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The National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU) seeks a seasoned, strategic, forward thinking, senior level researcher and administrator to be Vice President and Chief Operating Officer and lead the internal operations of a well-respected and influential higher education association. The VP/COO must be a leader able to deliver effective strategic results in support of NAICU’s mission to advance higher education policy and provide oversight for efficient and effective processes and systems that increase the productivity of the organization. The VP/COO will bring an understanding and appreciation of the challenges, opportunities, and public policy issues facing association members and set and advance a research agenda in support of independent higher education.
ABOUT NAICU

Based in Washington, D.C., NAICU is a proactive champion, advocate, and unifying national voice for independent higher education. It is the only national membership organization solely focused on representing private, nonprofit higher education on public policy issues in Washington. NAICU represents the leaders of private, nonprofit colleges and universities on federal issues, and works on behalf of the membership to analyze and shape federal higher education legislation and policy. With nearly 1,000 colleges, universities, and associations as members, NAICU reflects the diversity of private, nonprofit higher education in the United States.

Since 1976, NAICU has worked to protect the independence of private, nonprofit institutions and ensure that all students, regardless of family income, have access to higher education. Its policy choices and courses of action have consistently focused on three areas:

- Ensuring that student aid programs continue to provide all Americans with access to the college of their choice.
- Promoting tax policy that helps families save and pay for college and also helps private, nonprofit colleges fulfill their distinctive missions.
- Seeking appropriate regulation of private, nonprofit colleges and universities that is sensitive to their diversity and independence, while addressing society’s needs.

To achieve these goals, NAICU meets with policymakers; advocates on behalf of its member institutions; provides analysis, insight, and guidance on legislation, regulations, and other policy developments; devises collective strategies among key stakeholders; organizes and manages effective coalitions; and keeps members informed and involved every step of the way.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, NAICU pivoted to advocate for stimulus funding for institutions, students, and families, and expects to continue to push for fair treatment of private, nonprofit higher education through the recovery period.

Comprised of leading policy experts and analysts, with contacts on Capitol Hill and in the White House and Administration, the NAICU staff serve as resources for in-depth information and research on issues affecting private, nonprofit colleges and universities and the students they serve.

MEMBERSHIP

NAICU’s devoted and active members help determine its organizational agenda, playing a critical role in the association’s effectiveness as an advocacy organization and champion for private, nonprofit higher education.

The nearly 1,000 member institutions include major research universities, faith-based colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Minority-Serving
ABOUT NAICU (CONT.)

Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities, art and design colleges, traditional liberal arts and science institutions, women’s colleges, work colleges, two-year colleges, and schools of law, medicine, engineering, business, and other professions.

The NAICU membership also includes a rich array of associations serving various subsets of private, nonprofit colleges and universities. One such group is the National Association of Independent College and University State Executives (NAICUSE), which is composed of the leaders of the state associations representing independent colleges and universities in 38 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Another group is the Secretariat, which consists of nearly 30 members representing the many regional and special purpose independent college and university associations.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

To support its members and meet organizational goals, NAICU tracks campus trends, conducts research, analyzes issues, and regularly publishes information that provides a snapshot of America’s private, nonprofit colleges and universities. It provides briefings on the most urgent policy items and talking points to assist institutional leaders in their communications with stakeholders on complex issues. NAICU also offers research, analysis, and tools, including Issue Briefs, Federal Student Aid Data Sheets, a weekly Washington Update e-newsletter, and regular alerts to keep members updated on key issues in Washington and whether they might be needed to take action to advocate on behalf of their institutions and students. NAICU also runs U-CAN (the University & College Accountability Network) and helps lead initiatives, such as the Student Aid Alliance and the Double Pell Alliance.

While presidents serve as the primary members of NAICU, the association offers targeted information, legislative and policy updates, and education resources for others in the presidential cabinet as well as government relations, public relations, and institutional research staff at member institutions. For the many smaller private colleges without the resources for an internal government relations staff, NAICU fills that function by providing necessary expertise, analysis, and insight.

LEADERSHIP

Dr. Barbara K. Mistick, D.M.

An experienced senior-level executive, entrepreneur, and educator, Dr. Barbara K. Mistick became the fourth president of NAICU on September 1, 2019. As NAICU’s president, Dr. Mistick is an advocate for independent higher education at the national level, working to influence federal policy and regulations on behalf of member institutions.

Over the course of her 30-year career in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, Dr. Mistick has served in presidencies at Wilson College (PA) and the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. She held leadership roles at the H.J. Heinz School of Public Policy and Management at Carnegie Mellon University (PA) and the National Education Center for Women in Business at Seton Hill University (PA) and spent more than 20 years as an entrepreneur and business leader in the transportation industry.

Prior to joining NAICU, Dr. Mistick served as the 19th president of Wilson College, where she was the architect of Wilson Today, a five-point strategic plan designed to double enrollment by reducing tuition, creating a first-of-its-kind student debt buyback program, and opening all degree programs to coeducation. During her eight-year tenure, Wilson experienced record enrollment growth, nearing 1,500 students in fall 2018. Dr. Mistick also served for six years as president of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, where she launched the first-ever capital campaign for the library and provided strategic leadership and operational oversight for a library system with approximately 2.2 million visitors and 19 neighborhood library locations.

Dr. Mistick earned her Doctor of Management from Case Western Reserve University (OH), a Master of Business Administration from the University of Pittsburgh (PA), and a Bachelor of Science from Carlow University (PA). She is the author of three books, the most recent of which, Stretch: How to Future-Proof Yourself for Tomorrow’s Workplace (2016), was designated as an Amazon Editor’s Pick and ranked #12 on the 800-CEO-READ’s Best Seller list.
ABOUT NAICU (CONT.)

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS
NAICU recently released the economic impact report, *Private, Nonprofit Higher Education: Shaping Lives and Anchoring Communities*, which tells the story of the economic, social, and cultural vitality that private, nonprofit colleges and universities add to communities, regions, and the nation. The report offers details about the $591.5 billion in economic impact generated by these institutions in 2018-19 and demonstrates how they are in the unique position to not only help but lead the acceleration of post-pandemic economic progress.

NAICU and its members have been active in calling for federal COVID relief funding, which has resulted in significant financial support for higher education that includes all private, nonprofit colleges and universities. It brings much needed relief to college students and their families, and also provides important resources to colleges and universities to help them remain open, safely and effectively educate their students, and ensure the health and safety of their campus communities.

STAFF & FINANCES
NAICU has 20 talented and experienced staff members, including the president.

The fiscal year 2021 operating budget was $7 million.

GOVERNANCE
NAICU is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of 48 members, which includes institutional presidents; the leadership of NAICUSE and the Secretariat, who serve as ex officio voting members; the NAICU president, who is an ex officio non-voting member; and three government relations professionals from institutions, who serve as ad hoc non-voting members. Seven committees report to the NAICU board. Four deal with public policy issues and are composed of board members as well as selected members: the Committees on Accountability, Student Aid, Policy Analysis and Public Relations, and Tax Policy. The Executive, Administration, and Audit Committees are operational committees, dealing with internal NAICU policies and procedures.
THE ROLE: VICE PRESIDENT & CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

In this role, the Vice President and Chief Operating Officer will report directly to the President and serve as a collaborative member of the senior leadership team. The VP/COO will:

- Coordinate key leadership activities with the President and senior team, including research, membership, human resources, finance and administration, technology, and planning.
- Oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization in coordination with NAICU staff members.
- Lead research and policy analysis staff and direct the creation and implementation of the research and policy agenda and activities that support NAICU’s mission.
- Serve as primary liaison to the Board of Directors and provide staff support for relevant committees.
- Oversee member relations, conferences, and other related activities and events.
- Enhance and oversee the development of all information technology resources, vendors, and policies, as needed to support the operations of NAICU, including adoption of best practices for association operations.
- Oversee the annual budget and related financial and human resource matters.
- Represent NAICU at events, conferences, and other outside efforts.
QUALIFICATIONS

The key qualifications and attributes of the successful candidate include:

- An advanced degree.
- Demonstrated passion and commitment to higher education.
- Significant senior level management experience providing broad oversight of finance and operations functions, including programmatic, administrative, human resources, technology, planning, and board relations responsibilities, ideally within a nonprofit organization, such as a higher education institution, foundation, membership association, or government agency.
- Demonstrated experience in developing and/or implementing a research and policy agenda with a preference for experience in higher education research.
- An understanding of issues confronting private, nonprofit higher education, including federal and state legislation, executive, agency, and administrative policies, and judicial decisions.
- Strategic thinking and agility with the ability to anticipate future consequences and trends and incorporate them into planning.
- Exceptional capacity for managing and leading people; a team builder who works collaboratively, enforces accountability, cultivates entrepreneurship, and empowers people at all levels of the organization to succeed.
- Clear ability to problem solve with creativity, wisdom, tact, and decisiveness, in collaboration with others.
- Outstanding organizational ability, allowing for the successful development, execution, and timely completion of multiple projects concurrently, all with a strong focus on excellence.
- Ability to communicate complex issues; exceptional written and oral presentation skills.
HOW TO APPLY

The position is open until filled, but only applications received by **July 26, 2021**, will be given full consideration. Applications should include a detailed letter of interest, current resume, and contact information for five references. References will not be contacted without explicit permission from the candidate. Inquiries, nominations, and applications may be sent in confidence to: NAICU-VPCOO@academicsearch.org.

NAICU is being assisted by Academic Search. Confidential discussions about the opportunity may be arranged by contacting Jay Lemons (jay.lemons@academicsearch.org), Shawn Hartman (shawn.hartman@academicsearch.org) or Jennifer Kookan (jennifer.kookan@academicsearch.org).

NAICU is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Employees are selected on the basis of their qualifications and work experience. It is the policy of NAICU to recruit, hire, and promote employees without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, veteran status, marital status, sexual preference, or for any other reason not related to employment.
ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities 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. For more information, visit www.academicsearch.org.