



Vice President for Strategic Initiatives

Rhodes College seeks an insightful, energetic, and nimble leader to serve as the inaugural Vice President for Strategic Initiatives. In close collaboration with President Marjorie Hass and the entire campus community, the Vice President will be responsible for helping Rhodes bring to life the ambitious goals outlined in the College's emerging strategic plan, expected to be approved by the Board of Trustees in Spring 2019. In addition, because ensuring and maintaining a diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus climate is a core element of Rhodes' strategic plan, this new Vice President will also serve as a subject matter expert and campus leader on these matters at the highest level.

Able to connect credibly and readily with faculty, students, staff, and administrators, this person will serve as both an essential member of the President's core leadership team and as a critical resource for a wide range of constituents both on and off campus. The new Vice President will also serve as one of the President's representatives both on and beyond campus, playing an important role in the College's relationships with the city of Memphis and beyond. With an ability to conceptualize the highest strategic aims of the College combined with a talent for on-the-ground project management, this Vice President will have the opportunity to develop and implement complex and substantive initiatives that will directly advance the academic and administrative mission of the College.

INTRODUCTION

Rhodes College aspires to graduate students with a life-long passion for learning, a compassion for others, and the ability to translate academic study and personal concern into effective leadership and action in their communities and the world. Rhodes has built a unique place for itself among the nation's top liberal arts colleges by combining a powerful commitment to the liberal arts with unusually rich connections to the surrounding City of Memphis, Tennessee. Rhodes has twice been named "The #1 Most Service-Oriented College in the United States" by *Newsweek*, and civic engagement is integrated into the curriculum for all students. Recently, Rhodes was included in the new Princeton Review college guide, *Colleges that Create Futures: 50 Colleges that Launch Careers by Going Beyond the Classroom*.

Recently named by the Princeton Review as America's most beautiful college campus, Rhodes also ranks #51 among the nation's top liberal arts colleges by *U.S. News and World Report*. The college is one of 40 institutions in the quintessential guidebook, *Colleges That Change Lives*, and is included on the Princeton Review's lists of "Colleges that Create Futures" and "Colleges that Pay You Back." Rhodes enrolls 2,036 students and has an endowment of \$360 million. The Rhodes student experience is driven by intellectual engagement, service to others, and honor. The Honor System, one of the oldest student-run systems in the country, is a valued and vibrant tradition at Rhodes and all incoming students sign a pledge affirming their commitment to the three components of

the System — the Honor Code, the Social Regulations Code, and the Rhodes Commitment to Diversity.

HISTORY

Rhodes College was founded in 1848 in Clarksville, Tennessee, and, for many years, it was closely affiliated with the Presbyterian Church. In 1925, President Charles Diehl led the move to the present campus in Memphis, Tennessee, where, in 1945, the college became known as Southwestern at Memphis.

Since 1984, when the College adopted the name Rhodes College to honor former College president Peyton Nalle Rhodes, the institution has grown beyond regional recognition to a nationally ranked liberal arts college that attracts students and faculty from far beyond the Mid-South region, with 70% of students from out of state.

CITY OF MEMPHIS

Rhodes sits in the heart of Memphis, a metropolitan area of 1.2 million people, a city with boundless creativity where passion, ideals, cultures, and opportunity converge in authentic ways. The city, on the Mississippi River, is filled with unexpected combinations: global commerce and local start-ups, high culture and outdoor adventure, soul food and haute cuisine, world-class infrastructure and spectacular green-and blue-ways, rich heritage and forward thinking, and, of course, all the many forms of music born and still being recorded here, which create a wholly original Memphis sound.

Home to several Fortune 500 companies and a burgeoning film industry, Memphis is a vibrant city with numerous museums chronicling its rich history, among them, the National Civil Rights Museum, a cherished college partner and catalyst for the recent year-long MLK50 Commemoration. The city boasts a vast park system, a green line, and Shelby Farms, an urban green space of 4500 acres, unrivaled in both size and potential. With five major expressways, numerous freight railroads, and the world's second largest cargo operation in Memphis International Airport, the city serves as a major American transportation hub.

The Rhodes community is deeply committed to ensuring continued growth and development in the City of Memphis. Rhodes' unique position as one of few liberal arts colleges in an urban setting provides an array of opportunities for students and alumni to engage with and make meaningful contributions to Memphis. The city's Medical District and the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital are key partners in providing such opportunities.

THE HONOR SYSTEM

The Rhodes Honor System, one of the longest standing honor systems in the country, consists of the Honor Code, the Social Regulations Code, and the Rhodes Commitment to Diversity. The objective of the Honor System is to foster the spiritual growth, moral fortitude, and intellectual development of the individual student. All incoming students sign a pledge at the beginning of each school year affirming their commitment to the three components of the Honor System. Students are personally responsible for their work, their actions, and their word, and all students pledge to uphold the System in their daily lives and to report cases of violation to the appropriate student governing bodies.

The Honor System is a tradition which has been valued by the Rhodes community for more than a century. It allows the fullest possible expression of individual life in harmony with community life, and it is a principle which members of the Rhodes community believe to be fundamental in ethical life during and after college.

LEADERSHIP

Dr. Marjorie Hass is a nationally recognized advocate for the value of a liberal arts education who began her tenure as the 20th president of Rhodes College in July of 2017. Under her leadership, Rhodes College has been recognized for its quality, value, and academic rigor.

Just six months after arriving in Memphis, the USA Today Network-Tennessee named Dr. Hass one of the 18 Tennesseans to watch in 2018. In her first year as president Dr. Hass secured a transformational gift to the Lynn & Henry Turley Memphis Center that more than doubles the College's investment in community partnerships, she supervised the launch of a new master's degree in urban education, and she began an inclusive strategic planning process that will chart the College's course for the next decade.

Dr. Hass serves as a board member of the Association of American Colleges & Universities and former chair of the board of directors of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. She is an active member of the Tennessee Independent Colleges & Universities Association. National, Tennessee, and local lawmakers regularly consult with Dr. Hass on key higher education initiatives.

Leadership development is a key priority for Dr. Hass. She serves as a mentor for emerging leaders in higher education and an advocate for diversity and inclusion. Dr. Hass has participated in several faculty development seminars since coming to Rhodes.

Dr. Hass began her career as a professor of philosophy. Her teaching and research focused on philosophy of language, philosophy of logic, and feminist philosophy. She spent more than 16 years as a member of the faculty and administration at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA. Dr. Hass was appointed provost in 2005, a position she held until she was named president of Austin College in 2009. Dr. Hass holds a bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree in philosophy from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

With the arrival of President Marjorie Hass in July 2017, Rhodes College seized the opportunity to assess its current environment and imagine a future that takes advantage of new opportunities to strengthen its position in the national landscape and Memphis.

To that end, Dr. Hass challenged the campus to consider how it will build on the College's academic and financial strengths in order to serve the diverse and talented students of the future. While the planning is still very much in process, several core themes have emerged. These include:

- Commitment to Rhodes' core mission as a residential, liberal arts college.
- Commitment to place, including Rhodes' campus, the vibrant city of Memphis, and our responsibilities as global citizens.

- Preparing for the talented students of tomorrow so that the College can best serve an increasingly diverse and engaged student body.
- Developing new revenue streams in order to reduce tuition pressure on families.
- Enhancing pathways from college to career to assist students in translating their academic learning into meaningful lives of leadership and service.

The planning process has identified a range of ways in which the above themes could be realized and applied through concrete actions and initiatives. The viability of these themes and applications are currently being assessed so that wise decisions can be made about priorities and The Board of Trustees is expected to vote on the completed strategic plan in Spring 2019.

ACADEMICS

The classroom experience at Rhodes is intimate and rigorous. Rhodes values the engaging dialogue that arises when students and professors work together to investigate questions and problems they care about. In this environment, students are expected to formulate and articulate big ideas and contribute in major ways to the critical discussions and debates that take place in classrooms and laboratories, and the 10:1 student to faculty ratio makes this possible. Rhodes seamlessly integrates high impact experiences such as internships, study abroad, and faculty-mentored student research with a traditional liberal arts education, and the Foundations Curriculum gives students the freedom to pursue their academic interests while developing critical-thinking skills that will serve them throughout their lives. Rhodes has hosted a Phi Beta Kappa chapter on campus since 1949.

Through 18 academic departments and 13 interdisciplinary programs, Rhodes offers more than 50 majors, interdisciplinary majors, and minors. The College provides pre-professional advising for students who plan to work in the health professions, law, engineering, ministry, and education, and has a partnership with St. Jude Children's Research Hospital to provide extraordinary research opportunities for qualified students. Rhodes offers two graduate degree programs: the Master of Science in Accounting and the Master of Arts in Urban Education.

More than 70 percent of Rhodes students supplement their study on campus with international study. The Buckman Center for International Education provides study abroad advising and financial aid and serves as the first point of contact for international students studying at Rhodes.

STUDENTS

Rhodes is home to a diverse group of approximately 2,036 students who represent 46 states (plus D.C.) and 41 countries. The Class of 2022 includes 32% students of color from the United States and 10% international students. Approximately 70% of Rhodes students live on campus, and the student body has a 44:56 male to female ratio.

Rhodes students are intellectually curious and deeply engaged in academic and extracurricular activities. Students with a personal commitment to service are drawn to Rhodes and to the many opportunities to integrate themselves into the greater Memphis community, and more than 80% of students participate in service activities. Rhodes actively recruits students who are excited to be part of the city, seeking opportunities to serve Memphis in ways that will benefit all its residents,

and the College was ranked #1 on *Newsweek's* list of "Most Service-Oriented" colleges two years in a row. In 2017, Rhodes students volunteered 394,758 hours of service to the community.

In addition to the multitude of service opportunities, there are more than 100 student clubs and organizations available on campus, including academic clubs, performing arts groups, cultural and political organizations, fraternities and sororities, student governance groups, religious organizations, publications, and club athletics.

FACULTY

Rhodes faculty members represent the best of the scholar-teacher model that is so essential to a liberal arts education. Virtually all of the faculty hold the highest degrees in their respective fields and contribute regularly to the scholarship of their disciplines. Many have been recognized for their excellence with grants from the NSF, NIH, NEH, and the Mellon Foundation, Fulbright awards, and numerous other honors including a recent faculty invitation to join the prestigious Council on Foreign Relations. Rhodes honors faculty accomplishment through institutional awards for teaching, scholarship, and service and supports the ongoing development of the faculty through such programs as the Hill Grant for curricular innovation, the Faculty Development Endowment Grants for faculty scholarship, and an extensive mentorship program for incoming faculty. Since the mid-1980's, Rhodes has offered a two-year William Randolph Heart Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Neuroscience for aspiring faculty from underrepresented minority groups in higher education. Rhodes is committed to sustaining an environment in which faculty can thrive in their careers and make substantial contributions to the College community and their scholarly communities. In summary, Rhodes faculty exhibit an unusual combination of superior teaching skills and significant involvement and accomplishments in scholarship.

STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION

Rhodes employs just over 300 exceptionally dedicated administrators and staff who join the faculty in serving the educational mission of the college and cultivating the character of its students. Staff members are an integral part of the community. Continuing to value the contributions of staff members at all levels of the College is essential to maintaining the sense of common purpose, civility, and respect within the community. Rhodes is proud to recognize particularly outstanding staff contributions at its annual Service Recognition program which includes recognition for years of service and four awards for outstanding staff.

CAMPUS AND FACILITIES

Rhodes' Collegiate Gothic campus, identified by The Princeton Review as the most beautiful campus in the United States, sits on a 123-acre wooded site in the heart of historic Midtown Memphis. The walkways, quadrangles, residence halls, common areas, and classrooms are all intentionally designed to encourage intimate conversation, the exchange of ideas, and life-changing connections.

With each new expansion on its original 123-acre Memphis campus, Rhodes has maintained its Collegiate Gothic architecture. The Paul Barret Jr. Library, completed in 2005, has been ranked among the country's most beautiful libraries. In 2012, Rhodes opened two new facilities, the expanded and renovated Catherine S. Burrow Refectory and the West Village Residence Hall. In 2014, the College completely renovated the Rhodes Tower science facility and, most recently, in

2017, the College opened Robertson Hall, a \$34 million, 55,000-square-foot science facility that houses state-of-the-art research and teaching facilities.

The College recently acquired a 10-acre property across the street from the main campus, known as West Campus. With this new space, the College continues its growth trajectory and provides even more opportunities to support the campus and Memphis communities. To date, construction at West Campus has included a bookstore, Human Resources department offices, the 650-seat McNeill Performance Hall, and renovated classrooms and faculty offices. In future years, West Campus will become home to several departments, as well as provide space for new residence halls and other co-curricular initiatives.

FINANCES AND RESOURCES

Effective June 30, 2018, the College completed its 45th consecutive year of balanced budgets. For fiscal year 2019, the total operating budget is \$77.7 million net of a generous financial aid budget of \$50.5 million. Rhodes has an endowment of \$360 million and a moderate debt level of \$69 million. Total assets are approximately \$615 million. The College maintains a debt rating of A+ with a stable outlook from Standard and Poor's and a rating of A1 with a stable outlook from Moody's Investors Service.

ROLE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

This newly created position is one of significant responsibility, visibility, and heft, with a broad purview and the support of the President's Office behind it. The Vice President will work closely with President Hass and serve as a collaborative and collegial member of her core Senior Leadership Team, which includes:

- Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Vice President of Enrollment & Communications and Dean of Admissions
- Vice President for Development
- Vice President for Finance & Business Affairs
- Vice President of Student Life and Dean of Students
- Executive Director of Communication
- Executive Assistant to the President

The Vice President will contribute to the development and lead the implementation of the College's emerging strategic plan. This effort will require bringing a holistic perspective to the planning and implementation process, and leading a variety of special projects and campus-wide initiatives in close partnership with faculty, students, staff, administrators, and key partners in and beyond the city of Memphis.

Because diversity, equity, and inclusion are inherently part of the College's future strategic direction, this Vice President will also be responsible for providing high-level and expert leadership for ensuring that Rhodes' campus climate is and continues to be one in which all can thrive. In the pursuit of these multiple goals, the Vice President will be supported by an administrative assistant and will also supervise the College's Title IX Coordinator.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Vice President for Strategic Initiatives will have the opportunity to address the following priorities:

- **Contributing to the development and leading the implementation of the College's strategic plan.** Expected to be approved by the Board of Trustees in Spring 2019, the strategic plan is being developed through a broadly inclusive and collaborative process involving a wide range of constituencies. The Vice President will join in the ongoing planning efforts and then organize and lead the complex process of realizing these ambitious goals. In doing so, the Vice President will connect faculty, staff, students, and others on and off campus and will be responsible for both the high-level strategy and the day-to-day management of large, transformative projects in service of the College's mission.
- **Serve as both a representative of the President on and off campus and a member of her Senior Leadership Team.** In addition to serving as a collegial and positive member of the President's core team, the Vice President will act as the President's representative in carrying out a wide variety of campus-wide initiatives. The Vice President will serve a similar role with local, regional, and national leaders at the President's request, which may mean serving on critical committees alongside Memphis' civic leaders or engaging with peers and colleagues across higher education.
- **As part of the College's strategic direction, convene a campus-wide committee on intentional diversity, equity, and inclusion.** Rhodes has staff in place currently who lead diversity and inclusion efforts at the day-to-day level and who are dedicated to supporting specific constituencies, such as faculty, students, and staff. The Vice President will provide highest level leadership for these ongoing efforts and also bring together a wide range of individuals and groups for candid and productive dialogue on questions of climate, race, identity, and the other issues that are currently at the forefront on campuses across the nation. This Vice President will lead the process for developing a new campus-wide statement on diversity and will provide space for fruitful discussion of new ideas for ensuring that Rhodes is and continues to be a place that is safe, welcoming, and supportive of its diverse community.

DESIRED QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS

The new Vice President will bring high-level strategic thinking, broad institutional perspective, and positive energy to their role on the President's core Senior Leadership Team. The ideal candidate will hold a Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degree and have an intimate understanding of the faculty experience. They will also bring many of the following complementary skills and experiences to their work:

Strategic Vision and Leadership

- Have a sophisticated understanding of the challenges facing residential liberal arts colleges in the 21st century and the need for institutions to develop meaningful, actionable, and institutionally appropriate responses to them;

- The ability to conceptualize strategic initiatives at a high level and then lead their day-to-day implementation;
- Experience setting and achieving long-term strategic goals as well as the temperamental and intellectual agility to respond effectively to urgent items as they arise;

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Subject matter expertise in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion, sufficient to allow them to serve as a campus leader and authority on best practices in a wide range of contexts and conversations both on and off campus;
- The ability to build relationships of trust and shared purpose across a wide range of stakeholders including faculty, students, staff, and administrators, as well as key partners in and around the city of Memphis;

Communication and Collaboration

- A strong sense of how to approach complex conversations and interactions with diplomacy, insight, and emotional intelligence;
- A high degree of comfort in engaging with students and credibility in engaging with faculty and staff;
- Exceptionally strong communication skills, particularly in the areas of writing and public speaking;
- The poise to interact confidently and effectively with important constituencies such as the Board of Trustees, local and national leaders, and others; and,
- An understanding of the collaborative leadership structure within higher education, the nature of the academic enterprise, and a commitment to the mission, vision, and institutional priorities of Rhodes College.

CONTACT

Please send nominations, applications, and queries in confidence and electronically to:

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Rhodes College is an equal opportunity employer committed to diversity in the workforce.