

ORGANIZATION: University of Pittsburgh
TITLE: Vice Chancellor, Alumni Relations
REPORTS TO: [Kris Davitt](#), Vice Chancellor, Development and Alumni Relations¹; Chief Development Officer, UPMC; President, Medical and Health Sciences Foundation
LOCATION: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
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TO APPLY: Please send resume and cover letter (PDF) to PittVCAR@pbrsearch.com.

BACKGROUND

The University of Pittsburgh (“Pitt”) is ranked among the top 25 U.S. public universities according to *U.S. News and World Report*, and 39th in the Thomson Reuters list of the world’s 100 most innovative universities. With an enrollment of more than 34,000 students (approximately 25,000 of whom are undergraduates), the university is one of the largest and oldest institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania and is a member of the [Association of American Universities](#). Pitt is the fifth-largest employer in the city of Pittsburgh, and the university’s research has been a key source of economic growth. Pitt ranks fifth nationally in NIH research funding, as well as tenth overall and sixth among public institutions in the NSF’s most recent ranking of federally-funded research.

The 132-acre central campus is a few miles from Pittsburgh’s downtown business district. Pitt has an endowment of more than \$3.5 billion and more than 300,000 living alumni worldwide. The university employs nearly 5,500 faculty and more than 7,500 staff. Pitt operates on a \$2.2 billion budget. More detailed information about Pitt can be found in the [Fact Book 2019](#).

Under the leadership of [Chancellor Patrick Gallagher](#), the university launched its strategic plan, [The Plan for Pitt](#), which focuses on creating internal and external collaborations and partnerships of impact; harnessing information in pursuit of grand challenges; and shaping a more entrepreneurial, innovative, and inclusive culture.

University of Pittsburgh Medical Center ([UPMC](#)), a world-renowned health care provider, is inventing new models of accountable, cost-effective, patient-centered care. It provides more than \$900 million a year in benefits to its communities, including more care to the region’s most vulnerable citizens than any other health care institution. As Pennsylvania’s largest nongovernmental employer, with more than 80,000 employees, UPMC is composed of more than 30 hospitals, more than 600 doctors’ offices and outpatient sites, an international division, and an enterprises division.

POSITION

Pitt seeks a strategic, collaborative, creative vice chancellor of alumni relations who will be responsible for all alumni relations and engagement across Pitt’s [schools and colleges](#). In collaboration with the senior vice chancellor, the Pitt Alumni Association ([PAA](#)), and the alumni relations team, the vice chancellor will set the strategic vision for activating and energizing a diverse alumni base. This will include developing a broad range of robust programming that meaningfully engages all alumni demographics; leverages school- and center-specific activities; engages regional volunteers; and aligns with overall engagement, leadership development, and fundraising goals. The vice chancellor will manage a budget of \$1M and lead a central alumni relations team of fourteen staff.

The vice chancellor will be an energetic, entrepreneurial leader who will partner with the other vice chancellors on the leadership team and colleagues across the fundraising, volunteer management, annual giving, and supporting functions to develop and launch innovative and creative alumni relations programs and strategies. She/he/they will have a metrics-driven, goal-centric approach and be adept at utilizing data to drive strategic decision-making. The ideal candidate will be a creative thought leader, an effective manager, an inspiring mentor, and an experienced builder of teams and programs. This is an opportunity to join a dynamic leadership team at a vibrant research institution and have a significant impact in defining and shaping a stellar alumni relations program.

¹ The Development and Alumni Relations team will undergo a rebranding and reorganization process. To that end, Kris Davitt’s title will change to Senior Vice Chancellor, Philanthropic and Alumni Engagement. Throughout the rest of the document, she will be referred to by the title of senior vice chancellor.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- In partnership with the senior vice chancellor, create a strategic plan to strengthen current programming and design new programming to engage alumni throughout their lives. This includes developing a culture and strategies for sustainable alumni relations programming for its own sake and, as appropriate, aligning alumni relations programming with fundraising efforts.
- Assess the current organizational structure, then develop and implement plans to grow and strengthen staff resources toward the strategic plan and goals.
- Establish and implement goals and performance metrics for alumni engagement that reflect university priorities, both short- and long-term. Regularly measure and report on progress toward goals.
- Manage the central alumni relations team and provide dotted-line management for school- and campus-specific alumni relations staff to ensure collaboration, integration, and best practices. Problem-solve with regional directors of development on engagement issues unique to their communities.
- Assess current programming for alumni affinity groups, including alumni of color, international alumni, and young alumni. Determine needs and priorities to strengthen this programming.
- Ensure best practices support for all alumni relations volunteer organizations (e.g., 40+ regional clubs, the African American Alumni Council, etc.). This includes building strong staff support, creating useful written and digital engagement resources, improving procedures and processes, and integrating online and social media tools to bolster volunteer activity and serve multiple alumni constituencies, while ensuring the integrity and security of information.
- Serve as the lead point of contact for the PAA board.
- Participate in collaborative efforts, led by the volunteer management unit, to create and manage a comprehensive volunteer pipeline, including volunteer leadership opportunities in support of philanthropic goals.
- Serve as a primary resource and contact for alumni relations issues that impact university offices, including student life, admissions, and deans' offices. Act as a liaison for the Office of the University Secretary on potential trustee recruits.
- Collaborate with internal partners to better integrate the work of alumni relations with other units, leading to coordination of strategy, greater consistency in messaging, and more efficient processes.
- Manage alumni engagement opportunities at key athletics functions, including private and reserved seating at football and basketball games.
- Play a lead role in Homecoming, Grad Central, Blue and Gold Society functions, and other major alumni events. Represent the university at other key events (e.g. Commencement).
- Participate in the planning and execution of chancellor travel in support of alumni engagement.

QUALIFICATIONS

- At least ten years of progressive experience in alumni relations, preferably at a large, complex institution
- Demonstrated success in leadership positions with increasing responsibilities
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively, and to be successful in a complex and goal-oriented environment
- Superior communications, interpersonal, and analytical skills
- Creative, innovative thinking and a willingness to take informed risks
- Well-honed people management skills, with a demonstrated ability to lead and motivate staff, develop organizations, and manage staff through change
- A high level of emotional intelligence, with the ability to engage a diverse group of constituents
- Bachelor's degree
- Some travel, weekend, and evening work required