



# ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY

## Vice President and Dean of Student Life

St. Lawrence University invites nominations and applications for the position of Vice President and Dean of Student Life. The next Vice President must be a bold, collaborative leader, who will play a central role in defining a culture and sense of community on campus that promotes students' intellectual growth, identity exploration, reflective leadership, and responsible citizenship.

### **OVERVIEW**

#### ***Mission***

The mission of St. Lawrence University is to provide an inspiring and demanding undergraduate education in the liberal arts to students selected for their seriousness of purpose and intellectual promise.

#### ***Market Position Statement***

Located in Canton, N.Y., St. Lawrence University is a coeducational, private, independent liberal arts institution of about 2,500 students. The educational opportunities at St. Lawrence inspire students and prepare them to be critical and creative thinkers, to find a compass for their lives and careers, and to pursue knowledge and understanding for the benefit of themselves, society, and the planet. Through its focus on active engagement with ideas in and beyond the classroom, a St. Lawrence education leads students to make connections that transform lives and communities, from the local to the global.

#### ***About St. Lawrence University***

St. Lawrence University offers undergraduate Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees as well as a small graduate program leading to Master Degrees in Education. At the undergraduate level, the University enrolls more than 2,400 students. The student body comes from 42 states and territories as well as 62 countries, with international students and U.S. ethnic/racial minorities representing approximately 21% of the student population. The St. Lawrence curriculum has 69 major and 41 minor fields of study. More than half of the student body studies for a semester or more abroad or off campus before graduation, while many majors and minors include interdisciplinary and intercultural learning.

In the 2018 admissions cycle the University admitted 46% of its applicants, and 22% of those admitted enrolled, yielding a first-year class of 643. Thirty-six percent of the matriculants were Early Decision candidates. The student experience is defined by a highly active and engaged student body, with 79% of students participating in community service and 124 distinct student organizations. St. Lawrence students consistently report a higher sense of satisfaction with their communities than at peer institutions, and enjoy the benefits of an alumni network ranked the third strongest in the nation by the Princeton Review for the last two years in a row.

Ninety-eight percent of St. Lawrence students reside on campus in housing options including 13 residence halls, senior town houses, 16 theme cottages, 4 University-owned Greek houses and 3 privately-owned Greek houses. The University's approach to student housing is predicated upon the belief that over the course of four years, students benefit from a residential curriculum in a number of ways. They learn to live in a diverse community and to value the unique contributions and cultural touchstones of the different individuals at St. Lawrence. Students develop and exercise leadership skills, allowing them to have a positive impact on their residential communities. They also develop skills that will benefit them throughout their lives — including communication, assertiveness, priority-setting and time management.

We strive for excellence and diversity among our faculty, and more than 99% of St. Lawrence's 177 full-time faculty members have a Ph.D. or terminal degree. St. Lawrence's student-faculty ratio is 11:1, and 98% of the full-time faculty teach undergraduates. Today's St. Lawrence faculty comprises men and women equally at 50-50 while 17% are people of color. Among full-time faculty, 66% are tenured and another 24% are in tenure-track positions. Of the 38 part-time faculty, many have a long-term connection to the University.

St. Lawrence faculty are active as both scholars and teachers. They recognize that effective teaching cannot be divorced from professional excellence in the subject matter taught. Their contributions to their disciplines and to the intellectual life of the University are vast and impressive, as demonstrated by their accomplishments and distinctions earned, including many grants from leading national and international funding organizations. One recent example is a 2016 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation supporting Sophomore Journeys, which builds on the University's recognized First-Year Program in supporting holistic student development through combined academic and Student Life initiatives. The Mellon Foundation is also providing support for the University's new interdisciplinary program in Public Health, a path-breaking academic and co-curricular option for students including experiential learning along with coursework in the sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities.

St. Lawrence faculty members offer highly rigorous and demanding courses while employing a highly student-centered approach to teaching and learning. This pedagogy requires dynamic collaborations between students and faculty both inside and outside of the classroom. Small class sizes help to establish strong student and faculty interactions and a learning environment in which students feel engaged, challenged, and comfortable participating and asking questions. The median class size is 17 with 62% of all classes consisting of fewer than 20 students.

The University's First-Year Program, which combines a living-learning program with a team-taught interdisciplinary course that emphasizes communication skills, critical thinking, and close academic advising relationships, was one of the first of its kind and has been a national model for such programs for 30 years. Through the St. Lawrence University Fellows Program, our students contribute to active faculty research programs based at St. Lawrence and elsewhere.

St. Lawrence University programs offer students learning experiences across the world. These opportunities range from the University's innovative New York City semester to international programs in England, Japan, Kenya and other locations around the globe. St. Lawrence's

commitment to international education is longstanding, and its Kenya campus program celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in June 2014. St. Lawrence has 30 off-campus study programs in more than 21 countries.

The University offers 34 intercollegiate athletic teams for men and women with 31% of all undergraduate students involved, and its philosophy includes a shared understanding that sports support the institution's learning goals for its students. Most teams compete at the NCAA Division III level and in the Liberty League, while men's and women's ice hockey competes at the NCAA Division I level and in the Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference. The intercollegiate athletic program is competitive and consistently challenges for conference titles and national rankings.

The outcomes St. Lawrence achieves for its students are outstanding. During the last decade, over 96% percent of graduates were in graduate school or employed seven months post-graduation. Significantly, our response rate for this data is over 73%.

The University operates with \$197 million in gross revenue and an endowment of approximately \$307 million as of June 30, 2018. Recognized for its recent positive trends in enrollment, St. Lawrence maintains the prestigious distinction of an 'A' credit rating by Standard & Poor's and Moody's.

In October 2011, the Board of Trustees approved a Strategic Map that is updated periodically and sets a vision to guide the University as it builds on its strengths and continues to distinguish itself as an innovative leader in the liberal arts. In support of its strategy, the University is currently in a comprehensive campaign and has raised donations and commitments of \$147 million toward the \$225 million goal. Given the momentum of support, the *Campaign for Every Laurentian* is expected to be the largest in the University's history.

### ***Location and Campus***

St. Lawrence considers its location one of its greatest assets. Canton, New York, is a rural community and regional business and government center with a population of 7,000 in the St. Lawrence River Valley. In the heart of New York State's North Country, the region is characterized by several small cities, numerous farms, many villages, and four colleges within 10 miles; clean air and open landscapes; and friendly, self-sufficient, communities. Canton sits between the Adirondack Park, the largest state park in the United States and the site of the University's nationally recognized Adirondack Semester, and the Canadian-U.S. border that is the St. Lawrence River. It is in close proximity to U.S. cities such as Burlington, VT, Syracuse, NY, and the Adirondack regions center of sports and recreation, the Olympic Village of Lake Placid, NY. The major Canadian cities and cultural centers of Ottawa and Montreal are nearby, with Ottawa the closest city to the University. As a result, St. Lawrence is the American liberal arts college closest to the capital of a foreign nation, and the Canadian studies program takes full advantage of proximity for international and intercultural learning.

St. Lawrence University comprises 1,000 acres in Canton, New York, plus property on Upper Saranac Lake in the Adirondacks used as a conference center for campus groups and a vacation site for alumni. Much of the Saranac Lake property remains pristine, exemplifying the long-held

commitment to the environment. In recent years the University has undertaken major initiatives directed toward renovation and building of new facilities, with the focus of these investments in buildings, grounds, and technology supporting academic excellence across the curriculum and a well-balanced, student-centered campus life. Campus improvements completed include a new university bookstore, a new student center, new athletic facilities and fields, a new student health center, a new science building with LEED gold certification, new arts facilities, improved computer network infrastructure, and new wireless networks in all campus buildings. More recently, a new 155-bed residence, Kirk Douglas Hall (named for the University's renowned alumnus) opened in August 2014 in response to strong student enrollment and retention. In 2017, a renovation of a historically significant building, Herring-Cole Hall, was completed. Last year, the renovation of two buildings were completed to create a student-focused space for the University's Center for Student Achievement, a new cutting-edge facility designed to support the ambition of every student to meet their academic potential.

### ***THE VICE PRESIDENT AND DEAN OF STUDENT LIFE***

As the senior student affairs officer at St. Lawrence, the Vice President and Dean of Student Life plays a central role in defining a culture and sense of community on campus that promotes students' intellectual growth, identity exploration, reflective leadership, and responsible citizenship. Reporting to President William L. Fox, the Vice President is responsible for the overall vision and effectiveness of a comprehensive range of programs, policies, procedures, and services that foster student success and a commitment to inclusiveness and support for the University's diverse student body.

The Vice President is a member of the President's senior staff and is involved in formulating university policy, and is staff support to the Trustee Committee on Student Life, working closely with the Trustee Chair and Vice-chair to facilitate and appropriate trustee oversight and engagement with the student life program.

Administratively, the Vice President oversees the Student Life division, including a total staff of 51 across the following departments: career services and leadership education; Diana B. Torrey Health & Counseling Center; diversity and inclusion; residential learning communities; security and safety; co-curricular education and programming; and student judicial affairs. In addition, the University Chaplain, who reports to the President, has a "dotted line" reporting relationship to the Vice President. For FY 2019 the annual budget for the division of Student Life is \$6,529,000.

There are seven direct reports to the Vice President:

- Assistant VP for Safety and Security and Emergency Management;
- Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion;
- Associate Dean for Student Life;
- Assistant Dean and Director of Residence Life;
- Director of Career Services;
- Director of the Fitness Center;
- Director of Health and Counseling Services; and,
- Director of Student Activities and Leadership.

For additional information regarding many of the units within Student Life, please click on the links below.

[Career Services](#): Coordinating and working with the Office of Alumni Relations, Career Services is committed to empowering students and graduates to develop their sense of purpose through formal study and active engagement beyond the classroom. They work to establish a network of support to help students navigate their own development with confidence as they explore career options, advance their personal brand, expand their experiences, and thrive in a dynamic world.

[Chaplain's Office](#): Please click on the following link to learn more about the Gunnison Memorial Chapel, Multifaith Advisors, Spiritual and Religious Life, Jewish Life, the Community Gospel Choir, GLBTQI, among other areas: <https://www.stlawu.edu/chaplain/about-us>.

[Diversity and Inclusion](#): The Office of the Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion upholds and promotes a culture of diversity and inclusion at St. Lawrence University. The Office supports the University's quest to create and sustain a living-learning community that embraces diversity in all its forms. The Associate Dean reports jointly to the Vice Presidents for Student Life and Academic Affairs.

[Health and Counseling](#): The Diana B. Torrey '82 Health and Counseling Center's mission is to empower students to be active partners in their wellness and supporting students in their pursuit of academic and lifelong goals.

[Housing/Residential Life](#): The Office of Residence Life's website provides students with a tremendous amount of information regarding the many residential communities at St. Lawrence as well as information about CA selection, housing assignments, important dates, residences, staff contacts, and more.

[International Student Services](#): International Student Services supports the intellectual, ethical, personal, and social development of St. Lawrence's international students as they explore their place and purpose as engaged learners in a diverse and interdependent University and world.

[LGBTQIA Student Services](#): The LGBTQIA Student Services is a collaborative interdepartmental initiative aiming to provide advocacy, information, and resources for LGBTQIA students, allies, and the overall community of St. Lawrence.

[Safety and Security](#): The philosophy of the St. Lawrence University Safety and Security Department is to provide a safe and secure environment for the entire University community. The Safety and Security Department offers a wide variety of services to assist students, staff and faculty members in their day to day living.

[Student Activities and Leadership](#): The mission of the Office of Student Activities and Leadership is to provide students with unique and engaging opportunities for involvement that complements their academic experience. These opportunities incorporate principles of leadership and service through participation in clubs and organizations, student government, paraprofessional positions, and special events. By providing the support to students and organizations to create

programming that enriches the campus community, a culture is created that inspires students to discover their full potential/initiate change.

[Thelomathesian Society](#): The Thelomathesian Society was instituted in 1863 by Vasco P. Abbott who became its first President. Thelmo, as it is often called, is the governing entity of the St. Lawrence University Student Body.

### ***Key Responsibilities***

A primary goal of the Vice President, in collaboration with the Vice President of the University and Dean of Academic Affairs, is to enhance the holistic education offered St. Lawrence students through effective living/learning, co-curricular, and out-of-classroom social and cultural opportunities. St. Lawrence's distinctive [First-Year Program](#) (FYP), integrates coursework, communication skills, advising, and residential life into a comprehensive educational experience. In October 2016, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded St. Lawrence a four-year grant to support the Sophomore Journeys program, which offers a series of [Sophomore Seminars](#) fostering integrated and varied learning opportunities. These programs and others illustrate our faculty's commitment to the education of the whole student, inside and outside the classroom.

Additional responsibilities:

- Represent the university in public and private sector forums;
- Participate in university enrollment management discussions;
- Encourage and facilitate community and global engagement, service learning, and service to the university;
- Undertake initiatives as needs and evidence emerge;
- Serve on the Title IX team and act, with the Dean of Academic Affairs, as the appellate step in adjudication processes; and,
- Assume additional responsibilities delegated by the president including serving on the president's behalf in his/her absence.

### ***Challenges and Opportunities***

The next Vice President will be asked to advance St. Lawrence's agenda in a number of areas:

#### **Providing visible, strategic direction for the division of Student Life and the University.**

St. Lawrence needs strong, collaborative, and creative leadership in Student Life. The University will look to the next Vice President to articulate a clear vision and direction for the work of the division. The next Vice President will be expected to bring knowledge and new ideas to St. Lawrence and will have the opportunity to work in partnership with the President, Board of Trustees, and other senior leaders of the University. S/he will also be expected to engage creatively with a broad range of stakeholders, to build collaborative relationships within and beyond the division, to cultivate support for new initiatives, and to advocate persuasively for them in budget-setting contexts. As St. Lawrence continues to build momentum for University-wide strategic planning efforts, an updating of the priorities of St. Lawrence's [Strategic Map](#), the next Vice President will lead Student Life strategic planning in a manner that aligns with and supports broader community-wide goals.

**Provide goals and leadership for the division of Student Life throughout [The Campaign for Every Laurentian](#).** The next Vice President will provide strategic leadership and successfully work with University Advancement to complete *The Campaign for Every Laurentian*, supporting fundraising priorities for the division ([Residential Living Spaces](#), [Sophomore Journeys](#), etc.). Additionally, the next Vice President will assist in the development of grant proposals to provide funding to assigned programs from outside governmental and private agencies.

**Managing an expansive division.** The next Vice President will have the opportunity to enact strategic priorities across a well-respected division that provides a broad range of programs and services. From health and wellness, to career preparation, to student activities, and support for St. Lawrence's diverse student body, the Vice President will need to skillfully manage across multiple functions while evaluating and implementing an organizational structure that effectively and efficiently advances strategic priorities and sustains campus community.

**Developing practices and policies that address the changing needs of students.** The continuously evolving needs and expectations of students require regular evaluation of policies and resource allocation. Like many colleges and universities, St. Lawrence's students are increasingly diverse, require more attention to health and wellness, and expect that their education will lead to rewarding careers. Moreover, students, parents, and government are increasingly concerned about sexual assault on campus. The next Vice President will need to be well-versed on these and many other issues and trends affecting students while providing leadership and guidance for division staff, faculty, senior administration, and students.

**Providing leadership within the context of St. Lawrence's distinctive student and academic culture.** St. Lawrence provides its students with an intensive academic and co-curricular experience. St. Lawrence students take full advantage of all the University has to offer and bring with them a spirit of achievement as well as a desire to make the world a better place. The next Vice President must be able to build a community that facilitates student learning in many formal and informal contexts. The person in this position will need to be a role model for civility, flexibility, and ethical decision-making.

**Cultivating community.** Students at St. Lawrence, describe a strong sense of identity based on areas of study; athletics and other activities in which they engage; ethnic, religious, and racial groups; etc. The next Vice President will be expected to help build an inclusive sense of community that transcends some of these more immediate affiliations – linking students, faculty, and staff together – and creating opportunities for students to learn from unexpected relationships and connections. The University aspires to offer all its students a stimulating, supportive environment and expects the Vice President to spearhead improvements in this regard.

**Developing more systematic ways to assess, improve and renew programs.** While the division's programs and operations are well regarded, the new Vice President will be asked to establish systems for collecting the quantitative and qualitative evidence necessary to evaluate the accuracy of these impressions. The next Vice President will be expected to prioritize assessment efforts within the division, benchmarking against best practices, and analyzing collected data in order to make informed and strategic decisions.

### ***Desired Qualifications and Characteristics***

The next Vice President must be both a strategic thinker and a consistent, hands-on, collaborative administrator. As a key member of the senior management team, the Vice President must have the capacity and vision to contribute to decisions affecting the University as a whole.

The next Vice President will possess a track record of successful and progressively responsible leadership in student affairs/life. Candidates should have a strong belief in St. Lawrence's educational values and goals. A master's degree is required. A doctorate is preferred.

The ideal candidate will possess the following characteristics:

- A strong professional background in student affairs with knowledge of student development, best practices, policies, and legal issues;
- The ability to formulate, articulate, and implement a strategic direction for student affairs at St. Lawrence;
- Senior-level management experience in higher education, including responsibility for personnel and budgets;
- The ability to inspire trust, create relationships across all sectors of the institution, cultivate a sense of community and shared vision, and lead multi-unit work groups to address complex campus issues;
- A working knowledge of the various areas under the purview of the Vice President;
- A commitment to mission and values of the University, including sustainability, diversity, and inclusion;
- Past experience and/or knowledge of small, residential liberal arts and sciences university;
- Proven crisis management capabilities;
- A high degree of accessibility and openness to students, and commitment to participating fully in the life of the campus community;
- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills;
- A principled but flexible approach to developing and implementing policies and procedures; and,
- Unquestionable integrity and a high level of energy.

### ***CONTACTS***

The search process is currently underway and will continue until the position is filled. Nominations, inquiries, and expressions of interest should be forwarded, in confidence, to:

**Susan VanGilder, Partner**  
**Matthew Bunting, Managing Associate**  
**Storbeck/Pimentel & Associates, LP**  
[StLawStudentLife@storbecksearch.com](mailto:StLawStudentLife@storbecksearch.com)

All offers of employment are contingent upon the finalist successfully passing a background (including criminal records) check.

*The University is committed to and seeks diversity among its faculty, staff and students. Such a commitment ensures an atmosphere that is diverse and complex in ways that are intellectually and socially enriching for the entire campus community. Applications by members of all underrepresented groups, as well as from individuals with experience teaching or working in a multicultural environment, are encouraged. St. Lawrence University is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

For additional information about St. Lawrence, please visit <http://www.stlawu.edu>.