



Leadership Profile:

President

2025



BUFFKIN / BAKER



The Board of Trustees of Columbia College, based in Columbia, Missouri, invites nominations for and applications from individuals who are passionate about becoming Columbia College's next President. Building upon the College's tradition of offering exceptional instruction, real-world experience, and a place at the table for tomorrow's leaders from all walks of life, the new President will have the opportunity to lead the College as it continues to deliver high-quality educational experiences in a constantly changing educational environment.

About Columbia College

History

In 1851, Christian Female College received its charter from the Missouri Legislature, opening its doors not just as a finishing school, but as a college for women. In 1970, Christian Female College took a confident leap forward. The College evolved from being a two-year institution exclusively for women into the four-year, co-educational institution now known as Columbia College.

By 1973, Columbia College's forward-thinking spirit caught the attention of the nation's military. In a historic move, the military asked the College to extend its educational venues to military bases. The College responded and became one of the first higher education institutions in the country to seize this opportunity.

In 1975, the College began offering evening programs to civilian adult learners, embracing all individuals eager to learn. In 2000, the College further embraced the future of education by offering some of the nation's first online courses.

Columbia College Today

Columbia College is dedicated to improving lives through higher education. As a private, coeducational, liberal arts and sciences institution, the College takes pride in its small classes, experienced faculty, and quality educational programs. Offering certificate programs, associate, bachelor's and master's degrees, the College features a traditional campus and active evening program in Columbia, Missouri; a national footprint of additional locations and centers that support all students; and a robust online presence.

Columbia College serves a diverse population of approximately 8,000 students, of which about 35% are military personnel. Approximately 46% of undergraduates self-identify as members of historically underrepresented groups, which includes more than 25% identifying as Black/African American and 11% identifying as Hispanic/Latino. More than 90% of students receive some form of financial aid. The College boasts in excess of 98,000 alumni worldwide and more than 37,000 military-affiliated alumni.

Spurred by the creative ingenuity of faculty and staff and the financial commitment by the Board of Trustees, Columbia College is investing in the development of multiple new programs and the hiring of faculty to support new and existing undergraduate and graduate programs.

Columbia College participates in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) as a member of the American Midwest Conference. The College sponsors 17 teams: seven men's and 10 women's. The College also sponsors an Esports program. More than 50% of the traditional student population participates in athletics.

Mission

Columbia College improves lives by providing quality education to both traditional and non-traditional students, helping them achieve their true potential.

Vision

Our vision is to be a highly innovative institution of higher education, dedicated to excellence in both its traditional and non-traditional programs nationwide.

Values

We believe all students deserve access to affordable quality education. We believe higher learning should be individualized, innovative and flexible. We believe a liberal arts core curriculum produces globally engaged citizens who are creative, curious and ethical. We believe people of all beliefs and backgrounds should engage in civil discourse and discovery.

Embracing Change, Ensuring the Future: Strategic Plan 2022-2027

Since its founding, Columbia College has stood for quality educational opportunities, resilience and innovation. The College's strategic plan, which includes the following goals, renews the institution's commitment to the values it holds dear while blazing new paths in the quest for knowledge and enlightenment.

- **Goal #1:** Strengthen academic excellence and student success.
- **Goal #2:** Attract and retain students who thrive at Columbia College.
- **Goal #3:** Promote a dynamic and welcoming work environment.
- **Goal #4:** Strengthen financial management, infrastructure and philanthropy.



Why Columbia College?

Columbia College meets students where they are in life. Whether a student is a recent high school graduate looking for a traditional college campus experience; an adult seeking career advancement or change while juggling a busy schedule; a motivated later-in-life learner; or an individual seeking to enhance their professional standing with certification, Columbia College provides a platform for everyone to realize their full potential.

Columbia College provides opportunities to generate life-changing growth. We deliver education in-person, online and on military installations, enabling all students to customize their educational journey to fit their needs.

Columbia College provides opportunities through programs tailored for flexibility. We are a higher education institution dedicated to blending traditional and non-traditional pedagogical education delivery to a varied student population. The institutional leadership model is based on shared governance. The vision is student-centered and future-focused. The College values tradition but is not bound by it. The College is resilient and continuously evolving and improving.

Columbia College provides opportunities to be innovative. That is what we do. That is who we are. For additional information about Columbia College, please visit www.ccis.edu.



Columbia, Missouri

Columbia offers small-town friendliness with big-city features and a high quality of life for people of all ages and interests. Although the city was founded on education, its location also makes it an attractive spot for businesses and travelers. Located on Interstate 70 and U.S. Highway 63, Columbia is in the middle of the state and the nation. Just a couple hours' drive from both St. Louis and Kansas City, Columbia is Boone County's largest population center with approximately 130,000 residents.

Education

Education is one of the most important industries in Columbia. Whether you have school-aged children or are considering higher education opportunities, Columbia has something for you. In addition to Columbia College, the city is home to three other higher education institutions, including the University of Missouri.

Business

With two major metropolitan areas being a couple of hours away each direction, and only a short drive from the state Capitol in Jefferson City, Columbia is an optimal location for business. The major industries include but are not limited to higher education, health care and insurance.

Recreation

Joggers, walkers and bikers enjoy the many hiking trails in Columbia such as the MKT Nature & Fitness Trail, a 4.7-mile urban walkway through Columbia's beautiful greenbelt. The trail also connects with the Katy Trail State Park, the largest rails-to-trails conversion in the nation, stretching 185 miles across Missouri.

The award-winning Columbia Parks & Recreation Department maintains more than 42 parks and recreation facilities on more than 2,000 acres. In addition to offering life enrichment classes, Parks & Rec also organizes sports leagues for all ages.

Festivals are also popular activities and highlight the best of what Columbia has to offer for fun, family and cultural events. True/False Film Fest, Art in the Park, and the Heritage Festival & Craft Show are just a few of the many annual events.

Sports

For the sports-minded person, opportunities are available at area parks, golf courses, tennis courts, swimming pools, bowling alleys and athletic clubs. The Activity & Recreation Center (ARC) has an indoor leisure pool featuring a triple-loop slide, a large gymnasium hosting two full basketball courts, a group exercise room, a state-of-the-art indoor track and much more. Columbians can also enjoy Mizzou Athletics events and other local intercollegiate sporting events. Additionally, Columbia is home to the Show-Me State Games, an annual, statewide, amateur Olympic-style sporting event for the whole family; the event is the largest state games competition in the nation.

For more information about Columbia, please visit the Columbia Chamber of Commerce website:

www.comochamber.com





The President

The President serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the College with responsibility for ensuring the success of the institution's mission, academic integrity, fiscal stability, enrollment, fundraising efforts, personnel development, and physical plant management consistent with the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. The President will provide dynamic and visionary leadership that ensures Columbia College continues to improve lives by providing quality education to both traditional and non-traditional students. In doing so, the President works closely with the Board of Trustees in developing, refining, communicating, and executing a strategy consistent with the overall mission and vision of the College.



Reporting Relationships & Responsibilities

The President of Columbia College is appointed by, and reports directly to, the Board of Trustees. Positions reporting directly to the President, i.e., the Senior Council, include: Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs; Chief of Staff; Vice President for Operations & Chief Human Resources Officer; Vice President for Enrollment Management & Marketing and Athletics; Vice President for Advancement; Chief Financial Officer; Associate Vice President for Student Experience & Dean of Student Affairs; Assistant Vice President for Strategic Communications; and the Senior Executive Assistant to the President & Assistant Secretary to the Board. Additional senior-level administrators who participate in Senior Council meetings, but who do not report directly to the President, include the Chief Information Officer, the Senior Director of Plant & Facilities, and the General Counsel. Overall, the President provides leadership for the College's approximately 70 full-time faculty members, 800 adjunct faculty members and 330 full-time staff members.

In addition to fostering meaningful relationships within the College, the President is expected to develop and maintain productive relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders, including but not limited to local and regional community leaders; state and local educational and governmental leaders; corporate partners; alumni; donors; and foundations.

The President should be personally invested in the future of Columbia College and become an integral member of the campus and Columbia communities. Further, the President will be expected to develop, build, nurture, and maintain significant, productive, and trusting relationships with all stakeholders to appropriately advocate for resources, financial and otherwise, to meet the needs of the College.

In addition to the broad responsibilities listed above, specific responsibilities include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Work harmoniously with the Board of Trustees, implementing board policies, making appropriate recommendations on items requiring board action, and keeping the board informed of issues, needs, and the operation of the College. Partner with the board to develop, implement, and/or execute the College's strategic plan in support of Columbia College's vision, mission, values, and goals.
- Provide strategic and operational leadership for all operations of the College.
- Provide academic leadership, along with the Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, in recruiting, retaining, and motivating a high-quality faculty committed to the mission and vision of Columbia College.
- Promote and foster shared governance and academic excellence.
- Strive to build, realign, and/or strengthen academic programs to be responsive to the current and future needs of students and faculty.
- Maintain adequate oversight, control, and stewardship of the College's financial resources and fiscal affairs.
- Lead the Senior Council with integrity, trust, sincerity, inclusiveness, collaboration and humility.
- Provide leadership for all faculty and staff to set a high standard of performance, nurturing and supporting achievement, growth and professional development; work actively with all areas of the College to encourage innovation, collaboration, civility, inclusiveness and teamwork.
- Commitment to recruiting and retaining quality faculty, staff and students.
- Promote initiatives to attract qualified students and meet enrollment goals, increase retention and support completion of degree programs by students.
- Actively lead and participate in fundraising and development activities; major gift solicitations; grow the endowment; create, sustain, and build trusting relationships with multiple internal and external constituencies to increase and diversify revenue streams.

- Work to build a sustainable financial model for the College in conjunction with the Board of Trustees.
- Actively engage with the student body, serving as a role model for students.
- Serve as the face of the College and seek appropriate opportunities to promote and market Columbia College in the community, the region, and nationally via the media, public relations activities, community activities, etc.
- Develop and support partnerships between the College, business and industry, the military, state and local officials, other educational organizations, cultural entities, and civic organizations.
- Maintain regular and consistent contact with alumni, faculty, staff, and the student body to facilitate open communication; listen to ideas and concerns; collaborate in development of opportunities and solutions.
- Seek professional development opportunities and encourage others to take advantage of opportunities to further enhance professional knowledge, skills, effectiveness, and competence.

Qualifications

Preferred qualifications include the following:

- Passion and enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the mission and vision of Columbia College.
- Demonstrate a belief in providing students a strong liberal arts & sciences educational experience.
- Appreciation for, and desire to be part of, a student-centric community that is focused on the quality and value of all students and their success.
- Espouse and model leadership principles based on integrity, honesty, trust, transparency, sincerity, inclusiveness, collaboration, humility, servant leadership, approachability, accessibility, and compassion; a leader who inspires individuals to be their best.
- Visionary, strategic, and creative thinker; able to think innovatively and explore new ideas especially in the areas of enrollment management, academic affairs and educational content delivery, and fiscal affairs; understand the changing landscape in higher education, especially private higher education.
- Ability to lead the College, strategically and operationally; ability to articulate the College's vision, mission, values and strategy to a variety of stakeholders.
- Proven record of successful leadership and managerial skills, whether within or outside of an academic environment; ability to give and receive constructive feedback and hold yourself and others accountable; understanding of shared governance and the importance of collaboration and buy-in.
- Exceptional people skills and interpersonal abilities; able to build and maintain close relationships and engender trust; willing and eager to use these attributes for stakeholder relations and financial development.
- Excellent communication skills; active listener; appreciates and considers suggestions and ideas of others.
- Ability to be an effective fundraiser; preference for successful experience leading fundraising in support of endowment, programs, and/or facilities.
- Good business management skills along with a strong financial acumen.
- Willingness to make decisions, including difficult but necessary decisions; willingness to take appropriate risks.
- Desire to be involved in campus activities and participate in the activities of the greater Columbia College community, the city of Columbia, as well as the state and surrounding region.
- Appropriate academic credentials; strong preference for a terminal degree; however, interested individuals with outstanding success in business or a professional career, outside of academics, are encouraged to apply.



Compensation

Compensation will be commensurate with experience including a competitive base salary, car allowance, comprehensive benefits package, and housing assistance.

How to Apply

To make a nomination, provide a referral or for additional information, please use the contact information below. Applications and nominations will be accepted until a successful candidate has been appointed. Review of applications will begin immediately.

To apply, please submit a resume and cover letter to: CCPresident@buffkinbaker.com

Ken Carrick, Partner
980-296-5401

Janny DeLoache, Associate Partner
704-377-7828

At Columbia College, we encourage individuals from all backgrounds and belief systems to join our community.

We are an equal opportunity institution that does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, citizenship status, veteran status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy status, parental status, marital status, age, disability, or any other protected status.

Columbia College is an equal opportunity employer and encourages applications from underrepresented groups.