

Search for
Manager of Special Events



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Spring 2026

CATHOLIC EXTENSION SOCIETY

Founded in 1905, [Catholic Extension Society's](#) mission is to work in solidarity with people to build vibrant and transformative Catholic faith communities in the poorest regions of America. The organization accomplishes this by strategically partnering with dioceses to build facilities, educate leaders, and support essential ministries in under-resourced areas. With its high-touch and innovative approach, Catholic Extension Society helps Catholic communities build their capacity to inspire hope and drive positive change.

Our initiatives span from southern border ministries and post-hurricane rebuilding in Puerto Rico to campus ministry support and scholarships for lay and ordained Catholic leaders at major Catholic universities. In the past 10 years alone, our collective programs and partnerships had an economic impact exceeding \$1 billion across 40 U.S. states and territories.

To sustain this vital mission, Catholic Extension Society raises \$25-30 million annually from 25,000 donors through a comprehensive development program with diverse revenue streams. For more information on our impact, see our [2025 Annual Report](#).

Headquartered in Chicago, the organization has a staff of 50 professionals working in the main office and regional locations. The team thrives in a dynamic, fast-paced environment with a strong culture of collaboration and mission focus.

WHY JOIN US?

National Mission, Local Impact – Be part of a powerful mission that strengthens Catholic faith communities in under-resourced areas across the United States. Experience firsthand how strategic funding and thoughtful partnerships transform lives and parishes.

Dynamic Culture – Join a high-performing, purpose-driven team in downtown Chicago. We foster collaboration, move with intention, and celebrate the impact of our shared work.

Events with Impact – In-person gatherings are central to our strategy. They raise awareness, build relationships, and deepen engagement with our mission. If you enjoy designing experiences that bring people together and inspire action, this role may be for you.

ABOUT THE ROLE

The Manager of Special Events leads gatherings that connect people to Catholic Extension's mission. Reporting to the Chief Operating Officer, this role combines partnership and direct management: advising colleagues and event partners across the organization while personally planning a wide range of events.

The portfolio includes Chicago-based board, staff, and donor gatherings; the Mission Bishops Conference and a donor centric Thanksgiving Celebration; and cultivation events nationwide in collaboration with development and mission colleagues. The Director also ensures that event operations run smoothly, hospitality remains a defining feature, and Catholic Extension Society's identity is consistently reflected across all experiences.

WHAT YOU WILL DO

- **Logistics and Collaboration:** Provide logistical planning, setting standards of excellence and ensuring alignment across the organization. While the Manager will not directly manage all events—for example, the national and regional Spirit of St. Francis Award Dinners—they will support colleagues and external partners, reduce silos, share best practices, and support one another in creating effective, mission-driven experiences.
- **Core Gatherings:** Plan and execute Chicago-based convenings, including staff celebrations, four all-staff meetings, the staff appreciation dinner, Christmas Mass and luncheon, two meetings each of the Board of Governors, the Executive Committee, and the Finance Committee, as well as the annual Board dinner.
- **Distinctive Experiences:** Lead planning—often with outside logistical support—for Catholic Extension's biennial Mission Bishops Conference and the Thanksgiving Celebration, ensuring these high-profile gatherings reflect Catholic Extension's mission and impact.
- **Cultivation Events:** Manage up to 15 smaller cultivation events annually outside Chicago, designed to strengthen ties with major gift prospects (in collaboration with gift officers) and with priests and parish leaders (in collaboration with mission officers). While the Manager is not expected to attend all, travel is required.
- **Seamless Operations:** Oversee logistics, budgets, vendor management, and CRM (Virtuous) data for events you lead, ensuring each one runs smoothly, responsibly, and with Catholic Extension's tradition of service.
- **Brand Management:** Manage branded apparel and ensure consistency across event communications and collateral.

IDEAL CANDIDATE PROFILE

We are looking for a talented events professional who thrives in a fast-paced, collaborative environment and is motivated by the opportunity to strengthen Catholic communities nationwide. The ideal candidate brings both technical know-how and a spirit of welcome and service.

Professional Experience and Skills

- Bachelor's degree and at least 5 years of professional experience, ideally in a midsize or larger nonprofit, university, or business setting
- Demonstrated expertise in event planning and project management, with a record of delivering high-quality gatherings that advance mission goals
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail; able to manage multiple projects in a fast-paced environment while solving problems with resourcefulness and initiative
- Supervisory experience
- Open to learning new tools, adopting innovative approaches, and leveraging technology to improve results
- Willingness to travel for cultivation events outside Chicago

Personal Qualities and Mission Commitment

- Collaborative and creative team player who can also work independently
- Collegial, mission-centered presence, with the ability to build trust and foster community
- Knowledge of the Catholic Church and its teachings, with sensitivity to serving faith-based communities
- Comfortable with ambiguity and proactive in making decisions
- Positive attitude, humility, and sense of humor

TO APPLY

Catholic Extension Society has engaged DeVine Consulting to support this search. To apply, please email a resume and cover letter outlining your qualifications and interest in the role to: CE2025.events@gmail.com. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.



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We offer a competitive salary starting at \$95,000 based on experience and a comprehensive benefits package to include medical, dental, vision, disability, 403b with company matching, paid time off, paid company holidays, commuter assistance, professional development opportunities, mentoring and more!

Catholic Extension Society is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Applicants may request any reasonable accommodation that may be necessary to participate in the application process.

Catholic Extension Society is located at 150 S. Wacker Drive, 20th floor, Chicago, IL. For more information about the organization, please visit: www.catholicextension.org.



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