



Union Organizing Director

Job Description

The organizing director is responsible for **evolving and executing a robust organizing plan**, as well as **managing a team of organizers** and working closely with an extensive and diverse coalition of labor unions to **secure worker's rights** across the state.

Salary

Entry — \$68,000
Middle — \$80,000
Top — \$105,000

Core Tasks

- Advance strategic priorities and maximizes organizational ability to engage, mobilize, and empower members and the communities.
- Perform ongoing analysis of all organizing campaigns and provide operational feedback to coalition members and organizers.
- Direct and supervise the daily activities of the organizing staff, develop a team that functions to bring continuity between programs that align with the and fulfill its mission statement.

Workplace / Environment

- Work hours**
Approx. 40 hours/week
(At key milestones overtime work may be required to meet deadlines)
- Environment**
Typical office, in the field for organizing events **semi-frequently**
- Travel**
Within the **state or regional area** of operations.

Education / Prerequisites

Education Level

Bachelor's degree typically required

Licensing

N/A

Pre-Job Preparation

Experience working on campaigns, advocacy, and in organizing.

Experience

Soft Skills

- Excellent Communication
- Problem Solving Skills
- Interpersonal Skills

Technical Skills

- Knowledge of Union principles and practices
- Strong writing
- Organization and Management



Career Path: Peter Hasegawa

About Me

Union Organizing Director at MLK Labor

Bachelor of Arts in East Asian Studies.

Early Interests

"I have always been **very interested in justice**; I think part of that has to do with my family story. My dad's family is Japanese-American, and they were all interned during World War Two after Pearl Harbor was bombed, even though they were all United States citizens. My mom's family were Holocaust survivors and refugees. I went to a really interesting high school, we had an honor code and a code of conduct, and an elected judiciary committee that I was on. If somebody was accused of violating those policies, then our committee which was a mix of students, and faculty would have to decide what should happen. It was a really great opportunity to have dedicated time to really think about **right and wrong and ethics and injustice**."

A Pivotal Moment

"In college, I hadn't quite found what I wanted to do for my job so I took a year off. Then I read an article in a magazine about a **union campaign called Justice for Janitors**. In Houston, Texas, janitors were able to successfully form unions to get health insurance for the very first time ever. Instead of just trying to get all the workers in one company to pressure that company to offer better wages, they shifted their focus to the companies and wealthy people who own skyscrapers. They **organized big protests and marches** and they would tie up traffic and get arrested, but they also did a lot of **really savvy political work**. They remain good jobs to this day. That was really inspiring, and I started to find people who knew about that kind of work, I eventually got a summer internship **working for a union**. After I graduated, I went back and worked as an organizer. **In some ways, the rest is history.**"

Climate Crisis Connections

"A few years ago, we had a **really bad heat dome** in the city of Seattle. I had a three week old baby at that time, and I didn't have air conditioning in my house, so my family **had to leave**. **It was really awful**. That experience for me was a sign that we are really not ready for climate change as a city, as a region, as a community. The next year, the unions that I work with, came together with Climate Justice organizations and Frontline communities and we went to the mayor. We were looking at the future of parks in our city and we noticed that there are actually community centers in neighborhoods all over the city of Seattle. We said there **needs to be a safe place** for people to go during these events and because we all came together and advocated over the next few years, half of those community centers are going to be turned into what we call **Climate Resilience Hubs**. **That's the vision that we're working for.**"

What's a Union?

"A union is when workers **come together with their co-workers** and decide what **they want to see improved at work**, then they make those concerns known. It's not just one person individually asking for a raise, or better benefits, or remote work, or better treatment for LGBTQ+ workers, or better policies on climate change. These are **all examples** of things that workers are wanting right now, and have made improvements on through organizing. When you have enough people, that's what **gives you the power to actually make change.**"

Pros

- "The greatest benefit is that **my work is meaningful**. I get to work for things that I really believe in, and I feel like I make a difference in the world and that it's a positive difference. And I get to feel that way almost every single day."

Cons

- "I definitely don't make as much as tech workers do in our city. Although I would say that, actually a value that we have in the labor movement is about people making a living wage. I own a home. I have two kids. I plan to be able to retire. And so I, that's **one of the great things about doing this kind of work** in the labor movement."

Fieldwork

- "One of my assignments is to help figure out how we can have **good outcomes for workers**, and particularly for workers and community members who are **historically excluded**, and have been excluded from the benefits in our economy and society."

Office Work

- "My job **varies a lot** from day to day because I work with all different groups."
- "I get to meet with cement masons, and workers who build airplanes, who are going to be negotiating with their company for **fair wages and benefits**, but also to make sure that workers have a really strong voice when it comes to safety."
- "Sometimes I get to **work directly with core allies** in the climate movement. And we are thinking about the future of our city."

Skills

- "People with a lot of different skills can make contributions. But, something that I would say are **under-emphasized are soft skills.**"
- "The people who really do the best in this field over time are **people who do right by other people**, people who can think about the thing that's important to them, but also the things that are important to other people, people who help other people out when they need help."

Education/Experience

- "It's actually a very open field and the thing that **counts more than anything is experience.**"
- "**Start volunteering**, volunteer for a political campaign or any kind of activist organization. It can be an environmental organization, LGBTQ+ rights, racial justice, advocating for workers, etc. The **process of making change** is actually pretty similar, even if the topics are different. We are always looking for people who have come through those experiences, gotten a taste, and decided that this might be their job."

The Future of **Green Labor**

"I would say we need to do so much work about **the climate crisis**. We need to electrify everything. Our King County bus system, all the big buildings in the city of Seattle, we got to get heat pumps in all those buildings, they need solar panels we need, we need to electrify the port, we need to protect people from heat, smoke, and sea level rise. There is an incredible amount of **actual construction** type of work that needs to get done and I hope that the labor movement and my work is helping to lead in making those changes that are necessary."

"I would also say, there is **incredibly important work** that needs to be done in schools. All school buildings need to be changed physically to be ready for climate change. When you go to places like the community college system, or the University of Washington, **the scale is even bigger**. There is incredibly important work that students could really **play a critical difference** in advocating for and the difference between that work getting started next year versus 10 years from now is going to make all the difference in the world. The most important thing with this climate transition is that **we do it quickly**. So I want to communicate some urgency. If a group of 20 students show up to a school board meeting and say "hey, we need to see these changes happen now," I think school board members will actually take that concern pretty seriously. Wherever there are students bringing these concerns forward, there's a whole other group of union members, construction workers, climate activists, and frontline communities, **who will show up to back you up**. So let's do this together, and we can **make these really important changes.**"

About Sustainability Ambassadors

We are here to **RAPIDLY ADVANCE A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**. Empowering **YOUTH** to catalyze community sustainability, **TEACHERS** to integrate rigor with relevance for real-world impact, **COMMUNITY** to drive collective impact.

We support a year-round training program for over 60 highly motivated middle and high school youth, a Teacher Fellows Program, City-County CAP internships, and college-level interns, and work with hundreds of educators to design new models of problem-based, place-based learning around **a shared vision of educating for sustainability**.

Your Green Jobs Future

Ready to explore your future in green jobs? Use [Map your Career](#) to map your trajectory!

Find career opportunities near you now! Use [Career Connect - Washington's](#) tool to find programs to build your career skills.

Interested in a future in solar? Take a look at the [Solar Jobs Census](#) to track solar job growth nationwide.

Explore [RVC's opportunities](#) to work with organizations led by communities of color.

Dive into the [Center of Excellence for Clean Energy's](#) robust career tools in the sustainable energy sector.

Grow your professional sustainability skillset with the [Seattle Youth Good Program](#).

See Seattle's [Clean Energy Resources Map](#) to examine what the city is planning for a greener energy future.

Check out the [U.S. Green Building Council](#) to explore the sector's current opportunities. :

Funder Acknowledgement



King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Wastewater Treatment Division

