



**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALUMNI RELATIONS
COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO
Chicago, Illinois
<http://colum.edu>**



THE OPPORTUNITY

The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Columbia College Chicago in the search for an Executive Director, Alumni Relations. The Executive Director, Alumni Relations reports to the Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations and is charged with the oversight of all alumni relations activity for the college. As a senior member of the Development and Alumni Relations team, the Executive Director will create a program that engages alumni and parents with the goal of increasing volunteer activity, charitable contributions, and greater connectivity to Columbia College Chicago. The Executive Director will also supervise the college's annual giving program and devise methods for alumni, parents, and friends to contribute to the college.

Approaching its 125th anniversary, Columbia College Chicago is at a significant moment in its history. One of the largest private, not-for-profit arts and media colleges in the country (9,445 students in fall 2014), Columbia College Chicago provides access to higher education to young people who aspire to learn creative practices in a culturally rich and diverse urban setting. The college has grown from a small, vocationally focused commuter school to an international institution with a growing reputation in a wide array of creative fields anchored by a strong commitment to the liberal arts.

To be at Columbia College Chicago is to join a broadly inclusive academic and artistic community. The college believes that the newest and best ideas of the 21st century will come from everywhere and everyone, making access and inclusivity a crucial part of its mission. The Columbia College Chicago community is inextricably linked to the city of Chicago, one of the world's most dynamic cultural and creative centers. The college's urban campus, located in the city's burgeoning South Loop, situates the college at the center of a vibrant and growing network of institutions of higher education. Chicago boasts one of the largest populations of college students in the country.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Executive Director, Alumni Relations reports to the Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The successful candidate will

- develop and implement strategic alumni relations focus and plan (long-term and short term plans) to further engage alumni;
- develop a matrix on measuring engagement progress;
- provide leadership, guidance, and counsel to the National Alumni Board, as well as regional alumni chapters;
- coordinate events, mailings, and communications for the department-wide comprehensive calendar, in conjunction with Development;
- work with the Office of Student Success in an effort to educate and engage undergraduates before they depart from the college;
- collaborate with the Office of Student Success on parents initiatives;
- maintain the alumni relations web site and all social media programs tied to the department;
- work closely with the Office of Communications on alumni magazine content, and maintain class notes information for both the magazine and the college website;
- supervise current members of the alumni relations team;
- enter contact reports on a timely basis in Raiser's Edge database and maintain event attendance reports, also through Raiser's Edge;
- devise and execute an annual giving program for college-wide support and supervise future annual giving personnel, in collaboration with the Vice President and other personnel;
- oversee and be responsible for managing the alumni relations budget;
- attend college-wide events, especially alumni or development events; and
- work on special initiatives as directed by the President, Provost, and Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations.

ABOUT COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO

Columbia College Chicago is one of the largest and most diverse private, nonprofit arts and media colleges in the nation with nearly 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Columbia College Chicago's focus on creative practice positions it at a cutting edge of the early twenty-first century. The college's core values of access to rigorous, hands-on learning; diversity and inclusion; and deep engagement with community connect it directly to key national conversations about the value of higher education in a changing world. Columbia College Chicago's fundamental commitment to preparing students to author the culture of their time differentiates it from its peers in a powerful and compelling way.

In July 2013, Dr. Kwang-Wu Kim became Columbia College Chicago's tenth president. He holds a doctor of musical arts degree and an artist diploma from the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins

University. He is an outspoken advocate for the arts, a proponent of expanding the role of creative practice in society, and seeks to change the approach to how artists are educated.

President Kim has launched a strategic planning process which will guide Columbia's activities for the next five years, focusing on six goals derived from President Kwang-Wu Kim's White Paper [*Redefining Our Greatness: A Vision for Columbia College's Future*](#). In this paper, President Kim lays out a powerful humanistic vision for Columbia's future while taking a candid look at the college's opportunities and challenges. Understanding – and buying into – this vision is essential for anyone who wants to join and represent the Columbia College Chicago community.

As Dr. Kim eloquently states:

“[Columbia College is] neither a traditional arts and media college nor a liberal arts college. The former focuses on developing the specific skills which will prepare students to take their places in existing professions and industries. The latter values the common learning outcomes achieved through study across a range of disciplines as the basis for building meaningful lives, but struggles to provide students with a clear starting point for building those lives. Our mission requires that we populate the educational space between those models, constructing a hybrid model that combines the best of both.

If our students are to be authors of culture, they must approach their futures with a sense of agency and ownership of possibility. This is not merely an acquired attitude; it requires fluency with a set of practical skills that will allow them to translate their creative passions into real world success.

It also requires the confidence of purpose, which only comes from having tested one's actions, beliefs, and values in the world. Our students must learn in part through deep engagement with our communities; their work must interact with and interrogate the world around us if they are to develop the authentic voice which must animate their creative practice. At Columbia College Chicago, producing expert makers and doers is not enough. Our students must become creative agents in the world whose work and practice is informed by a sense of social justice and responsibility.

If our students are to create that which does not yet exist, they must also have every opportunity to learn from the voice and the experience of the other. At Columbia College Chicago, our commitment to diversity is inextricably linked to our educational purpose. We believe that a community which brings diverse voices and experiences into close proximity is fertile ground for creating new ideas and new creative practice when a fundamental social tenet is the honoring of

difference and a fundamental educational principle is collaborating with difference.

This commitment must become systemic so that the institution, all institutional processes, and all members of our community can be held accountable. We must educate our community in the often uncomfortable work of hearing and honoring the voice of those who have been marginalized, neglected, or silenced, and we must push ourselves to move this commitment into the very fabric of the institution so that it is reflected in the content of what we do.”

KEY COLLEAGUES



Jonathan Stern joined Columbia College Chicago in August 2014 as the Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations. Prior to his appointment, Jon served as the Dean for College Advancement at Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana, overseeing all aspects of fund raising, alumni, and parent relations. In his position at Wabash, Jon achieved record annual fund totals and increased donor participation while also securing significant seven-figure gifts for scholarship and faculty support.

Prior to his position at Wabash College, Jon served for eleven years in leadership development positions at the University of Chicago Law School. Most recently, he was Associate Dean for Campaign and Strategic Initiatives, in which capacity he oversaw the alumni relations and development departments and led the law school through all phases of a \$100 million campaign which successfully closed in 2008 with a final total of \$104 million. Additionally, he increased donor participation, built out the school’s philanthropic base, and helped close the school’s first 8-figure gift.

Before going to University of Chicago Law School, Jon served as the Assistant Dean for Development and Alumni Relations at the Northwestern University School of Law, where he planned and executed a successful \$63 million campaign and achieved 55 percent growth in the Annual Fund.

Jon received his B.S. in Management with a concentration in Marketing and Music from Miami University in 1983. An accomplished musician, he served as General Manager of the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra and began his career in fund-raising at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. From 1987 to 1997, he served in a range of development positions at the University of Chicago, where he was Director for Development and Major Gifts Officer from 1992 to 1997.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES

The ideal candidate for the position of Executive Director, Alumni Relations will have

- experience working with volunteers and varying audiences;

- excellent written and verbal communications skills;
- excellent negotiating skills and diplomacy;
- familiarity with the full-range of social media platforms and tools;
- a good background working with databases;
- experience with Raiser's Edge;
- proficiency in the use of MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint);
- self-motivation, discipline and a high level of organization;
- an ability to demonstrate vision, imagination, creativity, and initiative;
- an ability to perform well under pressure and to complete multiple projects concurrently; and
- a demonstrated ability to work independently and in a team environment.

A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is required, as is a minimum of 5-7 years of experience. with a particular emphasis on alumni relations, development, or university experience.

BENEFITS

Columbia College Chicago offers an excellent and competitive benefits and compensation package.

LOCATION

Columbia College Columbia is located in Chicago, Illinois. Columbia College Chicago is an urban institution whose students reflect the economic, racial, cultural, and educational diversity of contemporary America. The college conducts education in close relationship to a vital urban reality and serves an important civic purpose by active engagement in the life and culture of the city of Chicago.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Before sending your résumé for this position, please read it over for accuracy. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To nominate a candidate, please contact Tim Child: timchild@aspenleadershipgroup.com

All inquiries will be held in confidence.