

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

... LEADERSHIP PROFILE



COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA



COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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The Leadership Opportunity

In December 2025, Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania’s Council of Trustees approved the initiation of a presidential search process, the university’s first since the merger that created CU. Seeking an individual possessing integrity, vision, and a strong commitment to shared governance, Commonwealth University’s next president will have the opportunity to lead the second largest institution in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). As the chief executive officer of Commonwealth University, the president reports through the PASSHE chancellor to the Board of Governors and is a key contributor to system-level strategy. Our next president will need to continue executing on the university’s plan for fiscal sustainability while driving new and innovative ways of serving the students, workforce, and communities of our region and all of Pennsylvania.

Qualifications for the Next President of Commonwealth University

The next president of Commonwealth University has a unique opportunity to make a foundational impact on the institution and its campuses. This is the university’s first presidential search conducted since the merger that created Commonwealth University, and the successful candidate will lead the development of CU’s culture and identity while maintaining a deep appreciation and respect for our individual campuses and the students, faculty, staff, and alumni connections that make them special.

The next president will possess broad experience in higher education and academia, have a passion for serving students, and have an entrepreneurial approach to emerging opportunities, innovations, and ideas that can allow the university to thrive in new and interesting ways. The successful candidate will have a leadership style that is extremely collaborative, collegial, transparent, and authentic – and they will be an effective, transparent, and frequent communicator to our faculty, staff, and student body.

The successful candidate will be an accomplished, proven, and experienced leader, able to shepherd limited resources while supporting the teaching, scholarship, and service work of our faculty. They will be a strong advocate for Commonwealth University and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, on-campus, in our communities, with elected officials, and with alumni and donors. They will be committed to the principles of diversity, equity, and belonging, demonstrating effectiveness at engaging individuals from a range of backgrounds and experiences and recruiting and retaining a diverse body of students and employees.

While no single candidate will possess all attributes, the ideal candidate will have the following qualifications and strengths:

- A strong academic background and credentials, including an earned doctorate or the highest degree in their chosen academic field;
- A successful record of academic leadership combined with executive accomplishments and experience;
- Intellectual curiosity and a deep commitment to excellence in teaching and scholarship;
- Demonstrated experience building and sustaining a diverse and inclusive environment, including an ability to navigate difficult and sometimes controversial issues across a range of constituencies;



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- The ability to represent the mission and vision of Commonwealth University to the region and state-wide, and a willingness to provide national leadership in higher education;
- A strong commitment to the principles of shared governance, leading transparent and effective work across faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors, community leaders, elected officials, and other university partners;
- A proven record in fundraising, alumni relations, university advancement, and the cultivation of donors at all levels in support of the university and its mission;
- An understanding of the importance of athletics to the life of the university, its students, alumni, local communities, and the state – and an appreciation for CU’s unique structure as a single university with three distinct, valued athletic programs and legacies;
- An inherent commitment to the creation and maintenance of a student-centric educational and campus life environment and the support services necessary for students facing a variety of affordability and access challenges to higher education;
- An understanding that CU is part of the PASSHE system and that collaboration with other universities is vital to the health of public higher education in Pennsylvania;
- Ability to work collaboratively and constructively with collective bargaining units in a unionized environment, and knowledge of collective bargaining agreements pertaining to PASSHE universities;
- A highly visible, active, engaged, and consistent presence across all Commonwealth University campuses, with a desire to spend time equitably at Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield;
- Possess a broad understanding of the national challenges facing higher education;
- High integrity, trustworthiness, and judgment, as evidenced through providing sound, consistent, and ethical decisions informed by financial and legal best practices as well as PASSHE requirements;
- A willingness to challenge the status quo thoughtfully and deliberately;
- The ability to identify, recruit, and keep high-quality talent committed to excellence at every level of the institution, with a proven record of empowerment, mentoring, and accountability;
- A bridge-builder with local neighbors and leaders, recognizing the central nature our campuses play in the life and economies of our host communities;
- Experienced in budgetary decision-making and the financial pressures often facing public universities;
- And ultimately, a leader who thinks strategically and systematically to develop and communicate a shared vision for the institution, its future, and the students we serve.



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About Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania



[Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania](#) (CU) was formed on July 1, 2022 through the statutory integration of Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield Universities as part of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education's "[System Redesign](#)" Initiative. A key driver of this historic merger was a mission to expand high-quality, affordable academic opportunities to support the needs of all learners regardless of campus or locality in our region. Each of Commonwealth University's locations continue to deliver robust residential experiences that let students choose their home campus while gaining the option to take hybrid or online learning courses offered via one of our other sites. CU students additionally have access to the full complement of their home campus NCAA Athletic programs.

Commonwealth University is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). Following a comprehensive self-study evaluation process and on-site evaluation visit by Commission team members, [Commonwealth University's accreditation was reaffirmed](#) in 2025, with our next self-study evaluation anticipated in 2032-2033.



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The Power of Three

Powerful ideas start at Commonwealth University, carried by dynamic stories and voices that enrich students and provide financially responsible degree options that maximize experiential learning, career preparation, and efficient time to degree completion.

Commonwealth University honors the history of its legacy universities and communities by preserving the founding principles, traditions, and unique culture of each campus as we continue providing a vibrant on-campus student experience. Our CU campuses stand as pillars of their communities, serving our students and neighbors alike.

Commonwealth University is investing in its students by answering the most significant challenges facing higher education – accessibility, cost, quality, and relevance – through the combined strength of its storied institutions.

Commonwealth University is building a powerful tomorrow by boldly changing the trajectory of public higher education, striving to be one of the most affordable, high-value degree options in the state. We are focused on increasing access, serving the region’s learners across all ages and socioeconomic statuses, and meeting the workforce development needs of Pennsylvania and our employer partners.

Commonwealth University is committed to honoring our alumni and donors by continuing to recognize and partner with foundations and alumni associations local to each campus. We honor and encourage donor intent, allowing our generous supporters to designate funds toward the programs and initiatives that most inspire them, either at a specific campus of their choosing or by having an impact CU-wide.

Commonwealth University is a high-achieving, nationally recognized, comprehensive university that delivers a personal and challenging academic experience. CU has entered a phase of renewed excitement and commitment to its core mission, which is centrally focused on students and providing a learning environment where both undergraduate and graduate students can grow in a supportive environment that promotes exploration and discovery.

Commonwealth University’s innovative and accredited [academic programs](#) are the sum of three distinct colleges: the College of Arts, Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences; the College of Health, Science, and Technology; and the Zeigler College of Business. With more than 70 degree programs, Commonwealth University is well positioned to meet the needs of today’s students and tomorrow’s workforce.

Commonwealth University leverages the benefits of a large, comprehensive, public university into three beautiful, rural Pennsylvania campuses – across the arts, athletics, academics, and the daily support our students receive from CU’s hundreds of dedicated faculty and staff.

We are THE Commonwealth. And this is the Power of Three.





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Our Communities

Commonwealth University's campuses are each situated in beautiful rural communities in Northcentral Pennsylvania. By unique headcount in the most recently completed 2024/25 academic year, CU-Bloomsburg is the largest of our campuses at 7,990 undergraduate and graduate students. Bloomsburg is located two hours northwest of Philadelphia off Interstate 80. CU-Lock Haven is home to more than 3,000 students and is located along the picturesque Susquehanna River, just south of Williamsport off U.S. Route 220. CU-Mansfield, located in the rolling Endless Mountains of the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania between Williamsport, PA, and Corning, NY, is the smallest of CU's campuses with a 2024/25 headcount of 1,323 students. Collectively, our campuses serve over 12,000 learners, making Commonwealth University one of the largest institutions in the Pennsylvania State System.

Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania

Affectionately called the "university on the hill" locally CU-Bloomsburg overlooks the vibrant Town of Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. Known for its scenic landscape, riverside recreation, and quality healthcare and educational industries, Bloomsburg is a community rich in history. Serving as the county seat of Columbia County, Bloomsburg is the only incorporated town in Pennsylvania. Its quaint downtown is a national historic district that also encompasses the university's Carver Hall, an original building on CU-Bloomsburg's campus and the central icon of the institution and its branding. While Bloomsburg and its surrounding region offer an abundance of outdoor activities during all four seasons, the Town's proximity to major metropolitan areas also allow for weekend excursions, including easy drives to Philadelphia (2 hours), New York City (2.5 hours), Baltimore (2.5 hours), and Washington, D.C. (3.5 hours).





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Lock Haven, Pennsylvania

Located near the confluence of the West Branch Susquehanna River and Bald Eagle Creek, the City of Lock Haven serves as the county seat of Clinton County and hosts Commonwealth University's Lock Haven campus. With a welcoming and vibrant downtown commercial district and an active arts community, Lock Haven – or "The Haven" as we affectionately call it – is a wonderful place to work, live, and raise a family. An incredible 60% of Clinton County is comprised of state natural land that makes up the gateway to the Pennsylvania Wilds, making Lock Haven a hub for those who love taking advantage of outdoor recreation opportunities across trails, parks, and scenic waterways.



Mansfield, Pennsylvania

Located along the Tioga River at the intersection of Business Route 15 and Route 6 in Tioga County, the Borough of Mansfield is the gateway to the beautiful Endless Mountains region in Pennsylvania's Northern Tier. CU-Mansfield provides students with the feel of a small, intimate liberal arts college – but backed by the resources of one of PASSHE's largest institutions. Those who enjoy nature, recreation, hiking, incredible fall foliage, and a welcoming community will fall in love with Mansfield and its people.





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About PASSHE

The mission of the System is as relevant today as it was at its founding: to provide high-quality education at the lowest possible cost to students; to increase educational attainment in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; to prepare students at the undergraduate and graduate levels for professional and personal success in their lives; and to contribute to the economic, social, and cultural development of Pennsylvania's communities, the commonwealth, and the nation. The [universities](#) combine to enroll the largest number of Pennsylvania residents among all four-year colleges and universities in the commonwealth. With more than 80,000 degree-seeking students and thousands more enrolled in certificate and other career-development programs, PASSHE is vital to Pennsylvania's economy.





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Mission Statement

Our hard-working and determined students are at the heart of everything we do. Commonwealth University leverages the power of Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield to provide affordable, high-quality education emphasizing high-impact practices, personal and career connections, and inclusivity supporting all learners to succeed in our region and beyond.

Vision Statement

Commonwealth University will be a premier regional public institution that supports and prepares all students for success in the global workforce by providing an accessible and transformative educational experience.





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Our Values

Student-Centered

As faculty and staff, this means we:

- Put students first by meeting them where they are to help them achieve success.
- Provide holistic support to adapt our work around the needs of our students.

As students, this means we:

- Feel supported through available resources, faculty and staff interaction, and the meaningful connections we make on campus.
- Have ample opportunities for growth, individualized attention, and academic and career development.

Welcoming & Inclusive

As faculty and staff, this means we:

- Represent the diversity of our students and create an environment in which all students, faculty, and staff feel supported, affirmed, and empowered.
- Encourage robust dialogue, intellectual curiosity, and diversity of thought while cultivating opportunities to have experiences with faculty, staff, and alumni as role models and mentors.

As students, this means we:

- Take an active role in fostering a welcoming and inclusive community.
- Seek out perspectives that are different from our own, create opportunities for dialogue, and encourage respectful discussions among a diversity of viewpoints.

Accessible

As faculty and staff, this means we:

- Cultivate an encouraging educational experience that supports all students.
- Invest in and connect students to resources that promote persistence and success.

As students, this means we:

- Have the financial support and resources to make college affordable through scholarships and financial aid packages.
- Feel supported by faculty, staff, and campus partners and are able to easily access the personal assistance we are provided.



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Innovative & Exceptional

As faculty and staff, this means we:

- Provide a best-in-class practical and hands-on educational experience that prepares students to succeed as global citizens.
- Build connections to new opportunities and programs, leveraging employers, alumni, and cutting-edge research to ensure we provide a high-quality educational experience.

As students, this means we:

- Have access to state-of-the-art technology and equipment to enhance our academic experience through in-person, hybrid, online, multimodal, and hands-on learning.
- Have practical opportunities to engage within and beyond the classroom to develop knowledge and skills we need to succeed in the global workforce.

Collaborative

As faculty and staff, this means we:

- Learn from each other and take advantage of the opportunity to build meaningful partnerships with colleagues, both on our "home" campuses and across the triad.
- Engage in effective best practice sharing and relevant professional development to enable highly effective teaching, student support, and effective institutional management.

As students, this means we:

- Have varied and significant opportunities to foster relationships and build community with our peers, mentors, faculty, and staff across all three campuses.
- Are engaged in the communities surrounding our campuses through meaningful partnership and service.

Resilient

As faculty and staff, this means we:

- Are motivated to persevere through challenges and adversity.
- Are dedicated to ensuring students have the resources, support, and opportunities they need to be successful.

As students, this means we:

- Are hard-working and have the grit, resolve, and determination to power through obstacles and barriers that come our way.
- Are committed to and motivated by our future success



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University Governance

Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Board of Governors

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 Marvens Ravix
 Angela Smith
 Ray Zaborney





How to Apply

The Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) is assisting Commonwealth University with this search. All applications, nominations and inquiries are invited to the below email address. Applications should include, as separate PDF documents, the following:

- A letter of interest addressing the candidate's qualifications against the themes in this profile. Letters of interest should be no longer than three pages in length.
- A current résumé/curriculum vitae
- The name, relationship, and email address of five professional references

All materials may be sent to Commonwealth University's Presidential Search Committee at:

presidentalsearch@commonwealthu.edu



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Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania is committed to equal employment and equal educational opportunities for all qualified individuals regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, affectional or sexual orientation, age, disability, or other classifications that are protected under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and other pertinent state and federal laws and regulations.

The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. This material has been copied, compiled, or quoted in part from Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania documents and personal interviews and is believed to be reliable. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and factual situations govern.



Have questions about the presidential search?
PresidentialSearch@commonwealthu.edu