

Cottonwood Alc Inc

Executive Director / CEO

EIN 821321124

MT · NTEE B20

FY ending 2025-06-30

June 10, 2026

This analysis benchmarks the total compensation of **Sara Casey Taleff, Executive Director / CEO** (\$70,674) against **every comparable organization** that fit the selection criteria — **288** in total — drawn systematically from IRS Form 990 filings, not a hand-picked subset.

Compensation sits at approximately the **76th** percentile of comparable organizations within the typical range

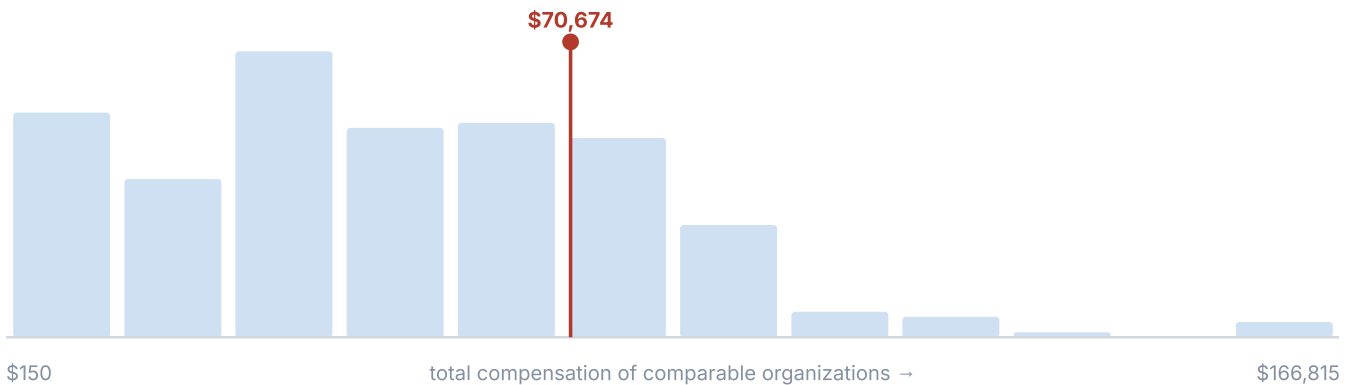
Benchmarked executive: Sara Casey Taleff — reported title "PRESIDENT", a **direct title match** to the Executive Director / CEO role.

How comparable organizations were selected

SECTOR	Organizations sharing the subject's NTEE classification (B20).
BUDGET	Total revenue between \$318,796 and \$713,722 — 0.67x to 1.50x the subject's \$475,815 (the band tightens as size grows).
GEOGRAPHY	Same NTEE sector (B20), nationwide + budget 0.67–1.5x revenue.

288 organizations qualified on sector, size, and geography → **288** within the band form the benchmarked peer set.

Distribution of comparable compensation



\$8,849	\$26,859	\$46,924	\$69,832	\$85,763	\$70,674
---------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------



■ Comparable organizations

Each figure is Form 990 Part VII columns D + F (reportable pay plus other compensation and benefits; column F may include amounts from related organizations), normalized to MT cost of living (BEA RPP, 2023) and to its filing year (CPI-U); the reported amount is on each linked 990.

ORGANIZATION	STATE	REVENUE	MATCHED TITLE	COMP (REPORTED)	COMP (ADJUSTED)	FY
National Association For Search	VA	\$475,413	Executive Director	\$93,149	\$85,644	2024
Arcadian Fellowship Church Inc	MD	\$476,640	Vice President	\$60,000	\$53,416	2024
Haven Education Solutions Inc	MD	\$473,044	President	\$12,250	\$11,228	2023
Amundsen Educational Center	AK	\$472,588	Executive Dir.	\$96,861	\$88,181	2024
Southwest Montessori Academy Inc	IN	\$472,283	Executive Dir.	\$47,464	\$47,663	2024
Shepherd's Heart Christian Ministries Inc	FL	\$471,530	President	\$25,000	\$21,787	2025
North Star Montessori School Inc	IN	\$470,268	Director	\$64,972	\$65,244	2024
Cupola Academy	PA	\$470,082	Co-director	\$89,304	\$84,804	2024
Firm Foundations Academy	PA	\$470,049	Chair	\$37,674	\$35,776	2024
Pinnacle Christian School	TX	\$481,840	Head Of School	\$43,654	\$41,582	2024
Green Mountain Montessori School	VT	\$482,315	President	\$80,077	\$79,017	2023
Black Male Working Academy Inc	KY	\$468,676	Executive Director	\$19,094	\$19,534	2024
University Montessori School	LA	\$484,030	Chairman	\$31,990	\$34,533	2023
Woodland Montessori School Inc	MO	\$467,230	President	\$88,100	\$88,855	2024
Waldessori Schoolhouse	TX	\$484,528	Board President	\$13,573	\$12,929	2024
University Montessori School	VA	\$466,888	Head Of School	\$61,298	\$58,024	2023
Friends Of Gantry Plaza State Park Inc	NY	\$466,105	Executive Director	\$99,900	\$85,961	2024

ORGANIZATION	STATE	REVENUE	MATCHED TITLE	COMP (REPORTED)	COMP (ADJUSTED)	FY
Faith Christian School And Institute	PA	\$486,139	President	\$28,778	\$28,135	2023
East Orchard Christian Academy Inc	IL	\$487,462	Secretary/di	\$17,000	\$15,505	2025
Trinity Simone Christian Preparatory Academy Inc	FL	\$464,072	President	\$42,000	\$37,571	2024
Trinity Academy Inc	TN	\$487,742	Head Of School	\$52,000	\$50,707	2025
Fort Dodge Community School District Foundation	IA	\$487,946	Director	\$86,250	\$92,584	2023
French-american School Of Norfolk	VA	\$463,262	Director	\$62,447	\$57,415	2024
Sea-king District Of The Washington Interscholastic Activities Assn	WA	\$462,852	Sea-king District Director	\$44,325	\$36,815	2025
Prew Academy Of Sarasota Inc	FL	\$462,414	Dir/principal	\$102,170	\$94,096	2023

Comp (reported) is the figure on each organization's Form 990 (columns D + F); **Comp (adjusted)** normalizes it to MT cost of living and 2025 dollars. Click any organization to verify the figure on ProPublica.

Methodology

Comparable organizations were drawn from electronically filed IRS Form 990 returns and matched on sector (NTEE code), budget (a size-adaptive revenue band that tightens as the organization grows), and geography (same-state first, broadening only when too few peers qualify); every organization within the band forms the peer set. To compare fairly across regions and years, peer compensation is normalized to MT cost of living (BEA Regional Price Parities, 2023) and to the subject's filing year (CPI-U). The figure benchmarked is Form 990 Part VII, Section A, columns D + F — reportable pay plus other compensation, benefits, and deferred amounts (column F may include amounts from related organizations) — with the chief executive matched by role. Related-organization amounts (column E) and institutional trustees are excluded. Full methodology: peerbasis.org/methodology.

Sample, role match & sensitivity

PEER COUNT 288 organizations. Compensation range \$150–\$166,815; filing years 2022–2025.

SIZE BASIS Matched on total revenue (\$475,815); for reference, expenses \$659,285 and assets \$1,722,973.

ROLE MATCH Sara Casey Taleff, reported title "*PRESIDENT*", benchmarked as Executive Director / CEO. The title maps directly to this role.

RELATED-ORG PAY	7 peers report related-organization compensation (column E), which the D + F benchmark does not fully capture; review where material.
OUTLIERS	3 peers fall outside 1.5× the interquartile range — consider whether any reflect one-time payments (severance, deferred-comp payouts).

Sensitivity — the subject's percentile under alternative compensation definitions:

BASIS	SUBJECT PERCENTILE
Total compensation (D + F), cost-of-living + inflation adjusted — the PeerBasis default	76 th
Total compensation (D + F), as reported (no adjustments)	73 rd
Reportable pay only (column D), adjusted	78 th
All sources (D + E + F), adjusted	74 th

If the percentile moves materially across these definitions, the result is sensitive to methodology choices, and the board should weigh which basis best fits its facts.

● Rebuttable presumption of reasonableness · 26 CFR 53.4958-6

Compensation paid by a tax-exempt organization is presumed reasonable — shifting the burden to the IRS — when three requirements are met. This report supplies the comparability data for the second. The board should record the following in its minutes *concurrently* with its decision:

Draft board minutes – executive compensation

1. The compensation of the Executive Director / CEO (Sara Casey Taleff) was approved in advance by [the Board / Compensation Committee], composed of members with no conflict of interest with respect to the arrangement.
2. Prior to its determination, the authorized body obtained and relied upon appropriate comparability data, namely the PeerBasis Compensation Comparability Determination dated June 10, 2026, comparing compensation against 288 similarly situated organizations (Same NTEE sector (B20), nationwide + budget 0.67–1.5× revenue).
3. The authorized body determined that total compensation of \$70,674 is reasonable (approximately the 76th percentile of comparable organizations) and documented the basis for this determination concurrently, on [date], by a vote of [__ for / __ against].

Sources: IRS Form 990 e-file data (apps.irs.gov); IRS Business Master File (NTEE classification). Every figure traces to an original public filing — click any organization above to verify it on ProPublica. PeerBasis is a service of Prismind Analytics; its [methodology is published](#), was commissioned for independent adversarial review, and discloses its own limitations. This report is comparability data to support a board's good-faith determination under IRC 4958; it is not legal or tax advice. Generated by PeerBasis on June 10, 2026.