



Search for Vice President for Human Resources  
University of Washington  
Seattle, WA

## THE SEARCH

The University of Washington (UW) seeks a strategic and collaborative leader to serve as its next Vice President for Human Resources (VPHR). The VPHR will play a pivotal role in ensuring the University of Washington remains a leader in workforce innovation, employee experience, and operational excellence across both its academic and healthcare enterprises.

The VPHR is the senior HR leader at the University of Washington, responsible for setting the strategic vision for human resources and ensuring alignment with UW's academic and healthcare missions. Reporting to the President and serving as a key member of the President's Cabinet, the VPHR leads a team of approximately 250 HR professionals with a biennium budget of \$60 million, supporting a workforce of over 56,000 employees across UW's three campuses and UW Medicine. UW employees fall into one of several employment programs, each with its own unique set of workplace rules and employee benefits. Over 28,000 staff and academic personnel are represented by 10 unions with 19 unique union contracts, soon to be 21 unique contracts with additional bargaining units being certified.

The VPHR oversees all aspects of human resources, including talent strategy, labor and employee relations, HR policy, total rewards, organizational effectiveness, and HR technology. The role requires an exceptional leader capable of balancing the diverse needs of a leading research university and a major academic medical center. The VPHR also serves on the Information & Technology Governance Committee and is the business owner for Workday HCM, ensuring HR technology supports institutional objectives. This is a rare opportunity to shape the future of HR at one of the world's premier public universities.

You can read more about Human Resources at the University of Washington [here](#).

The University of Washington has engaged the search firm Isaacson, Miller for this important recruitment. Instructions for applying, nominating, and inquiring can be found at the end of this document.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

As one of the world's leading public research universities, the University of Washington is driven by a determination to serve the public good. Since 1861, the ideas and ideals of UW students and faculty have come alive at home and abroad through active research, teaching, and engagement. It is the University's mission and vision — not just its heritage — that makes it a public institution. Advancing social equity and changing lives are integral to UW's identity. Excellence, collaboration, and diversity are core values of the UW, and the University is dedicated to leading the public dialogue on society's greatest challenges as promoters of positive change. In doing so, the University fosters civic partnerships, service learning, and community engagement initiatives that serve the greater common good.

UW students and faculty are committed to turning ideas into life-changing realities that improve the world. From revolutionizing global health through new vaccines and worldwide disease data to developing cleaner, more sustainable technologies, the UW strives for positive impact, whether touching one life or millions. UW's impact extends to communities from Spokane to Shanghai, delivering real-world solutions, innovative technologies, and compassionate care at home and around the planet. As an international epicenter for commercializing research and technology, the University is at the center of the Pacific Northwest's thriving innovation ecosystem.

With \$1.87B in sponsored research grants and contracts in FY23, the UW is a research powerhouse of global prominence. UW is also committed to providing affordable access to academics and education on campuses in Bothell, Seattle, and Tacoma. Combined, the University's three campuses offer their 60,000 students more than 846 degree options across 473 programs. UW also operates a clinical enterprise that educates students for the five-state WWAMI region through the School of Medicine and provides outstanding health care to all, regardless of ability to pay, through UW Medicine. The University is located in a dynamic region, home to many innovative, globally prominent, established corporations as well as numerous startups.

### UW Seattle

Nestled between the glittering Puget Sound, two snow-capped mountain ranges, and miles of lush forests, the UW's historic campus in Seattle marked its 163rd anniversary in 2024. With cherry blossoms that bring thousands of visitors to the Quad every spring and a stunning view of Mount Rainier, the campus is renowned for its Pacific Northwest beauty. Students find diverse opportunities to engage, explore, and learn here, whether in one of many high-tech labs or out on the UW Farm. As the home of Husky Athletics, Meany Hall for the Performing Arts, the Burke Museum of Natural History & Culture, the Henry Art Gallery, UW Medical Center, and more, the campus in Seattle attracts thousands of community members and visitors throughout the year.

## UW Bothell

As a small campus community with the resources and opportunities of a large university, UW Bothell offers high-demand degree programs with an emphasis on student-faculty interaction, experiential learning, and community engagement. Hosting a diverse student body of nearly 6,000 students, Bothell's breathtaking campus includes the state's most successful wetlands restoration site, providing unique educational and research opportunities. In 2023, 38% of incoming first-year students and 42% of new incoming transfer students at UW Bothell were first-generation college students, and 92% of new UW Bothell students in 2023 were from Washington state.

## UW Tacoma

At UW Tacoma, students become engines of change for themselves, their families, and their communities — and this urban-serving university has become an engine for the revitalization of historic downtown Tacoma. Of UW Tacoma's approximately 4,790 students, 18% are military-affiliated, and 61% of undergraduates are students of color — including 32% from underserved communities. 51% of undergraduates at UW Tacoma in 2023 were first-generation college students, and *U.S. News & World Report* named UW Tacoma the No. 1 performer for social mobility in Washington in 2022.

## Leadership Transition

In February 2025, the UW Board of Regents announced that Robert J. Jones, former Chancellor of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, was selected as the 34<sup>th</sup> President of the University. Jones succeeds President Ana Mari Cauce, who held the role for 10 years and helped transform the university by providing a leading-edge student experience, conducting research and scholarship that has a global impact, upholding the UW's dedication to its public mission, and infusing the entire university with a commitment to innovation.

The UW presidency will be Jones' third time leading a public research university, as in addition to his former role as Chancellor, he previously served as President of the University at Albany. He is a distinguished scholar, with his research focusing on crop physiology, and a leader in national academic organizations and the Big Ten Conference. He will become the first African American to serve in the role.

You can read more about President Jones and his appointment [here](#).

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VICE PRESIDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES

The VPHR is responsible for overseeing approximately 250 HR professionals, including a leadership team of eight across the areas of HR Benefits, Analytics, and Information Systems, Compensation, Labor Relations, Campus HR Operations and Services, UW Medicine HR Operations, Total Talent Management, HR Policy and Workforce Strategy, and Employee Experience. They will be charged with leading a modern, strategic, and service-oriented human resources function that supports the University's academic and

medical missions. As a trusted advisor to university leadership, the VPHR will focus on the following key areas:

**Vision & Strategy:** Establish and drive a comprehensive HR strategy that aligns with the University's long-term goals, supports the new President's vision, and fosters a high-performing, inclusive workplace.

**Workforce & Culture:** Develop initiatives that enhance recruitment, retention, and employee engagement across a diverse and complex workforce, ensuring a culture where all employees have the resources and support to achieve excellence.

**Labor & Employee Relations:** Oversee engagement with labor unions and guide strategies that support productive relationships while ensuring compliance with employment policies and regulations.

**HR Innovation & Technology:** Champion the use of HR data, analytics, and technology-including Workday HCM-to enhance decision-making and service delivery. Pilot and enable relevant AI-powered tools to enhance workplace productivity.

**Access & Workplace Excellence:** Cultivate a workplace where all employees have opportunities to contribute, grow, and excel, ensuring fair and transparent policies that support professional success.

**Organizational Effectiveness:** Strengthen HR's role as a strategic partner, ensuring agility in responding to evolving workforce needs and institutional priorities.

## QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal qualities:

- Extensive experience leading human resources in a large, complex organization, ideally in higher education, healthcare, or public-sector HR.
- Proven ability to oversee strategic workforce planning, HR technology modernization, and talent management.
- Deep expertise in labor relations, compliance, and HR policy within a unionized environment.
- Strong understanding of process optimization and service delivery models within a shared services framework.
- Strong commitment to fostering a workplace culture where all employees can achieve their full potential.
- Exceptional leadership skills with the ability to collaborate with executives, faculty, and diverse stakeholders.
- Experience balancing the needs of both academic and healthcare workforces.
- Juris Doctor (JD) highly preferred; advanced degree in Human Resources, Business Administration, Law, or a related field preferred.

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## APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

All interested candidates should submit an updated CV and/or resume and a 2-3 page statement of interest that discusses your interest and relevant experience via the website:

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-washington/vice-president-human-resources>

All nominations and inquiries regarding the position should be submitted via the same site. The position will remain open until it is successfully filled. All correspondence can be addressed to the Isaacson, Miller representatives noted below:

Rebecca Kennedy, Managing Partner  
Courtney Wilk-Mandel, Partner  
Angelo Alexander, Senior Associate  
Cara Meyers, Search Coordinator  
Isaacson, Miller

Committed to attracting and retaining a diverse staff, the University of Washington will honor your experiences, perspectives, and unique identity. Together, our community strives to create and maintain working and learning environments that are inclusive, equitable, and welcoming.

[The University of Washington is an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer.](#) All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, age, protected veteran or disabled status, or genetic information.

To request disability accommodation in the application process, contact [uwhrsearch@imsearch.com](mailto:uwhrsearch@imsearch.com).

Applicants considered for this position will be required to disclose if they are the subject of any substantiated findings or current investigations related to sexual misconduct at their current employment and past employment. Disclosure is required under [Washington state law](#).

The base salary range for this position will be \$375,000 to \$460,000 annually, commensurate with experience and qualifications.