTF seeks an entrepreneurial, experienced, and effective leader of unquestioned integrity, intellectual breadth, convening power, and notable achievement in the nonprofit, military, and/or business sectors to be its next CEO.

The ideal candidate will be a thoughtful and inspiring leader and manager able to act as a strategic partner to the Board of Directors. They will bring a global perspective and will be skilled in leading a comparably scaled organization or complex department of highly talented professionals. They will have a track record of success leading a nonprofit, private, or public enterprise with a diverse constituency and broad scope. As a steward of PTF resources, this individual will be adept at listening, informing, and defining a strategic vision, and will be accountable for the oversight of implementation.

The CEO must possess the business acumen, management and leadership skills necessary to lead the organization to achieve key milestones and determine what may be possible in the years ahead. The ideal candidate will have experience working closely with a board, staff, partners, and other constituents to achieve ambitious goals in a fiscally responsible manner, outstanding communication skills, and the ability to represent PTF effectively with a diversity of audiences, including current Scholars, future Scholars, and partners.

This leader will foster an environment of high performance and delivering results, creativity and innovation, partnering with the team and also providing the overarching leadership necessary to advance current and new initiatives. Through listening and thoughtful dialogue, they will establish strategic partnerships and relationships throughout the Scholar community and network of partners, while honoring the legacy and history of PTF and respecting and promoting its culture and values. The ideal candidate will build on the best of PTF to date, and marry it with the best of what is possible for the future of PTF. The candidate will bring a deep appreciation for the global community of Tillman Scholars and will demonstrate a sensitivity to the unique challenges and opportunities associated with the veteran community.

The ideal candidate will be a seasoned professional who has demonstrated their ability to achieve real impact across a complex organization; a collaborative leader able to provide clear guidance and to act decisively when necessary; someone skilled in translating vision and strategy into reality. The candidate will have experience in leading successful, strategic change management. This candidate will have demonstrated a commitment to listening to key constituents and being responsive, respectful, and engaging. This leader will have a track record of being an effective and compelling communicator with various audiences and in various formats. The ideal candidate will be a confident executive who is comfortable working at both a high level as well as in the details to ensure direct reports are achieving metrics, meeting budgets, and providing exceptional support to the Tillman Scholar and partner community.

In terms of the professional and personal competencies required for the position, we highlight the following:

- **Passion for the Mission:** As the leader of the organization, the candidate will demonstrate the energy, enthusiasm, and dedication to achieve PTF's mission of uniting and empowering remarkable military veterans and spouses as the next generation of public and private sector leaders committed to service beyond self.
- **Strategic and Inspirational Leadership:** The candidate will be a strategic thinker who will work with the Board of Directors and senior leadership team to inspire and cultivate vision. The ideal candidate will have a demonstrated record of identifying needs, setting priorities, strategic planning, and leading organizations to success.
- **Building Relationships and Using Influence:** This individual will have the relationship-building skills necessary to connect, convene and mobilize Scholars and partners against shared goals and initiatives. The candidate will build and strengthen relationships across the corporate and partner network, the Board, and donors.
- **Communication Skills:** As the most visible, active, and accessible relationship-builder at PTF, they will have the ability to connect with and engender trust from the Board, staff, the Scholar community, and the partner network. The individual will feel comfortable articulating PTF's vision and direction to large audiences as well as be effective in one-on-one meetings and interactions across a diverse Scholar and partner base.
- **Leading, Managing, and Inspiring Teams:** The candidate will build an open working relationship with an engaged Board of Directors and collaborate with the senior leadership team to execute an overall strategy, allocate resources, and set high-level implementation goals and priorities. The ideal candidate will have the interpersonal skills, charisma, and intellect needed to recruit, retain, motivate, and inspire the team, Board Members, Scholars, and partners. They will be an active listener, and demonstrate high integrity and respect with all audiences.
- **Executing for Results:** The ideal candidate will demonstrate the ability to set clear and challenging goals while committing the organization to improved performance. They will lead with passion, humility, courage, intelligence, and energy. They will prioritize hearing from Scholars, staff and Board Members to inform goals. The candidate will foster a culture of engagement and empowerment, convening and leading diverse constituencies from across the organization and country to achieve excellence. The candidate will have the ability to identify and discern issues and opportunities, set priorities decisively, delegate responsibilities, inspire both staff and Scholars, ensure accountability, and allocate resources to ensure results.

Location

There is a preference for the CEO to be based in Chicago, Illinois.

Contact

Russell Reynolds Associates, the global executive search and leadership advisory firm, has been exclusively engaged to lead this search. We welcome confidential nominations and expressions of interest to the team via the contact information below.

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