SEARCH PROSPECTUS:

Vice President for Administration and Finance
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INTRODUCTION

Cottey College, an independent, non-sectarian, liberal arts and sciences college for women located 90 miles south of Kansas City in Nevada, Missouri, seeks a dynamic and experienced Vice President for Administration and Finance (VPAF) who can build on recent successes and further the College’s mission and its vision for greater achievement. The VPAF, a member of the President’s Council, reports to the President of the College, Dr. Jann Weitzel, and works collaboratively with other executives, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

The ideal candidate will bring extensive experience and a record of progressive achievement to the position, as well as the ability to develop and implement strategies that leverage the unique assets and opportunities of the College. Prime candidates will have a master’s degree in business administration or a related field and seven years of progressive experience in higher education management or a related setting.

This vice president will provide sound, forward-thinking financial direction to the College, based on established institutional values and strategic planning priorities while serving as a change leader, relationship-builder, and steward of the institution’s human, financial, and physical assets.
In 1884, Virginia Alice Cottey founded Vernon Seminary to educate women to be “knowledgeable, thinking, mature adults.” Backed by the $3,000 she and her sisters had saved, she selected Nevada, Missouri, as the site and named the school for Vernon County in which it is located. To the townspeople, however, the school was known as Cottey’s school or Cottey College; and in 1886, the founder proudly renamed her institution Cottey College.

As time passed, Ms. Cottey realized she could not guide her college forever. Coincidentally, she accepted an invitation to join the P.E.O. Sisterhood, a philanthropic women's educational organization with the same ideals she maintained for Cottey College. In 1927, she presented the College as a gift to the P.E.O. Sisterhood in return for the Sisterhood’s promise to raise an endowment for the College and to maintain it in perpetuity.

With the support of P.E.O., Ms. Cottey’s dream continued. Buildings were erected, accreditation was achieved, and the College expanded its reach and diversity of the student body.

The 1907-08 catalog stated Virginia Alice Cottey’s guiding principle: “The College was founded . . . for the purpose of affording (women) superior facilities for obtaining a thorough, practical, yet liberal education, at very reasonable rates. . . A strong faculty, trained in the best colleges and universities, will strive in every legitimate way to awaken and deepen the interest necessary to success.”

For more than 135 years, the College has offered women the opportunity to learn and grow into leaders, role models, and confident individuals. Cottey began as a two-year institution that, through academic rigor and personal interaction, prepared students to transfer to highly selective universities. In recent years, the College has expanded its mission by transitioning to a baccalaureate granting institution. In both the bachelor’s and associate’s degree programs, students are challenged to push the limits of their knowledge and study and practice leadership.

Successful Cottey graduates include the first female member of the Texas Supreme Court, a Treasurer of the United States, an Oscar nominee, an astronaut in training, the first female general manager for the Associated Press, science and math professors, Fortune 500 managers, and entrepreneurs in technology and other enterprises.
Cottey is a fully accredited four-year independent liberal arts and sciences college for women offering baccalaureate and associate degrees.

Bachelor degree programs include a focus on women’s leadership, social responsibility, and global awareness in addition to the specific major requirements. Classes incorporate an interdisciplinary approach in an academically challenging setting with leadership opportunities for women in a caring and dynamic community. Through the LEO (Leadership, Experiences, Opportunity) program and the Serenbetz Institute for Women’s Leadership, Social Responsibility, and Global Awareness opportunities are available for all students to discover, develop, and demonstrate their leadership skills. Graduates of the bachelor’s degree programs are well-prepared to enter the world of work and for advanced study in graduate or law school.

In addition, Cottey offers two-year, associate degree options. Students can earn an associate in arts, associate in science, associate in fine arts — art, associate in fine arts — dance, associate in fine arts — theater, or associate in arts — music degree. These degree programs are carefully designed to facilitate transfer to a four-year college or university if graduates want to complete a major in an area other than one of the majors offered by Cottey.

The academic tradition at Cottey College is firmly grounded in the liberal arts. Cottey emphasizes general education while promoting high academic standards and unique opportunities for personal growth through residential, cultural, and intellectual experiences. Deeply embedded in the Cottey education is the mission to nurture civility, integrity and concern for others; to encourage and value diversity and social justice; and to foster leadership and service.

The College is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and the associate of arts-music degree is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music. Further, Cottey’s education program is accredited by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
Cottey has a proud tradition of a close working relationship between academic and student affairs. Students excel in an environment where they enjoy the full support of a close-knit community that focuses on preparing women to be learners, leaders, and citizens in a global society.

Leadership development is a prominent opportunity available to each Cottey student and is a key priority of the institution’s strategic plan. Cottey offers many opportunities for leadership development through the Serenbetz Institute for Women’s Leadership, Social Responsibility, and Global Awareness; the Leadership, Experiences, and Opportunity (LEO) program; and a baccalaureate degree in Organizational Leadership and a minor in leadership. While many colleges have a leadership focus, few are focused on women’s leadership as both a skill set and body of knowledge.

In an effort to support Cottey’s mission, the Serenbetz Institute provides programming and financial support for students who have declared a baccalaureate major to engage in leadership immersions, summer leadership internships, and undergraduate research grants. The Institute’s programs are closely tied to the majors. Students report that they “find their voice” in this stimulating environment where close contact with faculty and staff is a hallmark of their experience.

Cottey offers access to state-of-the-art equipment in science laboratories and language labs as well as art and music studios in a newly constructed fine arts building. Computers are available to students for general use at a ratio of 1 for every 3 students. Students can create musical compositions in the digital music laboratory, and all students may participate in free music lessons and have access to excellent instruments and practice rooms. Rehearsal and performance facilities are exceptional and available to music, dance, and theater.

Learning beyond the classroom takes students to laboratories and businesses throughout the country, as well as unique international opportunities. Every Cottey student, typically during the sophomore year, is eligible for a trip to Europe supported by the College, which pays for airfare, hotel, and several other amenities. During the first week of Spring break, students accompanied by faculty and staff members visit a major cultural center of Europe (in recent years London, Paris, Madrid, Barcelona, Florence, and Rome). Learning modules developed by faculty and staff enhance the cultural experience by incorporating historic landmarks, theatre, music, architecture, food, and more. Students will visit Munich in March 2020 and Athens in March 2021.

Students participate in over forty student organizations. The importance of team activities is emphasized through athletic programs available to students on several levels, including intercollegiate teams in basketball, cross-country, golf, softball, track, and volleyball. Beginning in fall 2020, Cottey will offer esports and become the second women’s college in the nation to host a team. The College is a member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).
THE FACULTY AND STAFF

Cottey’s programs and students are supported by dedicated staff and excellent faculty. Cottey College employs 121 full-time staff, 41 full-time faculty, 7 adjuncts, and numerous part-time staff. Of the full-time faculty, 55 percent are tenured. Almost 90 percent of the full-time faculty have terminal degrees; 76 percent have doctorates; 76 percent of the College’s faculty are women; and 19 percent are ethnic minorities or international. More than 50 staff members represent the business services, dining services, and physical plant.

Students have the opportunity to engage with faculty and staff in meaningful and substantive exchanges and to create long-lasting relationships.

FINANCIAL HEALTH

Unlike most small private colleges, Cottey College is in excellent financial health. It has no long-term debt, no short-term debt, and its payables are current. The College’s endowment as of January 2020 was just over $100 million, from which the Board authorizes an annual draw of 4.5 percent. The 2018-2019 operating budget was $17.5M. The total undesignated gift revenues for 2018-2019 were over $1.5M.

COTTEY’S PRIMARY PARTNER

Cottey College is owned and supported by the P.E.O. Sisterhood, a non-sectarian, philanthropic educational organization that has almost 230,000 members in the United States and Canada. P.E.O. supports educational opportunities for women through its philanthropies and Cottey College. P.E.O. has assisted more than 109,000 students specifically through scholarships and loans totaling more than $347 million and generally through its support of thousands of students who have graduated from Cottey College.

The P.E.O. Sisterhood’s commitment is remarkable. A significant number of students attend Cottey due to the encouragement of and referrals from P.E.O.s. For example, P.E.O.s host gatherings for prospective students and provide Cottey College materials to high school teachers and guidance counselors. It is a clear fact that Cottey thrives because of the dedicated efforts of P.E.O.s.

The P.E.O. Sisterhood appoints the Board of Trustees, which consists of both P.E.O. members and public members (non-P.E.O.s). The College has benefited from strong and effective leadership by its Board whose members bring with them a passion for engagement and a demonstrated commitment to support the College. They embrace the concept of shared governance and are supportive of academic freedom. The Board of Trustees and the College’s senior leadership work compatibly in an environment of trust and mutual respect and enjoy a strong and healthy relationship.
In the fall of 2019, Cotey enrolled 260 students, who represent 35 states and 19 countries. The average ACT is 21.7 and GPA is 3.33. Among the students, there are about 21 percent who are minorities, and 8 percent are international. Few small colleges are so geographically or racially/ethnically diverse.

At its highest enrollment, Cotey College had over 400 students in 1993. The goal in recent years has been 350. Several changes have been made at Cotey College that bode well for reaching this goal. Baccalaureate and athletic programs have been expanded. Marketing has been enhanced to support recruitment and visibility of the College. Goals have been set for transfer students from community and technical colleges for degree completion options and a number of transfer agreements are in place. Great attention is being given to retention and recruitment of students.

THE LOCATION OF THE COLLEGE

Cotey is located in Nevada, Missouri, a peaceful, friendly county seat of approximately 8,500 residents located 90 minutes south of Kansas City, Missouri, in the gently rolling hills of southwestern Missouri’s prairie lands. Faculty and staff report that the quality of life is high and that the cost of living is low. The community enjoys multiple civic, cultural, and social opportunities. Nevada has an active arts community, with a theater, a community choir, citywide mural projects, art exhibits featuring the work of area artists, and outstanding parks and golf courses. These activities are enhanced by lecture and artist series at Cotey, which bring well-known speakers, entertainers, and performances to the College and the community.

The Cotey campus has grown from a small three-block, three-building institution to a campus that now occupies 15 buildings covering more than 11 city blocks. In addition, Cotey owns a 33-acre wooded recreational area and lodge, located near the campus, along with a historic and well-maintained president’s home a few blocks away. The College dedicated a new fine arts building in September 2015. Since then the College has focused on first impressions of its facilities and grounds. The parlor in P.E.O. Hall, a student residential building, was renovated in 2019. Current initiatives include the renovation of the Chapel to create a campus center in the lower level with beautiful outdoor patios, the renovation of the library to enhance the first floor and update the heating and cooling infrastructure, and the addition of a space in Hinkhouse Center for a stock trading lab and esports.
THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

• Works in collaboration with the President and the President’s Council to facilitate the educational and institutional mission and goals of the College and the development and implementation of the Campus Master Plan.
• Develops and implements business and finance policies and procedures.
• Directs the development of the institutional operating budget and develops budget modeling forecasts and other selective financial reports annually for campus leadership and the Cottey College Board of Trustees.
• Serves as staff liaison with the Finance and Building Committee of the Board of Trustees.
• Oversees the development, implementation, and maintenance of the financial accounting system, monthly financial reports, purchasing, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and the annual audit.
• Actively participates in the institutional strategic planning efforts.
• Oversees the management of the Business Office, campus facilities, grounds and safety, maintenance and housekeeping, dining services, bookstore, and administrative computing services.
• Sits on various campus and community committees as appropriate.
• Oversees the College’s investment program, including communications with investment consultants and money managers, compliance with investment guidelines, educational programs for the Board of Trustees, and financial reporting requirements.
• Participates in planning and implementing the college-led student international trip.
• Reviews and signs all College contracts.
• Performs related duties as necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the College.
• Performs other duties as assigned by the President.
Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Has expertise with the principles, practices, and techniques of non-profit and/or college and university financial systems.
- Is competent in interpreting and following generally accepted accounting principles, GASB, NACUBO, and federal/state policies and regulations.
- Has in-depth knowledge of fund accounting principles and an understanding of funds used by the College.
- Is knowledgeable regarding facilities management.
- Is knowledgeable about investment/treasury practices.
- Is an effective team-oriented leader, capable of motivating staff and promoting the College with faculty, students, and other administrators.
- Thinks and acts creatively and strategically in support of the College's mission and goals.
- Analyzes and communicates multiple, complex tasks within and external to the College community.
- Works in a collaborative and transparent budgetary process.
- Has leadership skills necessary to function in a diverse, collaborative environment.
- Is a leader of organizational change and able to implement quality management approaches.
- Understands the changing role of technology and its application in an educational environment.
- Establishes priorities, works independently, and displays the ability to make decisions after a thorough and participatory review of information.
- Incorporates fairness, consistency, honesty, and compassion with a good work ethic throughout the finance and business organization.
- Develops and encourages positive working relationships with faculty, staff, students, and the public.

Credentials and Experience:

- Possess a master's degree in business administration or related field.
- Seven years' progressive experience in higher education management or related job experience.
- Preference given to private higher education experience.

Special Requirements:

- Class E driver’s license.
While applications will be accepted until a new VPAF is selected, interested parties are encouraged to submit their materials by **March 20, 2020**. The search committee will review applications soon thereafter to select semi-finalists and will conduct interviews by Zoom in late March 2020. Finalists will be invited to campus in early April and an appointment is expected soon thereafter.

To apply, candidates should submit a letter of interest addressing the ways in which they meet the qualifications and desired characteristics. Applications should also include a current resume and a list of five professional references with email addresses and telephone numbers. References will not be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. Send attached PDF materials addressed to:

**VPAFCottey@academicsearch.org**

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**Assisting in the search is:**

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Cottey College is committed to providing equal opportunity to its students and employees in all aspects of campus life. The College does not unlawfully discriminate in educational programs, recruitment and admissions of applicants, school-administered activities or programs, or employment opportunities, policies, or practices on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other status protected by law.

In addition, and in accordance with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Cottey College does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs, school-administered activities or programs, or employment opportunities, policies, or practices.
ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search, Inc. is assisting Cottey College in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services exclusively to institutions of higher education. Academic Search was founded on the principle of strengthening higher education leadership through professional search services. We are the only search firm in the nation with a formal relationship to a premier leadership development program. As the subsidiary of the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI), Academic Search provides substantial financial support to a number of leadership identification, development, and support programs across all sectors of public and private higher education. For more information, visit http://www.academicsearch.org/.

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