



The Solid Waste Association of North America

Chief Executive Officer

Position Overview

The **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** will lead the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) in executing its strategic plan while partnering with the Board of Directors, staff, legal counsel, and members to advance the solid waste and resource management profession. The CEO will strengthen SWANA's impact through advocacy, professional development, conferences, chapter engagement, technical divisions, and member services while serving as a trusted advisor on governance and organizational leadership.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Collaborate with the Board to develop and execute SWANA's strategic vision centered on four priorities:
 - Prioritizing safety across the waste collection industry.
 - Advancing sustainability through advocacy, research, and education.
 - Expanding professional development and workforce growth.
 - Delivering exceptional value through conferences, networking, research, and member resources.
- Develop operational and business plans aligned with strategic goals.
- Identify growth opportunities and emerging challenges while recommending actions to the Board.
- Secure grants, sponsorships, and funding from government, nonprofit, foundation, and private-sector partners.
- Build collaborative partnerships with industry, government, and related organizations.
- Execute contracts and organizational commitments authorized by the Board.
- Support Young Professional initiatives, leadership development, and member retention.
- Serve as SWANA's spokesperson and engage subject matter experts as appropriate.

Governance

- Partner with the Board on governance, mission, vision, and strategy as a non-voting ex-officio member.
- Support Board committees, technical divisions, chapters, and volunteers.
- Work with Board leadership on meeting agendas, governance activities, and leadership development.
- Advise on nonprofit governance, legal compliance, and financial reporting requirements for a 501(c)(3).
- Keep the Board informed through regular updates on organizational performance, operations, and emerging issues.

Organizational Leadership

- Lead day-to-day operations while ensuring organizational effectiveness and fiscal sustainability.
- Develop and manage the annual budget and operating plan.
- Maintain financial integrity, legal compliance, and sound risk management.
- Recruit, develop, and empower staff while fostering collaboration, accountability, transparency, integrity, results, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).
- Improve operational efficiency and ensure timely, high-quality program delivery.
- Engage members to understand needs, increase satisfaction, and strengthen organizational performance.

Membership & Chapter Engagement

- Grow membership through recruitment, retention, engagement, and enhanced member value.
- Strengthen communication with chapters and respond to member concerns.
- Encourage volunteer leadership and committee participation.
- Align chapter, regional, and technical division strategies with SWANA's mission.

Public Affairs & Industry Leadership

- Increase SWANA's visibility among industry leaders, government officials, regulators, media, and stakeholders.
- Promote industry best practices, innovation, circular economy initiatives, and climate resilience.
- Lead legislative and regulatory advocacy while monitoring government affairs across the U.S. and Canada.
- Build strategic partnerships with industry, government, and regulatory organizations.
- Position SWANA as the leading source of expertise in waste management, resource recovery, education, and safety.
- Oversee marketing and communications across digital, print, social media, trade publications, and news outlets.

Qualifications

Experience

- 10+ years of senior executive leadership in a professional association and/or the solid waste/resource management industry.
- Experience leading a highly visible nonprofit organization.
- Expertise in finance, budgeting, marketing, governance, and hybrid workforce leadership.
- Proven success in strategic planning, execution, accountability, membership growth, recruitment, retention, and engagement.
- Entrepreneurial mindset with experience maximizing organizational impact.
- Certified Association Executive (CAE) designation and/or industry knowledge is preferred.

Leadership Competencies

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Visionary, collaborative leadership that translates strategy into results.
- Strong problem-solving, innovation, and continuous improvement.
- Commitment to diversity and engagement of staff, volunteers, and young professionals.
- Exceptional written, verbal, public speaking, and listening skills.
- Ability to build relationships, inspire stakeholders, and communicate organizational value.
- Strategic thinking, sound judgment, and effective decision-making.
- High emotional intelligence with a coaching and people-focused leadership style.

First-Year Success Measures

Within the first year, the CEO is expected to:

- Successfully transition into leadership while building strong relationships with the Board, staff, and members.
- Review the strategic plan with the Board and establish measurable performance metrics.
- Foster a transparent, inclusive, and member-focused organizational culture.
- Improve staff engagement, effectiveness, and employee survey results.

About SWANA

The **Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA)** is a member-based association dedicated to advancing solid waste and resource management through education, advocacy, research, certifications, conferences, technical training, and professional development. For more than 60 years, SWANA has supported public and private sector professionals through 47 chapters across the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean and serves as the U.S. National Member of the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA).

For confidential consideration, please email your resume and letter of intent to Lori Shearin, Smart HR, Inc. @ lshearin@smarthrinc.com.