

SEARCH PROFILE:

DEAN OF COMMUNITY AND COMMITMENTS



BEREA COLLEGE

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THE OPPORTUNITY

Berea College, one of the nation's most distinguished liberal arts institutions, invites applications, expressions of interest and nominations of candidates as it seeks an accomplished and experienced professional in its search for the Dean of Community and Commitments (DCC). The first interracial, co-educational college in the South, Berea is dedicated to serving students from Appalachia and across the world. Reporting to the Provost and housed within Academic Affairs, the DCC will be responsible for advancing mission-centered programming throughout the college community, guided by the college's eight Great Commitments—a unique framework that articulates the college's core principles, including educational opportunity, interracial education, gender equality, and sustainability. The DCC will lead institutional efforts to create a supportive environment that fosters success and well-being for students, faculty, and staff. The role entails strategic vision and leadership, focusing on the oversight of several of Berea's distinguished centers, including the Loyal Jones Appalachian Center, Carter G. Woodson Center, and bell hooks center. The position encourages collaborative work across departments to integrate values into the college's unique mission, culture, and operations.

In addition to building on-campus community, the position emphasizes strengthening our well-developed collaborations and partnerships within the region. The DCC will be expected to play a pivotal role in ensuring that Berea College remains a model for higher education institutions in fostering a campus environment where all individuals, regardless of their background, feel valued and empowered to succeed. The position embodies Berea's mission to advocate for social justice, educational opportunity, and transformative change all while upholding the eight Great Commitments.

Located in Berea, Kentucky, the private, residential, undergraduate college has an historic and distinctive mission to educate students of great academic promise but limited economic means. No Berean student has paid tuition since 1892, and Berea students graduate with the least debt in the country. Berea is one of nine federal Work Colleges. Berea is recognized for its contributions to the public good, being ranked the #1 liberal arts college in the country for serving its students and the community (*Washington Monthly*) and ranked the #1 college in the country for service learning (*U.S. News & World Report*).



ABOUT BEREA

Berea College's tagline, "A college like no other," accurately characterizes this uniquely special institution. Berea offers a high-quality, tuition-free education to bright and talented students who have limited economic resources. Berea's dedication to serving students with financial need is joined to its recognition that Berea students bring a wealth of experiences, talents, and gifts to the College. Founded in 1855 in a slaveholding state by ardent abolitionists and radical reformers, Berea was the first interracial and coeducational college in the South. Its founding motto, "God has made of one blood all peoples of the earth" (Acts 17:26), can be observed today as students, faculty and staff of many nations and all races, ethnicities, gender identities and religious traditions or no religious tradition learn about and champion the eight "Great Commitments" that form Berea's mission.

Today, Berea is consistently ranked as one of the leading private liberal arts colleges in the United States. Such recognition is earned through Berea's focus on rigorous and supportive academic programs that enable a student body comprised of nearly all Pell Grant recipients to graduate with little or no student loan

HISTORY OF BEREA

In 1855, the Rev. John G. Fee built a one-room school on a ridge in Madison County given to him by fellow abolitionist Cassius Clay. Fee named Berea after the Greek town mentioned in the Bible's book of Acts because Bereans were open-minded. This school eventually became Berea College, with its first Bachelor of Arts degree awarded in 1873. Created to educate the needy and deserving, the College was open to all races and was coeducational from its beginning. As a rising tide of segregation swept the country after the end of Reconstruction, segregation was forced on Berea, the only integrated college in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, by a criminal statute (the "Day Law") enacted by the Kentucky General Assembly in 1904. The College challenged the law all the way to the Supreme Court, where it was upheld in 1908. The College divided its endowment, raised additional monies for a Black institution, and opened the Lincoln Institute in Simpsonville, Kentucky, in 1912, to educate Black students. Following the partial repeal of the Day Law in 1950, the College began the process of reintegration. It is now the most diverse college in Kentucky, with over 50% students of color.

ABOUT BEREA (CONT.)

debt. Academic and financial eligibility are important criteria for determining admission and Berea awards each admitted student a Tuition Promise Scholarship worth almost \$200,000 over four years. Tuition Promise Scholarships are made possible, in part, by earnings from the College's endowment, with a market value of \$1.7 billion on September 30, 2024.

Until 1892, Berea charged a small amount of tuition. Then, a nascent student work program was established. Today, as one of nine federally recognized Work Colleges, Berea students are required to work at least 10 hours per week in one of more than 130 departments across campus. Through the Labor Program, students are paid for their work, and they use their earnings for tuition credit and educational expenses. In addition to earnings, they gain valuable workplace experience that can complement their academic major, helping them launch meaningful and successful lives upon graduation. First-year students are assigned to labor positions, while continuing students seek positions from across campus, often choosing one that complements

GREAT COMMITMENTS

Berea is an educational institution firmly rooted in its founding by an ardent abolitionist and Christian minister. Adherence to the College's non-denominational spiritual foundation and motto, "God has made of one blood all peoples of the earth," shapes the College's culture and programs so that a student body, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds can work toward both personal goals and a vision of a world shaped by inclusive Christian values, such as the power of love over hate, human dignity and equality, and peace with justice. This environment frees persons to be active learners, workers, and servers as members of the academic community and as citizens of the world. The Berea College experience nurtures intellectual, physical, aesthetic, emotional and spiritual potentials and, with those, the power to make meaningful commitments and translate them into action.

Berea bases all curricular and co-curricular activities on the College's Eight Great Commitments, a broad mission statement focusing on equality, inclusivity, service, work, the liberal arts, and Appalachia. Originally adopted in 1962 and last revised in 2017, all who encounter Berea see its fidelity to these Great Commitments:

- To provide an educational opportunity for students of all races, primarily from Appalachia, who have great promise and limited economic resources.
- To offer a high-quality liberal arts education that engages students as they pursue their personal, academic, and professional goals.
- To stimulate understanding of the Christian faith and its many expressions and to emphasize the Christian ethic and the motive of service to others.
- To promote learning and serving in community through the student Labor Program, honoring the dignity and utility of all work, mental and manual, and taking pride in work well done.
- To assert the kinship of all people and to provide interracial education with a particular emphasis on understanding and equality among Blacks and whites as a foundation for building community among all peoples of the earth.
- To create a democratic community dedicated to education and gender equality.
- To maintain a residential campus and to encourage in all community members a way of life characterized by mindful and sustainable living, health and wellness, zest for learning, high personal standards, and a concern for the welfare of others.
- To engage Appalachian communities, families, and students in partnership for mutual learning, growth, and service.



ABOUT BEREA (CONT.)

their academic area of interest. Upon graduation, students are provided with a work transcript in addition to an academic one. The Labor Program is one of the distinctive elements of a Berea education, and one that links generations of Bereans to one another.

Berea College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate degrees. The most recent SACSCOC reaffirmation visit took place in 2016, with the next reaffirmation visit scheduled for 2026. The baccalaureate degree in nursing is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. The Kentucky Board of Nursing has granted the nursing program “Approval” status. The College is also accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)/Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) for the preparation of elementary, middle, and secondary school teachers, with the bachelor’s degree as the highest degree approved. Berea College is also accredited by the Education Professional Standards Board of Kentucky.

RANKINGS & RECOGNITION

Washington Monthly, 2024 College Guide and Rankings

- #1 Best Liberal Arts College
- #1 Best Bang for your Buck (South)

Money Magazine, Best Colleges 2024

- Listed as one of 54 5-star colleges in the nation and the only Kentucky college or university to receive that rating
- Listed among the “Best Colleges in the South”

U.S. News and World Report, 2025 Best Colleges

- #40 National Liberal Arts Colleges (tied with Spelman College)
- #2 Most Innovative Schools
- #5 Top Performers in Social Mobility
- #9 Best Undergraduate Teaching
- #1 Least Debt National Liberal Arts College

Wall Street Journal/College Pulse Rankings, 2025

- #9 Best Value
- #22 for Social Mobility

New York Times College-Access Index, 2023

- #1 for college access





STUDENTS & STUDENT LIFE

Although the majority of Berea's approximately 1,500 students come from Kentucky and Appalachia by a longstanding Board mandate, the student body is geographically diverse. More than 40 U.S. states and territories are annually represented as well as more than 70 countries. The College reserves slots each year for F-1 international students; 39 international students enrolled in Fall 2024, selected from over 2200 individuals completing applications. International students must meet the same financial eligibility requirements as domestic students, with students representing 141 different countries, with majority of coming from Africa and Asia.

Over the last five years, Berea has graduated 1,504 students. Of those, 58 percent were the first in their families to earn a four-year college degree, 60 percent were female based on birth sex, 13 percent were Hispanic, 23 percent were African American, 4 percent were non-traditional students (either married, parenting, or 24 years or older) and 9 percent were International. In any given year, roughly 98 percent of domestic students who are citizens are Pell grant recipients; other students who are ineligible due to citizenship still must meet

similar financial eligibility requirements. In keeping with its mission to offer holistic student support, single- and married-family housing and a nationally accredited Child Development Laboratory are available on campus for students, faculty, staff, and community members with young children.

Berea attracts academically prepared students who are seeking to further their academic success and develop personally and professionally. It is the most selective institution in Kentucky, accepting 33 percent of applicants. Yield rates are consistently above 50 percent. Ninety-six percent of 2024 first-year students had a recalculated high school GPA of 3.00 or higher. The average entering ACT score was 25.4 (based on the 142 students whose test scores were used in the admissions decision). That strong preparation combined with the quality of a Berea education and the unparalleled support provided to students is reflected in retention and graduation rates. The first-year retention rate for students who entered in 2023 was an anomalous 79 percent; for the five previous years first-year retention ranged from 82 to 88 percent. The latest six-year graduation rate is 62 percent.

STUDENTS & STUDENT LIFE (CONT.)

Thanks to philanthropic support, the College can assist students in what it calls the “bridge into college, the bridge through college in four years, and the bridge out into the world beyond.” An example of the bridge into college includes a summer experience for 60 randomly-selected incoming first-year students. These students have had retention rates above 90 percent since the program’s inception. The bridge through college program includes, among other benefits, a recently endowed dental clinic that offers free dental care to all Berea students. The bridge out program includes the opportunity for every Berean student to receive financial support for professional clothing, a fully-funded dream internship without worry about how to pay for it, professional test preparation, graduate school visits, and \$500 to facilitate relocation and living expenses.

More than 95 percent of Berean students live in one of 14 residence halls. With more than 100 [clubs and organizations](#) to choose from, students have many opportunities to explore their passions, expand their sense of self, discover their purpose, and learn and serve together. Berea has nearly 20 dance and music ensembles, various academic honor societies, and opportunities to volunteer in the community. With groups including Black Student Union, Campus Crusade for Christ, Cosmopolitan Club, Latin American Student Association, Student Government, Volleyball Club, a campus newspaper, and more, students can find opportunities for leadership, service, and engagement.

The [Berea Mountaineers](#) compete in 16 varsity sports in the NCAA Division III. In Fall 2024 Berea joined the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference. Men’s sports include baseball, basketball, cross country, golf, soccer, tennis, and track & field (both indoor and outdoor). Women’s sports include basketball, cross country, soccer, softball, tennis, track & field (both indoor and outdoor), and volleyball. Bereans excel on the field and in the classroom, with more than 75 student-athletes earning Academic All-Conference status in the 2023-24 academic year and 70 student-athletes made the Dean’s List during the Spring 2024 semester.



Berea offers an array of vital offices, centers, and gathering spaces that provide academic, career, and social support for students and help the College adapt its commitments to the 21st century:

- [bell hooks center](#)
- [Black Cultural Center](#)
- [Carter G. Woodson Center for Interracial Education](#)
- [Center for Excellence in Learning through Service \(CELTS\)](#)
- [Center for Teaching & Learning](#)
- [Doris Ulmann Art Galleries](#)
- [el Espacio Cultural Latinx](#)
- [Forestry Outreach Center](#)
- [Francis and Louise Hutchins Center for International Education](#)
- [Loyal Jones Appalachian Center](#)
- [Nontraditional Student Center](#)
- [Office of Internships and Career Development](#)
- [Office of Student Success and Transition](#)
- [Willis Weatherford, Jr., Campus Christian Center](#)



FACULTY AND STAFF

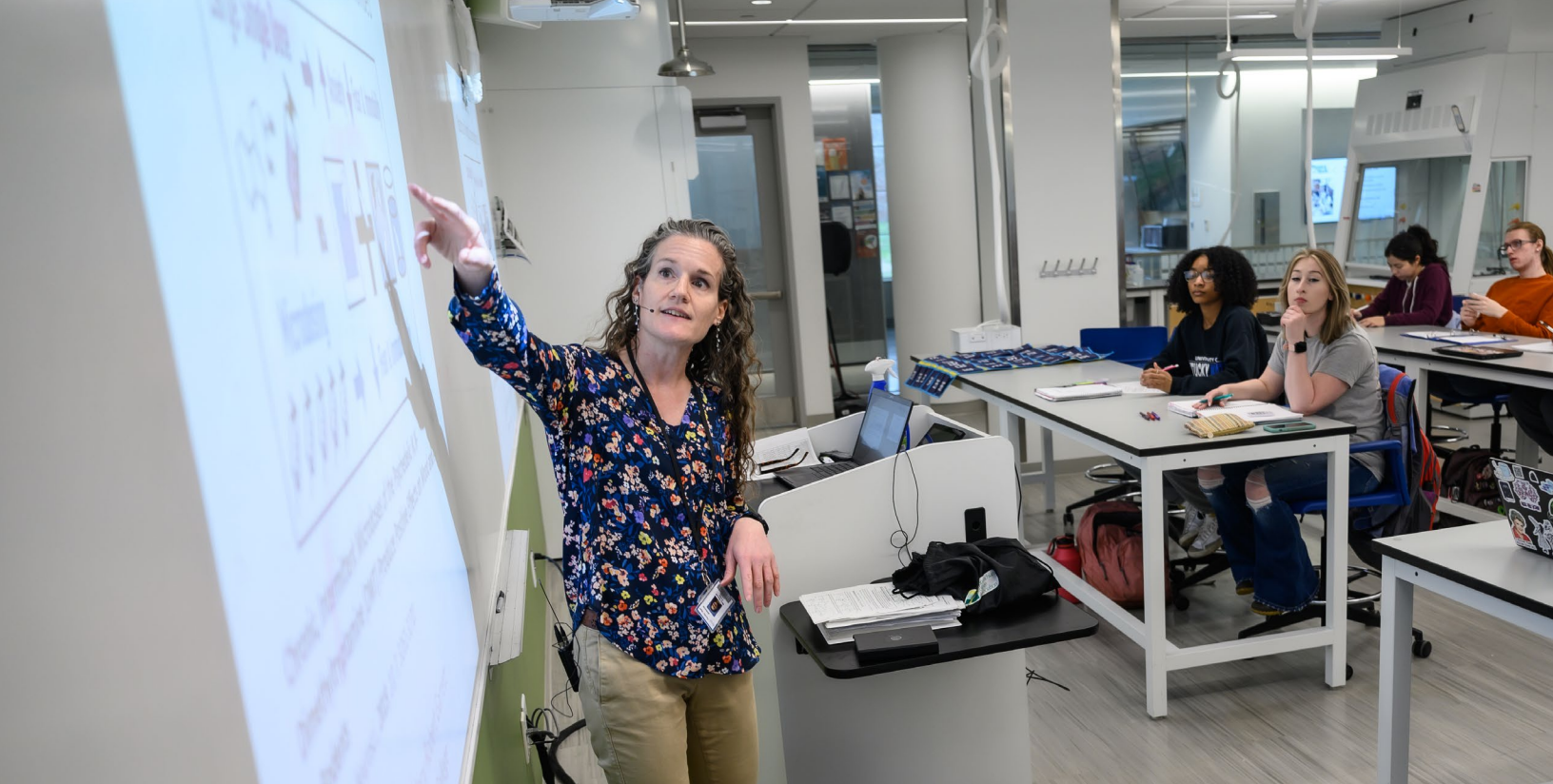
Students value the close and caring community at Berea, where they can build meaningful relationships with members of the faculty and staff. The College's 136 full-time faculty members are committed to helping prepare undergraduate students for long-term success and they serve as the students' principal advisors. Of the full-time faculty, 130 are in tenure-line positions, and 98 percent hold the terminal degree in their disciplines. Approximately 27 percent of the faculty represent an ethnic or racial minority, 10 percent are Berea alumni, and 54 percent identify as female. The student-to-faculty ratio is 9:1, and the average class size is 14. Full-time faculty teach six courses per year.

The faculty are joined by an equally dedicated and talented staff of 425-plus full-time, internally funded members who are committed to creating a supportive and welcoming community for Berea students, particularly in the crucial role of Labor Program supervisors. Nineteen

WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS

As a continuous learning environment built upon Berea's Great Commitments and learning goals, Berea College expects employees "to be active learners, workers and servers" and to contribute to a workplace where human compassion, dignity and equality are expressed and lived. To that end, the College has codified the following workplace expectations: exhibit enthusiasm for learning, act with integrity and caring, value all people, celebrate work well done, work as a team, serve others, and encourage plain and sustainable living.

percent of the staff represent an ethnic or racial minority, approximately a third are Berea alumni, and 59 percent identify as female.



ACADEMICS

Berea is highly regarded for the excellence of its [academic program](#), which is grounded in the traditional liberal arts but also includes several longstanding professional programs. With a student-faculty ratio of 9:1, faculty provide the transformative teaching that enacts the college's student-centered mission. Berea embraces active, experiential, and project-based learning, ensuring that students apply classroom learning in hands-on contexts. Faculty serve as academic advisors, providing a mentorship relationship that students consistently name as a highlight of their time at Berea. Academic offerings are complemented by strong labor, residential, and service programs. At Berea, faculty, staff, and students see to it that learning takes place not only in classrooms, labs, and studios, but also in Labor Program worksites, in the residence halls, and in all areas of the residential campus.

Berea offers Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in 34 fields, including the arts and sciences, interdisciplinary programs, and select professional fields. Berea also has programs in Education Studies, Engineering Technologies and Applied Design, and Agriculture and Natural Resources. Among professional programs, the Nursing Department, for example, ranks among the best in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Most years, Berea nursing graduates have a 100 percent first-time passing rate on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) for registered nurses. The College offers a dual-degree program in Engineering in cooperation with the University of Kentucky, a partnership that could be developed during the next provost's tenure.

Academic disciplines are organized by department and program and housed in six divisions. The divisions are led by chairpersons who are elected by divisional faculty for a term of five years. The College's most popular majors for the last five years are Computer and Information Science, Business Administration, Biology, Psychology, and Communication.

In addition to completing one or more majors, all Berea College students complete a robust General Studies program that includes five interdisciplinary core classes, a series of perspectives courses, and a vibrant weekly Convocations program during the academic year, featuring notable speakers, scholars, and performers who enrich the campus community. Berea's curriculum offers numerous high quality, fully-funded, high-impact learning opportunities. The College has nationally recognized programs in service-learning, internships, undergraduate research, and Entrepreneurship for the Public Good. Prior to the pandemic, nearly half of Berea's graduates studied abroad at least once; more than half completed a fully funded, credit-bearing internship; and more than half had taken a service-learning course. Overall, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 94 percent of graduates completed at least one paid internship, studied abroad, completed a service-learning course, or participated in paid faculty-student research. A current goal is to ensure that all students complete at least one high-impact activity, with aspirations to ensure that students complete two or more.

ONE BLOOD, ALL PEOPLES

The courage and vision of Berea's founders in 1855 remains central to the campus today. The College nurtures a campus that its founders would celebrate. Much of this work revolves around a shared understanding of and dedication to the Great Commitments, which emphasize values such as the ethic of service, interracial education, democratic society, and gender equality. Berea's commitment to its "one blood, all peoples" motto is interwoven throughout all curricular and co-curricular programming, with its [eleven different Centers](#) demonstrating the College's collaborative approach to inclusive excellence.

Our centers range from our Campus Christian Center to our Forestry Outreach Center to our Center for International Education. To provide just a few examples, the Carter G. Woodson Center for Interracial Education, established in 2011, focuses work on the interrelationship of race and poverty through coalition building on campus and in the community and region. It offers programs and events that "assert the kinship of all people," embodying Berea's 5th Great Commitment. It also leads a Civil Rights Seminar and Tour in odd years for Berea College faculty and staff and in even years for students.

The Center for Excellence in Learning and Service (CELS) focuses on community service and civic engagement through a variety of ways that include mentoring, tutoring, and social justice advocacy. CELS educates students for leadership in service through promotion and coordination of academic service-learning and student-led community service. CELS envisions an educational system that successfully combines community service with academic learning to create an environment which challenges and prepares students to be critical thinkers, reflective learners and active members of just communities, near and far.

The Loyal Jones Appalachian Center strives to honor Berea's 8th Great Commitment: "To engage Appalachian communities, families, and students in partnership for mutual learning, growth, and service." The Center enacts this mission by teaching students, staff, faculty and the general public about Appalachia, providing support to students from Appalachian counties, providing support and creating opportunities for travel across Appalachia, and identifying and creating ways to serve the region.

In September 2021, Berea formally launched the bell hooks center, named after the late feminist scholar, writer, and poet, who at the time of her death in December 2021 was the College's Distinguished Professor in Residence in Appalachian Studies. Supported by a major grant from the Mellon Foundation, the bell hooks center is an inclusive space that welcomes students to "come as they are" and offers programs, collaborations, and events that affirm students' sense of self and belonging—on campus and in the world.

Berea College's Francis and Louise Hutchins Center for International Education (CIE) fosters an understanding of, and respect for, all peoples of the earth. The CIE provides many services to Berea's current international student population, including advising, counseling, and referral services, orientation services, advocacy of international student concerns, internship opportunity authorization, international student clubs support, and student programming.

With a goal to have Berea become a well-known national model for new forms of community-building, the new Dean of Community and Commitments will build on the strengths of these Centers.

FINANCES

Berea is proud of its commitment to providing a high-quality education to promising students and has continually worked to strengthen its financial position and endowment to sustain its no-tuition model. As of September 30, 2024, the endowment value was almost \$1.7 billion. The spendable return from the endowment funds approximately 71 percent of the unrestricted educational and general operating budget. The remaining budget comes from federal and state aid, the Berea Fund, student fees, and some revenues from housing and meals. The College has a formal investment policy approved by the Board of Trustees and outsources the management and implementation of its investment policy.

Giving to Berea comes in many forms, including planned giving and bequests, foundation and trust support, individual philanthropy, and donations to the Berea Fund. In FY24, the

College received \$68.3 million from almost 12,000 donors, including donations from nearly 300 students who contribute a portion of their work stipends back to the College. Affirming that philanthropy is more about generosity than wealth, these student philanthropists, known as Berea Patrons, comprised typically more than 60 percent of enrolled students each year before the pandemic.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, Berea's annual unrestricted educational and general operating budget was approximately \$60.8 million, with assets totaling \$2.1 billion and liabilities of \$109.5 million. The College has \$82.9 million in debt and a current Moody's rating of Aaa. There are only five private colleges and eight private universities with a Moody's Aaa rating.



LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

Berea's active and engaged [Board of Trustees](#) comprises an accomplished and diverse group of alumni and friends of the College. The Board presently consists of 30 members, including four trustees nominated from the College's alumni association. Trustee terms are for six years. The Board meets three times during the academic year. Organized into an Executive Committee and nine standing committees, the Board is led by a Chair and Vice Chair, who typically serve for four years.

Berea's President, Dr. Cheryl L. Nixon, began her tenure in July 2023. She is supported by a talented and experienced leadership team that oversees all instructional and operational aspects of the College. The [Administrative Committee](#) currently comprises 10 members in addition to the President: Provost; Dean of Faculty; Vice President for Alumni, Communications and Philanthropy; Vice President for Operations and Sustainability; Vice President for Finance; Dean of Labor; Vice President for Student Life; Vice President for Strategic Initiatives; and Chief Information Officer.

Under the President's leadership, the Provost's Office is undergoing reorganization to emphasize the Provost's position as second-in-command to the President, strengthen oversight of the academic affairs division, encourage academic program innovation, and enable the new Provost to partner with the President in steering the College's future. Currently, the Provost works alongside the Dean of Faculty, oversees the Associate Provost, directs multiple offices such as institutional research and accreditation, and manages related enterprises such

as the Berea farm and Child Development Lab. The next Provost will have an opportunity to help with the reorganization of Academic Affairs and establish reporting relationships that strengthen the work of the division. The Dean of Faculty role will report to the Provost and focus on faculty development and support. The incoming Provost will have the opportunity to shape additional reporting structures.

The [campus governance structure](#) allows for the inclusion and participation at various levels of all employees of the College. All non-student employees are members of the General Faculty, but a smaller body of representatives, the General Faculty Assembly (GFA), serves as the voting body. The GFA concerns itself with nonacademic affairs. The College Faculty Assembly (CFA) acts on both academic program matters and recommendations related to faculty personnel policies. The Staff Forum serves in an advisory role, fostering community and advocating for staff priorities. The Student Government Association (SGA) represents the interests of all students and has members who serve on most College committees and the GFA.

The College and General Faculties are organized to conduct their affairs primarily through five program councils and their subordinate committees. The Executive Council coordinates this work and is generally responsible for the effective functioning of campus governance.



CAMPUS FEATURES

Berea's beautiful 140-acre campus reflects the character, history, and charm of the College while also demonstrating the power of state-of-the-art technologies that enhance teaching and learning. Berea has invested more than \$124 million in renovations over the last decade, with a special focus on ecological design and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. The campus showcases one LEED Platinum residence hall, seven LEED Gold buildings and residence halls and three LEED Silver buildings. The College's commitment to sustainability was featured in *The Princeton Review's 2019 Guide to Green Colleges* and given a #1 ranking for "Highest Score for Residence Halls" by the *U.S. Green Building Council*.

Recent campus construction features the Computer, Media, and Information Technology Building, which opened this fall 2024. The 48,800 square-foot building is the new home of the departments of Computer Science, Digital Media, and the College's Information Technology Division. In addition to classrooms and laboratories, it houses a multidisciplinary Maker Space, Sound Stage, and a Media Production suite that includes the Campus Radio and On-Air studios. In 2018, the college completed the Margaret A. Cargill Natural Sciences and Health Building, a 133,800 square-foot facility that houses the College's science disciplines, mathematics, and nursing program. It includes a high-fidelity nursing simulation lab, digital planetarium/theatre, and astronomy observation deck. New Residence Halls include Danforth, which opened in 2020, and Kettering, which opened in 2021. The College's new Facilities Management Complex was completed in the spring of 2021. Current projects

underway include renovations to an existing building to create a new Student Center.

The [Berea College Farm](#), which celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2021, is the longest continuously operating college farm in the country. It covers 1,400 acres, including gardens and 500 organic acres. The [Berea College Forest](#) is one of the oldest sustainably operated forests in America, consisting of 9,180 acres and serving as a watershed for the College and the town of Berea. Certified by the U.S. Forest Stewardship Council, the forest also offers opportunities for recreation, conservation, research, and more. It is a member of the California credit market, so the carbon capture of the Forest is significant in Berea's sustainability commitments.

Berea College was the first higher education institution to build and operate a hydroelectric generating plant. Located 45 minutes from campus on the Kentucky River, the Matilda Hamilton Fee Hydroelectric Station is named for Berea's co-founder and initial First Lady. The facility generates the equivalent of roughly half of the College's electrical usage, although the power is sold at a price attractive to a nearby utility that serves Estill and Jackson counties. The College is building a second facility at an abandoned lock upriver in Lee County.

The [Seabury Center](#) is home to Berea's Health and Human Performance Department, its varsity athletic teams, and an array of recreational and intramural sports programs. Seabury offers gymnasias, an indoor pool, racquetball courts, indoor track, weight room, wellness center, state-of-the-art classrooms, and multipurpose

CAMPUS FEATURES (CONT.)

spaces. Its main arena is used for basketball games and stage events and hosts the annual Spring commencement ceremony. Just outside are athletic fields, an all-weather track, and tennis courts.

The Boyd and Gaynell Fowler [Child Development Lab](#) fulfills a multi-faceted mission to serve as a learning laboratory for Berea students and staff involved in the Child and Family Studies program; serve as a rich resource for scholarly and creative work of faculty and students; and serve the Appalachian region by providing exemplary early childhood education services to Berea students, staff, faculty, and community members.

Lincoln Hall, home to the Berea College administration, is a designated National Historic Landmark. The charming historic [Boone Tavern Hotel and Restaurant](#), built in 1909, is located on the College Square in the heart of Berea. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and earned distinction as a LEED Gold Certified Green Hotel. Also located on College Square, the [Visitor Center & Shoppe](#) offers Berea College branded merchandise, student-made crafts, and student-led craft demonstrations.

Built in 1917, the [Log House Craft Gallery](#) is a historic craft gallery owned by the College and features crafts from the Berea College Student Craft program and more than 450 other artists from the Appalachian region and beyond. The education of the hand has always complemented the education of the mind at Berea, and the Berea College Student Craft Program started in



1893 with Weaving. It added the Woodcraft program in 1895, with Broomcraft and Ceramics following in 1920. Thousands of students have contributed to and benefitted from this rich history by dedicating their labor experience to the pursuit of their craft.

BEREA & THE APPALACHIAN REGION

The Berea College campus is the center of activity in the town of Berea, and there is an unusual campus-city symbiosis arising out of the College's long history and its importance to the town and region. [Berea](#) is a town of 15,500 residents, located in the gorgeous foothills of the Appalachian Mountains and situated 40 miles south of Lexington, Kentucky; 118 miles south of Cincinnati, Ohio; 130 miles north of Knoxville, Tennessee; and 210 miles north of Nashville, Tennessee. Designated the "Folk Arts and Crafts Capital of Kentucky," Berea is a hub for creativity, with a growing population of weavers, instrument makers, furniture artisans, jewelry designers, glassworkers, potters, painters, sculptors, and musicians.

With numerous arts-and-craft and culinary festivals scheduled throughout the year, Berea is a perennial tourist destination. The area's climate features moderate winters

and warm summers, which supports College activities and the area's active artisans and musicians. Berea has a pedestrian-friendly culture supported by miles of bike trails, sidewalks, and regularly held 5K runs and other fitness events. The College and the town are committed to the practice of sustainability and conservation for the region and have collaborated on several shared-use trails in and around the community.

The Berea area features attractive real estate options, a low cost of living, multiple good school districts, local and specialized health care and a hospital. Its location along Interstate 75 provides easy access to employment centers and lively metropolitan areas.



THE LEADERSHIP AGENDA

Reporting to the Provost and serving as a key member of Academic Affairs leadership team, the Dean of Community and Commitment (DCC) at Berea College will serve as the thought leader and subject matter expert responsible for advancing a culture of belonging, connection, service and support, throughout the college community and beyond. The role entails strategic and collaborative leadership, oversight of on-campus and off-campus initiatives, work across departments to express, integrate, and enliven the values of the College's historic mission, especially as it relates to the Eight Great Commitments. Reflecting the highest levels of ethical practice, the DCC will have oversight of the DCC Office, guiding programs that ensure a supportive campus environment that fosters success and well-being for students, faculty, and staff.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- At least two-four years of experience in a senior administrative leadership role in higher education.
- Experience designing, implementing, and sustaining community- and culture-building initiatives in a complex organization, preferably higher education.
- A terminal degree, with a Ph.D., Ed.D., or J.D. preferred.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Working with campus constituencies, develop initiatives that align the campus's new Strategic Framework with the college's mission and values, as articulated by the eight Great Commitments.
- Serve as a liaison between the college and local, regional/state, and national communities to advance Berea's reputation as a leader in educational access, opportunity, and service, becoming a model for promising/best practices.
- Advise the President and senior leadership on building a campus culture dedicated to "impartial love" (a phrase used by the college founder), providing counsel on policies, practices, and issues impacting the campus climate.
- Support faculty in advancing the Great Commitments through their teaching, research, and scholarship.
- Create strategies to foster student's sense of educational belonging, meaning, and mattering, ensuring measurable outcomes.
- Monitor trends, collect data, and generate reports to inform institutional decision-making.
- Foster open communication between student groups, faculty, and administration, creating safe spaces for dialogue.

THE LEADERSHIP AGENDA (CONT.)

- Build and strengthen partnerships with internal and external stakeholders.
- Lead the DCC Office, managing staff, budgets, and resources.
- Oversee select Centers, working collaboratively with their directors, including the Loyal Jones Appalachian Center, Carter G. Woodson Center, and bell hooks center.
- Lead or co-lead campus-wide initiatives, including events, lectures, and symposia that promote awareness, understanding, and celebration of Berea's unique culture and history.
- Willingness to be very visible throughout the institution;
- A high degree of emotional intelligence;
- An effective partnership builder with community, school districts, and entire state;
- Diplomat and advocate for Berea's mission;
- Strong data analysis skills, and ability to work successfully with data collection methods and analytics teams;
- Have a strong understanding how campus culture impacts the retention of students, faculty and staff and a desire to shape that culture;

DESIRED ATTRIBUTES, SKILLS, EXPERIENCES AND ABILITIES

- Proven track record of success in higher education administration and practices;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Strong organizational and management skills;
- Have the ability to create and implement viable programming for all students;
- Comfortable and confident in working collaboratively across the campus with other programs, faculty, and staff;
- An understanding and appreciation for higher education, faculty governance, collegiality, and institutional history;
- Knowledgeable of trends and the changing national landscape of higher education;
- Ability to help campus create a vision of its next chapter as a leading institution in educational opportunity and community service.





APPLICATIONS & NOMINATIONS

The Berea College Dean Search Committee is being assisted by Academic Search. Applications, nominations, expressions of interest and all inquiries may be submitted in confidence to BereaDCC@academicsearch.org. The position is open until filled, but only applications received by **April 11, 2025** can be assured full consideration.

Applications must be submitted as PDF documents and include a curriculum vitae and a substantive cover letter that addresses the expectations discussed in the leadership agenda. Contact information for five professional references will be requested later in the process; references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission.

Confidential conversations about this opportunity may be arranged by contacting Senior Consultant [Dr. Carlos N. Medina](#).

Berea College, in light of its mission in the tradition of "impartial love" and social equality, welcomes "all peoples of the earth" to learn and work here. The College provides equal employment opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment regardless of their race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, political affiliation, disabling condition, or service in the uniformed services, in accordance with applicable law. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Berea College in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience. Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.

