

impact employment opportunity

Community Engagement Director at



in **Appleton, Wisconsin**

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to apply: bit.ly/pillars-ced-apply

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Pillars is hiring a Community Engagement Director

***Peter Gray Executive Search is Pillars's
exclusive recruiting partner for this executive search.***

about the position

From homelessness to coming home, [Pillars](#) (60 employees, \$6 million+ budget) provides shelter, support, and solutions to address its community's housing needs in and around Appleton, Wisconsin.

Managing a team of four and a budget of \$2.8 million, the **Community Engagement Director** sets strategic direction for and oversees fund development and community engagement.

This is a great opportunity for **an experienced nonprofit development professional with the passion and skills to drive community support for innovative, impactful housing solutions.**

- **Job title:** Community Engagement Director
- **Employer:** Pillars
- **Location:** Appleton, Wisconsin (onsite position with limited flexibility for occasional remote work)
- **Salary range:** \$90,000 - \$100,000
- **Employment benefits:** Pillars's excellent [employment benefits](#) include medical, dental, vision, health and dependent care flexible spending accounts, employee assistance program, 401k retirement plan with employer match, and generous paid time off.

Please review the detailed position description on the following pages.

For more information about Pillars, please see its [website](#), including its [archive](#) of [Annual Reports and Fact Sheets](#).

interested?

Please [apply](#) confidentially: bit.ly/pillars-ced-apply

Deadline: rolling. The position is open until filled. It was announced on **July 28, 2026**. Rather than setting an application deadline, we are considering applications and holding interviews on a rolling basis, with first-round interviews starting in mid-August. For best consideration, please apply promptly; and please complete all questions in the application, including the cover letter/personal statement.

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From homelessness to coming home,
Pillars addresses a continuum of housing needs.



Mission

From homelessness to coming home, Pillars provides shelter, support, and solutions to address the housing needs in our community.

Vision

We envision a creative, compassionate community that collaborates to find innovative, effective solutions so experiences of homelessness are rare and brief and everyone has a place to call home.

Core Values

Respect

Appreciate each person as they are and for who they are.

Collaboration

Work together with shared purpose and commitment.

Empowerment

Inspire growth through support and trust.

Grit

Encourage each other through successes and challenges.

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Job Title: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR

Reports To: Executive Director

FLSA Status: Exempt

Last Revision: 03/27/2026

SUMMARY: From homelessness to coming home, Pillars provides shelter, support, and solutions to address the housing needs in our community. The Community Engagement Director sets strategic direction for and oversees fund development and community engagement, including major donor development, the annual fund, event planning, grant writing and research, and marketing and communications management. This role encourages an agency-wide focus on community outreach of connecting the resources of our community with the needs of Pillars clients and tenants. The purpose of this role is to share the needs of those we serve with our community in a way that fosters alignment and inspires compassion and collaboration.

SCOPE: Community Engagement spans three interconnected functions (Fundraising, Marketing and Communications) with four dedicated team members in total, supported by the entire Pillars team – Board of Directors, Extended Leadership Team, staff, volunteers, donors, partners and more. The team’s annual revenue budget is \$2.8 million, raised on annual expenses of \$440,000.

The **Fundraising function** coordinates and implements the annual fundraising plan, involving some 1,500 donors; conduct internal and third-party fundraising and friend-raising events; and facilitate donor relationship building efforts.

The **Marketing and Communications functions** provide brand guidance; plan and implement program and organizational marketing collateral; manage social media; and orchestrate media and public relations.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Has a passion for the mission of Pillars and displays agency values: Respect, Collaboration, Empowerment and Grit.
- Active member of the Pillars Leadership Team. Partners with Leadership Team members to expand financial and in-kind support for the organization. Collaborates with the Leadership Team to share Pillars’ story effectively.
- Directly supervises Community Engagement Team. Provides leadership and development opportunities to guide efforts of the team to reach established goals. Leads team by prioritizing work, making process improvements and monitoring progress.

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- Recommends agency level process improvements to the Leadership Team and participates in their implementation. Fosters a culture of collaboration, personal development, and engagement to drive a continuous improvement environment and provide exceptional service to the community.
- Analyzes trends in fundraising data and engagement, reviews with the Leadership Team and makes recommendations.
- Participates in Board of Directors' meetings and supports the Board of Directors Community Engagement Committee. Partners with the Community Engagement Committee chair to prepare committee meeting agendas and monthly notes. Maintains and updates Financial and Connectional Health sections of the agency dashboard.
- Leads the development of a comprehensive community engagement plan for Pillars, including fundraising and Leadership Team community outreach strategies. Works with the Executive Director and Board of Directors to ensure plan is integrated with the larger Pillars strategy.
- Leads development, alongside the Community Engagement Committee, Development Manager and Development Administrator, of a strategic fundraising plan to meet revenue needs of Pillars. Plan includes major donors, individual fundraising, endowment support, business, corporate and faith community donations, grant writing, special events and sponsorships.
- Prepares annual budget with participation of Community Engagement team and drives periodic reconciliation and audit processes related to community engagement activities.
- Oversees management and cultivation of donor relationships, including existing donors and new prospects, alongside the Executive Director (major donors) and Development Manager. Partners with Board members to develop personal engagement plans. Oversees donor relations, maintenance of the in-house donor tracking system, monthly reporting and reconciliation of donations, and annual appeal letters.
- Oversees external agency communications including annual report to the community, press releases, collateral materials (brochures, presentations, etc.), newsletters and social media communications. Partners with Marketing & Communications Coordinator to execute plans.
- Oversees media requests, as well as external requests for speaking engagements and tours. With the Community Learning Coordinator, arranges and conducts speaking engagements and tours; tracks activities on a monthly basis.
- Collaborates with the Client Services team to foster volunteerism across the organization.
- Other duties as assigned.

CORE COMPETENCIES:

- **Building Relationships** – Demonstrates exceptional relationship-building ability with team members, board and committee members, donors and potential donors, agency partners, volunteers, and visitors to Pillars. Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to effectively build and manage relationships.
- **Communication** – Strong verbal and written communication skills are required on multiple levels: with team members, peers, and community partners.

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- **Problem-Solving** – Identifies and resolves problems in a timely manner. Gathers and analyzes information skillfully. Develops alternative solutions. Works well in group problem-solving situations; remains calm when dealing with emotional topics.
- **Teamwork** – Balances team and individual responsibilities. Gives and welcomes feedback; contributes to building a positive team spirit.
- **Project Management** – Takes initiative to ensure projects are on track to be completed in a timely manner; demonstrates strong organizational ability; has a passion for working collaboratively with others to attain a positive outcome.
- **Strategic thinking** – Develops strategies to achieve organizational goals; understands organization's strengths and weaknesses; analyzes market and competition; identifies external threats and opportunities; adapts strategy to changing conditions.

QUALIFICATIONS:

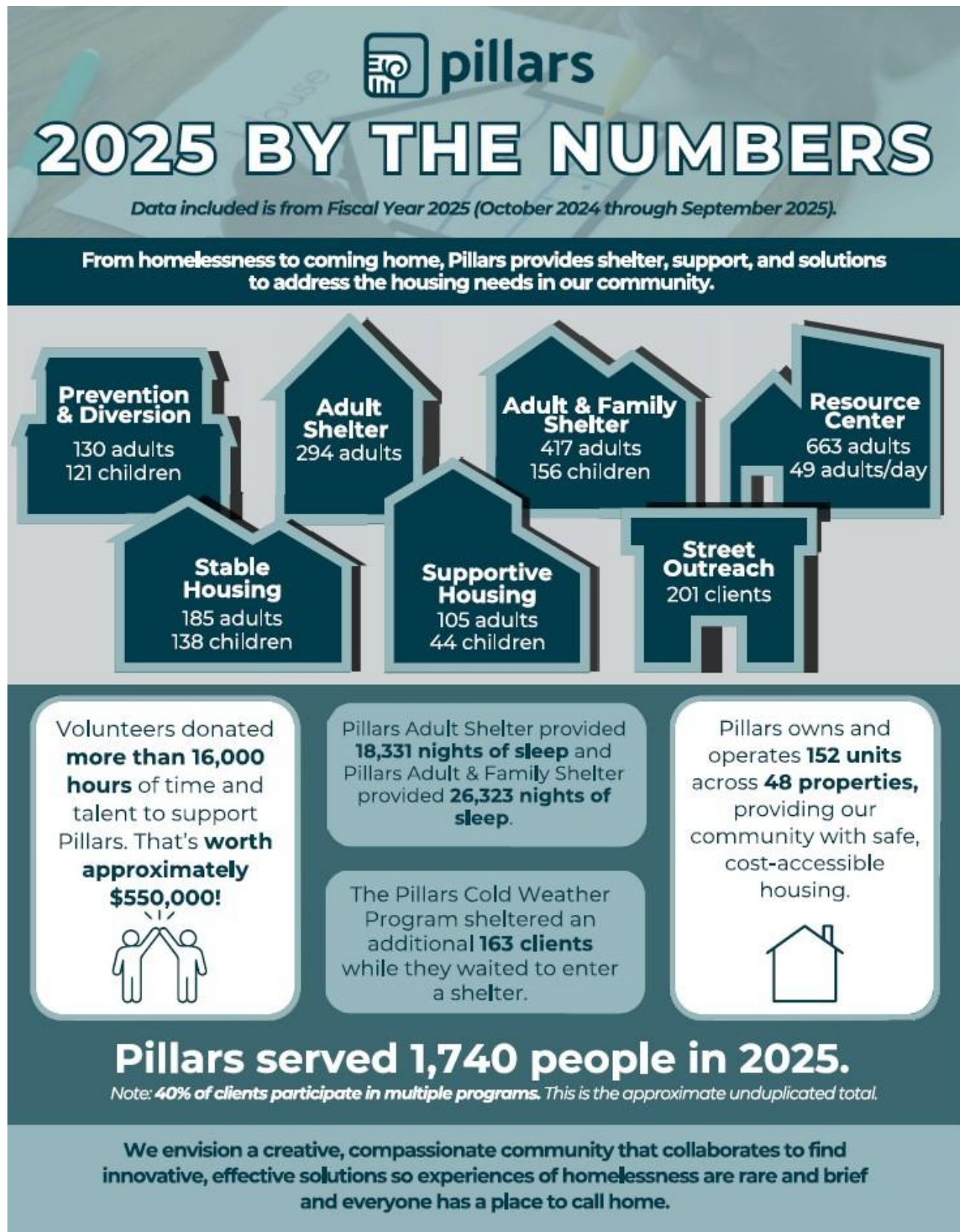
- Bachelor's Degree required. Preferred degree in Non-Profit Management or Business Administration.
- 5 or more years of experience in management and leadership required
- 5 or more years fund development related work experience required
- Demonstrated success planning for and achieving revenue goals
- Possess and maintain a valid Wisconsin driver's license
- Ability to travel locally, with access to a reliable vehicle and personal auto insurance which meets Pillars minimum requirements for liability (100/300/100)

This position is expected to work inclusively and respectfully within a diverse community and practice civility in the workplace. In addition, this position requires strong oral, written, interpersonal, and organizational skills, demonstrated integrity, and the willingness to work independently and as part of a collaborative team. This position requires knowledge of Microsoft Office suite and related technologies.

COMPLIANCE ACCOUNTABILITIES: The Community Engagement Director must act in accordance with Pillars' policies and procedures, complete all required compliance training/continuing education within specified timeframe, and maintain a thorough knowledge of all internal operating procedures, as well as applicable laws and regulations.

WORK ENVIRONMENT: The work environment is characteristic of a professional office setting. This team member must occasionally lift and/or move up to 15 pounds. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

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about peter gray executive search



[Peter Gray](#) is a recovering Wall Street recruiter who now recruits social impact leaders and fights bias in hiring.

As founder and CEO of [Peter Gray Executive Search](#), he guides nonprofit organizations and social impact employers through [leadership succession](#) and other [strategic hiring](#).

Peter began his career in executive search at Korn Ferry in New York City. Before that, he was a management consultant at CSC Index, the firm that pioneered business process reengineering.

Peter gives back as a member, adviser, and supporter of several nonprofit and civic organizations. A former Boys & Girls Club kid, he serves on the board of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County, Wisconsin. Through his own [fundraising](#) and his [leadership of fundraising campaigns](#), he has helped raise over \$10 million for the Boys & Girls Clubs.

Awards include the In Business Madison Executive Choice award, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County's Volunteer of the Decade and Mentor of the Year awards, the Aviva Youmanity Award, and the Wisconsin Bicycle Federation's Advocate of the Year award. Current and past committees include Madison Rotary, Downtown Madison Inc., United Way of Dane County, Foundation for Madison's Public Schools, Madison Public Market, and the Madison Area Diversity Roundtable.

Peter holds a BA from Harvard University, and an MBA from Columbia Business School.

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