

Stanford University

Vice President for Alumni Affairs, Stanford University
President of the Stanford Alumni Association
Stanford, California

THE SEARCH

At the intersection of Stanford's past, present, and future lies one of the university's most consequential leadership opportunities: the Vice President for Alumni Affairs (VP) and President of the Stanford Alumni Association (SAA). This is a visionary role that reimagines and shapes how one of the world's most renowned institutions of higher learning connects with its nearly 250,000 alumni who form a global network of influence, innovation, and impact. Reporting directly to President Jonathan Levin '94 and serving as a member of his senior staff and cabinet, the VP/SAA President leads one of higher education's largest and most influential alumni organizations. The SAA uniquely operates as a university division with a distinct mandate to serve as both bridge and conduit between Stanford and its alumni community. In this capacity, the VP/SAA President works closely with the SAA Board of Directors, which provides strategic guidance on alumni programs and serves as the principal representative body connecting alumni to the university's Board of Trustees.

With an operating budget of \$43 million, an endowment exceeding \$60 million, nearly 100 staff members, and a volunteer network of more than 13,000 alumni, the SAA represents a significant and multifaceted enterprise. Accordingly, this role requires a seasoned general manager capable of leading a large, complex, and high-impact organization with responsibility for personnel, business development, budgets, systems, and performance. The successful candidate must demonstrate the operational rigor required to lead a division of this scope, including setting vision and direction, ensuring organizational effectiveness, and navigating a broad range of functional complexities from long-term strategy to the day-to-day demands of a dynamic organization. Equally important, this leader must bring a demonstrated capacity to lead through change—guiding the SAA through evolution with clarity, purpose, and an ability to bring others along.

Stanford seeks a forward-thinking leader to guide alumni engagement into its next chapter of excellence. This is not a role defined by continuity alone but rather presents a compelling opportunity to build on a strong foundation while reimagining how the university connects with, serves, and activates its alumni in an ever-evolving landscape. The next leader will assess and refine longstanding structures and practices,

including opportunities for further integration across the university and the more intentional deployment of shared services to continuously enhance effectiveness and promote alignment, particularly with the [Office of External Relations](#). The role requires a leader who is energized by complexity and ambiguity and who thrives in environments where change is both necessary and expected. This work will include leveraging data, technology, and emerging capabilities—including artificial intelligence—to better understand, segment, and engage Stanford's diverse global alumni community, while ensuring that programs and experiences remain relevant, personal, and resonant across generations.

The VP/SAA President serves as a principal university ambassador, responsible for authentically, clearly, and thoughtfully representing Stanford to its alumni. This individual will maintain a deep and current understanding of the university's priorities and challenges and will translate complex institutional issues into thoughtful, audience-appropriate engagement. Equally important, they will foster a strong and trusted channel for the exchange of perspectives, ensuring that alumni viewpoints across generations are conveyed to university leadership with credibility and insight. The role requires a proficient communicator comfortable with extemporaneous engagement who can convey both confidence and approachability while building trust through transparency and genuine connection.

Success in this role demands exceptional diplomacy and emotional intelligence. The VP/SAA President must engage thoughtfully with a wide range of alumni perspectives, including those that are critical or challenging, with patience, respect, and curiosity. This individual will meet alumni where they are, fostering dialogue across differences and furthering active engagement with the institution. The ability to navigate complex or sensitive conversations, listen deeply, and build enduring trust is essential, as is a mindset that regards engagement as an opportunity to strengthen relationships and cultivate lifelong advocates for Stanford.

As a member of the President's senior staff and cabinet, the VP/SAA President will also serve as a trusted advisor on matters that extend beyond, yet materially impact, alumni affairs. This individual must be prepared to engage in substantive and wide-ranging institutional deliberations and to contribute thoughtfully, candidly, and with sound judgment. In this capacity, the role calls for intellectual curiosity and the confidence to speak with clarity and honesty, including when offering difficult or dissenting perspectives. At the same time, the successful candidate will demonstrate a deep commitment to and adoration for Stanford and an ability to represent and advance the university's interests with credibility and conviction.

Stanford seeks an exceptional and multifaceted leader who brings a rare combination of operational excellence, strategic acuity, and interpersonal effectiveness. The successful candidate will be a proven organizational leader with experience managing complex teams and functions; an outstanding communicator with a compelling public presence; and a highly relational individual who builds trust readily and cultivates meaningful, lasting connections. A change agent, the next leader will also embrace bold thinking and inspire others to pursue a shared vision for the future. They will demonstrate strong analytical instincts with the ability to balance long-term strategy with near-term execution. This individual

will bring tireless enthusiasm, optimism, resilience, and stamina to the role, along with a sense of humor and perspective—approaching the work with both seriousness of purpose and humility.

A deep connection to Stanford University, ideally in the form of an undergraduate and/or graduate degree from the institution, is preferred. The successful candidate will bring deep respect for Stanford's unique traditions and a clear vision to discover its future, embracing the distinctive spirit of the SAA while working collaboratively across the university to cultivate and mobilize alumni as engaged ambassadors. Above all, Stanford seeks a leader who is motivated by the scale of the opportunity and inspired to expand the impact of and possibilities for alumni engagement.

Stanford University has retained Jack Gorman of the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to conduct this important recruitment and has convened a dedicated search advisory committee, notably co-chaired by Stanford Board of Trustees Chair **Lily Sarafan '03** and Vice President for University Relations **Megan Pierson '82**, to help identify this next leader. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1885, [Stanford University](#) is one of the world's premier institutions of higher education. From the beginning, Stanford stood apart from the broader higher education landscape: coeducational in a time when most private universities were all-male; nondenominational when most were associated with a religious organization; and practical, producing cultured and useful citizens. The institution has been defined by its willingness to experiment beyond known limits and has thus achieved some of the most iconic advancements in technology, medicine, business, the arts, humanities, and the social sciences in the 20th and 21st centuries. With its close ties to Silicon Valley, the future is arguably invented at Stanford. This ethos continues to inspire faculty, staff, students, university leadership, and Stanford's talented and accomplished alumni. Stanford remains committed to providing rigorous research and scholarship, along with broad world-class education, and to cultivating the next generation of national and global leaders.

As of Fall 2025, Stanford enrolls over 17,300 students who come from all 50 states and 70 countries – representing a diverse, global, and dynamic student community – as well as over 2,400 faculty who are leaders in their fields. The university's core academic mission is anchored by its [seven schools](#): the Graduate School of Business, Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability, Graduate School of Education, School of Engineering, School of Humanities and Sciences, Stanford Law School, and the School of Medicine. Stanford is home to 15 independent labs, institutes, and centers, and includes the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory.

STANFORD ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1892 by the first graduating class, the [Stanford Alumni Association](#) (SAA), a division of the university, has a mission to reach, serve, and engage all Stanford alumni and students; to foster a lifelong

intellectual and emotional connection between the university and its graduates; and to provide the university with goodwill and support.

In a typical year, SAA receives roughly 40 percent of its budget from the university and is otherwise self-funded through its revenue-generating programs. Its 93 staff members oversee diverse offerings including the [Stanford Magazine](#), online communication and networking tools, academic and social programming, a travel/study program, and numerous Stanford-related products and initiatives.

Consisting of 36 members, the [SAA Board of Directors](#) convenes three times per year and serves as the principal representatives of Stanford alumni in the affairs of the university. The Board of Directors, under authority delegated by the university's Board of Trustees, sets priorities for Stanford's alumni relations, oversees SAA's administration and programs, monitors budgets and long-term program plans, and approves goals for the division. **David Hornik '90**, a founding partner with Lobby Capital, and **Amanda Renteria '96**, CEO of Code for America, respectively serve as chair and vice chair of the Board.

KEY AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Strategic Vision and Innovation

- Develop and execute a multi-year strategy that aligns alumni engagement with Stanford's broader academic and fundraising goals.
- Develop and direct SAA's strategic approach to alumni relations by overseeing programs, services, marketing, communications, and revenue generation, ensuring that resources are effectively aligned with organizational goals to advance Stanford and SAA's mission.
- Establish and manage performance targets and financial goals for alumni programs and services, analyzing outcomes to ensure effectiveness, promote continuous improvement, and allocate resources efficiently in alignment with agreed-upon objectives and the annual operating budget.

Alumni Voice and University Advocacy

- Represent Stanford to its global alumni community of nearly 250,000, sharing the university's vision, priorities, and achievements, while fostering engagement and lifelong connections through outreach such as direct interactions, presentations, town halls, tours, educational programming, and correspondence.
- Elevate the voice of alumni within the university, ensuring their perspectives help inform institutional strategies and decisions.
- Strengthen alumni engagement and loyalty through impactful programs and services that connect alumni to one another and to Stanford and provide goodwill and support.
- Strategically mobilize alumni as global ambassadors and institutional partners, leveraging their expertise and influence to drive measurable support for Stanford's mission.

- Represent Stanford and SAA to external constituencies and partners, actively strengthening the university's reputation and visibility by cultivating productive relationships that advance institutional goals.

University Leadership and Collaboration

- Actively contribute to senior university management discussions; advise university leadership on alumni affairs and engagement strategies.
- Ensure that timely, accurate, and relevant information is provided to Stanford's President and the SAA Board of Directors to support informed decision-making.
- Collaborate across the Office of External Relations – including Development, Government Relations, University Communications, and Community Engagement – as well as with alumni relations development in the schools and academic units, to ensure alignment and coordination.
- Integrate alumni engagement priorities into broader institutional planning, supporting Stanford's long-term vision and impact.

Dynamic Leadership and Team Development

- Inspire, mentor, and develop a diverse team, instilling a shared vision for innovation and excellence in alumni engagement while fostering a commitment to inclusion and belonging within the SAA staff.
- Encourage a culture of creativity and experimentation, empowering team members to explore new ideas and approaches in their work.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

- A proven track record as a senior leader of skilled professionals in multiple business functions/disciplines (such as finance, financial reporting, marketing, contracts, operations, HR, legal, data/information management, nonprofit laws, sales, communications, affinity programs, and public relations).
- A deep sense of vocation for the role, coupled with strong affinity for Stanford's distinctive culture of excellence, curiosity, and irreverent optimism. Prior Stanford affiliation, ideally in the form of an undergraduate and/or graduate degree, strongly preferred.
- Successful experience liaising with boards and volunteers, overseeing board relations, and delivering presentations.
- Experience in initiating and successfully assessing, solving, implementing, structuring, and managing business processes, preferably in a decentralized environment, including coordination with many constituents.

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- Demonstrated strategic leadership, planning, and change management skills with sound judgment and managerial courage.
 - Ability to represent the university professionally, both internally and externally. Excellent written and oral communication skills. Ability to prepare clear and concise reports and deliver formal presentations to senior management and other audiences.
 - Exceptional interpersonal, negotiation, diplomacy, and political acumen skills. Successful track record of establishing credibility and trust with diverse groups, including senior leaders. Demonstrated experience engaging and motivating groups of diverse individuals.
 - Ability to juggle a vast quantity of incoming information, interruptions, and inquiries with a high level of professionalism and tolerance for ambiguity.
 - Expert analytical and problem-solving skills. Strong project/program management skills with demonstrated effectiveness in data analysis, critical thinking, creative problem solving, consulting, facilitation, negotiating, influencing, people leadership, and strategic decision-making skills.
 - Availability to work long hours, including evenings and weekends, and willingness to travel as needed to engage with alumni and represent Stanford at various events and initiatives.
 - Minimum of 10 years of relevant experience leading and overseeing senior team leaders.
 - Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree in business or a related field is preferred.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

The expected annual pay range for this position is \$600,000 - \$725,000.

Stanford University provides pay ranges that represent its good-faith estimate of what the university reasonably expects to pay for a position. The pay offered to a selected candidate will be determined based on factors such as (but not limited to) the scope and responsibilities of the position, the qualifications of the selected candidate, departmental budget availability, internal equity, geographic location, and external market pay for comparable jobs. Please find an overview of Stanford benefits and rewards here: <https://careersearch.stanford.edu/benefits>

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website:

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/stanford-university/vice-president-alumni-affairs-and-president-stanford-alumni>

Jack Gorman, Partner
Nicole Poe, Managing Associate
Sandeep Kaur, Senior Search Coordinator
Isaacson, Miller

Stanford University is an equal opportunity and affirmative action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Stanford University. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by Stanford would supersede any conflicting information in this document.

ADDENDUM

President Jonathan Levin '94

Distinguished economist and academic leader Jonathan Levin became Stanford University's 13th president on August 1, 2024. President Levin previously served as the Philip H. Knight Professor and Dean of Stanford Graduate School of Business (GSB). A leading economist, he is widely recognized for his scholarship in industrial organization and market design.

Jonathan Levin was born and raised in New Haven, Connecticut. He earned undergraduate degrees in English and Mathematics at Stanford in 1994, an M.Phil in Economics at Oxford University in 1996, and a PhD in Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1999. After joining the Stanford faculty in 2000, Levin rose through the ranks to become the Holbrook Working Professor of Price Theory in the Department of Economics. He served as department chair from 2011 to 2014, a period of rising stature for Stanford economics.

Levin's scholarly work has spanned topics ranging from incentive contracts to game theory, e-commerce, and health insurance. He has conducted influential research on the organization and design of markets, subprime lending, and empirical methods to study imperfect competition.

In 2011, he received the John Bates Clark Medal as the economist under the age of 40 who has made the most significant contribution to economic thought and knowledge. Levin is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a former Guggenheim Fellow, and a recipient of department and school awards for distinguished teaching.

In September 2016, Levin became the 10th dean of the Stanford Graduate School of Business. Under his leadership, Stanford GSB strengthened its position as the preeminent institution of management research and education. The school invested in new research programs, reimagined and significantly increased financial aid, expanded online and global programs, introduced classes for Stanford undergraduates, and developed ambitious collaborations focused on technology, sustainability, and other critical issues for business and society.

From 2021 to 2025, Levin served as a member of President Biden's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. He is a Trustee of the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. He has consulted widely in industry and government. He was part of the international expert group that designed the first vaccine Advance Market Commitment for pneumococcal disease and participated in the design of the FCC's noted broadcast spectrum incentive auction.