

SEARCH PROFILE:

VICE PRESIDENT FOR COLLEGE LIFE



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Reporting directly to the president and serving as a member of the president's senior staff, the Vice President for College Life is the chief student affairs officer, providing leadership and vision in administering a comprehensive range of student-facing programs and services, and supporting and creating a campus culture that promotes academic achievement, personal development, and thriving and belonging for every student.

VICE PRESIDENT FOR COLLEGE LIFE LEADERSHIP AGENDA

Participate on the president's senior leadership team as a knowledgeable, and collaborative leader who is prepared to advocate for the interests of the students and the Division of College Life while also being an active contributor to discussions and collaborations about institution-wide priorities. The College is seeking an experienced senior leader with strong communication and management skills, knowledge, experience, and energy capable of elevating student affairs and the College to new levels of success while serving the needs of present and future students. The Vice President of College Life should be able to advise and assist the president and senior leadership colleagues particularly in relation to complex student issues, crisis situations and current and emerging trends in student life and student affairs.

Sustain a focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives for all students and staff. Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are a campus priority and must continue to evolve in support of a strong sense of community for all Muhlenberg students under the leadership of the Vice President for College Life. Therefore, the new vice president will be someone with a strong understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging frameworks and demonstrable experience

implementing campus-based initiatives informed by this body of knowledge. A main focus will be partnering with others in the campus community to make meaningful and measurable progress toward a campus culture of inclusion and belonging.

Demonstrate proven collaborative and creative leadership within the context of an environment that embraces integrative learning. The successful candidate will be an educator, will promote student empowerment and efficacy, be deeply innovative, adept at relationship building, and serve as an integral partner with the academic community.

Be adept at applying strategic planning, research, assessment, and communication skills to evaluate and promote divisional needs and College goals.

The incoming Vice President for College Life is expected to provide vision in the leadership of all student affairs functions. The successful candidate will have the expertise and communication skills to plan strategically, use assessment data, and organize the division to be effective stewards of the College resources. The successful candidate will have the experience and judgment to be an innovative and creative change agent who can move the division to new levels of excellence from day one.



VICE PRESIDENT FOR COLLEGE LIFE LEADERSHIP AGENDA (CONT.)

Enhance strategic partnerships with the Provost's Office and faculty to promote student success and retention. The new vice president must possess the collaborative skills, credibility, and knowledge to be a thought partner with the provost to build connections between academic affairs, the faculty and student affairs professionals to maximize the potential for all students at Muhlenberg to engage and thrive. The vice president must develop a shared understanding of the academic mission and the contributing role of student affairs within. The Vice President for College Life will be expected to work closely with the president and provost to strengthen the ties between curricular and co-curricular areas of the College with the ultimate objective of maximizing the success of every Muhlenberg student. Demonstrated experience collaborating successfully with academic affairs, particularly as it relates to enhancing measures of student success and retention, is essential.

MUHLENBERG'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

Muhlenberg College's mission to prepare individuals to be thoughtful leaders and serve meaningfully in an increasingly pluralistic and globalized world requires both individual and collective responsibility towards achieving the goals of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

Muhlenberg College recognizes and values intersecting identities including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexuality, ability, age, socioeconomic class, nationality, language, and citizenship status that are integral to who we are and how we experience the world and each other. This diversity enriches our campus community, is fundamental to who we aspire to be, and calls for each of us to engage with one another in ways that demonstrate awareness of and respect for these identities. Together we must continually strive towards building a campus where differences are welcomed, celebrated, and respected, and each individual feels a sense of inclusion and belonging.

We seek to support individuals from historically marginalized groups, acknowledging that some identities have been and continue to be advantaged by power and privilege at the costs of others, by creating access to opportunities that will enable them to thrive personally and professionally. In parallel, we strive to understand, acknowledge, and redress the harm and injustice resulting from these inequalities. The success of our community is inextricable from the success of every individual and to achieve this we must persistently, vigorously and collectively work towards diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

Our commitments guide the actions of each individual at Muhlenberg and our collective strategies for creating a more just community. We recognize that this work is often difficult and ever-evolving and that meaningful transformation requires that every individual in our community commit to working toward these goals.

THE COLLEGE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Founded in 1848, Muhlenberg College is a private, residential, liberal arts college offering baccalaureate and graduate programs. At Muhlenberg, we are committed to a campus community that ensures students, faculty, and staff of all backgrounds feel welcome, respected, valued and included. The College provides an intensely challenging, supportive environment centered around a rigorous academic curriculum designed to prepare students for lives of leadership and meaning in a dynamic, global society. The academic program is amplified by a range of innovative programming: comprehensive and intentional residence-life programming, expansive experiential learning requirements, and an innovative coaching program designed to maximize every student's performance and potential.

The institution is currently in a \$125 million campaign, "[Boundless: The Campaign for Muhlenberg](#)," and has raised more than \$112 million to date. The campaign will

support key priorities including endowed professorships, financial aid, a \$35 million expansion of the student union, the construction of a new academic/college life building (Fahy Commons for Public Engagement and Innovation opened in January 2023), the annual fund, high-impact practices, and outcome opportunities for students.

Part of eastern Pennsylvania's scenic Lehigh Valley, Allentown is a diverse city of 125,000, Pennsylvania's third-largest, located just 60 miles north of Philadelphia and 90 miles west of New York City. The Lehigh Valley, which also includes neighboring cities Bethlehem and Easton, is one of the fastest-growing regions in the state and the Northeast, leading Pennsylvania in population growth for people aged 18–34. Home to a vibrant arts scene, extensive parks and recreational opportunities, a rich blend of diverse cuisine, and much more, visit [Life in the Lehigh Valley | Muhlenberg College](#) and [check out Allentown here](#).





STUDENT LIFE

Muhlenberg enrolls approximately 1,800 undergraduate students. The class of 2027 includes 26 percent students of color and more than 17 percent first-generation students and comes from 25 states and four countries; 28 percent of the students come from Pennsylvania, 31 percent from New Jersey and 19 percent from New York. A member of the American Talent Initiative, the College is deeply committed to increasing access to a Muhlenberg education for the nation's most talented students and provides robust financial aid, offering \$16.5 million in grants and scholarships in 2023 to first year students.

The residential campus is home to an engaging and dynamic campus community, with 23 NCAA Division III teams, approximately 150 student clubs and organizations, over 500 student leadership positions, a thriving Greek community, a vibrant performing arts scene and much more. On campus and off, there is much to become involved in at Muhlenberg!

ATHLETICS

More than a third of Muhlenberg students participate in varsity sports, including the College's newest, Women's Wrestling, competing in its inaugural season in 2024-2025. Working in concert with our academic program, Muhlenberg athletics inspire our student-athletes to perform at levels beyond what they think possible. The mental and physical requirements focus effort, imbue discipline, and embolden leadership. The College is a member of the NCAA's Division III Centennial Conference, one among an elite group of American liberal arts colleges that maintain exceptional academic standards while also competing at a high level athletically. The ideal of the true student-athlete—one who strives for excellence in the classroom and in competition while representing the College with integrity—remains the foundation of Muhlenberg's athletics philosophy.

ACADEMIC LIFE

The College has approximately 160 full-time faculty. Faculty lead a number of centers and institutes on campus, including the Muhlenberg Center for Teaching and Learning, the Institute for Religious and Cultural Understanding, the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion, the Acopian Center for Ornithology, and the Center for Ethics.

The Muhlenberg curriculum is grounded in experiential learning and provides opportunities for students in all programs to participate in research, community engagement, internships, and several types of study abroad programs that provide critical experiences for students in today's rapidly changing world. The outstanding quality of the Muhlenberg academic program has been recognized by Phi Beta Kappa and some 15 additional national honorary societies with established chapters at the College. The College was recognized by U.S. News and World Report as one of the nation's most innovative liberal arts colleges in 2022, ranking at No. 51.

PATHWAYS FOR DISCOVERY

Muhlenberg's new curriculum reflects the vital components needed for post-college success in our increasingly complex world. The varied perspectives and cross-disciplinary hallmarks of a liberal arts education are more valuable than ever and have their greatest impact when paired with consequential experiential learning, written reflection and creative problem solving.

Muhlenberg graduates always have been driven to make a difference. Students are better equipped than ever to harness their potential on a pathway that's right for them.

Muhlenberg's academic curriculum guides the student from exploration and discovery to depth, integration, and application. It challenges students to take risks and cultivate curiosity. Along the way, faculty and staff provide support through [personalized coaching and mentorship](#).

Once students have established a foundation of exploration in their first two years, they integrate that knowledge into their major or minor, both on and off campus, in integrative and experiential, hands-on experiences. Muhlenberg offers 52 programs, including 40 majors, 37 minors and 12 interdisciplinary programs. Explore our programs.

Students can build multiple areas of expertise by pursuing additional majors and minors, as well as optional micro-credentials that develop key skills for professional life, leadership, and democratic citizenship. The fourth year provides a final integrative experience within the major and an opportunity to create a digital presence, such as an e-portfolio, to launch a life and a career of consequence.

INTEGRATIVE AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

High-impact learning experiences, including integrative and experiential learning, offer different ways for students to develop and put into practice key skills that will enable them to succeed in their professional careers, to hone the skills and foster values essential to civic engagement; and to contribute to thinking about and seeking solutions for some of the world's most complex problems. High impact learning experiences allow students to engage in learning that extends beyond the classroom and takes a variety of forms, including internships, community-engaged work, research, and study abroad.

OUTCOMES

The College is committed to providing students with powerful outcomes. The [Career Center](#) and [The Muhlenberg Network](#) of alumni and parents helps students and graduates benefit from their rewarding learning experience through internship and job placement programs. Approximately 90 percent of graduates are either employed or pursuing graduate or professional degrees following graduation. Muhlenberg graduates are prepared to meet their personal definitions of success while continuing to value service to others in ways both big and small.





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our collective work is grounded in concepts of equity and justice, and we recognize the inherent dignity and worth of all individuals who constitute our intertwined communities. We value deep partnership with community organizations/schools and members, and envision our work as co-created with multiple constituencies.

The Office of Community Engagement connects students, employees, and local communities through

partnerships intended to catalyze personal, institutional, and community change.

Muhlenberg is one of only 119 colleges and universities nationwide to receive the 2020 Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, an elective designation that indicates institutional commitment to community engagement from The Carnegie Foundation.

REDEFINING INCLUSIVITY

As an institution and as individual members of a campus community, we believe it is our shared responsibility to build and support an environment for living, learning, and working at Muhlenberg in which everyone is welcomed as their full selves inclusive of their diverse social identities and lived experiences. Our efforts are led by dedicated colleagues who provide support for our collective efforts by providing vision, strategy, and expertise in our diversity, equity, and inclusion work with students, staff, and faculty. [Please refer to our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Statement.](#)

Every student is an essential part of the Muhlenberg family. The Vice President for College Life will establish, encourage, and foster an environment of respect,

recognition, and active inclusion of the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of students, faculty, and staff. The vice president will provide active and positive representation of College Life in interactions with all key stakeholders to include students, faculty, staff, families, and other College constituents. As vice president, the selected candidate will strengthen the College's position as a thought leader in student affairs, diversity, equity, and inclusion practices through active and ongoing engagement in national conferences and dialogue.

Through these and other duties as assigned, the vice president will be dedicated to creating a campus culture that's dedicated to supporting students throughout their Muhlenberg years.

COLLEGE LEADERSHIP

Kathleen E. Harring, Ph.D., was named president by the College's Board of Trustees on June 26, 2020, after serving as interim president for a year. A member of the Muhlenberg College faculty since 1984, Dr. Harring most recently served as the College's provost.

President Harring's accomplishments under her tenure as president include: the launch of master's degrees and post-baccalaureate certificates; a new core curriculum that foregrounds experiential learning; construction of the first new academic building in fifteen years, Fahy Commons for Public Engagement and Innovation, which is designed to meet the highest levels of sustainability; a more diverse student body and increased diversity across faculty and staff; a revision of the College's diversity statement and commitments, expanded support for students from underserved communities through mentoring and career development programs; and the public launch of the Boundless campaign which has exceeded targets at all stages.

The president's senior leadership team includes the provost; vice president for advancement; vice president for enrollment management; vice president for college life; chief of staff and executive assistant to the board of trustees; chief information officer; chief financial



officer; and vice president for communications and marketing. While not direct reports to the president, the vice president and executive director for graduate and continuing education and the vice president for human resources are members of the senior leadership team.

CHARACTERISTICS, DUTIES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Foster a student-centered campus environment that supports academic excellence grounded in diversity, inclusivity, belonging, and community.

Lead a collaborative and highly coordinated College Life team to meet the holistic needs of the student body and campus community, with oversight of the following areas:

- Athletics
- Campus Safety
- Community Engagement
- Conference Services
- Disability Services
- Equity and Title IX
- Health and Counseling Services
- Housing and Residence Life
- Multicultural Life
- Religious and Spiritual Life
- Seegers Union Operations
- Student Conduct
- Student Engagement
- Serve as an active and positive representative of College Life in working to establish, encourage, and foster an environment of respect, recognition, and active inclusion of the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of students, faculty, staff, and other College constituents.
- Ensure that the Division of College Life utilizes data-informed strategic planning, program development, assessment, and goal implementation for all student affairs units, and the division as a whole, in alignment with institutional goals and objectives.
- Develop, implement, and manage division-wide operations and capital budgets, ensuring the efficient and effective stewardship of College resources.
- Maintain a current understanding of applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations, as well as College policies and procedures, that impact student behaviors and activities.
 - Oversee all activities related to student social conduct, Title IX and equity proceedings, ensuring due process and the implementation of relevant College policies and procedures.

CHARACTERISTICS, DUTIES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES (CONT.)

- As a member of the president's staff, engage in collegewide leadership and close collaboration with senior leadership colleagues, most importantly with the provost, and other College stakeholders to pursue the following objectives:
 - Develop and promote a deeply integrated and holistic student educational experience
 - Strengthen student persistence and retention
 - Address complex student issues and crisis situations, while maintaining required levels of confidentiality
- Communicate current and emerging trends in student life and student affairs as they relate to academic and co-curricular needs that promote student success and retention
- Strengthen the College's position as a thought leader in student affairs, diversity, equity, and inclusion practices through active and ongoing engagement in national conferences and dialogues.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

While no one person may possess all the qualifications listed below, the ideal candidate will have many of the following professional experiences and characteristics:

- The successful candidate must have a minimum of a master's degree in higher education administration or a closely related field.
- Progressive leadership experience in student affairs or a related field.
- Excellent interpersonal, organizational, communication, and leadership skills and the ability to work collaboratively and effectively with students, faculty, staff, senior administration, and trustees.
- Demonstrated understanding of and commitment to liberal arts education, the College's mission and purpose, high academic standards, and student success.
- Commitment to [Muhlenberg College's statement of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging](#).
- Ability to develop collaboration among diverse groups and to lead and manage change.





APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Academic Search, led by senior consultant Dr. Thomas C. Shandley, is assisting Muhlenberg College in this national search.

The Vice President for College Life will be expected to start on or around January 1, 2025.

Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest can be submitted electronically, and in confidence, to: MuhlenbergVPCL@academicsearch.org. The position is open until filled, but only applications received by September 30, 2024 can be assured of full consideration.

Applications should consist of:

- a detailed letter of interest;
- a complete curriculum vitae (CV);

- a separate statement of no more than one page, which provides information about your commitment to Muhlenberg's diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging goals and initiatives; and
- the names and contact information (phone and email) of five professional references, none of whom will be contacted without prior notification to the candidate.

Additional information about the institution may be found at <https://www.muhenberg.edu/>

Muhlenberg College is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All employees are expected to support Muhlenberg's commitment to function as a diverse, caring, inclusive community.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Muhlenberg 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.

