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ASSISTANT VICE CHANCELLOR, ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Denver, Colorado

<http://du.edu>



UNIVERSITY of
DENVER

The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with the University of Denver in the search for an Assistant Vice Chancellor, Alumni Engagement.

This is a unique opportunity for an experienced, driven, and passionate leader to join a dynamic, growing and purposeful enterprise united around a compelling mission charted by Chancellor Rebecca Chopp and Vice Chancellor Armin Afsahi. The Assistant Vice Chancellor will work with a community of talented professionals united to advance this mission, inspiring philanthropy and engagement among all facets of the University of Denver community.

The University of Denver (DU) is building an advancement enterprise that mirrors the excellence of its great institution. Advancement efforts at DU have a tremendous impact through their relationships with DU's remarkable students, dedicated donors, inspiring alumni, engaged families, and wonderful friends. DU is committed to building and fostering a culture of deep engagement and philanthropy in support of the institution as it implements the *DU IMPACT 2025* vision. The advancement team is a campus-wide network of collaborative, curious, results-oriented, and mission-driven professionals who value inclusivity and possess a deep respect for one another and for our shared profession. Together, they are working to form communities of DU ambassadors all over the world, earn the philanthropy of those who support and believe in its mission, create experiences that deepen the engagement and commitment of its Pioneer community, and build capacity for the University of Denver and DU Advancement to do extraordinary things.

Founded in 1864, the University of Denver is the oldest independent university in the Rocky Mountain region. It has become one of the West's premier private universities, recognized for its commitment to the public good, and for its track record of training thoughtful and creative leaders. With its dedicated faculty and staff and high-achieving students, the university plays an integral role in the cultural, social, economic, and educational life of the region, and increasingly beyond.

The University of Denver is an independent, doctoral-granting research university with high research activity and extensive global reach. *U.S. News and World Report* lists the University of Denver among the nation's top 100 universities. The university enrolls nearly 12,000 students from all regions of the United States and 76 other countries in its distinguished undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. With 71% of undergraduates participating in a university-funded study abroad program, the University of Denver is ranked No. 1 in the nation, among doctoral and research institutions, for international study experiences.

DU students are ethnically and culturally diverse, sharing a commitment to new experiences, a love of diverse perspectives, appreciation for scholarly excellence, an insatiable curiosity, and the drive to harness their passions to make a difference.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Assistant Vice Chancellor, Alumni Engagement will report to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Networks.

PRINCIPAL OPPORTUNITIES

The University of Denver is seeking an experienced, driven, and passionate leader to join its Advancement team as the Assistant Vice Chancellor, Alumni Engagement to awaken a community of advocates for the University of Denver. This is a unique opportunity for an experienced professional to join a dynamic, growing and purposeful enterprise united around a compelling mission charted by Chancellor Rebecca Chopp and Vice Chancellor Armin Afsahi. The Assistant Vice Chancellor will work with a community of talented professionals united to advance this mission, inspiring philanthropy and engagement among all facets of the University of Denver community. The Assistant Vice Chancellor, Alumni Engagement will help pioneer a new paradigm for alumni relations by cultivating strong relationships with alumni in industry as well as building highly effective global networks of alumni focused on supporting and driving the strategic priorities of the university.

The Assistant Vice Chancellor will oversee campus-wide alumni engagement activities as well as programs designed for alumni of specific schools, colleges and units. The University of Denver is unique in its academic portfolio, which boasts both a strong undergraduate experience as well as highly respected graduate and professional schools. Alumni identify with both the institution as well as their specific academic units within it, and the Assistant Vice Chancellor will have the opportunity to apply a creative approach to the crafting of engagement strategies that emphasize the intersection of those identities.

The Assistant Vice Chancellor will also launch and lead DU's regional campaign strategy, a nation-wide commitment to build and maintain a continuous presence in the university's major markets. Through the regional advancement program, the Assistant Vice Chancellor will strategically engage the global Pioneer family in supporting and advancing the university, working closely with development professionals in the regions to holistically build a culture of engagement and philanthropy in each of the primary markets. With over sixty percent of the alumni base living outside of Colorado and thousands of parents and friends spread throughout the country, the Assistant Vice Chancellor's leadership will be imperative in building and sustaining a strong national cultivation strategy.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Campus-Wide Alumni Engagement

The Assistant Vice Chancellor, Alumni Engagement will

- lead a team of engagement professionals who are functionally aligned with Global Networks within DU Advancement and are embedded within their assigned schools, colleges, and units; and
- oversee university-wide engagement opportunities and align unit-specific programming with campus-wide efforts and priorities.

Regional Advancement

The Assistant Vice Chancellor, Alumni Engagement will

- build DU's continuous presence in key markets across the United States;

- lead the design and execution of market engagement strategies for each region, and partner with engagement and development professionals embedded in those regions to achieve regional goals; and
- nurture a sustainable network of volunteers and leaders to effectively scale engagement efforts and facilitate two-way communication that represents the interests and voice of the alumni body, and allows the university to communicate needs and news as well as celebrate accomplishments.

Leadership

The Assistant Vice Chancellor, Alumni Engagement will

- serve as a member of the Vice Chancellor’s leadership team, helping to craft and guide the overarching strategy of DU’s advancement enterprise;
- provide comprehensive leadership of a highly outbound team that proactively brings DU into a place of greater relevance for employers, alumni, and parents serving as advocates and volunteers including supporting the day-to-day functionality of the alumni engagement team, as well as facilitating recruitment, hiring, training, mentoring, evaluation, and professional development;
- directly supervise the campus-based alumni engagement team (10-12 full time employees) and the regionally-based engagement team (5 full time employees); and
- effectively manage the alumni engagement operating budget, including monitoring transactions, promoting policy compliance, and assisting in budget modeling and forecasting processes.

University Citizenship

The Assistant Vice Chancellor, Alumni Engagement will

- serve as an active and collaborative partner to all central and unit-based advancement functions and campus colleagues to foster strategic, effective, and collaborative practices; and
- contribute to team success and model “One DU” leadership.

KEY COLLEAGUES



Rebecca Chopp, PhD
Chancellor

The University’s chancellor, Rebecca Chopp, PhD, came to the University of Denver from Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania. There she served as president and passionately upheld the college’s longstanding commitment to admitting the most highly qualified students without regard for their financial circumstances. She supported innovative ways for faculty and students to interact and extended the distinct role the school plays in educating students to build inclusive communities and to become leaders motivated to contribute to the public good. Before joining Swarthmore, Dr. Chopp served as president of Colgate University, where she led a comprehensive strategic plan that expanded the University’s academic space, strengthened academic programs, and developed new interdisciplinary centers.

She also served as provost and executive vice president for academic affairs at Emory University and as a dean at Yale University. Dr. Chopp is a widely published author and editor. She is on the governing board of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, has chaired the Patriot League, is the immediate past chair of the Centennial Conference President’s Council, and has served and on the board of the National Survey of Student Engagement. Dr. Chopp has also served as a member of the executive committee of the Annapolis Group, the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Foundation for Teaching, and president of the

American Academy of Religion. A native of Kansas, Dr. Chopp received a BA from Kansas Wesleyan University, an MDiv from St. Paul School of Theology, and a PhD from the University of Chicago. Each of her alma maters has honored her with distinguished awards, and she has received six honorary doctorates from other colleges and universities. An important element of Dr. Chopp's successes at her previous institutions is her talent and passion for fundraising and her demonstrated willingness to be a strong partner and committed champion for college and university development programs.



Armin Afsahi
Vice Chancellor for Advancement

Armin Afsahi is the University of Denver's Vice Chancellor for Advancement. In this capacity, he inspires the vision and provides the leadership for the university's philanthropy programs, and oversees development, alumni relations, global engagement, advancement services, communications, and the campaign. As the chief philanthropy officer, he facilitates strong, sincere and lasting relationships with key University leaders as well as alumni, parents, and friends of the University of Denver.

Armin brings to the community a dynamic mix of expertise spanning creative alumni engagement strategies, innovative and highly effective fundraising strategies, and leadership of comprehensive campaigns raising in excess of \$1 billion. He has over 24 years of private and public sector experience in institutional advancement, business development, strategic planning, marketing, and operations. For the past 10 years, he has been a senior advancement executive for prestigious institutions including the University of California, San Diego and Georgetown University. Armin holds an MBA in finance and strategic management from University of San Diego, and a BA in communication from UC-San Diego. Armin's public and professional service includes public lectures and presentations at numerous industry occasions, as well as service on the Council of Alumni Association Executives Board of Directors, Council of Advancement and Support of Education Board of Directors, Marine & Oceanic Sustainability Foundation Board of Directors, San Diego Humane Society, and a Partner with San Diego Social Venture Partners.

Prior to the University of Denver, Armin served as UC San Diego's associate vice chancellor for Alumni and Community Engagement for nearly eight years where he led the alumni relations; annual giving and regional advancement; donor development, undergraduate scholarship fundraising; marketing and digital outreach; publication of the university's Triton magazine; campus-wide corporate relations and industry engagement; and, the student career and professional development center. Armin also served as chief alumni officer for the university and led the UCSD Alumni Association and its Board of Directors.

In his first year at DU, Armin re-shaped the advancement culture across the university, established practices and service lines to advance the vision of the Chancellor, and re-imagined DU's global engagement paradigm. Specifically, Armin led the important effort to unify Advancement across the university and align fundraising and engagement practices in a consistent framework. Through creative engagement initiatives, coherent and transparent fundraising acumen, and significant traction on transformative concept development, DU's witnessed its second largest fundraising in history during a year without a single major capital gift.



Brandon Buzbee
Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Networks

Brandon Buzbee joined the University of Denver in November of 2015 as University Advancement's associate vice chancellor for global networks. In his newly envisioned role at DU, Brandon has been responsible for setting the vision for, and overseeing the execution of, donor pipeline development, industry engagement, student philanthropy, career and professional development services, and university-wide alumni engagement. Brandon brings depth in and commitment to advancing higher education, and he possesses a unique blend of vision, creativity, experience, and passion to his role. As a member of the Advancement leadership team,

Brandon, along with his team, plays a vital role in fulfilling the promises inherent in Chancellor Chopp's vision for DU's future.

Prior to DU, Brandon served as the executive director of industry engagement and regional development at the University of California, San Diego. During his tenure, he forged a new paradigm for the Alumni Association to shift its focus away from soliciting memberships toward cultivating sustained philanthropic relationships. He also led new and innovative initiatives in alumni outreach, student philanthropy, career services, and prospect pipeline development. Nationally, he has been recognized for his contributions to the field of alumni relations and career services. He has served as faculty at national conferences and he has presented many times on emerging trends in both the alumni relations and career services.

Brandon has been recognized by the Council on the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District VII as a Rising Star in University Advancement and by the Council of Alumni Association Executives as the Robert G. Forman Fellow. The prestigious fellowship is awarded to encourage the advancement of high potential, senior professionals into chief alumni relations positions. Highly relevant to the University Advancement's mission, his fellowship generated an in-depth research paper on emerging models alumni relations offices are using to better serve the career and professional needs of their alumni. He is regularly invited as a speaker at colleges and universities, and he has recently concluded the authorship of a chapter in an upcoming CASE publication that speaks to best practices in involving students in the work of Advancement. As associate vice chancellor, Brandon brings a clear vision for the future to grow the breadth and depth of student, alumni, and community engagement at the University of Denver.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES

The ideal candidate for the position of Assistant Vice Chancellor, Alumni Engagement should have

- innovative, curious nature and the ability to challenge long-standing paradigms of alumni relations;
- demonstrated ability to form and fully leverage cross-functional teams of colleagues, volunteers, and academic/administrative leaders;
- strong written and oral communication skills;
- ability to represent the University of Denver, and its major initiatives and units, in a variety of capacities;
- proven ability to work with a high level of independence, maintain confidentiality, prioritize assignments, and manage time effectively;
- demonstrated interpersonal skills to foster and maintain effective relationships with colleagues, donors, volunteers, and University Officials;
- ability to interact effectively with diverse groups having competing interests and priorities within the University and community;

- demonstrated, measurable success in increasing the engagement of a large constituent community;
- experience leading alumni and/or employer relations in a complex and dynamic higher education setting;
- experience leading alumni relations activities during a comprehensive campaign; and
- experience forming and/or leading a regionally-based engagement program.

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is 7-10 years of experience in constituent engagement, preferably in a higher education setting. The successful candidate will have at least 5 years of experience managing personnel, with a demonstrated commitment to coaching, mentoring, and developing team members.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The University of Denver offers a competitive salary and a comprehensive benefits package.

LOCATION

The University of Denver benefits from an incredible setting. Thanks to its natural beauty, sophisticated cities, and welcoming Western culture, Colorado is ranked the fourth happiest state in the nation (*WalletHub* 2014). Not only is Colorado the country's most popular ski destination, it also is home to four national parks, 42 state parks, and many outdoor recreation areas for boating, hiking, camping, swimming, snowmobiling, bird-watching, world-class fishing, hunting, and biking. As a result, Colorado has the fittest and leanest population in the nation.

DU students, faculty, and staff draw on the great outdoors and on the vibrant city of Denver for a diverse array of recreational opportunities, cultural attractions, and sporting events. Student-athletes compete on the Denver Pioneers NCAA Division I Summit League sports teams. The school boasts 32 national titles, including most recently, the 2017 NCAA Men's Hockey Championship, 2016 NCAA Skiing Championship and the 2015 NCAA Men's Lacrosse Championship (becoming the first team west of the Mississippi River to earn the title). The ski team has won more national championships than any other program in the country. DU has also earned the Directors Cup for eight of the past nine years. On the professional level, Denver has a team in each of the four major sports leagues: the Denver Broncos in the NFL, the Colorado Avalanche in the NHL, the Denver Nuggets in the NBA, and the Colorado Rockies in the MLB.

For creative entertainment, the DU community enjoys musical, theatrical, and innovative performances in the on-campus Newman Center for the Performing Arts. In downtown Denver, the Denver Performing Arts Complex is the largest such facility under one roof, and it is home to the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, Opera Colorado, Denver Center Theater Company, and the Colorado Ballet.

The city is known for its revitalized urban areas, including Lower Downtown, or LoDo, a hub of shopping, dining, and nightlife that is just eight miles from campus. In recent years, Denver has emerged as an attractive destination for an increasingly diverse and talented workforce; it is the fastest growing city for millennials and entrepreneurs. Metro Denver has a population of 2.7 million people, with a growth rate that has consistently outpaced the national rate every decade since the 1930s.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The University of Denver is its people—all its people. DU aims to attract bright and motivated students and give them every opportunity to thrive. It relies on engaged faculty who are passionate about their teaching and their scholarship. It depends on talented staff to support the operation and mission of the university. In an organization so reliant on its people, creating a diverse and inclusive community isn't only the right thing to do; it's critical to the successful implementation of its mission. The greatest challenges faced in the century ahead are incredibly complex and will require diverse teams who can work collaboratively and innovatively. Actively seeking a student body and a faculty and staff who represent the diversity of the region, nation, and world is necessary to prepare students for an increasingly globalized and connected world. That diversity extends to identities beyond just race and gender—including sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, religion, political and ideological viewpoints, and more.

As the University of Denver prepares to meet the exciting challenges of this growing, thriving, and remarkably diverse city as well as the needs of a changing nation, it will continue to be guided by the principles of Inclusive Excellence. DU must continue to strive for an inclusive community that embraces all its members, provides equality of opportunity for all, and actively encourages all voices to be heard. Everyone must be welcomed and treated with dignity and respect, and every person's story must be honored. An inclusive community celebrates different cultures, engages in clamorous debates, and cultivates the individual and collective flourishing of all.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. Before submitting your materials, please read them over for accuracy. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To nominate a candidate, contact Michael Vann: michaelvann@aspingleadershipgroup.com.

All inquiries will be held in confidence.

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