THE SEARCH

The State University of New York (SUNY) believes that higher education should be accessible to all citizens, independent of financial means and background; that it should help students find their purpose and discover how to contribute positively to a free and civil society.

SUNY seeks an outstanding leader with vision and empathy to be its System Provost. The successful candidate will be the Chief Academic Officer of the largest comprehensive system of public higher education in the United States, and responsible for driving academic excellence and innovation across the SUNY System. The successful candidate will join a team of world-class academics dedicated to realizing the Excelsior Scholarship goal of making education affordable and individually transformational. This is an exceptional opportunity for an experienced and dynamic individual to help lead a large, diverse system of higher education committed to preparing students to address the challenges of the nation and a global society in the twenty-first century.

The system, which includes AAU institutions, other major research institutions, academic medical centers, comprehensive colleges of arts and sciences, and technical colleges, as well as community colleges, attracts students from a diverse and changing demographic across the State of New York, the nation, and the world. With a campus within 30 miles of 95 percent of the almost 20 million residents of New York, SUNY is a vibrant part of the local communities and regional economies. With an all-funds annual budget in excess of $13 billion, SUNY’s 64 campuses are a significant force in higher education nationally with an increasing global impact.

The System Provost serves as a key member of the Chancellor’s Executive Leadership Team. The fundamental role of the Provost is to foster academic excellence across the System and ensure that SUNY education is accessible and of the highest quality. The Provost will be responsible for advancing academic programs and policies; fostering a culture of cooperation and continuous improvement across SUNY and within the System Administration; supporting the university’s deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; leading strategic enrollment across SUNY campuses; guiding the enrichment of the educational experience; ensuring pathways for student success and completion; and leading the identification and implementation of best practices at scale.

In addition to a strong record of scholarly achievements, the successful candidate will be a dynamic, empathetic, and collaborative leader who serves as the primary voice and advocate for SUNY’s academic enterprise within the state, national, and international higher-education community.
THE SYSTEM PROVOST: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Reporting to the SUNY Chancellor, the System Provost oversees about 200 team members at SUNY System Administration. The Provost leads an executive team and manages an annual budget of approximately $150 million for system-wide programs, initiatives, and staff. As the leader of SUNY’s academic enterprise, the System Provost is responsible for inspiring and empowering SUNY’s 33,250 faculty members, 57,887 staff members, and more than 460,000 students, making this an unparalleled opportunity for an outstanding leader to lead changes and strive for impact.

Central to the charge to the new System Provost is developing the necessary policy infrastructure to connect and leverage the diverse strengths of the System’s universities and colleges to advance SUNY as a whole; to drive academic excellence across the System; to lead the innovative thinking in enrollment, completion, and technology adoption for academic affairs; to contribute to the well-being of New York; and to catalyze economic and workforce development. The Provost will play a critical role in the selection and leadership development of campus presidents, in close collaboration with the Chancellor. The Provost will also support external efforts and work with elected and appointed federal, state, and local officials on behalf of SUNY.

An example of the resources made available to the Provost to transform SUNY’s academic enterprise is the SUNY Performance Improvement Fund (PIF). In the 2016/17 academic year, $53.5 million from the Enacted Budget of the State of New York and other State appropriations supported the strategic priorities of the System and campuses. The PIF program competition is focused on shaping educational strategy, strengthening student recruitment and success infrastructure, enhancing diversity and inclusion across the System, and promoting knowledge creation, creativity, and translation.

The responsibilities of the System Provost include:

- Academic quality of the System
- Faculty development
- Strategic student enrollment, mobility, and success
- Distance and online learning
- Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP)
- Global affairs
- Institutional research and data analytics
- University-wide academic programs and initiatives
- Assist the Chancellor in presidential searches, evaluations, and leadership development

To ensure SUNY’s continued growth, vitality, and distinction, the next Provost is expected to address the following key opportunities and challenges:

Collaborate with campus leadership, faculty, and students to support the academic mission of SUNY

As the leader of SUNY’s academic enterprise, the System Provost is empowered to enhance the excellence, accessibility, and affordability of all SUNY academic programs in close collaboration with campus leadership, faculty, and students.

The System Provost recognizes and embraces the unique characteristics, strengths, and challenges of each sector and institution, enabling them to establish their own goals for excellence while advancing
system-wide academic standards and strategic goals. The Provost will ensure that academic perspectives and priorities are central to all decisions regarding the budget, program planning, enrollment, human capital management, and capital construction. The System Provost works closely with the Chancellor, the SUNY Board of Trustees, the Cabinet, and campuses to align resources and develop strategic and viable revenue streams in order to enable the University to meet its core academic mission.

**Support shared governance**

Shared governance is central to SUNY and an important element in the institution’s educational and operational philosophy. SUNY seeks a Provost who embraces the importance of shared governance, emphasizes its role in the achievement of system-wide goals particularly academic excellence, and envisions it as an important aspect of institutional leadership development.

**Lead the implementation of strategic enrollment, student mobility, and success initiatives**

The System Provost will take the lead to create a system-wide strategic enrollment plan, matching students to the best campus to pursue their higher education goals. Working with campus leadership, the plan will position SUNY to meet student needs and foster innovative instructional models to broaden access, quality, and success.

In December 2012, the SUNY Board of Trustees adopted a resolution easing barriers for transfer from any SUNY campus to another by guaranteeing a set of transferrable general education requirements and courses. This seamless-transfer policy was fully implemented in Fall 2016. In addition to insuring the ongoing success of seamless transfer, the Provost will be empowered to rethink how students are admitted to a SUNY System campus and what assistance the System can provide in guiding students from matriculation through graduation through individualized assessment and mentoring.

**Access and affordability**

On April 8, 2017, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed into law the Excelsior Scholarship, a first-in-the-nation program to provide tuition-free college at New York’s public colleges and universities, both two-and four-year, to students who come from families making less than $125,000 per year. The Excelsior Scholarship is a “last-dollar” program, building on the generous foundation of federal Pell grants and New York’s Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), through which the State already invests $1 billion in tuition assistance annually to all of postsecondary education in New York. To be eligible for the Excelsior Scholarship, students must be a New York State resident enrolled full-time and making progress towards on-time completion. After graduation, Excelsior recipients must live in New York State for the length of time stipulated in the award. The 2017/18 academic year is the first year of the Excelsior Scholarship, and the Provost, working closely with the Chancellor and the entirety of the SUNY System, will be instrumental in making this one-of-a-kind program successful.

**Encourage the development and utilization of data and data analytics in strategic planning and decision making**

Like many institutions across the country, SUNY is generating data and intelligently using data analytics to inform enrollment, to make early interventions with students at risk, and to inform decisions about resource investment. In a system as large and diverse as SUNY, it is especially important and relevant to utilize the full potential of data and data analytics. The System Provost is expected to foster a data-
driven culture in strategic planning and decision making through the development and utilization of large datasets and data analytics to identify potential barriers and solutions, assess where changes may be needed, and inform strategic directions.

**Develop and implement system-wide academic initiatives that address the opportunities of the changing landscape of public higher education**

The System Provost is expected to be a thought leader in higher education who is keenly aware of the changing landscape of public universities in terms of evolving future workforce needs, changing demographics of students and faculty, new education policies, and emerging education technologies. The Provost will evaluate and facilitate opportunities for SUNY to learn across its institutions and from peers across the nation; leverage technologies to create modern, flexible learning environments; work with partners to develop alternative, workforce-ready credentials; and continue to expand access to applied-learning opportunities for all students, regardless of their course of study.

**Strengthen efforts to align academic programs with needs of New York State**

The System Provost leads the efforts to address critical workforce needs in New York State by aligning SUNY program offerings with existing labor statistics and future labor trends. Identifying target markets, funding high-need areas, developing a common set of policies, and instituting consistent processes in academic planning and program assessment while working with faculty governance bodies are all important elements of work for the next Provost.

**Guide the implementation of Open SUNY and the application of technology in support of the academic mission**

Open SUNY is a system-wide platform that provides world-class, online-enabled learning opportunities. Open SUNY is not a new degree program or a new school; it’s a flexible way to access the courses, degrees, professors, and rich academics. Today, Open SUNY houses 512 online-enabled degrees across 42 SUNY campuses and offers about 14,000 course sections per year, creating unique online-learning experiences unlike any that existed before. Since its launch in 2014, more than 403,000 students have enrolled in Open SUNY online course sections, using it to fit classes into busy schedules and accelerate their progress toward a degree.

Building on the success of Open SUNY, the next Provost will ensure that Open SUNY realizes its potential for additional enrollment capacity at large scale. Overall, the Provost plays an important role in advancing the application of technologies not only to online learning, but also to instruction, research, libraries, and all forms of academic and organizational collaboration among SUNY institutions.

**Engage with and advocate for the SUNY community**

The Provost is expected to be a strong advocate of SUNY by sharing the stories of SUNY’s education, research, and public service achievements to a variety of audiences, which will garner support, build partnerships, and help elevate the University to new levels. Internally, the Provost is charged with preserving and expanding the open lines of communication that currently exist, promoting recognition of all those who contribute to achieving institutional goals, and maintaining greater transparency in decision making.
PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS

SUNY seeks a System Provost with strategic vision, a collegial leadership style, passion for educational innovations, and energy and integrity to inspire the SUNY academic community to new levels of effectiveness and excellence. This opportunity calls for an outstanding academic leader to join an excellent team to make the SUNY System the standard of excellence in public higher education. Qualified candidates will possess an earned doctorate or appropriate terminal degree along with the following experience and abilities:

- A record of distinguished research, scholarship, and teaching;
- A demonstrated passion for and commitment to quality higher education;
- Successful experience as a forward-thinking and results-oriented academic administrator in a complex organization with a proven ability to execute large and ambitious plans;
- A deep commitment to student success and a broad understanding of student affairs;
- A track record of dedication to diversity and the ability to promote, support, and achieve the various tenets of SUNY’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- An astute understanding of the relationships between academic policies, budgeting, and operations;
- The ability to thrive in the public sector with well-developed political and diplomatic skills, adept at representing the institution’s missions and goals with both the executive and legislative branch;
- A strategic facilitator, able to think creatively across boundaries and committed to harnessing and facilitating the potential for collaboration across institutions and disciplines;
- Demonstrated commitment to shared governance in planning and managing change and the ability to reduce conflicts and facilitate a shared commitment to excellence;
- Knowledge of emerging national and global educational, public policy, and cultural trends, and ability to connect with corporate, educational, governmental, and private-sector leaders;
- The ability to work effectively with all SUNY campuses, including the community colleges, which prepare students for both transfer and the workforce and operate with local governing boards and local and state funding formulas;
- Outstanding listening and communication skills with a demonstrated ability to inspire and engage others to support the vision of the System;
- A collegial, accessible, and empathetic character, demonstrably possessing absolute integrity, flexibility, resilience, and a good sense of humor.

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

The State University of New York (SUNY) is the nation’s largest comprehensive statewide higher-education system, made up of 64 colleges and universities committed to providing a broad range of outstanding academic programs that are affordable for students within New York and around the world. The University’s campuses are divided into four categories, based on educational mission, types of academic opportunities available, and degrees offered.

SUNY’s four university centers at Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, and Stony Brook (the latter two being AAU members) all provide outstanding undergraduate and graduate education and conduct leading-edge research activities. Other SUNY campuses include three specialized doctoral-degree-granting institutions, two free-standing academic health science centers, 13 comprehensive liberal arts colleges, seven residential technology colleges, and 30 community colleges. SUNY’s community colleges are
unique entities not only within SUNY but across the nation. Each college is sponsored by a county or collection of local entities, and each has its own appointed Board of Trustees that helps guide the academic and financial direction of the institution. However, each college is also ultimately overseen by the greater SUNY Board of Trustees and receives funding from the State of New York, making them a collaborative effort among localities, SUNY, and the State.

In addition, SUNY supports five statutory colleges—four at Cornell University and one at Alfred University. They are unique academic units created by legislative acts prior to the establishment of SUNY that continue to receive state support through the SUNY budget.

SUNY offers students a wide diversity of educational options including short-term vocational/technical courses, certificate, associate, and baccalaureate degree programs, graduate degrees, professional degrees, and post-doctoral studies. SUNY provides access to almost every field of academic or professional study in more than 7,000 degree and certificate programs.

During the late 1990s and early in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the SUNY System experienced tremendous growth, with total student enrollment increasing by more than 15 percent. Since 2008, total enrollment in SUNY’s four-year campuses has held more or less steady within 1 percent of 220,000. Community colleges had an even more dramatic increase in the late 1990s and early 2000s, increasing enrollment by about 25 percent, but since 2010 have seen their enrollments decrease by about 10 percent. The fall 2016 enrollment in the State-operated four-year and doctoral campuses was 219,861 (excluding Statutory colleges), including graduate-level enrollments of more than 40,000 students. Community college enrollment in fall 2016 was 216,277. System-wide retention and graduation rates have been steadily increasing, and the SUNY System is planning enrollment-management practices to attract additional students and provide greater access to the campuses.

SUNY aspires to be the most inclusive state university system in the country. In support of this, SUNY created a system-wide Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in 2007. The Board of Trustees passed a sweeping Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy in 2015. All SUNY institutions and System Administration have developed strategic diversity and inclusion action plans that tangibly demonstrate SUNY’s commitment to the principles of inclusion, wherein an institution only achieves excellence when it is inclusive. SUNY identifies diversity, equity, and inclusion as essential aspects of system and campus planning and as indispensable characteristics of academic excellence and the ongoing experience of every member of the SUNY community.

In support of excellence across all aspects of the University, SUNY has adopted a performance system, SUNY Excels. SUNY Excels represents the University’s commitment to an ambitious set of goals moving SUNY toward continuous improvement and excellence in five key areas: access, completion, success, inquiry, and engagement. To ensure accountability, for the University system and the public, in 2015 each campus developed comprehensive Performance Improvement Plans that include a narrative about their strategic priorities as well as commitments for improvement through 2020–21 on a standard series of metrics. These plans are working documents that are updated annually to reflect new developments and to report on progress.

SUNY faculty and students conduct frontier research in many areas such as advanced manufacturing, clean energy, medicine, and policy, addressing critical societal challenges while generating economic benefits. In Fiscal Year 2016, SUNY attracted about $920 million in sponsored program funding for 7,100
research, training, and public-service projects. Also in Fiscal Year 2016, SUNY was awarded 68 U.S. patents, received 306 invention disclosures, and was ranked 38th among the “Top 100 Worldwide Universities Granted U.S. Utility Patents for 2016,” according to the National Academy of Inventors (NAI) and Intellectual Property Owners Association (IPO). The Research Foundation for SUNY, a private nonprofit corporation created to support research, education, and public service at SUNY, manages SUNY’s sponsored program expenditure.

SUNY, supported by its more than 90,000 employees, enrolls students each year from all 50 states and more than 170 countries. In brick-and-mortar, SUNY has invested well over $7 billion in capital construction and renovation of educational, research, and hospital facilities since 2009 to ensure students learn and faculty teach in modern, accessible buildings. The State and SUNY are also working together to tackle the pressing problems of college readiness, affordability, and completion.

The State of New York and SUNY

The leaders of the State of New York have actively supported the ambitious goals of SUNY through the enactment of several important legislative reforms. In 2011, Governor Cuomo established the NYSUNY 2020 program to keep tuition increases low and predictable while providing $470 million in additional revenue to New York’s public colleges and universities. After five years of predictable tuition, New York’s public four-year resident rates remain the lowest in the northeast and in the lowest quartile nationally, contributing significantly to the goal of student access to higher education. In addition, this program has provided new capital matching grant funding for a public-private Challenge Grant Program that links higher education to economic development. Twenty-five percent of the additional revenue generated went directly to students to ensure that highest-need students continue to attend SUNY institutions tuition-free. Additional funds were used to support faculty and improve instruction.

TO APPLY

Application packets must include: Letter of interest and current curriculum vitae.

Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed through Provostsearch@suny.edu website at: www.suny.edu/provost-search

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