

ASPEN LEADERSHIP GROUP

VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEVELOPMENT
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION
Stillwater, Oklahoma
[Oklahoma State University Foundation](#)



The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with the Oklahoma State University Foundation in the search for a Vice President for Development.

The Vice President of Development will provide strategic vision and ensure operational excellence for a comprehensive development program. The Vice President will lead and manage a division of more than 100 development professionals across all Oklahoma State University campuses, colleges, and programs. The Vice President will serve as a member of the OSU Foundation Executive Team and will work closely with the team to create and execute strategies to achieve university-wide goals through philanthropy and endowment growth.

The OSU Foundation has proudly supported the university's fundraising needs for more than half a century. As the private fundraising organization for Oklahoma State University, as designated by the OSU Board of Regents, the Foundation's mission is to unite donor and university passions and priorities to achieve excellence. It exists solely for the benefit of OSU and manages donor dollars to provide the most advanced educational opportunities to students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends of OSU. From scholarships to community programs, OSU Foundation donors generously support the spirit and tradition of Oklahoma State University. The Foundation employs incredibly talented people, all passionately committed to supporting quality education for the next generation as well as the mission of the university to improve the lives of people in Oklahoma and the world through teaching, research, and outreach.

Founded in 1890, Oklahoma State University has grown through its traditions and culture to become one of America's premier land-grant universities. With more than 35,000 students across a five-campus system, Oklahoma State University has graduated more than 264,000 students to serve the state of Oklahoma, the nation, and the world. Students from across the United States and more than 100 countries converge on the OSU campus to create a vibrant and inclusive culture. OSU consists of five academic colleges, plus a veterinary school and an osteopathic medical school and offers 200 undergraduate majors and options, 79 master's programs, and 45 doctoral programs.

From being named a top public university to being known as America's Healthiest Campus, OSU's awards and rankings showcase its academic distinctions, campus culture, and value. As a Carnegie top-tier research university, its innovative academics develop its students' intellect and creativity. Niche.com named Oklahoma State University in its top-50 list of public universities nationally, and first in Oklahoma among public colleges and universities. *Money Magazine* cited OSU among its "Best State Schools for Out-of-Staters" and *Yahoo Finance* listed OSU among its "Top 100 Smartest Public Colleges in America."

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Vice President for Development will report to the President of Oklahoma State University Foundation, Blaire Atkinson.

PRINCIPAL OPPORTUNITIES

Step into the OSU Foundation office and you won't need long to see why we were named one of the Best Places to Work. Foundation employees come to work each day prepared to make a difference in the lives of thousands of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends. The passion that drives OSU Foundation employees is infectious! From internal administration and communication to development and donor relations, the Foundation is comprised of a group of people on a mission to unite donor and university passions and priorities to achieve excellence.

Just outside the main doors, Oklahoma State University's Stillwater campus stands as a testament to the success of the Foundation as the university's fundraising arm. The excitement, buzz, and energy of this modern land-grant institution combined with a dynamic vision, new ideas, and enthusiasm are also part of the Foundation.

At the Oklahoma State University Foundation, each employee believes in our purpose and comes to work eager to change the future. We bring our individual talents together to propel our university forward. We strive to achieve our mission daily with excellence by working together, holding each other accountable, and communicating transparently. All employees take pride in our inclusive and collaborative culture and actively participate in reinforcing our values daily. The Foundation promotes balance in each employee's life and intentionally supports the personal and professional growth of each team member. These values are embedded in our organization and are exemplified by the appreciation and recognition extended by all OSU Foundation employees. Throughout each day's journey toward our goal, we remember to have fun and enjoy our work. The Foundation rivals any other organization when it comes to creating a fun and productive work atmosphere, which is directly reflected in our ability to achieve transformational results while maintaining a Best Place to Work status. We are committed to expanding our team with driven individuals capable of strengthening culture to achieve excellence.

–Blaire Atkinson, President, Oklahoma State University Foundation

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vice President for Development will

- develop and execute strategies to maximize a comprehensive, best-in-class development operation for the Foundation to increase philanthropic support, grow the endowment, and expand OSU's visibility and importance among key influencers, alumni, and donors at all levels;
- direct an effective development program that enhances annual giving, expands the major-gift prospect base, secures transformational donations, and leverages relationships with corporations and foundations;
- in collaboration with the Foundation President, the Executive Team and Leadership Team, create a bold, compelling, integrated comprehensive campaign with measurable, aggressive, and attainable programmatic and fundraising goals;
- ensure that campaign strategies and tactics align with the fundraising priorities as established by the Foundation President and University President;

- lead the implementation of donor-centered operational strategies and objectives across multiple fundraising departments and consistently challenge each aspect of the operational process to improve efficiency and increase donor satisfaction;
- provide vision and leadership for the development operation and advise the Foundation President on the planning and execution of fundraising priorities, while balancing expectations and resources required to achieve the agreed-upon goals;
- build strong working relationships with the Foundation Executive and Leadership Teams, board and committee members, and staff to provide meaningful and valuable engagement opportunities aimed at furthering the culture of philanthropy across and outside of OSU;
- spearhead a development approach that aligns the strategic value of prospect development, marketing & communications, and donor relations in the development enterprise to elevate fundraising;
- partner with the OSU Alumni Association and other OSU Affiliates to develop and deploy an effective advancement strategy for OSU by maximizing resources between all entities and creating organizational alignment throughout all organizations;
- expand and grow a cohesive, high caliber team that works in partnership with university deans, faculty, volunteers, and donors, and maximize their effectiveness and clearly define their roles, relationships, and expectations;
- lead the recruitment, training, and retention of high-performing members of the development team;
- cultivate a culture of lifelong learning and exceptionally prepared and accountable development professionals;
- partner with the Foundation President to foster an environment that rewards new ideas and risk-taking, builds confidence, encourages teamwork, celebrates current achievements, and establishes clear expectations for future success;
- cultivate strong relationships and communication with administrators, deans, faculty, and staff throughout OSU;
- ensure that development has a service orientation with respect to internal and external constituencies;
- benchmark the Foundation's development programs and performance against best-in-class examples among peer institutions; and
- oversee a small personal portfolio of principal gift donors and potential donors.

FOUNDATION AND UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP



Blaire Atkinson

President, Oklahoma State University Foundation

The Oklahoma State University Foundation Board of Trustees named Blaire Atkinson as the organization's seventh President in December of 2019. Previously, Atkinson was President of the OSU Alumni Association, and served as the organization's leader since October 2018, after four months as its interim President.

Prior to her role at the Alumni Association, Atkinson served as the Senior Associate Vice President of Development services at the OSU Foundation, where she had been providing strategic direction and oversight in human resources, marketing and communications, donor relations, and special events. She began her career at the Foundation in 2011.

Atkinson graduated from OSU with a degree in business administration and holds Senior Professional in Human Resources and SHRM Senior Certified Professional certifications. Prior to joining the OSU Foundation in 2011, the native of Vici, Oklahoma, spent several years overseeing human resources at various organizations within the state.

Atkinson is dedicated to improving Oklahoma through quality education and is passionately devoted to OSU. She is a member of Leadership Oklahoma Class 30 and an Oklahoma Achiever Under 40 honoree. She has also been involved in various community volunteer organizations over the years.

In her role as President of the OSU Foundation, Atkinson provides supervision and ensures appropriate control over the affairs of the OSU Foundation. She also serves as a senior advisor to OSU administration on matters relating to the development, implementation, and integration of Oklahoma State University's private fundraising programs and activities.



Burns Hargis

President, Oklahoma State University

Burns Hargis was named the 18th President of Oklahoma State University and the OSU System in December 2007 and took office March 10, 2008.

Hargis oversees one of the nation's most comprehensive land-grant university systems with more than 35,000 students, 7,000 employees, and campuses located in Stillwater, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Okmulgee.

As President, Hargis has enthusiastically united the broad OSU community of students, employees, alumni, and donors behind his bold vision of a modern land-grant university that cuts across disciplines to better prepare students for success. The results have been historic.

He has guided OSU to record enrollment and record fundraising, with pledges and cash surpassing the \$1 billion *Branding Success* campaign goal nearly two years ahead of schedule. In total, OSU has raised more than \$1.7 billion in private support and added 67,000 new donors during Hargis' time as President. OSU's giving has focused on student scholarships, faculty, and other vital resources and programs.

Hargis also is overseeing a construction boom that is transforming the OSU campus to be more competitive in academics and athletics. Most recently, the crescent-shaped business building and

spectacular McKnight Center for the Performing Arts are new campus icons. Guided by Hargis' vision, the OSU campus has never looked more beautiful.

Hargis has held several leadership positions related to intercollegiate athletics, serving on NCAA, Football Bowl Championship and Big 12 Conference boards. He holds degrees in accounting from Oklahoma State University and in law from the University of Oklahoma.

Before being named OSU President, Hargis had a long and distinguished legal and business career, with active civic and philanthropic leadership across many fronts. He was Vice Chairman of Bank of Oklahoma, N.A. Before joining Bank of Oklahoma in 1997, Hargis practiced law in Oklahoma City for 28 years, most recently with the firm of McAfee & Taft. He is a former President of the Oklahoma County Bar Association, former President of the Oklahoma Bar Foundation, and is a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation.

Hargis served as Vice-Chairman of the Oklahoma State Election Board, the Oklahoma Constitutional Revision Commission, and served as Chairman of the Oklahoma Commission for Human Services. He is a former member of the Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

A firm believer in the power of imagination and collaboration, Hargis was the first chair of the Oklahoma Creativity Project. He has served and chaired many boards, including the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges of Oklahoma State University. Hargis received the state's highest honor when he was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in 2009.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Oklahoma State University Foundation seeks a Vice President for Development with

- a demonstrated ability to plan and implement a comprehensive development program based on best practices, particularly in pre-campaign planning and campaign implementation including experience working in a complex university environment and managing significant change;
- experience successfully leading a large development program;
- a demonstrated collaborative approach to management that brings out the best in staff and yields pride and ownership;
- an ability to cultivate a sense of team effort where openness and communication are valued;
- experience working with administrators, deans, faculty, and staff and an understanding of the advancement function (development, operations, alumni relations, public relations and marketing);
- an ability to play an integrated role in the university;
- proven competence in preparing and managing an operating budget including experience in creating credible philanthropic and financial forecasting models in partnership with leadership; and
- an ability to aggressively but realistically set and achieve fundraising goals.

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is at least fifteen years of experience as an executive in development and campaign management and operations.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The OSU Foundation is committed to treating all people with dignity and respect. It values diversity and treats all individuals with respect and professionalism by providing a workplace that offers equal employment opportunity for all persons based solely on merit. In connection with employment opportunities, discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship status, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other protected status under applicable local, state or federal law is not tolerated.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The Oklahoma State University Foundation offers a competitive salary and benefits package.

LOCATION

The Oklahoma State University Foundation is located in Stillwater, Oklahoma, home to nearly 50,000 people in north central Oklahoma, near the geographic center of the United States. Often called Oklahoma's "premier education community," Stillwater is the home of some of the region's finest education and training institutions, including Oklahoma State University, Meridian Technology Center, Northern Oklahoma College/OSU Gateway, and one of the nation's top rated public school systems. Stillwater is also home to a diverse mix of business and industry, from manufacturing to advanced technology. With its low crime rate and a cost of living below the national average, Stillwater is consistently ranked among the nation's top small cities for quality of life. In addition to the beautiful Georgian architecture of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater is surrounded by historic attractions, unique restaurants, and an abundance of entertainment and activities. Stillwater has quick access to major highways and is located just one hour from Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

The global COVID-19 pandemic significantly altered the operations of many organizations around the globe; however, OSUF was able to seamlessly transition 100% of its staff to a remote work environment within two to three business days. The OSU Foundation has made great strides expanding its technological capabilities and functionality allowing for greater access for staff. Since progressiveness is one of OSUF's organizational values, the Foundation consistently seeks to discover and implement new methods to increase organizational efficiency. With this, a significant investment was made in 2018 towards implementing virtual collaborative platforms, such as Microsoft Teams, SharePoint, and Slack. Additionally, OSUF consistently dedicates capital for the latest IT equipment and laptops, allowing staff to work remotely at any time. When the OSU Foundation closed its doors to the public in March 2020 due to the pandemic, 100% of the Foundation's staff members were able to easily transition to a remote work environment. Staff were able to collaborate with one another and access necessary tools to fulfill operational and fundraising priorities.

The Foundation allows employees to work within the building, however COVID precautions are strictly enforced. The Foundation leadership team realizes that due to the ongoing pandemic situation, many parents no longer have childcare coverage as public schools have shifted to distance learning. It also realizes that some staff, particularly those in higher-risk categories, may feel uncomfortable or hesitant to return to work. The Foundation has expressed its understanding of its staff's concerns and does not wish to create unnecessary stress or pressure. The Foundation trusts its staff and respects their decision if they determine they cannot return to the office due to childcare issues or concern of the possible outcomes of COVID-19.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Oklahoma State University Foundation.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit:

[Vice President for Development, Oklahoma State University Foundation.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Don Hasseltine:

[donhasseltine@aspenleadershipgroup.com.](mailto:donhasseltine@aspenleadershipgroup.com)

All inquiries will be held in confidence.