

Lead Story: [Universities Facing Big Challenges  
Recruiting New Leaders](#) 1

Ranking: [Hunt Scanlon  
Higher Education Top 50](#) 6

Spotlight: [Adaptable Leaders Needed to Drive  
Fundraising, DE&I and Technology Initiatives](#) 7

## Universities Facing Growing Demand, and Big Challenges, Recruiting New Leaders



Executive search for higher education and academia is undergoing a tremendous transformation. Technology is having a big impact. Diversity is also making its effects felt. Even certain roles are not the same as they were just a short time ago. Talk about a sector in transition.

One result: Academic institutions continue to pump big fees into the coffers of executive search firms nationwide. Many academic recruiting specialists say business, in fact, has never been better. Even smaller recruiting outfits have multiple assignments running concurrently, all at the senior levels, and if there is any slowdown coming it is to be found at the talent identification stage. With so much activity, it seems, talent demand is far outstripping the supply.

In recent months, a number of top schools have announced they are looking for new, high profile leaders to take them into new eras of fundraising, digitalization, sports and, in some cases, globalization. Several universities haven't changed leaders in years or even decades, and their boards of trustees and search committees are finding an entirely new and highly competitive landscape as they set out. It is another good reason why they're calling in headhunters to help.

### More Demanding, Complex Roles

Meanwhile, leadership roles in today's colleges and universities have become increasingly demanding and complex. Senior academic leaders must balance the needs of numerous constituents—needs that require a cross-section of skills far beyond the traditional set of scholarly and research accomplishments. Interviews with a host of recruiters for the sector reveal the special challenges of their work.

Those who lead today's universities are CEOs of publicly scrutinized institutions with requirements to fundraise, balance budgets and satisfy numerous demands with scant resources, according to **Russell Reynolds Associates**. "They compete for students, for faculty and staff members, and for rankings," the search firm said. "Perhaps unsurprisingly, the average length of tenure in these roles is decreasing, and there is a growing need to attract and retain quality talent that can adjust to the unique challenges and aspirations of each educational institution."

According to the search firm, while the senior leaders at colleges and universities contend with these expanded challenges, there is also growing demand for professional endowment leadership at many of these institutions, as pressure from today's capital markets makes meeting target investment returns increasingly difficult. Complicated times demand complex leaders, say recruiters who specialize in the field.

### BY THE NUMBERS

#### Big Growth Expected In Higher Education Leadership Search

Of the academic specialist search firms surveyed...

... **89%** forecast revenue growth in 2021

Source: Hunt Scanlon Media

Change, of course, is never easy. "Contemplating leaving one institution you love for another you may not know can be especially hard," said Brian Casey, president of DePauw University. "I was fortunate that Russell Reynolds Associates guided me through the search with a gentle hand and provided me with information, wisdom and respect. I remain grateful for the opportunities they showed me and the help they offered me during the search and during my transition."

Brian Mitchell, president of Bucknell University, found the executive search process "comprehensive, competent, careful," which, he said, "enhanced the pool and brought to the university an outstanding choice in Michael Snyder as our new provost. Russell Reynolds Associates understood its role and the importance of this search to us and behaved accordingly."

From refining job descriptions to launching and managing nationwide leadership hunts, recruiters have become trusted partners in what has become one of *(cont'd. to page 2)*

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the fastest growing sectors seeking expert talent. Reduced state funding, rising tuition costs, soaring student debt and decreased federal research funding have all contributed to a dramatic rise in the role search firms are playing in the recruitment of university presidents and chancellors.

Recruiters, say clients, are adept at managing a process that can be fraught with political and financial intrigue as well as the usual amount of educational issues. Like for-profit leadership recruiting, the search for a university president or chancellor can become a laborious process lasting several months to half a year before a candidate is selected. But unlike searches for companies, academic assignments can and often do include the need to satisfy any number of constituencies – and that more than anything can complicate and lengthen the timeline to find the perfect leader.

### Frozen Searches

Anniston, AL-based **Higher Education Leadership** offers what it describes as a new model of higher education search. With recruiting consultants from a variety of academic and administrative positions, the firm offers universities and candidates a variety of services: profile development, position advertising, candidate support and recruiting, facilitation of the interview process, as well as complete internet and social-media vetting. Some of the search firm's clients include Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Arkansas Tech University, Auburn University at Montgomery and the University of Texas Permian Basin, among others.

Alan G. Medders, a consultant with the firm, has spent more than 25 years in public and private higher education in which he held a series of development and advancement roles. He says that beginning in mid-March of last year, with the full outbreak of COVID-19, higher education recruiting came to a standstill. One university HR director, he said, recently indicated to him that universities will become much more discerning, strategic, and cost-conscious when it comes to utilizing search firms to fill a role.

"Like many other sectors of the economy, it is going to take two to three years for higher education search to return to full capacity," said Dr. Medders, who noted the sector could be a leading indicator of the financial health of institutions in general.

### Bountiful Search Market

"The current market for recruiting university and college presidents is bountiful," said Jay Lemons, president of **Academic Search**.

"We are seeing candidate pools that include over 100 applicants. Although the pandemic may have discouraged some individuals from announcing their departures at first, overall we have not seen a decrease in prospective candidate inquiries. This holds true for other leadership positions as well."

"The pandemic really shined a spotlight on leadership across all sectors; in particular, we have seen university presidents and senior leaders either flourish or fail, with very little grey area," said Shelli Herman, president and founder of **Shelli Herman and Associates**.

"The pressure and stress that top decision-makers faced during the pandemic was unprecedented and I think we saw some leaders at their best and others falter

*(cont'd. to page 3)*

mightily. Many boards have made some courageous changes of late and determined that new leadership is part of the immediate need post pandemic. I applaud them. In fairness to those in leadership, being a university or college president now is not for the faint of heart. I have seen the average tenure of college presidents change from 15 to 20-plus years as the norm, to five or 10 being the maximum time leaders can endure.”

Ms. Herman has also seen a gap in terms of those who are now serving and those who are ready to do so. Despite all of the training out there to help those who aspire to lead a college or university as its president, there is a dearth of individuals willing to take on these roles.

Ms. Herman also shares the general sense that most campuses will have someone in leadership supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility as part of the norm five years from now. “It is most likely something that should have been in place decades ago,” she said. “I believe strongly that this work is something that should have ownership at every level of the organization, starting at the top and working through every employee at every level of the enterprise. Accepting differences and embracing them fully and completely should not require compliance. Instead, it should be a part of the fabric of the campus, be wholly mainstream thinking, and simply what is done because it is right.”

Senior executives who lead into the future will NOT be afraid to challenge the status quo, to break the mold when it comes to evaluating business, and they will disrupt business as usual at every level, according to Ms. Herman. “I frequently hear the excuse that shared governance requires slow decision making,” she said. “This is exactly why campuses have really struggled to stay relevant with their constituents. Shared governance can occur in the context of timely decision making and could be the difference between a campus that is relevant and solvent, and one that goes the way of the dinosaur.”

“At CarterBaldwin, we expected to see an increase in presidential searches throughout 2021,” said Bill Peterson, partner at **CarterBaldwin Executive Search**. “That’s proving to be true – we are on pace to have a record year - and we anticipate that it will continue into 2022.”

### Delayed Retirement Plans

Historically, many long-serving presidents retire after a decade or more of service, which has been an ongoing trend for the past several years, according to Mr. Peterson. “However, the pandemic delayed the plans of many sitting presidents who did not want to add a presidential transition to an already burdened institution, or governing boards who chose stability over progress for the moment,” he said. “As a result of a return to normalcy, we are seeing a more dramatic increase in openings, and we will likely continue to see retirements in the coming months. We will also see accelerating departures due to the strain the pandemic had on presidents both personally and professionally. Certainly, there is a new generation of leaders coming along – and the landscape is rife with opportunities for them to move into top leadership roles.”

## LEADERSHIP SEARCH

### CarterBaldwin Recruits 12th President for Cornerstone University



**CarterBaldwin Executive Search** placed Gerson Moreno-Riaño as the 12th president of Cornerstone University, a private, non-denominational Christian institution, in Grand Rapids, MI. Partner Bill Peterson led the assignment. Dr. Moreno-Riaño

succeeds Joseph M. Stowell, who retired this spring after 13 years in the role. Cornerstone’s new president previously served for over seven years as EVP for academic affairs and chief academic officer at Regent University in Virginia Beach, VA. Headquartered in Atlanta, CarterBaldwin provides executive search services in the healthcare, technology, non-profit, consumer services, industrial and media/telecom sectors. Its clients include name-brand institutions, such as KPMG, ADP, Duke University, Pepperdine University, and Berkshire Hathaway.

“Having the right leadership on diversity and inclusion is integral to a college’s future and success,” said Mr. Peterson. “There is tremendous value in having a person or persons focused on identifying cultural, institutional, and individual biases and blind spots that thwart diversity and inclusion. It is also important that diversity, equality and inclusion reflect a culture that is being modeled and promoted across an institution, by everyone – not outsourced or assigned to any single individual.”

When looking for senior leaders for universities Mr. Peterson says that above all, one’s bearing and character are essential in higher education leadership. “Picturing the kind of leader an institution needs standing at a podium and leading through a difficult time is a good place to start,” he said. “An effective leader must also be able to navigate an institution in a time of rapid change, discerning what should remain and never change while seizing opportunities to innovate to benefit the institution. A successful, lasting leader must also be able to effectively cast a vision consistent with an institution’s identity through storytelling that resonates and attracts faculty, staff, students, and resources. Finally, he or she must embody the belief that education is transformational in the lives of students, and that faculty is essential to fulfilling the mission of an institution.”

“We have been quite busy with president recruitments,” said Mike Wheless, co-founder, principal and consultant at **Anthem Executive**. “Typically, it slows in the summer months. This year the demand has not subsided and we will be busy in the summer. For the reasons I laid out below, the demand will only increase.”

Mr. Wheless notes that he is definitely seeing shorter and shorter tenures. There are many reasons for it. “One major reason is the patience for boards and universities has never been thinner for a new president to hit the ground running and perform,” he said. “Today’s boards and universities are more prepared to cut their losses and move on faster than any time in history. Demographics play a major part - there are tens of thousands of people dropping out of the workforce every day for retirement. (cont’d. to page 4)





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Many presidents are long in the tooth. Some wanted to hit the eject button and retire well before COVID but hung on to see their university through it. Now with COVID seemingly behind us, many are punching out."

The job of leading a university has also become increasingly complex. "Having recruited CEOs, board directors, and executives industry before getting into higher education search, I can tell you without question that running a university has become amongst the most complicated CEO roles of any industry - period. Many people simply do not want the top role," said Mr. Wheless. "Social media and technology platforms have made a president role more of a fishbowl than ever. There are so many dynamics that can tank a presidency today. Many great presidents are too tired of trying to stay ahead of it all."

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*"Having the right leadership on diversity and inclusion is integral to a college's future and success. There is tremendous value in having a person or persons focused on identifying cultural, institutional, and individual biases and blind spots that thwart diversity and inclusion."*

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Historically, higher ed has not done a good job as other industries in preparing the next generation for succession. "And with all the cost-cutting universities have been forced to make, training and development are typically among the first areas to go," Mr. Wheless said. "For the sheer number of openings, some may be getting their time before they are truly ready. Then they run into things that can eat a new president's lunch, such as athletics."

Universities today also must become more diverse and inclusive. Hiring a diversity officer to say the university has one is not enough. "The mission orientation of the university has to be centered in DEI," said Mr. Wheless. "It has never become more important. A university that is willing to recruit a high-level DEI officer and report directly to the president, and clearly define the role paired with the university's mission, demonstrates to the community that is not just lip service. Access is the newest standard coming out of the White House. Don't be surpassed if the DEI includes A on the end of it soon - DEIA. Access for all is becoming increasingly important in leveling the playing field. Meeting access needs will change the role and further define it in the future. My advice to presidents is to look for DEI leaders who are already moving in the access direction, or wait and read about your competitor doing it."

Martin Baker, managing partner and practice lead in **Buffkin / Baker's** higher education practice, has witnessed a significant demand for new leaders at colleges and universities. "The war for talent is at an all-time high. In addition to presidents and chancellors, there is great demand for strong academic and operational leaders as well," he said. "Colleges and universities are seeking leaders with many of the same characteristics, including those who are visible and engaged in

(cont'd. to page 5)

their institution, support the development of the faculty, staff, and students, raise money, and can develop a shared vision to support the academic mission of their institution.”

Mr. Baker agrees that we are certainly at a point in time where there is generational turnover. “We have anticipated this development for several years,” he said. “In addition, college and university leaders have significant fatigue from the past 16 months. Institutional leaders had to provide leadership during such an uncertain time, with no roadmap to follow. Many academic leaders are stepping down to catch their breath and recharge the batteries. In addition, the role of president/chancellor has developed into 24/7 role leading to shorter tenures because of burnout in the job.”

The demands on higher education, and more specifically college presidents, has vastly changed over the last several decades, according to Wendy Wilsker, managing partner at **Boyden**. “College presidents were once viewed as an extension of their faculty, but now they are required to be educators, financial administrators, fundraisers, politicians, and recruiters,” she said. “In an era of heightened social media, presidents are in the limelight 24/7 and their responses to critical matters not only effects their campus, but their reach extends to future students, alumni, parents, and the larger college community. The stakes are higher and college communities are demanding greater accountability from their college president.”

Colleges are facing enormous financial challenges. Lisa Vuona, managing partner at Boyden, said: “As a society, we may see the effects of the pandemic in our rearview mirror, but colleges and universities are still grappling with decreased funding for programs, a reduction in staff, diversity/equity/inclusion in the workforce, challenges recruiting and retaining faculty and staff, heightened fundraising goals, over-enrollment for the fall, the plight of international students gaining access to the States, and so many other issues. Because of these issues, some current provosts and deans are steering away from the top job, leaving the pool of presidential candidates quite lean.”

With so many schools hiring chief diversity officer, Ms. Wilsker notes that diversity, equity and inclusion cannot only be the job of the chief diversity and inclusion officer. “It must be system-wide and it must start with the president, the board of directors, and top leadership,” she said. “Many colleges are building DEI offices to create systemic change across the campus. Faculty, students, alumni, and the greater college community wants and needs actual change taking place in recruiting, hiring, retaining, and training multicultural teams. It is no longer okay to say, we are working on a change. Action needs to be done across campus to support and attract students, faculty, and professionals of color.”

When discussing the types of leaders schools are seeking today, Ms. Vuona notes that recently, “my business partner and I made a guest appearance on a zoom with a dozen mid-level fundraisers across the country. The topic of discussion was what do you want to see in a leader? The group focused on inclusivity, culture, and servant leadership. How do these leaders measure success? How are they learning about me as a person? How (specifically) can they

## LEADERSHIP SEARCH

### Buffkin / Baker Recruits Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the University of San Diego



Martin M. Baker, managing partner of **Buffkin / Baker**, assisted the University of San Diego (USD) in the recruitment of Regina Dixon-Reeves as its vice provost for diversity, equity and inclusion. Dr. Dixon-Reeves comes to USD from the University of Chicago, where she served as the assistant provost in the office of the provost. Buffkin / Baker is a specialty boutique search firm composed of industry leaders in their respective fields and each has over a decade of retained search experience. Mr. Baker has been in executive search for 19 years. In addition to his role as managing partner, he is also head of the firm's higher education practice.

develop and help shape my growth in the field? How are they held accountable? What specific examples demonstrate their commitment to hiring and retaining a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce?”

### Racial and Cultural Awareness

“Diversity, equity, and inclusion work must be embedded and infused in the core mission and operations of all institutions,” said Mr. Baker. “While diversity, equity, and inclusion have been a focus for years, now more than ever, institutions are tasked with providing more effective strategies that produce valuable outcomes for students, faculty, and staff. Whomever the stakeholder, and however they identify, higher education has seen a renewed emphasis on making sincere efforts to ensure that all stakeholders are in a welcoming and safe environment in which to pursue all the opportunities provided. Under the leadership of chief diversity officers, these efforts improve racial and cultural awareness, enhance critical thinking, and provide a stronger sense of community.”

Colleges and universities need leaders who can navigate financial challenges, define and enhance organizational climate and culture, invest in the health and well-being of its students and employees, show general awareness and empathy to their teams, and have strong interpersonal and communication skills to develop meaningful relationships with external stakeholders, such as elected officials, alumni, donors, and industry partners, according to Mr. Baker.

“After a year of national reckoning that thrust centuries-old social justice fault lines to the forefront, chief diversity officers have become champions of intentional organizational and transformational change on college campuses across the country,” said Keight Tucker Kennedy, partner at **Isaacson, Miller**. “The role has evolved over the years and many institutions have launched CDO searches with the benefit of initial institution-wide conversations and buy-in, while others have responded to a flash point that necessitated a search.”

“These key leaders play a critical role in bringing awareness, discovery, impact, and progress to some of the most important academic issues facing a campus community today,” Ms. Tucker Kennedy said. “Chief diversity officers also help senior leaders see and understand the way changing demographics and diversity can benefit an institution.”

# Hunt Scanlon Top 50 Higher Education Search Firms

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<b>Academic Search</b> <a href="#">Jay Lemons</a> , President (202) 332-4049	<b>Leaders International Executive Search</b> <a href="#">Tony Kirschner</a> , Partner (604) 688-8422
<b>AGB Search</b> <a href="#">Roderick J. McDavis</a> , Managing Principal (202) 776-0856	<b>Lindauer</b> <a href="#">Deb Taft</a> , CEO (617) 262-1102
<b>Anthem Executive</b> <a href="#">Mike JR Wheless</a> , Co-Founder & Principal (713) 570-6992	<b>Myers McRae</b> <a href="#">Emily Parker Myers</a> , President & CEO (478) 330-6222
<b>Aspen Leadership Group</b> <a href="#">Jeff Hanavan</a> , Founding Partner (970) 315-2818	<b>Napier Search</b> <a href="#">Mary Worland Napier</a> , Principal (386) 740-9597
<b>Berkheimer Clayton</b> <a href="#">Betsy Berkheimer-Credaire</a> , President & CEO; <a href="#">Fred Clayton</a> , Chairman (213) 621-2300	<b>Odgers Berndtson</b> <a href="#">Steve Potter</a> , CEO (646) 553-4758
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<b>Buffkin/Baker</b> <a href="#">Martin Baker</a> , Managing Partner (629) 216-2002	<b>The Phelps Group</b> <a href="#">Valerie Phelps</a> , Founding Partner (416) 364-6229
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## SPOTLIGHT

## Adaptable Leaders Needed to Drive Fundraising, DE&amp;I and Technology Initiatives



*For over four decades, **Academic Search** has been a leader in designing and implementing search processes for leaders of colleges and universities across the country. The firm has completed hundreds of executive searches for higher education institutions and related organizations, for roles ranging from presidents to provosts to deans.*

*Dr. L. Jay Lemons became president of Academic Search in 2017, after serving for 25 years as a college president in both public and private higher education. He recently sat down with Hunt Scanlon Media to discuss the current market for recruiting university and college presidents and other leadership.*

**Jay, there currently seems to be a lot of activity among top universities in the search for new presidents. Can you share the current demand for new leaders at universities?**

With delayed retirements due to the pandemic and the additional stresses placed on institutions and their leaders in the last year, many colleges and universities are searching for new presidents at this time. We are not just seeing presidential turnover but also those at the senior administrative level. Research published in March of this year from Higher Education Publications Inc. indicated that since April 2018, following presidents and chancellors, the provost position has been turning over at the highest rate.

**Why do you think there is so much turnover currently? Are we seeing a new generation of leaders taking over or are you seeing shorter tenures among college presidents?**

The average tenure of presidents and other cabinet officers has been decreasing for some time and has undoubtedly been compounded by COVID-19, which has only made more evident pressing issues commonly faced by campus leadership, from the financial health of the institution to the mental health of students, faculty, and staff. A study by the American Council on Education found the average presidential tenure declined from 8.5 years in 2006 to 6.5 years in 2016. This dip is even larger for certain types of universities, like HBCUs and other minority serving institutions. Furthermore, more than half of today's presidents expect to step down within five years.

**Discuss the importance of chief diversity and inclusion officers at colleges today.**

The role of the chief diversity officer at colleges and universities is new to many institutions and increasingly so in the last decade. Whereas in the past there have been individuals whose scope may have encompassed elements of diversity, equity, and inclusion, such as Title IX officers, there are now designated diversity officers who sit at the president's table and provide enterprise-wide leadership. In some cases the role has been created in response to an institutional crisis associated with racial incidents on campus or

to upheaval. However, in any case, it is imperative to the success of the leader serving in the role that they be a part of the senior leadership team and be given the authority and resources to enact substantive institutional change. As campuses continue to face social, cultural, and political challenges, the chief diversity officer is all that more critical in affirming an institution's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, effectively engaging internal and external stakeholders across the diversity spectrum, and ultimately promoting the college's success.

**What are some characteristics of senior executives that can lead universities into the future?**

Commonly, some characteristics of senior leadership on campuses are financial acumen, effective communication skills, strategic planning expertise, among others. In today's environment, however, other characteristics have been emphasized quite significantly, one of the top being change management. Leaders had to quickly pivot this past year to face unprecedented times in which their campuses shut down, classes went online, and enrollment dropped. With this change, leaders were charged with thinking creatively and "outside the box" about how to diversify revenue streams and curricular and co-curricular opportunities. Even as we begin to see ourselves on the other side of the pandemic, higher education leaders should recognize the new ways in which they were engaging students and continue to develop innovative tools and approaches.

**Explain the current market for recruiting university and college presidents and other leadership.**

The current market for recruiting university and college presidents is bountiful. We are seeing candidate pools that include over 100 applicants. Although the pandemic may have discouraged some individuals from announcing their departures at first, overall we have not seen a decrease in prospective candidate inquiries. This holds true for other leadership positions as well.

**Are there any lasting impacts from COVID-19 and how are higher education institutions rebounding?**

There certainly will be lasting impacts from COVID-19. Chief among them are the financial woes that institutions have felt and will likely continue to feel for some time as they explore new business models, technology and strategies for reaching students. Prior to the pandemic, institutions were already confronting falling enrollments, declining state funding, and shifting student demographics, all of which were exacerbated in the last year. Many of these losses were stemmed during this past year through the additionally authorized federal support that came to higher education. It is still early to say what other impacts could be forthcoming, but in addition to confronting financial challenges during the pandemic, institutions faced increased mental health concerns of students, faculty, and staff as well as diversity and inclusion issues on campus and at times also in their surrounding communities. Institutions and their leadership have had to adapt quickly, (cont'd. to page 8)



and some have flourished while others may not make it, with consolidations and mergers still likely on the horizon. Overall, the pandemic forced colleges and universities across the country to reexamine how they go about educating the next generation, meeting market needs, and preparing students for success.

**What skill-sets are you looking for when recruiting university and college presidents? Has this changed from past years?**

The general skillsets needed for a successful presidency remain similar to the past, but the priorities of skills and experience have changed to meet the most pressing current needs of universities and colleges. Because so many campuses are facing financial concerns, one's ability to think innovatively about ways to increase revenue and fundraise, relationship build, and develop partnerships on behalf of an institution are more paramount than ever.

**What is the biggest challenge in recruiting leadership for higher education institutions, and how do you overcome these challenges?**

One of the most significant internal challenges to a search is inconsistency in the expectations of the hiring authority and other constituents of the institution for the position. At the onset of the search, we propose meeting with as many internal and external stakeholders as possible to learn about the desired characteristics and experience sought in the next leader as well as the challenges and opportunities the new leader will face, which ultimately guide the recruitment and candidate evaluation process.

**How important has diversity, equity and inclusion become in the recruiting process? How has this impacted roles within these institutions and the search process?**

Diversity, equity and inclusion has always been important in the recruitment process and is only more so today. Requests for proposals are consistently asking that we demonstrate our commitment to diversity as an organization as well as in recruiting a diverse pool of candidates. Our best practices have developed over the years to include more intentional efforts to educate the search committee on mitigating bias at every stage of the search process. In addition, we have found that more purposeful efforts are being made at the very beginning of the search to build a diverse search committee that reflects more broadly the campus community and demonstrates a commitment by the institution to a more inclusive process.

**What do you expect for the rest of 2021 and 2022?**

We are already seeing an uptick in the number of requests for proposals in comparison to this time last year and we suspect that number will continue to rise and become more in line with what we experienced pre-pandemic. As universities and colleges begin to find their footing out of what was an extraordinary year, we expect that they will continue to face funding challenges, shifting demographics, equity and diversity issues, changing technology and teaching modalities, among other trends. The need to find adaptable, innovative, talented campus leaders is and will remain important for the growth and success of our higher education system moving forward.



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## DHR Forms Alliance with Harvard Business School Latino Alumni Association

Chicago-based executive search firm **DHR International** has partnered with the Harvard Business School Latino Alumni Association (HBSLAA) to create “21 in ’21” – a program aimed at placing 21 Latinx executives in board roles before the end of this year. DHR will engage its Latino Diversity Network of board-ready executives and its clients to bring more Latinx executives to public and private company boards across sectors.

“With an increased national conversation on diversity, equity, and inclusion, we are pleased to launch 21 in ’21 in partnership with DHR,” said Lulu Curiel, president emeritus of HBSLAA.

“It’s an honor to partner with HBSLAA on our 21 in ’21 program, demonstrating our commitment to increasing Latinx diversity in the boardroom,” said Keith Giarman, managing partner for the global private equity practice at DHR and a Harvard Business School alumnus. “The economic value of the U.S. Latino community in 2017 was \$2.3 trillion, comparable to the world’s eighth-largest GDP in the world according to LDC Latino Donor Collaborative. This group will continue to drive the economy, and companies that understand the Latinx perspective will be poised to succeed.”

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### Moving the Needle

“By engaging HBS board-ready alumni and board decision-makers, we will move the needle on driving diversity into the boardroom,” said Melissa Hart, HBSLAA board member.

The Harvard Business School Latino Alumni Association is a non-profit organization with the aim to connect, empower and advocate for Latinx business communities. The organization is dedicated to creating a community that brings together alumni, current students, prospective students, and faculty to increase its influence at Harvard Business School and in the national Latinx business community.

The HBSLAA works to achieve its mission by connecting the collective HBS Latinx community (prospective students, students, alumni and faculty), empowering its alumni by creating learning and development opportunities and a platform for them to grow from graduation-to-retirement, and advocating for communities of color across Harvard University and globally.

## Korn Ferry Names Academic Sector Global Practice Leader

**Korn Ferry** recently appointed Charles Falcone as a senior client partner and global leader of its academic sector recruiting practice, including academic medicine and higher education. He is based in Chicago.

"Charlie has an exceptional reputation in the market and brings extensive advisory and search experience working on the successful recruitment of CEOs, chancellors, deans, presidents, chairs, chief medical officers and board-level assignments for academic institutions, health systems, and health-related associations and societies," said Gregory Button, president, global healthcare services practice, Korn Ferry. "He will be a great asset to our team."

Mr. Falcone joined Korn Ferry from Russell Reynolds Associates, where he led the firm's education practice, overseeing higher education, academic medicine, and digital education, and specialized in executive search and leadership advisory solutions for senior leadership across academics and healthcare. Mr. Falcone has over 30 years of clinical healthcare, executive search, and leadership advisory experience. Previously, Mr. Falcone spent 12 years with Spencer Stuart as partner and managing director for the Chicago office and senior member of the healthcare practice. There, he specialized in recruiting senior and board members for academic and healthcare systems.

### National Search for CHRO

Korn Ferry's global education practice provides comprehensive organizational consulting services spanning strategy execution, leadership development, talent acquisition, assessment and succession, and rewards and benefits. The firm works across the spectrum of public and private, small to large, faith-based, and for-profit higher education clients. Korn Ferry has served as a consultant and counsel in over 800 educational searches in the last decade.

Korn Ferry was recently called in University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) to lead a national search to replace retiring chief human resources officer Alesia Jones. The CHRO reports to senior vice president for administration and financial affairs Brian Burnett. "This search is incredibly important to ensure UAB continues to support our most precious resource — our people — and maintain the attention and excellence that made us Forbes' No. 1 Best Large Employer and No. 4 in Diversity," Dr. Burnett said. "I am appreciative of the leadership that Alesia has provided to UAB over many years and know we have work to do to find a capable and outstanding CHRO to lead the next chapter of HR excellence in support of our people."

"The individual selected for this position will help continue the university's leadership in recruitment, benefits and other employee services that consistently makes this one of the best places to work," said Ray Watts, president of UAB. "I thank Alesia for her years of service and the search committee for their commitment to ensuring this search is a success."



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## The Emergence of Chief Diversity Officers in Higher Education

Chief diversity officers have become increasingly common across leading institutions of higher education, driven by the push to create more diverse, inclusive, and equitable environments for the benefit of all members of the community. While much has been written on the evolution of the mandate and remit of this role, relatively little data exists to identify the common profiles and reporting structures into which these roles fit.

To address this gap, **Russell Reynolds Associates** combined its proprietary database of candidates from past chief diversity officer searches the firm has conducted with publicly available information to identify 60 diversity chiefs from major research universities and liberal arts colleges. The search firm reviewed the profiles, backgrounds and reporting structures and spoke separately with more than a dozen sitting chief diversity officers and university presidents to understand the unique context and challenges of this role. The firm's findings indicate that, while specific needs and priorities will vary by institution, several broad conclusions can be drawn about the effective chief diversity officer.

### EFFECTIVE CDO

#### The Effective Higher Ed CDO Demonstrates:

- Capacity for strategic leadership of change management initiatives
- Ability to effectively persuade and influence stakeholders
- Data-savvy storytelling skills
- Effective external engagement
- Personal motivation and resilience
- Domain expertise and an understanding of higher education culture

Source: Russell Reynolds Associates

### Evolution of the Chief Diversity Officer Role

The role of chief diversity officer is expanding at universities. It has become one of the most important positions for shaping the vision, culture and very face of institutions of higher learning from coast to coast. It is also increasingly becoming a cabinet-level job, with a broad range of responsibilities beyond that of most administrators.

The growth of this role builds upon the historical trend toward promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in higher education that began with the creation of "minority affairs" roles, which first began appearing at universities in the 1970s, according to the Russell Reynolds report.

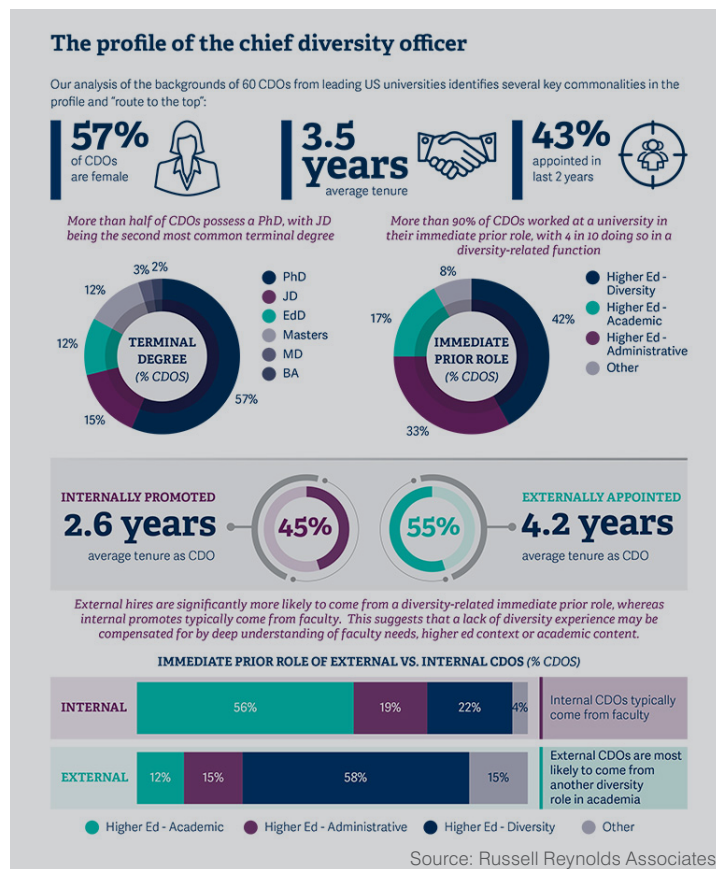
"Primarily oriented toward compliance or risk-mitigation, including issues related to workplace discrimination, affirmative action and accessibility, these roles were typically located at the department level or within a division of student services, rather than at the executive level or within the president's cabinet," the firm found. "While undoubtedly integral in moving the overall conversation regarding campus diversity forward, these roles were often criticized as purely symbolic or insufficient appeasement to

(cont'd. to page 12)

minority and underrepresented groups who felt their needs were not being properly addressed.”

### Understanding Diversity

Russell Reynolds noted that over the course of the early 2000s, understanding and conceptualization of diversity began to shift, with many pointing to a series of Supreme Court rulings, most notably related to the University of Michigan’s affirmative action admissions policy, as being instrumental in shifting universities away from a legalistic and mechanical view of diversity and toward a more holistic understanding of how diversity in all forms can benefit learning environments. “Rather than being defined simply as the presence of individuals that differ by ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or some other social identity, diversity is now seen as a resource that can be leveraged to enhance the learning of all students and is, therefore, fundamental to institutional excellence,” the search firm said.



Accordingly, the search firm said that the mandate and expectations of the CDO role have also evolved, with many universities now positioning the function as integral to the strategic direction and success of the institution.

Historically, diversity professionals often came to the role from either an HR or other compliance-focused background, indicative of the narrow scope usually afforded to the function. As the mandate and complexity of the role have expanded, so too has the range of profiles that have become relevant. Russell Reynolds’ analysis revealed four “archetypes” of CDOs among today’s diversity leaders, representing the most common current pathways to the CDO role.

**Forbes**

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## Higher Education Recruiting in the News

### Penn State Hires Spencer Stuart to Assist in Search for Next President



As part of a phased approach, the board of trustees of Pennsylvania State University has gathered an array of critical characteristics that the university community wants in the successor to president Eric J. Barron, who is retiring

next year. The school has called in **Spencer Stuart** to assist in the search for a new leader. Spencer Stuart's education practice works with research universities, liberal arts colleges, graduate and professional schools, independent schools, research centers and institutes, and early and secondary education organizations. It has conducted more than 300 senior-level executive and board searches over the past five years. Ninety-six percent of the firm's executive search placements in academia and research in the past five years are still in their roles today, said Spencer Stuart.

### R. William Funk & Associates Assists Texas A&M in Selecting Sole Finalist for President Post

**R. William Funk & Associates**, which specializes in recruitment for roles in higher education, has assisted the Texas A&M University System board of regents in the selection of Katherine Banks as the president of Texas A&M University. R.



William Funk & Associates has recruited chancellors/presidents two-thirds of all public AAU universities. The firm has also recruited presidents or chancellors to more than one-half of U.S. News & World Report's recently published "Top 30 National Universities." The firm has conducted more than 425 searches for college and university presidents and chancellors as well as an even greater number of provosts, deans and various vice presidents.

### Isaacson, Miller Tapped by Harvard University to Find Chief Information Officer



**Isaacson, Miller** continues to be the go-to recruiter for Harvard University. This time the school has retained the firm to find a chief information officer. Last year, Harvard University turned to Isaacson, Miller to recruit Sherri Ann Charleston as the school's

chief diversity and inclusion officer. In addition, Harvard Business School recently retained Isaacson, Miller to lead its search for a chief diversity officer. More than half of Isaacson, Miller's work has been in academia, involving university presidents, college chancellors and deans. The firm has filled top leadership posts at Wellesley College, Washington State University, Miami University, Howard University, Bowdoin College, Dartmouth, NYU, Virginia State University, and the University of North Carolina, among others.

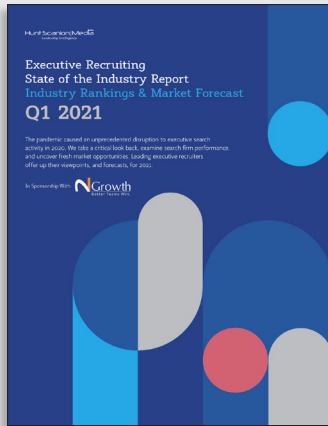


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## More Higher Education Recruiting in the News

### WittKieffer Selected by Colorado State University to Lead VP of Diversity & Inclusion Search



**WittKieffer** has been enlisted to find a vice president for diversity and inclusion (VPDI) for Colorado State University (CSU) in Fort Collins, CO. Spearheading the assignment are Charlene Aguilar, consultant; Christine Pendleton, senior associate; and Bree Liddell,

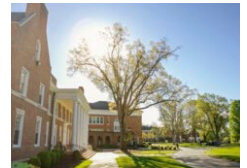
associate. "The vice president for diversity and inclusion will join CSU amidst a time of increasing opportunity and transformative cultural change," said WittKieffer. WittKieffer, based in Oak Brook, IL, assists hospitals, health systems, academic medical centers, medical schools and physician groups; biotech, pharmaceutical, diagnostics and medical device companies; colleges and universities and not-for-profit community service and cultural organizations with senior administrative recruiting assignments.

### Myers McRae Assists Pfeiffer University with Provost Search

After a national search, Macon, GA-based

#### **Myers McRae Executive Search and Consulting** has helped to place Daniel

Mynatt as the next provost and VP of academic affairs for Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer, NC. Kenny Daugherty,



president of the search firm, led the assignment. Dr. Mynatt currently serves as vice provost for institutional effectiveness for the University of Mary-Hardin Baylor. Myers McRae serves colleges, universities, independent schools, and other not-for-profit institutions. Nearly all of its search professionals have a minimum of 20 years of experience in higher education. The majority of the firm's searches have been for presidents, chancellors, provosts, vice presidents, deans and other senior academic and administrative leaders.

### Storbeck Search Leads CHRO Search for University of Rochester



Higher education-focused **Storbeck Search**, part of the **Diversified Search Group**, has been called on by the University of Rochester to lead its search for a new CHRO. Leading the assignment are Shelly Weiss Storbeck, managing partner and

senior associate Carly Rose DiGiovanni, and Amy Sugin, managing director for Koya Partners, also part of Diversified Search Group. Ms. Storbeck has one of the most widely recognized names in higher education search, having recruited senior leaders for some of America's most prestigious colleges and universities. Among her more recent assignments, she has led president searches for the University of Pittsburgh, University of Wisconsin, Bates, Denison, Haverford, and Swarthmore colleges.