

# Advocate

Executive Director / CEO

EIN 822772144  
 DC · NTEE W30  
 FY ending 2024-12-31  
**June 9, 2026**

This analysis benchmarks the total compensation of **Falen M Laponzina, Executive Director / CEO** (\$441,381) against **every comparable organization** that fit the selection criteria — **83** in total — drawn systematically from IRS Form 990 filings, not a hand-picked subset.

Compensation sits at approximately the **99<sup>th</sup>** percentile of comparable organizations above the 90th percentile — board review recommended

**Benchmarked executive:** Falen M Laponzina — reported title "Officer", selected as the organization's **highest-paid individual** — no exact title match, so confirm this is a comparable role.

## How comparable organizations were selected

- SECTOR** Organizations sharing the subject's NTEE classification (W30).
- BUDGET** Total revenue between \$253,126 and \$566,701 — 0.67x to 1.50x the subject's \$377,801 (the band tightens as size grows).
- GEOGRAPHY** Same NTEE sector (W30), nationwide + budget 0.67–1.5x revenue.

**83** organizations qualified on sector, size, and geography → **83** within the band form the benchmarked peer set.

## Distribution of comparable compensation



\$12,267	\$22,737	\$55,108	\$82,304	\$100,443	<b>\$441,381</b>
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## ■ 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 DC 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
<a href="#">American Freedom Foundation</a>	FL	\$378,457	President	\$132,509	<b>\$146,045</b>	2023
<a href="#">Veterans Ride For Free</a>	CT	\$376,888	Secretary	\$18,200	<b>\$19,446</b>	2024
<a href="#">Vetgroup Inc</a>	NJ	\$376,568	Executive Dir.	\$51,491	<b>\$53,937</b>	2023
<a href="#">Veteran Community Initiatives Inc</a>	PA	\$375,086	President	\$66,575	<b>\$75,657</b>	2024
<a href="#">Hesperus</a>	AZ	\$381,890	Executive Director	\$86,154	<b>\$94,420</b>	2024
<a href="#">Heroes Linked</a>	CA	\$373,514	Ceo	\$154,418	<b>\$151,950</b>	2024
<a href="#">Independence For Veterans Inc</a>	NJ	\$383,925	President	\$73,517	<b>\$77,009</b>	2023
<a href="#">Lake Belton Vfw 10377</a>	TX	\$384,655	Quartermaster	\$14,400	<b>\$15,992</b>	2025
<a href="#">Special Ops Xcursions</a>	TN	\$366,586	President	\$55,000	<b>\$65,881</b>	2024
<a href="#">Honoring Our Fallen</a>	CA	\$390,886	Ceo\founder	\$78,667	<b>\$77,409</b>	2024
<a href="#">Outdoor Association For True Heroes Inc</a>	TX	\$391,677	Founder, Executive Directo	\$96,000	<b>\$109,432</b>	2024
<a href="#">Sinking Spring Veterans Home Association</a>	PA	\$362,972	Treasurer	\$24,850	<b>\$29,074</b>	2023
<a href="#">Mckinney-montgomery Post 141</a>	OK	\$358,425	Finance Officer	\$24,788	<b>\$31,104</b>	2024

ORGANIZATION	STATE	REVENUE	MATCHED TITLE	COMP (REPORTED)	COMP (ADJUSTED)	FY
<a href="#">The Mandatum Foundation</a>	VA	\$355,534	Lead Coach	\$14,500	<b>\$15,954</b>	2024
<a href="#">Leroy O Buck Post No 7863 Vfw Inc</a>	PA	\$354,076	Employee	\$46,717	<b>\$51,721</b>	2025
<a href="#">Newby-ginnings Of North Idaho Inc</a>	ID	\$401,878	Executive Director	\$52,000	<b>\$64,899</b>	2023
<a href="#">Department Of Sc Vfw Of United States</a>	SC	\$404,075	Service Officer	\$56,000	<b>\$64,860</b>	2025
<a href="#">Working Dogs For Vets</a>	TN	\$349,383	President	\$32,513	<b>\$37,942</b>	2025
<a href="#">Idaho Veterans Network Corporation</a>	ID	\$347,789	Director	\$14,400	<b>\$17,007</b>	2025
<a href="#">Hunting With Heroes Inc</a>	WY	\$344,305	Sec-tres-director	\$18,000	<b>\$21,965</b>	2024
<a href="#">Idaho Veterans Chamber Of Commerce</a>	ID	\$343,929	President	\$80,640	<b>\$100,644</b>	2023
<a href="#">It's About The Warriors Foundation</a>	PA	\$415,009	Executive Director/president/secretary	\$85,980	<b>\$97,709</b>	2024
<a href="#">Vallejo Veterans Building Council</a>	CA	\$340,530	Building Manager	\$22,500	<b>\$22,795</b>	2023
<a href="#">Friends Of Fisher House - Illinois Inc</a>	IL	\$419,182	President	\$45,000	<b>\$50,415</b>	2024
<a href="#">Department Of Illinois Vfw Auxiliary Inc</a>	IL	\$326,983	Secretary	\$14,600	<b>\$16,840</b>	2023

**Comp (reported)** is the figure on each organization's Form 990 (columns D + F); **Comp (adjusted)** normalizes it to DC cost of living and 2024 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

DC 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](https://peerbasis.org/methodology).

## ● Sample, role match & sensitivity

PEER COUNT	83 organizations. Compensation range \$989–\$686,644; filing years 2023–2025.
SIZE BASIS	Matched on total revenue (\$377,801); for reference, expenses \$495,251 and assets \$29,977.
ROLE MATCH	Falen M Laponzina, reported title " <i>Officer</i> ", benchmarked as Executive Director / CEO. <b>Selected as the organization's highest-paid individual without an exact title match — the board should confirm this is a comparable role.</b>
RELATED-ORG PAY	4 peers report related-organization compensation (column E), which the D + F benchmark does not fully capture; review where material.
OUTLIERS	1 peer 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	99 <sup>th</sup>
Total compensation (D + F), as reported (no adjustments)	99 <sup>th</sup>
Reportable pay only (column D), adjusted	99 <sup>th</sup>
All sources (D + E + F), adjusted	99 <sup>th</sup>

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 (Falen M Laponzina) 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 9, 2026, comparing compensation against 83 similarly situated organizations (Same NTEE sector (W30), nationwide + budget 0.67–1.5× revenue).
3. The authorized body determined that total compensation of \$441,381 is reasonable (approximately the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile of comparable organizations) and documented the basis for this determination concurrently, on [date], by a vote of [\_\_ for / \_\_ against].

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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 9, 2026.