

Cal State
Monterey Bay

Assistant Vice President, Development
California State University, Monterey Bay
Marina, California



THE SEARCH

[California State University, Monterey Bay](#) (Cal State Monterey Bay) seeks an experienced, strategic, and collaborative fundraising professional to serve as its next assistant vice president, development (AVP). Reporting to and partnering closely with Cal State Monterey Bay's vice president for university advancement (VP), Michael LaPlante, the AVP is an integral member of the advancement executive team and will provide strategic leadership to and overall supervision of Cal State Monterey Bay's development team.

The AVP joins Cal State Monterey Bay at an exciting moment, as efforts are underway to publicly launch the university's second comprehensive campaign. Overseeing a team of five, the AVP will direct and execute strategic data-informed strategies to strengthen systems, processes, and policies, supporting enhanced performance and productivity across development. An exceptional communicator and relationship builder, the AVP will inspire trust to establish and deepen critical relationships with senior academic and administrative leaders across campus. In addition to personally managing a portfolio of major and principal gift prospects and donors, the AVP will develop and execute strategies to grow the university's donor base and strengthen relationships within the Monterey Bay community, cultivating a robust culture of philanthropy both on campus and beyond. In partnership with the VP, the AVP will lead and manage the comprehensive campaign by ensuring that all campus constituents are informed, actively engaged, and collaborating effectively in support of campaign priorities. The AVP will contribute to developing the strategy, messaging, and implementation plan for launching the public phase of the campaign and oversee its execution to maximize visibility, participation, and philanthropic support.

The ideal candidate must possess demonstrated and progressive fundraising leadership experience, including at least three years of direct supervisory experience, preferably in an academic setting and a campaign environment. With a keen understanding of fundraising best practices, the AVP will have a proven track record of program building and fundraising success in securing major and principal gift commitments from individuals, corporations, and foundations. The AVP will be adept at motivating, empowering, and advocating for staff, as well as facilitating cohesion and team success. The AVP must be a responsive and collaborative team player, a strong relationship-builder, as well as demonstrate the credibility, maturity, and sophistication necessary to effectively engage with senior leaders and diverse groups of internal and external constituents. The successful candidate will reflect and embody the core values of Cal State Monterey Bay by serving the university with authenticity and humility, demonstrating integrity, trust, diplomacy, emotional intelligence, and professionalism to effectively engage and partner with key internal and external constituents. This individual must bring a deep appreciation and passion for the mission, goals, and uniqueness of Cal State Monterey Bay. A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

Cal State Monterey Bay has retained Rachel Ellenport of the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to conduct this important recruitment. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

ROLE OF ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT, DEVELOPMENT

Reporting directly to the vice president, university advancement, the AVP will lead the development team's efforts to identify, cultivate, and solicit individual major and principal gift donors as well as corporate and foundation donors, and expand alumni outreach and annual gifts in support of university initiatives and priorities. The AVP will establish metrics for success, manage a select portfolio of prospects and donors capable of making major gifts to the institution, and create a cohesive, collaborative, and strategic fundraising team.



KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT, DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Leadership and Program Management

- In partnership with the VP, design and implement performance metrics, assessment tools, and annual goals for the development team and individual fundraisers based on best practices and accountability; devise strong data-informed methods for decision-making and the timely evaluation of program performance and forecasting.
- Create and implement methods of improving individual and team productivity, performance, and collaboration.

- Oversee the preparation of written proposals, informational materials, planned gift illustrations, and other materials to secure major and principal gifts, including proposals to corporations and foundations.
- Supervise the development of and compliance with policies and procedures relating to all university fundraising initiatives and work collaboratively with leadership on collateral materials for those efforts.
- Partner with the marketing and communications team to coordinate collateral material (case statements, recognition, stewardship, information) for fundraising efforts.
- Review and modify or approve the fundraising plans of any fundraising initiative.



Fundraising and External Relations

- Personally cultivate and manage a select portfolio of principal and major gift potential philanthropic partners.
- Systematically engage, guide, and support deans and program leads in the fundraising process and manage their annual advancement business plan.

- Direct the comprehensive campaign, ensuring all campus constituents are aware, engaged, and collaborating effectively. Develop and execute the campaign’s public launch.
- Represent the VP and/or the division by participating in committees relating to university initiatives.
- Serve as a member of the extended cabinet.

Staff Management

- Provide leadership, supervision, and evaluation for the directors of development, corporations, and foundations, and annual giving; lead by example, fostering a culture of excellence, transparency, collaboration, and professional growth.
- Implement best practices utilizing clear data-informed measurables. Ensure development directors emulate a high-performing team, as defined by industry standards.
- Clearly articulate job responsibilities and the performance review process and establish meaningful opportunities for professional progression and development.
- Supervise budgets, allocating fundraising personnel and financial resources; track and forecast expenditures in comparison to approved budgets.



QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

This position requires exceptional judgment, high emotional intelligence, superb communication skills, and the ability to collaborate with multiple internal and external constituencies. The AVP will bring many of the following professional qualities and experiences:

- At least seven years of progressively responsible fundraising experience, three of which include management of a team, preferably in higher education.
- A deep knowledge of donor-centered fundraising, fundraising techniques, proposal development, prospect identification, prospect research and cultivation, campaign management, fund solicitation, donor recognition, and stewardship.
- Thorough understanding of modern management and administrative techniques related to the development and implementation of appropriate methods of work planning, scheduling, and coordination in a team environment to meet changing organizational objectives.
- Successful record of personally cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major individual and institutional philanthropic partners at six-figure levels and above, aligning strategy with pre-approved goals and priorities.
- Proven success in building or expanding a comprehensive, sustainable fundraising enterprise and fostering a collaborative, high-performance team environment.
- Strong supervisory, management, and organizational skills with excellent time management and follow-through abilities. Ability to function on multiple tasks simultaneously, demonstrating initiative and self-discipline.
- Demonstrated ability to work well with people at all levels of an organization, across a broad range of backgrounds; respect and appreciation for each individual.
- The intellectual depth, maturity, self-awareness, and confidence to establish credibility and garner the trust of volunteers, philanthropic partners, senior leaders, academic partners, colleagues, and staff, inspiring them to achieve their maximum potential.
- Excellent listener; clear, crisp, and compelling written and verbal communication.
- Knowledge and proficiency in working with a CRM database.
- Commitment to higher education and philanthropy.
- Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited four-year college or university; advanced degree preferred.



COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

Located along the central coast of California, Monterey Bay is a vibrant and dynamic community that offers a unique blend of natural beauty and cultural attractions. With miles of stunning coastline along the Pacific Ocean, rolling hills, and lush forests, this area offers residents a peaceful and relaxing environment for recreation. Monterey Bay offers an interlude from the hustle and bustle of city life within driving distance from major cities such as San Francisco and San Jose and makes it easy to explore everything California has to offer, including endless opportunities for hiking, surfing, beachcombing and more. Close to the famous Monterey Bay Aquarium and Cannery Row, the local community enjoys access to art, farmers' markets, and festivals at their fingertips.

The anticipated compensation range for this role is **\$150,000-\$170,000**. In addition to the salary range listed herein, Cal State Monterey Bay offers a wealth of benefits to make working at the university even more rewarding. These benefits may include comprehensive health insurance, sick and vacation time, retirement savings plans, and access to a number of perks. Please refer to the link listed [here](#) to learn more about Cal State Monterey Bay's compensation practices and benefits. Salary offers are determined based on final candidate qualifications and experience; the budget for the position; and in support of fair, equitable, and consistent pay practices at California State University, Monterey Bay.

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/california-state-university-monterey-bay/assistant-vice-president-development>

Rachel Ellenport, Partner
Christina Garrison, Senior Associate
Caroline Corry, Senior Search Coordinator
Isaacson, Miller

Cal State Monterey Bay is an Equal Opportunity Affirmative Action employer seeking to recruit and support a broadly diverse community of faculty and staff. We value and celebrate diversity in all its forms and strive to foster an inclusive culture built on respect that affirms inter-group relations and builds cohesion. We consider qualified applicants for employment for their anticipated contributions and without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, medical condition, pregnancy, marital status, veteran status, or disability.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by California State University, Monterey Bay. 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 California State University, Monterey Bay would supersede any conflicting information in this document.



ADDENDUM

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, MONTEREY BAY

Founded in 1994, Cal State Monterey Bay is one of the youngest CSU campuses. Situated on the former Fort Ord military base, Cal State Monterey Bay serves over 8,000 students – over 87 percent of whom are undergraduates – and is home to over 30,000 alumni around the globe. Ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as a top 15 regional university in the West, top 10 in public regional universities, and second in social upward mobility in the West, Cal State Monterey Bay’s mission aims to prepare students to contribute responsibly to California and the global community by providing transformative learning experiences in an inclusive environment. Since its founding, Cal State Monterey Bay has uniquely become one of the most residential campuses in the CSU system with over fifty-two percent of students living on campus. Its diverse student body receives personal attention in small classes while pursuing degrees in 25 undergraduate and nine graduate majors across six academic colleges:

- [College of Arts, Humanities, and Sciences](#)
- [College of Business](#)
- [College of Education](#)
- [College of Extended Education and International Programs](#)
- [College of Health Sciences and Human Services](#)
- [College of Science](#)

Cal State Monterey Bay is academically known for strengths in marine science, leveraging a [long-term partnership with the Monterey Bay Aquarium](#), and programs in health sciences, engineering, agricultural science, and hospitality management, reflecting the region’s developing industries. In 2025, Cal State Monterey Bay was classified as a Research College and University (RCU) by the Carnegie Foundation.

Although Cal State Monterey Bay serves students across the entire state of California and beyond, 38 percent of its undergraduates come from Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties, which reflects its commitment to serving the local community. The university has been federally designated as a Minority Serving Institution and a Hispanic Serving Institution and prides itself on making higher education accessible to traditionally underserved and low-income populations. As much as 72 percent of Cal State Monterey Bay’s students receive some form of financial aid, and over 50 percent of students identify as first generation and as members of an underrepresented population. Students participate in over 105 active student clubs and organizations that represent a diverse body of interests, values, and fields of study.

Cal State Monterey Bay is committed to the success of its student-athletes within the California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) and the NCAA Division II. The Cal State Monterey Bay Otters compete in 14 intercollegiate varsity sports: men's sports include baseball, basketball, cross country, golf, and soccer; while women's sports include basketball, cross country, golf, soccer, softball, track & field (indoor and outdoor), volleyball, and water polo. To these ends, philanthropic investments for student support within

scholarships and athletics are strong opportunities of interest. Explore California State University, Monterey Bay here: <https://csumb.edu/>.

Philanthropy and Finances

All CSU campuses have two main funding sources: the state General Fund and student tuition and fees. State funding now covers slightly more than half of the CSU's operating costs, with tuition and fees making up for the remainder. Auxiliaries and philanthropic support generate additional revenue needed for essential services that supplement state-supported activities. Cal State Monterey Bay's operating budget was \$160 million in Fiscal Year 2025. In the same year, its endowment was valued at over \$60 million, and the university raised \$15 million in annual philanthropic revenue. Serving its core mission to provide a transformative education, future fundraising priorities will be shaped around and in support of areas outlined in the strategic plan, including, but not limited to, strengthened academic programs; improved facilities, classrooms, and laboratories; and enhanced faculty support alongside four college-naming opportunities.

Foundation of CSUMB

The [Foundation of CSUMB](#) (Foundation) is a 501(c)(3) auxiliary organization established to advise, govern, and oversee policy and direction, and assist with the leadership and general promotion of the Foundation of California State University, Monterey Bay to support the organization's mission and needs. The foundation board is comprised of 15 dedicated community leaders across business, academia, finance, healthcare, and civic government committed to the university and advancing its mission.

The Division of University Advancement

Cal State Monterey Bay's University Advancement division includes more than 30 full-time staff, encompassing development (including individual, corporate and foundation relations, and planned giving), alumni relations, advancement services, marketing and communications, government affairs, university events, and administrative staff. In December 2020, Cal State Monterey Bay concluded its first-ever comprehensive campaign, [Vision 20/20: The Campaign for Monterey Bay](#), and successfully surpassed its original \$100 million goal. For more information about University Advancement, visit <https://csumb.edu/giving/>.

LEADERSHIP

Michael LaPlante, Vice President for University Advancement

Michael LaPlante was appointed vice president for university advancement on June 1, 2025. LaPlante brings over 25 years of experience in higher education development and campaign leadership, including prior experience in the CSU system.

LaPlante joins Cal State Monterey Bay from Western Colorado University (WCU) where he served as the vice president of advancement and executive director of the WCU Foundation. LaPlante was instrumental in the planning, execution, and success of WCU's Elevate Western campaign, which surpassed its initial \$80 million goal. Under LaPlante's campaign leadership, WCU doubled its annual contributions and its endowment and received three of the four largest gifts in WCU's history.

Before joining WCU, LaPlante spent 15 years at Colorado State University in progressive leadership roles. As associate vice president for advancement, LaPlante oversaw gift planning, regional development, principal gifts, and corporate and foundation relations during CSU's \$1 billion State Your Purpose campaign. LaPlante's early career in athletics development began in the California State University system, including roles at San Diego State University (SDSU) and California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly).

LaPlante earned an MBA from Colorado State University and a bachelor's degree from Bowling Green State University.