



President and Vice Chancellor Vermont State University and Vermont State Colleges

THE SEARCH

The [Vermont State Colleges \(VSC\)](#) seeks an innovative, collaborative, and results-driven leader to serve as its next President of [Vermont State University \(VTSU\)](#). The President of VTSU will—together with the President of the Community College of Vermont (CCV)—also hold the title of Vice Chancellor of the VSC. The appointment is expected to begin July 1, 2026. This is a unique opportunity to lead a newly unified university with five campuses and multiple learning sites while serving as a senior executive within the broader VSC leadership team.

This role will report directly to the VSC Chancellor and work in close partnership with the President of the [Community College of Vermont \(CCV\)](#) and Vice Chancellor of the System. CCV is VTSU's sister institution within VSC. The President and Vice Chancellor will align VTSU's operations with System priorities, ensuring the delivery of high-quality academic programs, building enrollment, stewarding resources, and strengthening relationships with communities and employers across Vermont.

Serving approximately 5,000 students from across Vermont and beyond, VTSU is at a pivotal moment in its young history. While the campuses that comprise the University have proud histories of providing an excellent education to students across a wide variety of fields, their recent merger creates a new dynamic as VTSU is called upon to meet the evolving, 21st-century needs of students and the state. Much work has been done to establish the University as a single entity. To continue the transformation, the next President and Vice Chancellor will lead the continuing cultural and functional transition while growing enrollment, modernizing the curriculum, developing innovative ways to reach and educate students, and stewarding relationships on and across its five geographically dispersed campuses. These tasks present opportunities for VTSU to be a leader in rural education, online learning, and career preparation. With a long tradition of educational excellence, the University's campuses now look to the future, as the merger creates new opportunities for VTSU to innovate in serving students and society. The current moment calls for a leader who can anticipate challenges, identify growth opportunities, and inspire both internal and external stakeholders with a clear and compelling vision.

VTSU has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in identifying such a leader. As indicated at the end of this document, all inquiries, nominations, and applications with cover letters should be submitted in confidence to the search firm.

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES

VSC is a fully integrated system with two educational arms: VTSU and CCV. Each is led by a President and Vice Chancellor reporting directly to the System Chancellor, Dr. Elizabeth Mauch. Dr. Mauch was appointed VSC Chancellor by the Board of Trustees on January 1, 2024. Dr. Mauch has gained the respect of Vermonters across the state as she builds a shared vision for the future of the VSC.

VSC's mission, from which VTSU and CCV's individual missions and priorities follow, is straightforward and well aligned with transformation:

For the benefit of Vermont, VSC provides affordable, high-quality, student-centered, and accessible education that prepares students for meaningful work, engaged citizenship, and lifelong learning, while contributing to the economic and cultural vitality of Vermont.

By maintaining a comprehensive, interconnected network of institutions, more educational programs and services are accessible when and where students need them, leveraging system-wide resources to enhance the quality and reach of instruction, support services, and experiential opportunities.

VSC is governed by a Board of Trustees composed of legislative, board, and gubernatorial appointees. The Board is the System's sole fiduciary and confirms the System's priorities, determines policy, and exercises broad financial oversight. The Chancellor serves as Chief Executive Officer of the VSC, with the president and vice chancellors of VTSU and CCV executing system strategy at their institutions.

Vermont State University

Background and Mission

VTSU was created in 2023 through the unification of Castleton University, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College. This bold restructuring addressed long-standing financial challenges, demographic shifts, and the need for a more integrated and efficient system of higher education in Vermont. Today, VTSU spans five campus locations—Castleton, Johnson, Lyndon, Randolph, and Williston--and has learning sites throughout the breadth of Vermont that serve as a statewide resource for accessible, high-quality education. Its mission as part of the Vermont State Colleges system is also aligned with transformation.

VTSU prepares all students for meaningful work and responsible citizenship by fostering their intellectual, personal, and creative growth in an accessible, caring, and inclusive community. As Vermont's regional public university, our technological, professional, and liberal arts programs engage with partners throughout Vermont and beyond to provide students with rich, real-world learning while meeting the needs of our communities and the state.

Deeply committed to affordability, accessibility, and academic excellence, VTSU prioritizes support for first-generation college students, working adults, and underrepresented populations. The University fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment where every student can thrive. Through innovative

academic programs, flexible learning options, and strong community partnerships, VTSU prepares graduates for success while playing a central role in workforce development and state economic growth.

Strategic Priorities

VTSU's current [Strategic Plan](#) is a guide to coalesce its campuses further and advance its institutional mission through three strategic priorities. First, the University is committed to increasing access through flexible pathways and delivery modalities. Second, it strives to position itself as a premier career-ready university by aligning academic programs with workforce needs, fostering innovation, and enhancing experiential learning. To better serve its students, VTSU is expanding its online course offerings to meet the needs of adult learners, non-traditional students, and rural communities. Third, the plan emphasizes building a stable, sustainable, and employee-centric institution rooted in a values-driven, community-oriented culture. Each priority is supported by clearly defined objectives, measurable outcomes, and structured timelines to ensure transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Academics

VTSU offers more than 100 undergraduate and graduate degree programs and a wide range of certificates in fields such as applied technology, engineering, science, healthcare, education, business, psychology, computer science, and the arts. Through its [Workforce, Community and Economic Development division](#), VTSU strengthens Vermont's economy by aligning education and training with employer and community needs. This work is supported by four specialized centers: the Center for Agriculture and Food Entrepreneurship (CAFE), the [Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship \(CIE\)](#), the [Center for Schools \(CFS\)](#), and the [Center for Workforce and Professional Education \(CWPE\)](#). VTSU is fully accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education.

Students and Faculty

VTSU serves a diverse student body of more than 5,000, including undergraduates, graduate students, and adult learners. Nearly half of VTSU students are first-generation college-goers, and over one-third are Pell-eligible. The university attracts students from across the country and around the world, reflecting its commitment to inclusivity and global engagement.

VTSU faculty are dedicated educators and mentors who combine strong academic backgrounds with a commitment to student success. With a student-to-faculty ratio of 14 to 1, students benefit from personalized attention, mentorship, and career guidance. Faculty actively engage students in experiential learning opportunities, internships, and applied research, preparing them for careers and civic life.

Engagement with CCV

Working in partnership with CCV, VTSU works to strengthen Vermont's higher education ecosystem by aligning programs, sharing resources, and expanding access to in-person, remote, and hybrid learning options. This collaboration has allowed students across the state to access high-quality education tailored to their individual needs. The institutions currently have 25 pathway agreements between them, and

more than half of the students who complete degrees at CCV and go on to further their education via transfer to VTSU.

Finances

In 2020, VSC faced immediate financial pressures exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic impacts. Working cooperatively with the VSC Board and Chancellor, the Vermont General Assembly formed a *Select Committee on the Future of Public Higher Education in Vermont* to develop a plan for addressing structural issues and strengthening the outlook of the VSC. The plan included increasing the State's annual general fund appropriation for the VSC from \$30.5 million to \$48 million while simultaneously making permanent structural adjustments to the system's revenue and expense structure to eliminate \$25 million in structural deficit over five years.

The fifth and final year of the deficit reduction plan is scheduled for FY26, with a budgeted deficit of \$4.9 million. As it has over the previous four years, University leadership, in conjunction with faculty as part of its normal shared governance processes, is working to eliminate the remaining deficit in advance of FY27.

Consistent with many other small to mid-size regional public institutions with a largely open access mission, recent actions occurring at the federal level have had an impact on the University's FY26 revenue budget. At the time of this writing, the full impact is being assessed; however, it is expected that the University will achieve its current year budget target with modest budget adjustments. The impact for FY27 is not yet known.

While largely tuition-dependent, VTSU does have a portfolio of sponsored programs. In the most recently completed fiscal year, FY25, the University had \$50,860,342 in active grants and contracts, \$5,483,054 in federally funded research programs, and \$45,377,288 in all other externally supported programs.

Athletics

Athletics are a vibrant part of the VTSU experience, fostering school spirit, personal growth, and community connection. VTSU offers NCAA Division III athletic programs at its Castleton, Johnson, and Lyndon campuses and USCAA programs on its Randolph campus, with more than 1,000 student athletes competing on over 60 varsity teams. Across all five campuses, students enjoy a vibrant selection of intramural and club sports that foster teamwork, friendly competition, and campus connection.

Campus and Community Life

VTSU's five campuses are located in Vermont's scenic Green Mountains, offering a blend of small-town charm and access to outdoor recreation. Students enjoy vibrant campus communities with more than 100 student clubs and organizations and a variety of intramural and recreational activities. Each campus plays an important role in its surrounding communities, serving as both an educational hub and a partner in local economic and cultural development.

ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE CHANCELLOR

The next President and Vice Chancellor will support a culture of change and innovation while fostering collaborative and respectful relationships that span the university's campuses and communities. VTSU has undergone personnel reductions and leadership changes during the recent reorganization. Faculty and staff desire consultative leadership; students need stability and affordability; communities want to know that these campuses will continue to serve them; and the State of Vermont seeks a vibrant VTSU to educate its citizens and prepare its workforce. The President and Vice Chancellor must lead by listening, communicate transparently, and establish trust and cohesion across the university.

This next leader must have a deep respect for and skill within a matrixed leadership model. The VSC is governed and functions as an integrated system, with strategic priorities and resource allocation determined at the System level, with the Chancellor serving as CEO. The President and Vice Chancellor works as part of a cohesive System-wide leadership team which focuses on strategy, operational alignment, and successful delivery of programs and services with shared accountability.

VTSU seeks an individual who has successfully led institutional transformation, preferably in higher education but potentially in adjacent sectors such as healthcare, business, government, or mission-driven nonprofits. The ideal candidate will have demonstrated a learning mindset, the ability to modernize operations, navigate complex stakeholder landscapes, and the ability to lead people through ambiguity while maintaining stability and focus on outcomes. The successful candidate will also have a deep appreciation of the role public higher education plays in rural communities.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE PRESIDENT AND VICE CHANCELLOR

This leadership transition comes at a time when VTSU is experiencing a renewed sense of possibility and promise. VTSU is poised at a transformational moment with the opportunity for the successful candidate to shape the future of the University and indeed the State through vision, teamwork, and purpose. The next President and Vice Chancellor will be tasked with addressing key challenges and transforming them into opportunities that foster long-term success, including:

Establishing VTSU as an innovative leader among institutions of higher learning

The President and Vice Chancellor will play a central role in delivering a strong, unified identity for VTSU, positioning the university as a leader in providing access to affordable, high-quality education. Building on the strengths of its merged campuses and in partnership with its System colleagues, the President and Vice Chancellor will advance flexible learning modalities, strengthen academic programs, and highlight VTSU's unique value as Vermont's regional public university.

Developing and growing academic programs aligning with community and industry needs

Working closely with System and campus academic leadership, the President and Vice Chancellor will build high-impact, sustainable programs that prepare students for a rapidly changing world while ensuring

and enhancing VTSU's role as a vital engine for workforce development and lifelong learning. This includes implementing Academic Program Optimization, championing curricular innovation, and fostering partnerships that support both student and community success.

Growing enrollment

With limited state funding and a tuition-dependent model, enrollment growth will depend on expanding online and hybrid programs, further exploring pathways with CCV, reinforcing VTSU's career relevance, and building strong pipelines through partnerships. By aligning institutional strengths with student and market needs, the President and Vice Chancellor will position VTSU as an accessible, forward-looking choice in Vermont and beyond.

Leading and managing a complex, multi-campus organization

The President and Vice Chancellor will oversee the daily operations of VTSU's five-campus structure, cultivating a culture of responsiveness, accountability, and collaboration across the university and System. Leading in this environment will require strong consultation with faculty and staff unions, active engagement with student organizations, and stewardship of important community relationships. The President and Vice Chancellor must listen deeply, communicate transparently, and foster cohesion across campuses, ensuring that System strategy is implemented consistently and effectively at VTSU.

Building and expanding relationships across the state

The President and Vice Chancellor will be a visible and persuasive advocate for VTSU, clearly articulating the university's value to prospective students, families, and employers, reinforcing VTSU's role as both a community anchor and a statewide contributor.

Stewarding the University's resources to ensure financial strength and sustainability

The President and Vice Chancellor will manage VTSU's resources with discipline, transparency, and a long-term commitment to stability. Revenue growth will come primarily from enrollment expansion, program development, industry partnerships, and online initiatives. As the university's chief fundraiser, the President and Vice Chancellor will engage alumni, foundations, industry, and community leaders to build philanthropic support for VTSU. By working in close coordination with the Chancellor and System finance leadership, the President and Vice Chancellor will ensure financial decisions are strategic, sound, and clearly communicated.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

While no candidate will fully embody every quality, the successful candidate will demonstrate many of the following qualifications and attributes:

- A strong commitment to the mission and values of public higher education;
- A strong commitment to fostering an accessible, welcoming, and student-centered community;
- A demonstrable ability to thrive as a team player in a matrixed leadership environment, working in close strategic alignment with System leadership;

- A strong record of administrative leadership with experience in financial and operational management as well as project execution;
- Outstanding interpersonal and communication skills as well as high emotional intelligence, with the ability to engage fluently and comfortably with students, faculty, staff, and external partners;
- A demonstrable track record of courageous leadership, innovation, and the ability to drive change thoughtfully and transparently.

LOCATION

Nestled in the heart of Vermont's scenic Green Mountains, VTSU's campuses offer the perfect blend of natural beauty and accessibility. Just a few hours' drive from major cities like Boston, New York City, and Montreal, VTSU provides students with both a peaceful academic setting and proximity to vibrant urban centers. Each campus is within walking distance of local amenities, including cafés, bookstores, and grocery shops. Vermont's stunning landscape makes it a haven for outdoor enthusiasts. Whether hiking through brilliant fall foliage or skiing at nearby resorts during the winter months, residents enjoy year-round opportunities for adventure and exploration.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the search process is completed. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/vermont-state-university/president-and-vice-chancellor>.

Greg Esposito, Partner

Vijay Saraswat, Partner

Alycia Johnson, Managing Associate

Elizabeth Arvantis, Senior Search Coordinator

Victoria Castillo, Senior Search Coordinator

Isaacson, Miller

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