



Vice President for Institutional Advancement
Clark Atlanta University
Atlanta, Georgia

THE SEARCH

Clark Atlanta University (CAU or the University) seeks an enterprising, dynamic, collaborative, and results-driven revenue-generator to serve as the University's Vice President for Institutional Advancement (VP).

Reporting to the President, the ideal candidate is a creative, focused, self-starter, and high-performing individual who thrives in an entrepreneurial and collaborative environment. The VP will work to rejuvenate and amplify the strengths of the institution's current development team and expertly steer a talented team of development professionals towards ambitious objectives, establishing a robust infrastructure for CAU's future initiatives. They will embody a blend of intellectual curiosity, strong social acumen, a profound sense of accountability, and a bias toward action. They will demonstrate exceptional communication skills and seamlessly navigate interpersonal interaction with keen emotional intelligence. Additionally, the VP will have a solid track record of resource mobilization, personally securing significant seven and eight-figure gifts while offering strategic counsel to the President. They will broaden and diversify funding sources, introduce new organizational systems and frameworks, and harness data-driven insights to inform strategic decision-making.

The incoming VP will serve as a vital ambassador for CAU, effectively conveying the University's message, voice, mission, and vision to diverse audiences. Equally crucial, they will demonstrate unwavering dedication to CAU's values and possess an understanding and appreciation of the institution's history, achievements, and future aspirations.

With responsibility for leading a team of approximately 21 professionals, the VP will be an experienced team leader adept at maximizing, leveraging, and advocating for a talented staff and facilitating cohesion and team success. At least 10 years of leadership experience in development, constituency engagement, and management is preferred, as is a comprehensive knowledge of strategies employed in all major development functions including campaigns. The successful candidate must demonstrate a high level of

integrity and trust; exhibit the credibility and sophistication to engage effectively and collegially and partner with key internal and external stakeholders; be a self-starter with a sense of urgency and a clear set of priorities; and have the ability to adapt to changing circumstances in a complex environment.

CAU has retained the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in conducting this search. As indicated at the end of this document, all inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to Isaacson, Miller, and will be held in the strictest of confidence.

CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY HISTORY

Located on 126 acres in the heart of Atlanta, one of the world's greatest international cities, Clark Atlanta University was established in 1988 as a result of the consolidation of two independent historically black institutions - Atlanta University (1865) and Clark College (1869). It is a United Methodist Church-related, private, coeducational, residential, and comprehensive urban research university. CAU offers bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, along with specialist programs, in 40 areas of study. With nearly 300 faculty members, the university provides over 4,000 students with the familial attention they would expect at a smaller college while taking advantage of the wide array of resources available at a larger university.

As the University endeavors to become a dynamic 21st-century research institution of choice for a diverse student body, it remains unwavering in its commitment to uphold its values of being people-centric, research-focused, inclusive and accountable, diverse and global; committed to excellence; and student-centered. Credited with bringing Clark Atlanta University to national acclaim in social science research when he joined the faculty in 1897, W.E.B. Du Bois, famed scholar and historian, offered perspective that rings true today; "Now is the accepted time, not tomorrow, not some more convenient season. It is today that our best work can be done and not some future day or future year."

MISSION

Building on its social justice history and heritage through innovative teaching, research, scholarship, and service, Clark Atlanta University, a historically Black university, transforms student lives and equips them for leadership in the global society.

PRESIDENT

Dr. George T. French, Jr., became the fifth President of Clark Atlanta University on September 1, 2019. Prior to this role, Dr. French served for 14 years as president of Miles College from 2006 to 2019. During his tenure at Miles College, he exceeded capital campaign goals and reached an unprecedented financial composite score to position the school for growth. Likewise, CAU under Dr. French's leadership has exceeded all fundraising records in University history. He has been instrumental in helping the University

maintain enrollment amidst the global pandemic and leveraged key corporate and community relationships that have positioned the university for unprecedented growth.

Dr. French is a nationally recognized leader and has served three secretaries of education under two United States Presidents as a congressional appointee to the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity. He is a three-term board member for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). He is also chair of the Atlanta University Center Council of Presidents, chair of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SIAC) Council of Presidents, and a member of the Metro Atlanta Chamber (MAC) Board of Directors. His other awards include NAACP Man of the Year and the Higher Education Leadership Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The CAU board of trustees currently consists of 28 members from law, medicine, government, business, higher education, and the United Methodist Church, and meets three times a year during the fall, spring, and summer. Trustees give their time, talent, and resources to safeguard the traditions, assets, and values of the university, ensuring that the university's strategic direction and mission are followed and its enhanced capacity to serve society is met and providing oversight and guidance for the activities of the university. The board is chaired by Gregory Morrison.

FINANCES

CAU's operating budget for FY 2025 is \$135 million. As of June 30th, 2024, the endowment was valued at \$104 million and managed on an outsourced CIO contract with JPMorgan. The university believes prudent investment oversight, sensible endowment spending, and active fundraising are vital to growing the endowment and ensuring that current and future generations of students benefit from the income it produces.

In 2022, CAU launched its first comprehensive campaign, *Centered on Lifting Lives and Leading the Way*, an ambitious 10-year campaign that aims to raise \$250 million to support catalytic investments in students, faculty, infrastructure, and initiatives that distinguish CAU as an institution of choice.

THE ROLE

The VP will direct the Division of Institutional Advancement, which is responsible for the university's fund development and acts on the president's behalf in all matters pertaining to private-sector fundraising and advancement efforts. Next to the president, the VP will serve as the university's chief of external affairs. The VP will lead fundraising and development efforts, cultivate strategic partnerships, foster strong donor relationships, and expand philanthropic support, building structure and systems for successful programs across major and annual gifts, corporate and foundation giving, and planned giving.

With a focus on collaboration and achievement of university-wide goals, the VP must be able to create a relationship-forward, metrics-driven, financially prudent, and results-oriented work environment that enables connections across CAU. The VP will encourage fresh perspectives and seek to partner with academic, administrative, and volunteer leadership to identify new ways to elevate development efforts. This position requires visionary leadership, exceptional judgement, strong communication skills, and the ability to work collaboratively with many constituencies, both on and off campus.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

Forge and Implement a Strategic Roadmap for the Development Operation

As the visionary architect shaping a unified, strategic, and meticulously orchestrated development operation, the VP for Institutional Advancement will conceive and execute a comprehensive development strategy to propel CAU into the future, fostering sustainable growth and impactful outcomes on a significant scale. The VP will leverage existing philanthropic strengths and relationships and actively pursue new funding and engagement opportunities, aiming to position CAU as a trailblazer in development excellence.

Lead and Manage the CAU Development Team

The incoming VP will inherit a 21-member development team and will play a pivotal role in optimizing their potential. This involves overseeing their professional growth and ensuring retention, evaluating current capabilities, and strategizing for additional recruitment to meet ambitious goals. The VP will define clear roles and responsibilities for the team, as well as foster a culture of accountability and achievement. Every team member will understand their contribution to CAU and the institutional mission and be deeply committed to its success. The VP will lead with fairness, openness, and empowerment. They will cultivate an environment that values every staff member, encourages innovation, and promotes collaboration while fostering confidence and camaraderie in the team.

Collaborate with and Support Executive Leadership in Development Initiatives

The VP will collaborate closely with the President and other university constituents to spearhead development efforts, especially around targeting new donors and aligning with emerging strategies and initiatives. Additionally, the VP will assist the President and other executive leaders in advancing their philanthropic priorities, acting as a mentor, coach, and strategy partner. By cultivating impactful gifts, the VP will elevate CAU to new heights of distinction while advancing the organization's missions, values, and vision.

Increase Annual Giving and Alumni Participation

Recognizing the wide array of audiences, alumni, parents, trustees, and friends who want to be involved in CAU activities, both personally and philanthropically, the VP will provide compelling mechanisms to engage them. As a part of these efforts, the VP will identify new ways to broaden the reach of alumni activities for the schools' nearly 40,000 alumni, ensuring these activities are fully integrated into overall development and alumni engagement efforts.

Through the use of data analysis of giving patterns and other factors, the VP will utilize the annual fund program as a pipeline for major and planned giving prospects. Working in conjunction with key partners, they will create and implement marketing strategies, including a coordinated series of direct mail, telemarketing, and electronic fundraising tactics, and other innovative approaches, and ensure marketing and promotional materials for the annual fund are consistent with school culture, messaging, and branding.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Candidates will possess many, if not most, of the following professional qualifications and leadership characteristics:

- A minimum of 10 years of senior-level fundraising and managerial experience in advancement;
- Proven track record of recruiting, cultivating, and leading high-performing, diverse, and motivated teams; creating a goal-oriented environment that empowers staff, builds confidence, and celebrates accomplishments;
- Experience leading a team and improving the effectiveness of staff members through established objectives, performance standards, and accountability; a strong commitment to professional development and desire to create a work environment that builds confidence, promotes diversity, celebrates achievements, and encourages teamwork;
- Adept at cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding principal and transformational gifts, with a significant track record of revenue-generation success; depth of knowledge and best practices in all key areas of development;
- Expertise in collaborating closely with executive leadership and colleagues across all organizational tiers to craft and execute development strategies and systems effectively;
- A keen focus on operational efficiency, resource utilization, and strong financial acumen;
- Superior written and verbal communication skills, and skilled at conveying complex information to diverse audiences with clarity and eloquence;
- Exceptional interpersonal and relationship-building skills, with the ability to engage, influence, and steward a diverse range of stakeholders, including donors, board members, volunteers, and community partners;

- A commitment to data-driven decision-making and the ability to communicate metrics effectively to a broad audience; forward-thinking, able to identify emerging trends and opportunities in philanthropy and fundraising, ensuring the institution remains innovative and adaptable;
- An entrepreneurial mindset with an ability to pioneer innovative approaches and engagement strategies; the ability to operate both independently and collaboratively as a part of a team;
- A baccalaureate degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

Compensation and Location

Compensation for this position will be competitive and commensurate with experience, with a salary range estimated at \$250,000. The institution also provides generous and comprehensive benefits. This role will be based in Metro Atlanta or surrounding areas, with travel as necessary.

Applications, Inquiries, and Nominations

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and applications (including resumes and two- to three-page letters of interest to the hiring committee, responding to the challenges and opportunities outlined above), should be sent in strict confidence to:

Donna Cramer, Partner
Karson Freeman, Associate

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/clark-atlanta-university/vice-president-institutional-advancement>

Clark Atlanta University is an equal opportunity employer.