

## VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADVANCEMENT

[SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY](#)

Boston, Massachusetts



**SUFFOLK  
UNIVERSITY**  
BOSTON

The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Suffolk University in the search for a Vice President for Advancement.

The Vice President for Advancement will oversee a fully integrated advancement program that fosters meaningful alumni engagement, increases alumni participation, and works to ensure fundraising success to further the mission of the university. The Vice President will formulate effective and creative short-term and long-term strategic plans that will significantly increase private philanthropic support; manage, recruit, and mentor a talented team of professional and administrative staff that is well prepared to meet the ongoing challenges and aspirations of the university; and guide and support the President in their role as chief spokesperson for the school as well as engage other senior leaders in the activities of the advancement office.

Suffolk University is a private, coeducational, nonsectarian university located in Boston, Massachusetts. The university was founded in 1906 to provide access and opportunity to individuals who wanted to better their lives through education. Suffolk remains true to that founding mission today. For more than a century, Suffolk has been woven into Boston's thriving urban landscape, offering a truly immersive environment in which to live, learn, and explore. Suffolk continues to anticipate and respond to the needs of a diverse student body. Students still benefit from their proximity to Boston's top employers, including the key business, health care, biotechnology, and start-up industries that increasingly define the city. Partnerships with the Museum of African American History, the Boston Public Schools, the judiciary, and many other entities engage faculty and students in groundbreaking scholarship and community participation. More than 6,500 students are enrolled in full and part-time programs leading to bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs offered through the university's College of Arts & Sciences, Sawyer Business School, and Law School. Small class sizes allow faculty to recognize each student's potential and build important mentoring relationships. Beyond the classroom, the university offers robust co-curricular learning and career development opportunities including through the work of the Center for Career Equity, Development & Success and the Office of Student Leadership & Involvement. Suffolk offers opportunities for study abroad at more than 50 locations in 25 countries around the world. There also are more than 100 clubs and organizations to choose from, and students can compete with one of 19 NCAA Division III athletic teams. Upon graduation, Suffolk students are well prepared for success and join a proud alumni community of more than 88,000 members who span the globe. These Suffolk alumni are deeply invested in the success of today's graduates.

Suffolk University is driven by the power of education, inclusion, and engagement to change lives and positively impact communities. Committed to excellence, Suffolk provides students with experiential and transformational learning opportunities that begin in the center of Boston, reach across the globe, and lead to extraordinary outcomes for graduates.

Committed to the success of its students and alumni, Suffolk University consistently receives top rankings. *U.S. News & World Report* names Suffolk among the best national universities and as one of the top 100 universities for social mobility. Suffolk is also included on the top colleges and universities list by *Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education*. Named one of Massachusetts' Top 100 women-led businesses by *The Women's Edge* and *Boston Globe Magazine* since 2018, it ranked in the top 20 in 2022—the highest university on the list. The professional schools at Suffolk are among the best in the country. *PreLaw Magazine* named the university among the top 25 most innovative law schools and the Law School's Legal Technology program received top ranking in the nation from the publication in 2018 and 2021. Sawyer Business School is the only United States business school to be simultaneously accredited by AACSB, NASPAA, and CAHME for its graduate business, public administration, and healthcare programs, and was ranked as a best business school by *Princeton Review* in 2022.

### REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Vice President for Advancement will report to the President, Marisa Kelly, and will serve on the President's Senior Leadership Team. The Vice President will oversee a team of 41 staff.

### FROM PRESIDENT KELLY

*If not for Suffolk...*

*That's a refrain we hear often from our alumni. They go on to describe how this institution provided them with educational opportunities that changed the course of their lives. The details of those stories are as varied and unique as the individuals who tell them, but they share that common theme—the idea that Suffolk opened doors that might otherwise have remained closed and gave individuals with potential the opportunity to succeed. It's something we have been doing since our founding in 1906.*

*Employees seek out Suffolk for a number of reasons, not the least of which is our location in the heart of downtown Boston, a higher-education hub that courses with intellectual curiosity and innovation. But they tend to stay here because they are committed to our essential mission of providing those life-changing educational experiences. They believe in the powerful notion that our greatest breakthroughs are human ones.*

*Our new Vice President for Advancement will be a leader in supporting those breakthroughs. Many of the same alumni who credit Suffolk with changing their lives want to give back so that new generations of students can experience similar opportunity—a virtuous philanthropic circle that is also as old as the university itself. And the need is great. More than 90 percent of Suffolk undergraduate students receive financial aid. They come from all walks of life and backgrounds, and many are the first in their families to attend college. Their access to the educational opportunity that we offer depends significantly on scholarship gifts from our donors.*

*Growing that scholarship aid is a strategic focus for the advancement division and the university itself. We have an exceptionally talented group of collaborators within the advancement organization who are deeply committed to that effort and to continuing to build a thriving culture of philanthropy at Suffolk.*

*I look forward to working alongside our next Vice President for Advancement as a member of Suffolk's leadership team—and as a close partner in our effort to ensure that more and more graduates will share their "If not for Suffolk" stories for generations to come.*

—Marisa Kelly, President

## **SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

At Suffolk University, diversity is more than simple demographic representation. It is paired with and activated by inclusion—creating a welcoming environment where all voices are heard, and all can make meaningful contributions.

Cultivating a diverse and inclusive community and creating more equitable outcomes require conscious effort. At Suffolk this effort takes many forms, including professional development opportunities and resources for faculty that are focused on diversity and inclusion, such as those developed and supported by The Center for Teaching & Scholarly Excellence and the Race on Campus Faculty Professional Learning Community. The university engages in ongoing assessment and updating of curricula to increase representation in course design and content, as well as equity in the classroom experience, which has led to business students learning how to make workplaces more equitable and welcoming to employees of all identities; government students learning how to engage diverse constituencies and craft public policy that benefits all; and psychology students learning how to build resiliency in underrepresented and immigrant communities facing racist speech and acts.

The faculty and staff of Suffolk University have an enormous impact on the student experience at Suffolk. They play a primary role in creating an inclusive and equitable campus community by supporting and advising students according to their unique needs. To be effective guides, mentors, and advisors, it is crucial that faculty and staff members alike are mindful of their students' identities and lived experiences. Equally important is their ability to collaborate with each other in a workplace that is supportive, open, respectful, and equitable. Suffolk University provides faculty and staff members with a range of resources designed specifically to help foster this kind of working environment.

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Development and Alumni Relations**

The Vice President for Advancement will

- assess the fundraising potential of the university, creating a sophisticated fundraising strategy that results in short-term gains as well as sustainable long-term growth in unrestricted, restricted spendable, and endowed funds;
- plan and implement campaigns that excite and energize the Suffolk community, serve as a challenge to new and existing donors, and meet the needs of the university;
- systematically and strategically identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward new individual and institutional donors capable of making significant contributions;
- personally cultivate and solicit major and principal gift prospects from a portfolio of current and prospective donors, both individual and institutional;
- understand and internalize the priorities and funding needs of the university and the compatible goals of individual schools and centers and articulate those priorities in clear and compelling terms to targeted communities;
- develop alumni programming that is engaging and brings the rich and varied resources of Suffolk to alumni;
- ensure that the stewardship of donors makes supporting Suffolk a personally fulfilling experience;
- ensure that the efforts of development and alumni relations are well coordinated among the schools and colleges within the university; and
- assess the infrastructure of development and alumni relations programs and formulate and effectively execute plans for improvement.

## **Annual Giving and Alumni Participation**

The Vice President for Advancement will

- formulate effective and creative strategic plans that grow and sustain alumni participation;
- provide strategic direction and leadership to the annual fund, and develop efficient and effective programs that maximize annual giving from alumni, parents, and friends in support of the goals and priorities of the university;
- through the use of data analysis, utilize the annual fund program as a pipeline for major and planned giving prospects;
- ensure that resources invested in the annual fund provide a generous return to the university in terms of increased funding and greater alumni engagement;
- determine points of evaluation, metrics, and analyses necessary to assess the effectiveness of all solicitation and participation programs, and help develop strategies and tactics that drive growth in giving; and
- working in conjunction with key partners, create and implement marketing strategies and ensure that marketing and promotional materials for the annual fund are consistent with university messaging and branding.

## **Advancement Management**

The Vice President for Advancement will

- manage, recruit, and mentor a team of professional and administrative staff that is well prepared to meet the ongoing challenges and aspirations of the university;
- set high standards, clear expectations, and establish metrics for success;
- ensure staff execute effective strategies that result in the meaningful engagement and successful solicitation of donors; and
- foster an environment that strives for excellence through mastery of best practices and implementation of new ideas.

## **University Engagement**

The Vice President for Advancement will

- guide and support the President in their role as chief spokesperson for the university, serving as coach, mentor, and co-strategist on the cultivation and solicitation of transformative gifts;
- provide deans with the resources necessary to leverage the strength of alumni and donors in support of the needs and aspirations of their schools;
- assist faculty in becoming part of the donor identification and cultivation process;
- encourage collaboration, open communication, and transparency with colleges, offices, and units as well as with senior administrators and other partners in development and alumni relations efforts;
- ensure open communication with the Board of Trustees, providing information on the progress of fundraising efforts while providing active and meaningful engagement;
- provide senior leaders with clear and consistent communications on the activities of university advancement;
- ensure that the university is able to draw upon the skills and talents of its talented and accomplished alumni; and
- convey to volunteers that their service is valued by the university and that their support is appreciated.

## **Communications**

The Vice President for Advancement will

- work collaboratively with the Office of Marketing and Communications to ensure that internal and external communications incorporate appropriate and consistent development and alumni relations messages and are aligned with the key messages of the university;
- leverage university advancement resources to create effective messaging and promote the university's mission and aspirations; and
- leverage social media and technology to achieve participation and fundraising goals.

## **LEADERSHIP**

### **Marisa Kelly President**

Marisa Kelly was named Suffolk's permanent President in March 2018 after guiding the university as Acting President for 20 months. Her leadership accomplishments are both concrete—shattering fundraising goals, adopting innovative curriculum, embracing best practices in governance—and more subtle—fostering an environment of inclusion and instilling confidence in students, faculty, and staff. At a time of changing demographics, Suffolk is seeing positive enrollment trends under Dr. Kelly's leadership. Her focus on financial management, local and international partnerships, and academic excellence are yielding positive trends for the university and enhancing the educational environment.

Dr. Kelly joined Suffolk University as Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost in August 2014, with responsibility for working collaboratively to ensure the quality of the educational experience for students at all levels, in and outside of the classroom. In that role Dr. Kelly distinguished herself on the Senior Leadership Team and demonstrated her commitment to experiential learning and the development of interdisciplinary educational opportunities.

Dr. Kelly, whose academic discipline is political science, has a distinguished record of collaborative academic leadership. Before joining Suffolk, she served as Provost at Ithaca College, Dean and McQuinn Distinguished Chair of the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of St. Thomas, Minnesota, and spent 12 years as a faculty member and administrator at University of the Pacific in Stockton, California.

She holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Kansas, an M.A. in Political Theory from San Francisco State University, and a B.A. in Government from California State University at Sacramento.

## **PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Suffolk University seeks a Vice President for Advancement with

- a commitment to the mission of Suffolk University—to provide students with experiential and transformational learning opportunities that begin in the center of Boston, reach across the globe, and lead to extraordinary outcomes for its graduates;
- an ability to articulate eloquently the academic and civic missions of Suffolk University, including its history and importance in the state and the national academic landscape;
- exceptional strategic planning skills, an entrepreneurial approach, and an ability to anticipate challenges and obstacles with the intelligence, creativity, and tenacity needed to provide and execute effective solutions;

- experience building upon an existing development program, including individual and institutional philanthropy in a way that the increased philanthropic support becomes transformative for an organization;
- a history of cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major individual and institutional donors, resulting in gifts of significant institutional impact;
- an ability to inspire high net worth individuals and major foundations and corporations to financial investment and leadership;
- the intellectual depth, maturity, and confidence required to effectively engage and garner the trust of the President, deans, faculty members, senior staff, and key volunteers in the cultivation and solicitation of top prospects;
- exceptional interpersonal skills and an ability to work well with people at all levels of an organization, across a diverse range of educational and social backgrounds, demonstrating an honest respect for each individual;
- an ability to offer effective solutions to issues facing not just university advancement but colleges, units, and offices across the university; and
- an approach to management that brings out the best in staff and yields pride, ownership, and a sense of team effort.

A bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and experience is required for this position as is at least seven years of progressively responsible fundraising and managerial experience in higher education advancement.

#### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

The salary range for this position is \$300,000 to \$350,000 annually. Suffolk University offers a [comprehensive package of benefits](#).

#### **LOCATION**

Suffolk University is in Boston, Massachusetts.

#### **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Suffolk University as well as the responsibilities and qualifications presented in the prospectus.*** Preference will be given to applications received by April 5, 2023.

*To apply for this position, visit:*

[Vice President for Advancement, Suffolk University](#).

*To nominate a candidate, please contact Don Hasseltine, [donhasseltine@aspenleadershipgroup.com](mailto:donhasseltine@aspenleadershipgroup.com).*

*All inquiries will be held in confidence.*