

ASPEN LEADERSHIP GROUP

CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER
NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE
NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE FOUNDATION
TRAVERSE CITY, MICHIGAN



Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Northwestern Michigan College Foundation in the search for a Chief Advancement Officer.

The Chief Advancement Officer will serve as the Vice President of College Advancement as well as Executive Director of the NMC Foundation and will be responsible for all fundraising efforts of the Foundation in direct support of the College's mission and strategic plan. The Chief Advancement Officer will provide strategic leadership in the raising and management of philanthropic resources across all programs and operating units of Northwestern Michigan College (NMC). The Chief Advancement Officer will provide executive administrative leadership to the College's public relations, marketing, and communications functions, through the Associate Vice President of Public Relations, Marketing, and Communications. The Chief Advancement Officer will partner with the Vice President of Student Services on enrollment marketing as well as engage with the community, alongside the President and Vice President Strategic Initiatives, to foster community connections and develop strategic partnerships. The Chief Advancement Officer will also provide executive leadership and oversight for the College's Denness Museum Center, International Affairs Forum, and WNMC radio station. Given the Chief Advancement Officer's charge, the successful candidate will be an astute relationship builder with an ability to engage with programs across the College and throughout the community. While strengthening existing relationships, the Chief Advancement Officer will develop new relationships and partnerships that build the College's visibility, appeal, community impact, and financial resources.

Founded in 1951, Northwestern Michigan College is a fully accredited, publicly funded community college offering over one hundred programs that serve people, organizations, and businesses. Located in the Grand Traverse Region, close to Lake Michigan and Grand Traverse Bay, the area is known for its high quality of life. NMC offers associate degrees and professional certificates, as well as bachelor's degrees through the Great Lakes Maritime Academy and Great Lakes Water Studies Institute. NMC also offers a variety of personal and professional classes and certificates through their Extended Education program. With a student-to-faculty ratio of 15:1, learners have access to the support they need to ensure success. NMC also boasts the 6th lowest in-district tuition among the state's community colleges and offers approximately \$1.5 million in scholarships each year.

As the first comprehensive community college chartered in Michigan, Northwestern Michigan College provides quality, affordable access to higher education for learners of all ages and backgrounds. NMC aspires to be a global community where all learners unlock their full potential by delivering lifelong learning opportunities that transform lives and enrich communities.

The people of northwest Michigan established NMC in 1951 because they wanted the benefits of higher education for their families and for themselves. To make this vision a reality, they committed their time and generosity which led to the founding of the NMC Foundation in 1981. A 501(c)(3) non-profit, the NMC Foundation supports the College through fundraising and community advocacy. NMC Foundation is recognized nationally as a top 20 Community College Foundation. A small, dedicated staff of development professionals works with the greater Northwestern Michigan College community to support life-changing educational opportunities, cultural experiences, and regional growth. Beyond the day-to-day work of the staff, the NMC Foundation Board provides leadership and guidance in accomplishing this mission.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Chief Advancement Officer will report to the President of Northwestern Michigan College, Dr. Nick Nissley, and will serve on the President's Council. The Chief Advancement Officer will oversee a team currently comprised of seven direct reports and over twenty staff members.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Are you an innovator with a vision for the future of higher education who reimagines the ways colleges can best serve our students and communities? Are you a collaborator who leverages relationships to develop new solutions and opportunities? If so, now is the time to join Northwestern Michigan College as our first ever Chief Advancement Officer.

Higher ed as an industry is at a pivotal moment and we at NMC are leaning into our “possibilitarian” spirit to actively design a new path forward. Since I joined as President in 2020, we have developed strategic plans for both the [College](#) and the [Foundation](#), with wide-community engagement, and now we’re focused on execution of those plans, delivering on our desired results. We’re also currently undertaking a facilities master planning process, with major changes anticipated, from campus reconfiguration to housing growth and new program-driven expansion.

To help us achieve this ambitious vision for the future, we are strategically elevating and expanding our advancement efforts. While the College has a proud and successful history of philanthropy, the newly designed Chief Advancement Officer must take a larger and more comprehensive view of what it means to successfully move the College forward, including and beyond philanthropy. I am looking for a partner to work closely with me to reimagine what is possible and effectively execute strategies to get us there. The Chief Advancement Officer will join NMC at an important time as the College looks to the future:

- *Following a successful comprehensive campaign that raised over \$40 million, the Foundation is preparing to mobilize generosity in support of the College’s strategic plan, ‘Next’ including a focus on supporting innovation;*
- *The development of the Fresh Water Research and Innovation Center, a collaboration of various entities, envisioned to become the hub for the research, development, and commercialization of freshwater and marine technologies and their applications affecting the Great Lakes and similar freshwater systems throughout the world;*

- A major \$10 million building campaign to support the College's 50+ year-old Aviation Program, (the only two-year flight training program in the state of Michigan);
- A major investment in the College's marketing efforts, including staffing and campaigns to support the College's enrollment marketing and growth strategies; and
- A community-driven interest in possible annexation of Benzie County.

NMC's mission is to transform lives and enrich our communities. In fact, there's a refrain we hear often that NMC isn't just a community college; it's the community's college. To successfully move the College forward in support of that mission, the Chief Advancement Officer must be an astute relationship builder, engaging with programs across the College and throughout the community. And, while the Chief Advancement Officer strengthens existing relationships, they must also help develop new relationships and partnerships to build the College's visibility, appeal, community impact, and financial resources, providing leadership to advance the College's mission. This role requires a collaborator with a growth mindset, as the Chief Advancement Officer will continue building a thriving culture of philanthropy at NMC and be accountable for growing unrestricted support for the College, as well as managing the Foundation's \$50 million assets. The vision of the NMC Foundation is to double the endowment in the next ten years. To be successful, the Chief Advancement Officer must be a possibilitarian, an innovation-driven, 'get-it-done' executive, committed to enabling the College's strategic needs, focused on inventive business strategy. The successful candidate must also be a highly collaborative leader who can work effectively with a broad range of stakeholders, including donors, program managers and faculty, board members, and members of the wider Traverse City community.

—Nick Nissley, Ed.D., President, Northwestern Michigan College

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Advancement Officer will

- provide strategic leadership in the raising and management of philanthropic resources across all programs and operating units of Northwestern Michigan College;
- develop and maintain dynamic, trusting relationships with donors, program managers and faculty, board members, and members of the wider Traverse City community;
- cultivate and solicit new major gift and planned gift donors, matching College needs with donor interests while continuing to steward existing donors;
- advise the President regarding College-wide strategic and operational decisions and participate in institutional strategic planning, goal setting, and operational planning in order to achieve College priorities;
- identify and implement processes that result in "sustainability funding" for key positions and programs;
- evaluate current advancement programs and develop and implement a strategic engagement plan for fundraising potential across campus;
- provide executive leadership and oversight for the College's Dennon Museum Center, International Affairs Forum, and WNMC radio station;
- ensure effective evaluation of fundraising programs and roles;
- share results with the Foundation Board, NMC Board of Trustees, administrative leadership, and Foundation stakeholders, as appropriate;
- work closely with the President and Foundation Board to develop and execute strategic resource development plans that support the strategic direction of the College;

- identify opportunities for continued strategic program growth aligned with the College's strategic direction and maximize potential donor involvement in support of College priorities;
- work with the Foundation Board to ensure appropriate recruitment and development for effective governance;
- guide and support the work of the Foundation Board and its volunteer committees;
- work with College staff and financial and legal experts as appropriate to ensure all policies and practices are aligned with the Foundation's mission and consistent with College and Foundation values;
- work with the Foundation Finance and Audit Committee and NMC Business Office, ensure the effective stewardship of Foundation assets;
- develop asset investment management and financial administration strategies and ensure their effective implementation;
- ensure the effective and mutually beneficial engagement of NMC alumni through the NMC Alumni Relations program;
- maintain and strengthen the Foundation's brand by ensuring its operations meet the highest ethical and legal standards for fundraising and non-profit management;
- recruit and nurture volunteers to raise and manage funds on behalf of the College and Foundation;
- represent the College and Foundation at various community, regional, and national events;
- work collaboratively with non-profit and community partners and funders to achieve shared goals; and
- support an understanding and appreciation of philanthropy within the NMC community and the community at large.

LEADERSHIP

Dr. Nick Nissley

President, Northwestern Michigan College

Dr. Nick Nissley became Northwestern Michigan College's eleventh President when he took office on January 1, 2020.

Nick Nissley, Ed.D. is an education executive with more than 25 years of experience including K–12, community college and university settings. He has leadership experience in fundraising, professional development, human resources, teaching, and the arts. His areas of focus include helping build individual and organization capabilities that support organizational effectiveness and innovation cultures in support of educational excellence. Dr. Nissley describes himself as a collaborative servant leader and “possibilitarian.”

Dr. Nissley's previous position was Executive Director of Cincinnati's School for Creative & Performing Arts, the first K–12 public creative and performing arts magnet school in the country, recognized as a model magnet arts school and a crown jewel of Cincinnati Public Schools. Before that, he served as Dean of the Business Division of Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, one of the State of Ohio's largest community colleges with over 10,000 students.

Before joining Cincinnati State, he served as Executive Director for the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Canada's premier arts and culture institution, where he was responsible for executive leadership of an organization renowned for combining leadership development and applied creativity in service of leadership.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Northwestern Michigan College seeks a Chief Advancement Officer with

- a commitment to the mission of Northwestern Michigan College—to deliver lifelong learning opportunities to transform lives and enrich communities;
- progressive executive leadership experience including administrative experience in higher education or an industry of similar complexity and scope;
- knowledge of current and emerging best practices in fundraising and philanthropy as well as experience raising and managing philanthropic resources;
- experience serving as an advisor to institutional leadership on strategic and operational planning;
- an entrepreneurial approach to problem-solving and a results-oriented, relationship-driven, and high-performance leadership approach;
- an ability to thrive in a dynamic, collaborative, fast-paced environment; and
- an ability to develop and maintain dynamic, trusting relationships and work productively with a broad range of stakeholders, including donors, program managers and faculty, board members, and members of the wider Traverse City community.

A bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and experience and at least five years of experience as a seasoned leader with practical experience in both fundraising and organizational advancement is preferred for this position. Northwestern Michigan College Foundation will consider candidates with a broad range of backgrounds. If you are excited about this role and feel that you can contribute to Northwestern Michigan College and the Northwestern Michigan College Foundation, but your experience does not exactly align with every qualification listed above, we encourage you to apply.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is \$143,257 to 159,174 annually. Northwestern Michigan College offers a [comprehensive package of benefits](#).

LOCATION

This position is in Traverse City, Michigan.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the missions of Northwestern Michigan College and the Northwestern Michigan College Foundation, 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: [Chief Advancement Officer, Northwest Michigan College](#).

To nominate a candidate, please contact Tom Herbert, tomherbert@aspenleadershipgroup.com.

All inquiries will be held in confidence.