

EXECUTIVE SEARCH

POSITION SPECIFICATION

TITLE: President

INSTITUTION: Onondaga Community College

LOCATION: Syracuse, New York

INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE:

Onondaga Community College (OCC) is a college of the State University of New York (SUNY) system and one of 30 locally sponsored community colleges throughout New York State.

With an enrollment of nearly 13,000 students, Onondaga Community College is one of the largest and most successful community colleges in New York State. Onondaga offers nearly 50 two-year associate degree programs and certificate programs, and maintains articulation agreements with more than 80 colleges and universities throughout the region and beyond. More than half of Onondaga's student body is enrolled in transfer programs, with a significant percentage of students pursuing direct-to-work programs. A growing number of workforce development partnerships provide students and incumbent employees with access to credentials necessary for career and professional advancement.

Through Onondaga's Regional Higher Education Center, students can earn a bachelor's degree on the Onondaga campus through innovative partnerships with SUNY Empire State College, SUNY Cobleskill, SUNY Delhi, Kaplan University, and Keuka College.

Onondaga's community education programs include classes for personal enrichment and professional development; accelerated degree programs for working adults; customized training for local business and industry; and, special programs for children and teens, individuals with disabilities, small businesses and school districts.

Onondaga has grown tremendously over the last decade, enjoying record enrollment growth as well as \$100 million in capital improvements. The College's recent Capital Campaign exceeded its \$7.5m goal in support of student scholarships. The campus includes nine academic buildings, the majority of which have been renovated in the last decade. A new academic/performance building for Onondaga's signature music program will be completed in the spring of 2013. The Gordon Student Center is a "one-stop" enrollment and student services center and includes modern dining facilities and the Hospitality Management program's student-run restaurant, "The Bistro." The student center also houses Onondaga's Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP) and Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) to support underrepresented student populations. A fully staffed, full time Office of Veterans' Affairs serves more than 250 student-veterans each year.

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The College has four modern residence halls accommodating 779 students. Also on campus, the recently completed SRC Arena is a 6,500 seat, multi-purpose arena with a six lane track, state-of-the-art fitness center and community meeting space. An innovative partnership provides a YMCA on the campus that serves students, faculty and staff as well as the nearby community. Alongside the arena is Murphy Field, a synthetic turf field with seating for up to 2,000 spectators. Presently under construction and due to be completed in the summer of 2013 is a new baseball and softball facility.

Onondaga strives to provide the full college experience and offers a full complement of clubs, organizations and intramurals to enrich student life. Storer Auditorium, an art gallery, and The Ann Felton Multicultural Center serve as the primary locale for Arts Across Campus, a year-round series of high quality arts and cultural programming designed to enhance student learning through the arts. The College's athletic teams have consistently won National Championships in men's and women's lacrosse and men's tennis.

Situated on 280 acres on a beautiful hilltop just outside the city limits of Syracuse, Onondaga's pristine campus is noted for its hills, wooded terrain, and expansive views of the surrounding countryside. Located in Central New York, Onondaga is a gateway for the Finger Lakes, Lake Ontario, and the St. Lawrence Seaway as well as the Adirondack mountains. It is located within a day's drive of many major cities, including New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington and Toronto.

Onondaga is a diverse educational learning community. The Board of Trustees, faculty and staff are committed to creating and maintaining an atmosphere where individuality is not only recognized - but encouraged – as an integral component of the fabric of the campus environment. Onondaga's mission is to *help students to explore their interests, discover their talents and transform their lives through education*. In fulfilling this mission, bold goals have been set forth in the College's 2011-2016 Strategic Plan, *A Framework for Success*.

MAJOR POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES:

The President of Onondaga Community College is the Chief Executive Officer of the College and reports to Onondaga's Board of Trustees. The President is responsible for the success of all aspects of the College's operations: academic, financial, administrative, government relations, community relations and alumni and donor relations.

The President provides leadership and vision for matters that affect academic programs and ensures the quality of student learning. He/she reflects and promotes the vision and identity of the College and advances a high-quality teaching and learning environment. The President will communicate and work effectively with members of the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors and the community. Additionally, the President will work closely with the State University of New York, its Chancellor and the Presidents of the other 63 SUNY institutions. The President works closely with the sponsoring entity, the Onondaga County Legislature and the Onondaga County Executive. In addition to managing the day-to-day affairs of the College, the President, in consultation with the senior management team, is responsible for implementing the College's five year strategic plan and mobilizing the organization and its partners in securing resources necessary to achieve the bold strategic goals contained within the plan.

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The new President will build upon the accomplishments of the past while continuing to enhance the College's academic programs and overall reputation in the region. He/she will skillfully manage a complex set of relationships across a broad group of stakeholders, many of which will have divergent interests. As a result, strong listening, communication and negotiation skills will be critical to success.

The President will also:

- Serve as the “face” of Onondaga both internally and externally. To the students, faculty and staff, the new President will be a visible, approachable leader. He/She will also develop strong relationships within the local and regional community, including government officials, and will actively engage employers in the area to ensure that Onondaga's academic programs and curricula are well-matched with the needs of the region.
- Be an inspirational leader. The new President will be inclusive by nature and will provide steady, visible leadership and support for the faculty and staff, fostering a culture of collaboration within the College and with the constituencies it serves.
- Have a track record of recruiting and retaining a talented and diverse team.
- Possess a strong financial background. Given the decreases in local/city and state funding as well as the natural fluctuations in the enrollment cycle, the new President will have the financial mind and innovative approach to navigate the College through a dramatically changing funding reality.
- Work to create a truly seamless transfer experience for students who wish to transfer to other institutions both inside and outside of the SUNY system.
- Embrace Onondaga's adult learning population who are looking to continue their education. Seek ways to continue to offer a high quality education with flexible delivery options and enhanced services.
- Increase Onondaga's standards for the retention of students.
- Provide operational leadership for the College, to include planning for infrastructure and human resources in order to support and guide the College's strategic and academic requirements for both the short and long term.
- Maintain a strong academic curriculum that is in full compliance with accreditation standards.
- Drive development/fundraising initiatives and convey to potential benefactors that the institution is strong, its vision is clear, and that their support will have a significant impact.
- Establish credibility with, and influence state and local government officials in the executive and legislative branches, on behalf of the institution.
- Engage effectively inside and outside the institution with a broad and diverse set of constituents and personalities. Actively seek to connect and work with people of all ages and backgrounds holding different perspectives.
- Express ideas clearly, both orally and in writing, to diverse audiences, for and on behalf of the institution, and listen effectively. Convey and ensure that differing viewpoints will be given full consideration in decision making.
- Represent the College in professional or regional organizations as appropriate.

EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS:

Onondaga's new leader must be passionate about the mission and role of a community college. He/She will be a person of unquestioned integrity, creative vision and great energy. The new leader will accept

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and relish the challenge of elevating Onondaga to the very top tier of all U.S. community colleges. The new President will achieve this top tier recognition through innovation and high standards in academic programs and student services, resourcefulness and efficiency in managing infrastructure and resources, *and* most importantly, through the success of its students.

Overall, the new President will be student-centered. He/She will gain great satisfaction through touching the hearts and minds of Onondaga's students and inspiring them to "be all that they can be." He/She must embrace the mission of a community college and recognize the unique challenges and opportunities of serving a student population that often requires remedial education courses and support services to ensure success.

The ideal candidate will have an established track record of educational and intellectual leadership within academia; however, individuals with relevant backgrounds, with a demonstrated deep commitment to higher education, will also be considered. The best candidates will possess strengths in the most current thinking in program assessment and student development, operational and financial skills, and faculty and staff development. Overall, he/she will be a strategic leader with a stamina for inclusion and deep commitment to a two year community college.

Other important considerations include:

- Strong track record of civic and community involvement.
- Strong experience as an effective communicator and negotiator, and ability to work well in a unionized environment.
- Politically savvy with strong government, media and public relations experience.
- Demonstrated results as an effective fundraiser.
- Demonstrated success in building a diverse team and fostering a culture of inclusion.

EDUCATION:

An earned doctorate from an accredited institution plus faculty experience at the college level is highly desired.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Special skills and attributes should include:

- High degree of ethics, integrity, and personal drive to achieve success.
- Strong business judgment, leadership and integrity are essential for this position.
- Courage – not afraid of tackling large, complicated issues; not afraid to ask tough questions.
- A high "Emotional Quotient" and the ability to be a collaborative, team player who enjoys working with, and as part of a larger team; with a sense of fairness and respect in dealing with staff and the student body.

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- Strong communications and interpersonal skills. Must be able to integrate within the functional structure of Onondaga Community College and within the SUNY system. This work involves forging alliances, sharing accountability and creating solutions to meet the greater needs of the College.
- Discretion in handling highly sensitive issues.
- Experience working effectively in large, complex environments.
- Creative thinker who is not afraid to suggest new ideas.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills that inspires a culture of open-exchange and collaboration.
- Strong facilitation, negotiation and mediation skills.
- A genuine, empathetic approach.
- Excellent organizational skills and meticulous attention to detail.
- A “doer” with strong initiative and natural energy, motivation and endurance to work in a growth-oriented, fast-paced and challenging environment.

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