

The Political Social Worker

# Job Search for a Macro Social Worker

Notes & Resources

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**In this booklet, you will find notes from the presentation along with links to resources that will help you with your job search and career planning. If you would like to schedule a one-on-one coaching session you can do so by calling 1(631) 615-1709 or emailing me at [rlwestconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:rlwestconsulting@gmail.com).**

**In addition to one-on-one career coaching I offer group sessions at a discounted rate.**

## **Definition of Macro Social Work**

As opposed to direct practice, wherein you provide services to individuals, families or groups, "macro practice" or "community practice" encompasses community organizing, social planning, human service management, community development, policy analysis, policy advocacy, evaluation, mediation, electronic advocacy and other large systems interventions.

## **Introduction**

I began working on the series; *Job Search for a Macro Social Worker*, after several people inquired on multiple LinkedIn discussion groups about how a social worker can find a macro practice job. One person who was about to graduate was beginning her job hunt only to find that the vast number of advertised positions for social workers focused on micro practice.

Let's not sugar coat this; it is not easy out there for a macro social worker. Currently the assumption (even among many in the profession) is that social workers are only interested in and capable of being therapist. Obtaining a LCSW is viewed as the be all and end all. I cannot recall how many surprised looks I've gotten from peers when I tell them I have no plans to sit for the clinical social work licensing exam. Furthermore, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is focused primarily on serving the needs of clinicians. All the CEU classes are geared towards micro/mezzo level practice and the majority of articles written for *NASW News* and social work journals deal with direct practice issues.

Despite current trends, there is so much more someone with a social work education can do besides clinical practice; however, you must think outside the box.

- When using job boards for your search don't enter the terms "social work" or "social worker." Odds are if a position has the job title of "social worker" it is going to be micro in nature. Same goes for using the term "MSW." Try using terms like community organizer, coordinator, advocate, community educator, or prevention specialist.

- Use job boards that are not solely for social workers or mental health professionals. Be aware that most the advertisements on boards dedicated to social work will be for micro focused jobs.
- Be prepared to justify why an BSW/MSW qualifies you for the job. You need to be aware that many times the person reviewing your application or interviewing you will most likely not be a social worker and therefore may not be aware of the scope of a social work education. You are going to be competing with applicants who hold a JD, MPA, or political science degree. You are going to have to show that you can do more than just counseling families and individuals.
- Network with professionals who are not social workers. Reiterating what I said before, The NASW is geared heavily towards clinical social work. As a result, if you are a macro practitioner you are not going to get a whole lot out of NASW networking events. Do some research and find out what other networking opportunities exist in your area for professionals involved in social justice work, nonprofits, or politics.

You can also check the websites of political parties. For example, the DCCC lists campaign jobs. Most websites for state and local legislatures will also have a career section.

Another tip is to not solely rely on the internet for your job search. Many open positions are not advertised and agencies often neglect to update the career section of their website, so do some research on local agencies and organizations. Make a list of the ones you are interested in working for then send a letter of inquiry along with your resume.

A letter of inquiry is like a cover letter but instead of responding to a job ad you are inquiring as to whether they have open positions that fits your qualifications. Also, consider volunteering. This can lead to job opportunities as well as give you the chance to gain new skills. Most organizations prefer to hire someone they know over someone who randomly sent a resume. This is also why it is a good idea to keep in touch with supervisors from your field placements.

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## Search Terms & Settings

The following is a list of search terms and job titles to use when looking for a macro level position. Please note this is not an exhaustive list.

## Job Titles & Descriptions

- **Community Organizer** – Usually an entry level position. Community Organizers coordinate and gather community members around an issue. Community Organizers may be responsible for recruiting and training volunteers, conducting community outreach, speaking in public, and meeting with community leaders and elected officials.
- **Field Organizer** – Like community organizing, this is also an entry level position that usually requires a Bachelor's Degree. It is a good entry job if you are interested in working in politics.

Field organizers work on political campaigns. They may be responsible for such tasks as recruiting and training campaign volunteers; helping to bring in donations, and coordinating phone banking and canvassing efforts. You can learn more about political campaign staff [here](#).

- **Community Educator** – May be considered an entry level job at some organizations. Community Educators develop workshops and trainings to educate the community. Community educators will need to be able to create trainings and may be responsible for carrying out community outreach. This position requires strong communication skills including public speaking.
- **Advocate/Lobbyist** – In a nut shell lobbying is advocacy in the political arena. Many lobbyist work at lobbying firms or as independent contractors. You must have a clear understanding of the legislative process, strong networking and negotiating skills. Many people think of lobbyists as serving large for-profit corporations but many small nonprofits and community groups also contract with lobbyist.

To get started I suggest immersing yourself in political news and spending time at your state legislature, county legislature or town hall. Lobbyist need to build relationships with public officials and their staff. You must have a keen understanding of where office holder's stand on the issues.

- **Program Coordinator** – More of a middle management position so you may need a few years post grad experience to qualify for this job. Responsibilities include developing, overseeing, and evaluating programs in an agency setting.

- **Program Manager** – This job title is often interchangeable with Program Coordinator. Because it is a management position you will need post grad experience.
- **Program Specialist** – Responsible for developing, coordinating and overseeing events and activities. You need to have good organizing and communication skills.
- **Legislative Aide** – This position is based in a legislator's office. This position requires you to have strong communication skills. You also need a clear understanding of the legislative process. Legislative aides provide support to elected officials and their staff in many areas including administration and public relations issues. You can learn more about this job [here](#). This may be considered an entry level job.
- **Outreach Specialist/Coordinator** – On a Macro level this may involve providing information about agency services and events to the general public, building relationships with other organizations and community leaders, building and coordinating contact list. On a micro level this might involve reaching out to individuals and families about services offered by your agency. You need strong communication skills and must love networking.
- **Membership Coordinator** – This is an admin position that is often considered entry level. You will usually find this position housed in a membership organization such as a professional association. This position often requires an understanding of how to use Client Management Systems (CMS) or Customer Relationship Management (CRM) programs. Membership Coordinators are responsible for soliciting members (donor/supporters/volunteers) and maintaining relationships with them.
- **Grant Writer** – This position requires you to find and apply for funding opportunities. Most small organizations do not have the ability to hire a full-time grant writer. Many grant writers will work as independent contractors or consultants for this reason. Large nonprofits and government agencies are more likely to have a development department which houses grant writers. To gain experience you can volunteer to write a grant for a small nonprofit or volunteer with a larger organization as an assistant to the grant writer. Learn more about being a grant writer [here](#).
- **Policy Analyst** – This position is about influencing policy and social decisions. Policy Analyst collects information, evaluate the outcomes of a proposed policy, and carries out research. They will often work in government, for an elected official, or with a think tank. Learn more [here](#).

## Macro Search Terms

Below is a list of search terms that will help you with finding job listings. It is important to be strategic about the terms you use when conducting a job search online. Avoid using terms such as “MSW,” “social work,” or “LMSW.” These terms will lead to mostly micro focused positions. Instead try the following terms:

- Political campaigning
- Coalition building
- Civic engagement
- Planning
- Fundraising
- Public policy
- Outreach
- Development
- Government relations
- Human rights
- Social justice
- Advocacy
- Social change
- Grassroots organizing
- Activism
- Program coordinator
- Nonprofit management
- Grants
- Public affairs

## Work Settings

Settings where you will find community practice jobs.

- Nonprofits that focus on social justice issues

Examples:

[The Long Island LGBT Network](#)  
[Be The Evidence International](#)

- Political or cause campaigns

Examples:

[NARAL Pro Choice America](#)

- Think tanks or Institutes

Examples:

[The Aspen Institute](#)

- Foundations

Examples:

[Women's Fund of Long Island](#)

- Membership organizations such as professional associations

Examples:

[Foster Family-Based Treatment Association](#)

- With public officials, political parties, and PACs

Examples:

[EMILY's List](#)

[DCCC](#)

- For profit companies (human resources, employee assistance programs, etc.)

## **Further Reading**

### **The Job Search for a Macro Social Worker Series:**

[Job Search for a Macro Social Worker](#)

[Job Search for a Macro Social Worker: Using Social Media](#)

[3 Secrets Every Macro Social Worker Must Know](#)

[Dr. Thomas Felke On International Social Work And Macro Practice](#)

[An Interview with Grant Consultant & Program Developer Stephanie Watson](#)

[Interview With Dennis Kao, MSW, PhD](#)

## **Career Articles**

[Jobs and Careers in Politics and Public Service](#)

[How My Personal Website Helped Me Land My Dream Job](#)

[42 resume Dos and Don'ts Every Job Seeker Should Know](#)

[Fitting Your Resume To The Job Listing](#)



## **Job Boards**

### **[Idealist.org](#)**

Social good jobs and articles on working in the nonprofit sector. Idealist also list volunteer opportunities and workshops.

### **[EMILY'S List](#)**

EMILY's List's Primary function is to train and provide financial support to progressive pro-choice women candidates and their staff. In addition to this they run a job bank that list positions with progressive political and cause campaigns.

### **[The Hill](#)**

A newspaper that focuses on Capitol Hill. The website also features a jobs section that list open positions in DC with varies political groups, foundations, and lobbying firms.

### **[Politico](#)**

A political news blog that also lists jobs in DC.

### **[ACOSA](#)**

The Association for Community Organization and Social Administration is a professional organization for community practice professionals. In addition to publishing the Journal of Community Practice, they also list jobs. Note: most jobs are academic positions.

### **[National Conference of State Legislators](#)**

NCSL represents the interest of state legislators and staff. The organization has a variety of resources related to public policy work. Additionally, they run a clearinghouse for legislative jobs across the United States.

### **[The Chronicle of Philanthropy](#)**

The Chronicle of Philanthropy offers news and events related to the social good sector. This include a job section on the website that list open positions at nonprofits and foundations.

### **[Organizers for America](#)**

This website offers a listing of community organizing jobs. You can post your resume as well as search for positions.

## **Feminist Majority Foundation**

FMF is dedicated to women's equality, reproductive health, and non-violence. The FMF career center lists jobs with social justice focused organizations.

## **Capitol Hill Jobs**

The site lists jobs on Capitol Hill. They also list internship postings. Capitol Hill Jobs runs two Twitter accounts that you can follow for up to date info on open positions, [@hilljobs](#) and [@legislativejobs](#)

## **ReproJobs**

This is a Face Book page that lists Reproductive Justice Jobs.

## **Social Networking Sites**

Guidelines for using social media for professional networking and as a job search tool:

- Complete your profile and use an appropriate headshot.
- Make your account public. If you have been using your account(s) to interact with friends then consider locking down those accounts and creating new ones that you use for professional purposes.
- Use them. You need to update your status on a regular basis. Some networking accounts move fast, like Twitter and G+; so you need to update your status multiple times during the day in order for other users to notice you.
- It's a two-way street. If someone follows you, follow back. Be strategic about it. Make sure it is a legitimate account and that it is someone who has similar professional interest to yours. Thank them for following and share their updates when appropriate. Your social networking accounts should not be all about you. You need to share other people's content and engage them in discussions.
- Use #hashtags on Twitter and G+. This makes it easy for others to find and follow you.

[Twitter](#) - 10-20 Tweets per day is ideal. But if this is too much for you then aim for 5. Tools like Hoot Suite and Tweet Deck are great ways to efficiently manage your accounts.

Twitter chats offer you the opportunity to network, discover, and share your expertise with others in the field. You can find Twitter chats to participate in [here](#).

Follow organizations and people who are in the area you want to work in. Most nonprofits and elected officials are now on Twitter. Make sure to create lists so you can keep all your followers organized.

[LinkedIn](#) – Participate as often as you can in discussion forums. Try to update your status once a day and spend about one hour a week participating in discussions. As of right now LinkedIn does not use hashtags.

#### Non-Social Work LinkedIn Forums

- Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management
- Idealist.org
- The Chronicle of Philanthropy & its subgroup Nonprofit Consultants
- Grassroots Organizing
- Volunteermatch
- American Evaluation Association
- Nonprofits Consultants Forum

[Face Book](#) – There are a handful of discussion groups on FB that might be useful to you. NASW and ACOSA both have fan pages as does The Political Social Worker. Most nonprofits also have FB pages.

[Tumblr](#) – Useful if you are interested in learning to blog. Tumblr is a user-friendly site that mixes social networking with blogging. There are a large number of macro social workers on the site.

[Google+](#) - Like LinkedIn there are many discussion forums where you may find mentorship. If you have a blog it is a good idea to be active on G+ and to complete the [Google authorship](#) profile as this will help with establishing your authority as a blogger.

[About.me](#) – This simple, but effective site, makes it easier for people to find and connect with you. It's sort of like having an online business card that links people to your blog, social networking accounts and email address. About.me also offers free business cards (you need to pay \$5.99 for shipping and handling) that are customizable. As of right now About.me does not use hashtags.

## News & Information Sources

### Social Media from a Social Work Perspective

[Virtual Connections](#) – This is a blog run by Nancy J. Smyth who is a social work professor and dean at the University at Buffalo School of Social Work. Nancy often talks about the need for social workers to understand social media in order to be culturally competent practitioners.

[Karen Zgoda](#) – Karen is a doctoral candidate at Boston Graduate School of Social Work. She also has an undergrad degree in psychology and computer science. She has a keen interest in integrating technology into social work practice.

[Jimmysw's Blog](#) – This blog is run by a social work professor who often incorporates social media into the classroom. The blog focuses on technology, social work, education and organizational practice.

### Macro Social Work

[The Political Social Worker](#) – This is my blog. I write about macro social work issues and politics through a social work lens.

[Rachel Landzion](#) – Rachel is a social worker whose area of expertise is in nonprofit administration and social media. She is also available as a social media consultant.

[#MacroSW](#) – This is the official blog for #MacroSW Twitter Chats. It lists chat announcements and transcripts from past chats. Live chats take place every Thursday at 9:00 PM EST. Chats cover a broad spectrum of macro practice issues.

### Networking Opportunities

[Young Nonprofit Professionals Network](#) – YNPN has chapters across the US that offer learning and networking opportunities for young nonprofit professionals.

[Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy](#) – They provide networking and educational opportunities to those working in philanthropy

[Social Enterprise Alliance](#) – SEA's focus is on providing information for social entrepreneurs and aspiring social entrepreneurs.

### Macro Social Work Professional Associations

[ACOSA](#) – The Association for Community Organization and Social Administration publishes the *Journal of Community Practice* and hosts an annual symposium. The organizations mission is to advocate for macro social work practice. ACOSA is a founding member of the Special Commission to Advance Macro Social Work Practice as well as #MacroSW Twitter Chats.

[MSWSN](#) – The Macro Social Work Student Network is an organization focused on giving macro social work students a place to network and learn about community practice. MSWSN started at Hunter College in NYC. There are now chapters on other campuses across the US. If you are interested in starting a chapter on your campus email [MSWSNNetwork@gmail.com](mailto:MSWSNNetwork@gmail.com).

[APPAM](#) – The Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management publishes and a journal, provides training, and a job listing related to public policy.

[AFP](#) – The Association of Fundraising Professionals. Offers trainings, publications, and networking opportunities for those working in fundraising.

[YNPN](#) – The Young Nonprofit Professionals Network. Offers networking and trainings for young professional in the nonprofit sector.

## Politics & Elections

[Campaigns & Elections](#) – This is a magazine that covers strategies, techniques, and personalities in the US and international politics. There is a subscription fee.

[e.politics](#) – This blog features articles and case studies on digital campaign tools and social media best practices.

## Letters of Inquiry & Resumes

A letter inquiry is like a cover letter. The main difference is that a letter of inquiry is not being sent in response to a job posting.

Many open jobs are not posted on job boards. Additionally, agencies often neglect to update the career page of the organization's website. This means it is worth taking the time to research what agencies are operating near you that most likely hire professionals in your area of focus.

You can use LinkedIn, Facebook, Idealist.org, and Guidestar.org to find agencies nearby. I recommend using a spread sheet to track contact information and actions taken (i.e. sending out a resume, getting a response, etc.). It is best to get the mailing address of an agency as you have a much better chance of someone seeing a correspondence sent through the mail than through email.

When formatting your letter use 1" margins and either Ariel or Times New Roman as a font. Don't use anything smaller than 12 Pt. font size. Furthermore, you should use block paragraphs.

When you are doing research on agencies it is important to get the name of the person most likely in charge of hiring for that position. If it is a small organization with less than 20 employees that person will probably be the Executive Director or CEO. Most agency website have an "about" or "staff" page that lists who works at the organization. This can help you figure out who to address your correspondence to.

## Sample Letter of Inquiry

Jane Doe  
555 Amber Way  
Applegate, NJ 55555

May 1, 2017

John Smith  
Executive Director  
Applegate Community Center  
555 Alice CT  
Applegate NJ, 55555

Dear John Smith:

Introduction: Why your writing to them. Include the position you are inquiring about.

I'm an experienced community advocate and organizer having been in the field for more than five years. I'm currently looking for a fulltime position related to community advocacy.

I'm a self-starter who can happily work independently, but who is just as comfortable collaborating. My strong suit is in strategizing and planning. I'm experienced with logic models, problem trees, and advocacy planning. Additionally, I have experience serving on nonprofit boards.

In the 2nd & 3rd Paragraphs show why you're a perfect fit for the organization.

What drew me to Applegate Community Center is the strong emphasis the organization places on community-based advocacy work. I am aware of the work that the Street Outreach team has been carrying out. It is a novel and exciting program.

I would love the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss how I may be part of the great work Applegate Community Center is carrying out. I can be reached by phone at 1-555-555-5555.

In the closing paragraph welcome the opportunity to talk with them and include your phone number.

Sincerely,  
Jane Doe

## Resume Example

**First Name MI. Last Name**

City/Town, State • Phone • Email/LinkedIn URL/Blog URL

### Community Organizing Expert

*Come up with an eye-catching title that explains your area of expertise or what you are aspiring to. Below that describe what you do in a short paragraph and what makes you unique. This is your elevator pitch.*

### Professional Skills

*Create a skills bank. List the skills you have that are most relevant to the job you are applying for. Don't go over 3 rows. See examples below.*

- Advocacy Planning
- Social Media
- Public Speaking
- CRM Software
- Program Management
- Mail Chimp
- Workshop Development
- Volunteer Recruitment

### Experience

*Include paid and volunteer experience in addition to field placements. You only need to go back 5 years. A resume is a tool to get your foot in the door; it is not your autobiography. Start with your most recent position and work backwards from there.*

#### **Board Member, Rise Up, Bay Shore, New York**

January 2014 – January 2015

In January 2014 I was invited to sit on the board of Rise UP. This is a nonprofit that is committed to making our communities more inclusive for those living with a disability. As a board member, I provided consultation to the Board President and Executive Director about developing the organization's long term goals. I connected the organization to key resources, fundraised, and worked to raise Rise UP's profile in the community.

### Education

*Start with the most recent degree and work your way back. **Do not list your high school education.***

#### **School, City/Town, State (do not abbreviate the state)**

Field of Study, Degree, Graduation Year

#### **New York University, Manhattan, New York**

Social Work, MSW, 2008



**Ithaca University, Ithaca, New York**  
English, BA, 2004

## **Professional Licenses and Certifications**

*Not mandatory. Most macro positions do not require licensing. Listing your social work license is necessary if you are seeking a clinical position or an administrative position at an organization where the primary purpose is providing mental health or health care services.*

Name of license or certificate, the License number, the state board that issued it, the year it was issued.

Licensed Master of Social Work (LMSW), 555555, New York State Board of Education, 2010

## **Professional Affiliations**

*Not mandatory but can help get you in the door. Use the following format:*

**Association's name, Date you joined**

*This is optional. If you held an officer position, sat on a committee, or worked on a project list them here. Otherwise just the name and year you became a member.*

## **Publications**

*This is optional. Use APA format to list publications.*

## **Awards**

*This is optional. List the name of the award, the organization who awarded it, and the year you received it.*

**15% Discount on Coaching Packages**



As a thank you for attending the workshop today, I am extending a special offer to participants. **You will receive a 15% discount on the purchase of your first career coaching package from The Political Social Worker.** To purchase a package please call 1-631-615-1709.