



VICE PRESIDENT OF ADVANCEMENT

[WILKES UNIVERSITY](#)

Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania



**Wilkes
University**

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

The Vice President of Advancement will plan, execute, and grow programs that cultivate, solicit, and steward philanthropic support from alumni, parents, and friends of Wilkes University in alignment with the university's strategic vision. The Vice President will oversee a team of accomplished professionals, developing and implementing clear policies and procedures tied to performance and success. The Vice President will execute their responsibilities consistent with best practices of the advancement profession and provide ethical, creative, and focused leadership while serving as a philanthropic leadership partner to the President of the university.

Since 1933, Wilkes University has been preparing students for lifelong success. National rankings recognize its commitment to access and making a Wilkes education as affordable as possible, while highlighting the ongoing return on investment for graduates. Wilkes offers the programs, activities, and opportunities of a large university in the close mentoring environment of a small college. Faculty members work side by side with students in pursuit of solutions to the most pressing questions of the day. Wilkes offers undergraduate degrees and programs in six schools and colleges: the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; the College of Science and Engineering; the Jay S. Sidhu School of Business and Leadership; the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy; the Passan School of Nursing; and the School of Education.

The university strives to provide all students, staff, and faculty with rich mentoring experiences and meaningful short- and long-term relationships. This mentoring culture is key to fulfilling Wilkes' mission by providing a rigorous educational experience that develops students intellectually and personally, engenders a sense of values and civic responsibility, prepares them for careers and graduate study, and encourages them to welcome the opportunities of a constantly evolving and multicultural world. By charter, Wilkes is non-sectarian and is governed by an active, 29-person Board of Trustees. Its current Carnegie classification is Doctoral/Professional, assigned to institutions awarding at least 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees and spending less than \$5 million on research, or awarding 30 or more professional practice doctoral degrees across at least two academic programs. Wilkes is a positive force for economic, social, and cultural development in the region. It contributes 2,300 jobs and over \$250 million in impact to Pennsylvania's economy, as well as more than 120,000 annual hours of hands-on community service by students, faculty, and staff.

The Brookings Institution has ranked Wilkes 14th overall among all colleges and universities and sixth among selective four-year private colleges and universities of its size for helping students from middle-class families raise their income level over previous generations. Wilkes University is among the nation's top colleges and universities included in *Washington Monthly's* annual rankings of higher education institutions based on their contribution to the public good in social mobility, research, and promoting public service. *The Economist* has ranked Wilkes 25th in the nation for economic value. Wilkes University is listed by *Princeton Review* as one of the "Best in the Northeast" colleges.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Vice President of Advancement will report to the President, Greg Cant, Ph.D. The Vice President will oversee a team of eight that currently includes the Chief Development Officer; Director, Alumni Engagement; Assistant Director, Development; Senior Gifts Officer; Gifts Officer; Gift/Data Entry Coordinator; Advancement Coordinator; and Communications Coordinator.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Vice President of Advancement will play a critical role in shaping the future of Wilkes University. As a member of the executive leadership of the University, and directly reporting to the President, the Vice President of Advancement will work closely with leaders, colleagues, and an eight-member advancement team that fosters alumni and donor relationships and serves as a steward for donor goals and university needs.

Wilkes is currently operating under the Bridge to the Future Strategic Plan which outlines key strategic objectives that are essential for Wilkes to thrive during a global pandemic. The strategic plan is only two years in duration and is limited in scope, encouraging all employees to focus our energy and resources on the most crucial issues facing the university. Among those priorities is the preparation of our next comprehensive campaign. The strategy, theme, and vision for that campaign will be the responsibility of the Vice President of Advancement, as illustrated through their development of a detailed implementation plan, as will its progress and success.

In addition, I will ask the Vice President to look at the existing structure and resources of the advancement division and identify the needs that will elevate our campaign to be most successful. Key to this is building and sustaining the relationships that support Wilkes and our mission of liberally educating our students for lifelong learning and success in a constantly evolving and multicultural world through a commitment to individualized attention, exceptional teaching, scholarship, and academic excellence, while continuing the university's commitment to community engagement.

Let me close by offering some personal insight: it is an interesting time at Wilkes University. I started as President in May 2020 and we have since welcomed a new Senior Vice President and Provost in June 2021 and several key university leaders, including a Vice President of Finance and a Title IX Coordinator and Legal Counsel. I support and trust our senior leaders to help us define the next chapter in Wilkes history. While our mission and commitment to students will never change, we must do all we can to continue to remain agile in the face of challenges far exceeding our campus. This opportunity represents a time of transformation at Wilkes University. If making lasting change inspires you, I strongly encourage you to apply for this position and be part of our family of Colonels.

—Greg Cant, President

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vice President of Advancement will

- lead the vision and strategy for all university advancement activities through goal setting, benchmarking, and evaluation with the expectation of growth in the university's philanthropic efforts;
- lead the design and execution of an advancement strategic plan;
- ensure a creative, compelling narrative and case for support is developed for the university's philanthropic efforts;
- work closely with the President and university leadership to integrate the advancement strategic plan with that of the university;
- serve as a key leader in the university's constituent engagement model to maximize cross-divisional collaboration for growth and efficiency;
- oversee the recruitment, retention, training, assessment, and motivation of a dynamic advancement team;
- utilize the talent of the Board of Trustees to create enthusiasm for and philanthropic support from alumni, parents, and other friends of the university;
- lead the planning and execution of future capital campaigns;
- assess and creatively deploy resources in such a way as to maximize quantity and quality to obtain results;
- carry a personal portfolio of leadership gift prospects; and
- support the President in all matters related to the cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of the President's prospects, including the oversight of drafts, visits, and alumni functions which involve the President.

UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

Greg Cant, Ph.D.

President

Greg Cant, Ph.D. assumed office as the seventh President of Wilkes University on May 26, 2020. A native of Australia, Cant has 30 years of experience as an educator and administrator in the United States and abroad. President Cant came to Wilkes from the Feliciano School of Business at Montclair State University, where he served as the Dean since July 2015. Under his leadership, the school developed and implemented over two dozen programs that enhanced enrollment and academic quality, leveraged interdisciplinary expertise, and addressed critical market needs. Prior to Montclair State University, Cant was the Dean of the Offutt School of Business at Concordia College in Minnesota. Cant worked with key constituents to transform Concordia's business program into a comprehensive business school.

Cant has held positions as a faculty member, administrator, faculty leader, department chair, and academic dean at three research-intensive universities, a regional state university, and a selective private liberal arts college. He also served as a professor in Guangdong, China. He has worked in the United Kingdom, as well as in his native Australia. Cant holds his doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Western Australia and a master's degree in industrial relations from Queen's University in Ontario, Canada. He also earned his bachelor's degree in industrial relations and economics from the University of Western Australia. Cant's research interests include cross-cultural management, particularly in China, business ethics and business pedagogy.

David M. Ward, Ph.D.**Provost**

David Ward, Ph.D. comes to Wilkes University from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke where he served as Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs from 2017 through 2020. At UNC Pembroke, he led an academic unit that included 36 undergraduate and 17 graduate programs serving a total 7,698 students. During this time, the university experienced significant enrollment growth and created a shared vision around new program development and retention.

Prior to joining UNC Pembroke, Ward was the Dean of the College of Health Professions at Georgia Southern University, formerly Armstrong State University, in Savannah, Georgia, where he also served a one-year term as interim provost. Ward previously served as Dean of the Westbrook College of Health Professions at the University of New England and served in a number of administrative positions, including Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, at the College of Health Professions at the Medical University of South Carolina.

Ward has taught at each of his institutions and served in various faculty positions since 1993. His research activities have focused on the use of cost-effectiveness analysis and linear programming for increasing the efficiency of health care spending. He has numerous peer-reviewed publications in journals such as *Health Care Financing Review*, *Public Budgeting and Financial Management* and the *American Journal of Public Health*. In addition, he has co-authored multiple editions of three different cost accounting textbooks. Ward holds doctorate and master's degrees in public administration from the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University. He earned his bachelor's degree in political science from Colgate University.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Wilkes University seeks a Vice President of Advancement with

- a commitment to the mission of Wilkes University – to liberally educate students for lifelong learning and success in a constantly evolving and multicultural world;
- fluency in the full spectrum of philanthropic fund development, including corporate and foundation relations, individual giving, capital campaigns, and alumni affairs;
- an ability to build long-term, productive relationships with donors, alumni, volunteers, and friends of the university;
- experience in goal setting, benchmarking, and evaluation;
- demonstrated success in the cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of leadership gift prospects;
- cultural competency and a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all professional practices;
- strong analytical and independent decision-making capability;
- budgetary experience;
- fluency in written and oral communications; and
- an ability to serve as a team player as well as to lead and motivate a team.

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is at least seven years of increasingly responsible fundraising experience, preferably in a higher education setting.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Wilkes University offers a competitive salary and [comprehensive benefits](#).

LOCATION

The Wilkes campus is located in downtown Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, a city of 40,000 on the western fringe of the Poconos on the Susquehanna River. The surrounding region offers considerable natural beauty and recreational opportunities, including numerous ski resorts, concert venues, water parks and state parks, and is a two-hour drive from both Philadelphia and New York City. The 35-acre campus blends stately mansions with state-of-the-art facilities in a historic downtown neighborhood. The campus includes eight academic buildings, 20 residence halls, nine administrative buildings, the Eugene S. Farley Library, and several other facilities that house student life, auxiliary, and athletic functions.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Wilkes University as well as the responsibilities and qualifications stated in the prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit:

[Vice President of Advancement, Wilkes University.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Don Hasseltine:

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

All inquiries will be held in confidence.