

AARON LAWLOR

Executive Leader | HR Innovator | 847.971.0454 | Chicago, Illinois | aaronlawlor@gmail.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY (MBA, PHR, SHRM-CP, SHRM-CA)

Senior HR executive with extensive experience leading people strategy across complex healthcare organizations, including a non-profit system and publicly traded company. Proven track record in building and scaling HR functions in startup, scale-up, transformation, and unionized environments. Skilled in supporting multi-site and remote workforces across 35+ states (including California) and managing talent programs in both the U.S. and U.K. markets. 6 years of chief executive experience of a \$500 million organization prior to HR career. 15 years of board governance experience.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Vice President of People | Kooth | Chicago, IL

Aug 2023 – Present

Proven success scaling 1000% hypergrowth, building talent management strategies across 35 U.S. states (including California) and the UK, creating a highly engaged workforce with a 45.7 eNPS.

- Spearheading People/HR AI vision, including data hygiene, workflows, and agentic AI as well as enterprise change management for workforce AI tools
- Lead talent management function across the UK and US, with a focus on hiring quality and creating a culture of high performance
- Lead the HR Business Partner function and serve as the HRBP to the leadership team
- Rapidly scaled People/HR infrastructure to support 1000% growth in six months and onboarding >200 employees in 35 states (including California, Illinois, and New York)
- Created and implemented a 50-state employee handbook
- Developed an engaging U.S. culture, evidenced by a 45.7 eNPS
- Aligned Commercial and HR strategies to proactively remove barriers
- Manage total rewards benchmarking, including executive compensation

Vice President of Human Resources | Howard Brown Health | Chicago, IL

Aug 2021 – Aug 2023

Led HR function for 700+ employees across a highly-matrixed and regulated healthcare network with 14 sites, managing a \$5M budget and 15+ HR staff, while leading labor relations for 400+ union employees and overhauling enterprise compensation strategy.

- Led labor relations for two bargaining units with 400+ employees
- Launched and led HRBP function; served as the executive team's HRBP
- Implemented a comprehensive compensation benchmarking program
- Oversaw an HRIS migration and four HR software system consolidations
- Spearheaded organizational development, including job architecture and work design
- With employee costs as the largest expense, led workforce strategies that helped turn a \$12 million enterprise budget deficit into a 3% margin in 12 months
- Navigated complex, conflicting priorities across clinical, operations, and finance

Interim Director of Human Resources | Howard Brown Health | Chicago, IL

Mar 2021 – Aug 2021

- Re-engineered recruitment processes focused on winning the best talent faster, including a differentiated process for highly skilled talent
- Developed a 3-year physician/provider workforce forecasting plan

Associate Director of HR | Howard Brown Health | Chicago, IL

Aug 2020 – Mar 2021

- Launched a new employee onboarding plan program, resulting in 80% of all new hires having personalized onboarding plans by position
- Collaborated on four core DEI strategies spanning the employee lifecycle

Human Resources Project Manager | Howard Brown Health | Chicago, IL Dec 2019 – Aug 2020

Human Resources Consultant | Howard Brown Health | Chicago, IL Aug 2019 – Dec 2019

Communications Consultant | Self-Employed | Chicago, IL Dec 2018 – Mar 2019

- Strategic planning consulting for business and non-profit clients
- Freelance writing, including marketing material, press releases, and social media content for business and non-profit clients

County Board Chairman | Lake County Government | Waukegan, IL Dec 2012 - Dec 2018

Chief elected official with oversight of a \$440M budget and 2,300 employees—attracted or retained 12 Fortune 500 headquarters through strategic workforce and economic development initiatives, helped negotiate 11 labor contracts, and delivered \$1M in benefits savings.

Human Resources Experience

- Approved and directly involved in negotiating 11 collective bargaining agreements, multi-million dollar legal settlements, and workers' compensation claims as the county's chief executive and signatory
- Key contributor to the creation of a wellness initiative resulting in \$1 million in benefits savings organization-wide
- Directed the formulation of annual employee benefits plans, including health, 457 deferred compensation, voluntary life and AD&D, health savings accounts, and wellness programs
- Advised and consented on employee policies, staffing, and operations appropriations, including compensation, pay scales, ladders, and merit increases

Executive Leadership Experience

- Served three terms as the chief executive of Illinois' third-largest county, including oversight of a \$440 million budget and a 2,300-person workforce
- Aligned county government enterprise, economic development, transportation and infrastructure, forest preserve, and health department strategic plans to attract businesses, resulting in 12 Fortune 500 headquarters attracted or sustained
- Directed strategic plan development, implementation, and measurement
- Directly supervised the County Administrator and administrative staff. Indirectly supervised 30 department heads
- Directly appointed/managed 300 people to 70+ boards and commissions
- Partnered with Cook and Collar County Executives to drive regional collaboration on economic development and shared legislative priorities
- Partnered with Fortune 500 companies, including Abbott, AbbVie, Baxter, and Takeda, on workforce development and quality of life strategies

County Board Member | Lake County Government | Waukegan, IL Dec 2009 - Dec 2018

- Chaired the County Board's Health and Community Services Committee, responsible for budget oversight totaling \$100 million and policy governance for six departments, including the Health Department, which delivers healthcare to 50K residents
- Served on the Finance Committee, providing legislative approval on union contracts, compensation and benefits, litigation, workers' compensation, and employment policies

Program Manager | Office of the Illinois Comptroller | Chicago, IL Aug 2011 – Dec 2012

- Key collaborator and project lead on the implementation of the Comptroller's Local Debt Recovery Program, including passing legislation, developing policy, establishing systems and processes, and tracking KPIs

Coalitions Director | Kirk for U.S. Senate (Illinois) | Northbrook, IL July 2009 – Nov 2010

- Led a statewide effort that produced 30 different coalitions
- Mobilized 10 field staff, 1,000 volunteers, and 50 surrogate speakers

Deputy District Director | Congressman Mark Kirk | Northbrook, IL

Nov 2006 – July 2009

- Served as the primary liaison to local elected officials
- Spearheaded special projects focused on aligning legislative agendas with media strategy
- Directly managed the internship program, including hiring and supervision

Political Director | Kirk for Congress | Northbrook, IL

May 2004 – Jul 2009

- Directly managed a \$5 million campaign budget
 - Managed 10 field staff and 500 volunteers focused on voter outreach
 - Managed high-dollar donor relationships and supported fundraising
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VOLUNTEER + COMMUNITY SERVICE**Advisory Board** | Consero Healthcare HR

2024 – Present

Board Member | United Way of Lake County | Gurnee, IL

2016 – 2019

Board of Governors & Operating Committee | Lake County Partners for Economic Development | Gurnee, IL

2013 – 2018

Board Member | University Center of Lake County | Grayslake, IL

2013 – 2017

President & Trustee | Cook Memorial Public Library District | Libertyville, IL

2003 – 2009

EDUCATION**Lake Forest Graduate School of Management** | Master of Business Administration**Lake Forest College** | Bachelor of Arts in Politics and Communications**University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School** | Chief Human Resources Officer Program Certificate**CIPD (SHRM equivalent in the UK)** | UK Employment Law Practitioner**Cornell University** | Workplace Investigations Certificate**Cornell University** | Labor Relations Certificate**Cornell University** | Compensation Studies Certificate

CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Professional in Human Resources (PHR)

SHRM Certified Professional (SHRM-CP)

SHRM California Law HR Specialty Credential

SKILLS

Analytics | Benefits Administration | Budget Planning and Management | Change Management | Compensation Design | Emotional Intelligence | Employment Law | Job Architecture | Labor Relations | Learning and Development | Organizational Development | Performance Management | Project Management | Recruiting Strategy | Relationship Management | Strategic Planning | Succession Planning | Talent Management | Union Negotiations