



Chief Development Officer Searches
Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, Cox School of Business,
and Dedman School of Law
Southern Methodist University
Dallas, Texas

THE SEARCHES

Southern Methodist University (SMU) seeks three accomplished, strategic, and collaborative advancement leaders to serve as the inaugural Chief Development Officers (CDOs) for the [Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences](#), [Cox School of Business](#), and the [Dedman School of Law](#). These newly created positions represent a significant investment in the future of philanthropy at SMU and underscore the university's commitment to building a best-in-class advancement enterprise capable of supporting its ambitious academic and institutional aspirations.

Southern Methodist University is experiencing a period of exceptional momentum. Under the leadership of President Jay Hartzell and Senior Vice President for Development and External Affairs Shontel Grumhaus, the university is reimagining its advancement model and investing in the people, processes, and infrastructure needed to elevate fundraising performance across the institution. The creation of these three executive-level positions marks the first phase of that transformation and reflects a commitment to building a more sophisticated, collaborative, and donor-centered culture of philanthropy.

Reporting to the Vice President for Schools and Unit Development, Paula Voyles Jewell, and serving as a senior strategic partner to their respective dean, each CDO will lead the development strategy for a major academic unit while helping shape the future of advancement at SMU. These leaders will have the opportunity to establish new standards for donor engagement, stewardship, prospect strategy, and team development while working alongside deans who are deeply committed to philanthropy and eager to expand their external engagement efforts.

The opportunities across these three academic units are substantial. The Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, the university's largest and most academically diverse academic unit, presents extensive opportunities to deepen donor engagement across its 16 departments and nine interdisciplinary institutes and centers. Following an extensive renovation and expansion project, the Cox School of Business is building on strong donor engagement and recent fundraising success to support ambitious priorities in faculty excellence, entrepreneurship, technology, experiential learning, and business innovation.

Similarly, the Dedman School of Law is advancing a transformative capital initiative for a new law school facility on the university's growing East Campus while cultivating a highly accomplished alumni base with significant philanthropic capacity.

As inaugural leaders in these roles, the CDOs will inherit exceptional philanthropic potential. SMU boasts visionary institutional and advancement leadership, a deeply loyal alumni community, influential volunteer leaders, and access to one of the country's most dynamic metropolitan regions. University leadership believes the institution possesses extraordinary untapped fundraising opportunity and is thereby making a deliberate investment to realize that potential.

The successful candidates will be accomplished fundraisers and collaborative leaders who bring strategic vision, intellectual curiosity, and a record of building strong partnerships across complex organizations. They will be energized by the opportunity to help shape a growing advancement enterprise, serve as trusted advisors to academic leadership, and play defining roles in the next chapter of philanthropic success at Southern Methodist University.

Southern Methodist University has retained Jack Gorman of the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to conduct these important recruitments. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this posting.

ABOUT SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

A nationally ranked private university located near the heart of Dallas, [Southern Methodist University](#) is a distinguished center for global research and teaching. SMU's more than 12,000 diverse, high-achieving students come from all 50 states and over 80 countries to take advantage of the university's small classes, meaningful research opportunities, leadership development, community service, international study, and innovative programs.

The university serves approximately 7,000 undergraduates and 5,000 graduate students through eight degree-granting schools: Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, Cox School of Business, Lyle School of Engineering, Meadows School of the Arts, Simmons School of Education and Human Development, Dedman School of Law, Perkins School of Theology, and Mood School of Graduate and Advanced Studies. SMU is data driven, and its powerful supercomputing ecosystem – paired with entrepreneurial drive – creates an unrivaled environment for the university to deliver research excellence.

Now in its second century of achievement, SMU is recognized for the ways it supports students, faculty, and alumni as they become ethical, enterprising leaders in their professions and communities. [SMU's relationship with Dallas](#) – the dynamic center of one of the nation's fastest-growing regions – offers learning, research, social, and career opportunities that provide a launch pad for global impact.

Fundraising and Financial Overview

[The Office of Development and External Affairs](#) (DEA) comprises 147 professionals and supports Southern Methodist University by securing funding for university priorities; promoting meaningful involvement in the life and work of the university; heightening international, national, state, and local awareness of SMU; and supporting the enrollment of a diverse and able student body. In Fiscal Year 2026, SMU raised over \$300 million in philanthropic support.

From 2017 to 2025, [SMU Ignited: Boldly Shaping Tomorrow](#) – the university’s campaign for impact – inspired an era of unprecedented advancement in academics, athletics, and national prominence. Thanks to more than 67,500 donors, volunteers, and supporters, the campaign exceeded its goal three years ahead of schedule, raising over \$1.656 billion and becoming one of the largest campaigns in the history of private Texas universities.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Development Officers serve as the senior advancement leaders across three respective academic units: the Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, the Cox School of Business, and the Dedman School of Law. The CDOs report directly to Paula Voyles Jewell, Vice President for Schools and Unit Development, and serve as trusted advisors to their respective deans. In these newly created positions, the CDOs will set the strategic direction for development efforts for these three prominent academic units; manage and grow major gifts portfolios; and engage key constituents in fundraising efforts. As SMU invests in its advancement operation in preparation for its next comprehensive campaign, the CDOs will also strategically grow the fundraising teams for these academic units over time.

- **Strategic Fundraising Leadership:** Develop and implement a comprehensive fundraising strategy aligned with the academic unit’s strategic plan and university priorities. Establish annual fundraising goals, campaign objectives, and performance metrics while identifying opportunities to increase philanthropic support.
- **Major and Principal Gift Fundraising:** Personally manage a portfolio of high-capacity prospects and donors. Cultivate, solicit, and steward major and principal gifts through strategic engagement, proposal development, and collaborative donor strategies with university leadership and the dean.
- **Partnership with the Dean:** Serve as the dean’s primary strategic advisor on philanthropy. Partner with the dean to identify fundraising priorities, prepare donor strategies, coordinate cultivation activities, and strengthen relationships with alumni, friends, corporations, and foundations.
- **Leadership and Staff Management:** Provide leadership, coaching, supervision, and performance management for development professionals supporting the school or college. Establish

performance expectations, develop staff, promote collaboration, and foster a culture of accountability and excellence.

- **Volunteer and Advisory Board Engagement:** Partner with advisory boards, campaign committees, volunteers, and key constituents to strengthen philanthropic engagement and expand fundraising opportunities.
- **Campaign and Strategic Initiatives:** Lead the academic unit's participation in comprehensive campaigns and strategic fundraising initiatives. Coordinate campaign planning, volunteer engagement, and fundraising strategies to achieve campaign goals.
- **Collaboration Across Development and External Affairs:** Work collaboratively with principal gifts, corporate and foundation relations, gift planning, prospect development, alumni relations, donor relations, annual giving, and other university partners to maximize donor engagement and philanthropic outcomes.
- **Financial Management and Reporting:** Monitor fundraising performance, analyze philanthropic trends, prepare reports and forecasts, and manage departmental budgets and fundraising resources.
- **University Leadership and Committee Participation:** Represent the school or college and Development and External Affairs (DEA) on university committees and leadership initiatives while promoting collaboration across academic and administrative units.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

- A minimum of ten years of professional fundraising experience and at least five years of management experience, preferably within a private research university setting.
- Depth of knowledge of best practices in all key areas of development and donor engagement strategies; demonstrated campaign experience.
- Demonstrated ability and experience building upon and/or transforming an existing development program.
- A proven track record of success in personally cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding gifts at the six- and seven-figure levels and above. A high level of comfort and effectiveness in working with high-net-worth individuals.
- Proven leadership and solid volunteer and staff management skills; desire to empower and motivate staff while providing the support and advocacy they need, as well as the ability to influence others beyond formal authority.

- Exemplary interpersonal communication skills; active, engaged listener; superior written and oral communication skills; clarity, crispness, and elegance in writing and speaking. The ability to succinctly articulate a vision and processes to key constituents, utilizing data and metrics as appropriate.
- The credibility, emotional maturity, authenticity, and sound judgment required to effectively engage and leverage university and academic leadership and volunteers in the cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of key prospects and donors.
- The desire and ability to build bridges and strong collaborative relationships with all members of an operation.
- A sharp eye for operational efficiency and the best use of resources.
- The ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously and with confidence and discretion.
- Impeccable attention to detail; superb follow-through; strong personal integrity, charisma, and work ethic coupled with a sense of humor and perspective.
- The personal flexibility to travel and work evenings or weekends as required.
- Bachelor's degree required; master's degree preferred.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

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

[Chief Development Officers, Southern Methodist University](#)

Jack Gorman, Partner
 Nicole Poe, Managing Associate
 Grace Zakim, Managing Associate
 Max Bartley, Associate
 Hodge Stillwell, Associate
 Ryan Cheung, Senior Search Coordinator
 Isaacson, Miller

Southern Methodist University will not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, education activity, or admissions on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. SMU's commitment to equal opportunity includes nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Southern Methodist 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 SMU would supersede any conflicting information in this document.

ADDENDUM

Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences

Since opening its doors in 1915, Southern Methodist University has placed the humanities and sciences at the center of its educational mission. Today, [Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences](#), the university's oldest and largest academic unit, continues that tradition by bringing together students and scholars dedicated to discovery, innovation, and addressing complex global challenges. Spanning the humanities, natural and mathematical sciences, and social sciences, Dedman College offers a rich interdisciplinary environment where students explore diverse perspectives and connect the study of people, cultures, and societies with scientific inquiry, data, and analytical problem-solving. The College also serves nearly all SMU undergraduates through the university's Common Curriculum and is home to nationally recognized programs in fields ranging from human rights, anthropology, and archaeology to particle physics, cosmology, economics, statistics, and data science.

Across its disciplines, Dedman College faculty advance groundbreaking research and scholarship that deepen understanding of the world and generate meaningful impact. Through research opportunities, internships, community engagement, and other experiential learning programs in Dallas and beyond, students apply classroom knowledge to real-world challenges. Graduates leave equipped with the curiosity, creativity, critical-thinking skills, and adaptability needed to excel across a broad spectrum of careers, including science, business, the arts, entrepreneurship, and public service. Whatever path they pursue, Dedman College alumni are prepared to lead with purpose, navigate change, and make lasting contributions to their communities and professions.

Janarthanan “Janan” Jayawickramarajah, a nationally recognized chemistry scholar, researcher, and academic leader, serves as the Elisabeth Martin Armstrong Dean of Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences. He joined SMU in June 2025 during a period of significant growth and momentum, following the university's achievement of Carnegie Research One status. An innovative educator and administrator, Dr. Jayawickramarajah has built a distinguished career advancing interdisciplinary research, graduate education, and faculty development. Prior to SMU, he spent 17 years at Tulane University as a professor of chemistry and leader of a nanobiotechnology research laboratory focused on developing bio-inspired functional molecules for applications in advanced materials and medicine. His work has been supported by major federal agencies, including the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H), the National Science Foundation, and the National Institutes of Health.

At Tulane, Dr. Jayawickramarajah served in several senior leadership roles, including Associate Dean for Research, Faculty Affairs and PhD Programs and Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, where he helped expand research funding, strengthen infrastructure, and enhance graduate education. He also founded the Science Policy and Communication Graduate Fellows Program, preparing graduate students to become effective communicators and leaders. His contributions have been recognized through

numerous awards, including Tulane's Dean's Outstanding Achievement Award and the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Department of Chemistry at The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin). He will also be inducted as a senior member of the National Academy of Inventors. Dr. Jayawickramarajah earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a PhD in organic chemistry from UT Austin before completing postdoctoral research at Yale University and joining the Tulane faculty in 2007.

Cox School of Business

Founded in 1920, originally as the Department of Commerce at SMU at the request of the Dallas business community, the Edwin L. Cox School of Business today offers undergraduate, graduate, and executive education programs to nearly 1,600 undergraduate and 1,300 graduate students. Ranked No. 36 among "Best Business Schools" by *U.S. News & World Report*, the Cox School brings a world-class faculty together with talented, ambitious students in a small private-school setting. The quality and frequency of interaction among students and faculty is superior at Cox. Professors – not graduate assistants – teach all of the BBA and MBA programs. The *Princeton Review* ranked Cox in the top 10 for best professors based on their interest and accessibility.

Todd Milbourn serves as the 10th dean of the Edwin L. Cox School of Business, where he holds the Tolleson Chair in Business Leadership and the Andrew H. Chen Endowed Chair in Financial Investments. A respected academic leader and finance scholar, Dr. Milbourn is committed to advancing teaching and research excellence, recruiting and supporting top faculty talent, and strengthening engagement with the business community. With a strong passion for entrepreneurship and innovation, he is leading Cox's continued rise by building on the school's record of exceptional student outcomes, career placement success, and industry partnerships. His vision positions the Cox School at the intersection of innovation, economic growth, and business leadership, while reinforcing SMU's role in supporting the entrepreneurial and economic vitality of Dallas, Texas, and beyond.

Before joining SMU, Dr. Milbourn spent 25 years at Washington University in St. Louis's Olin Business School, where he served as the Hubert C. and Dorothy R. Moog Professor of Finance and most recently as Deputy Dean. During his tenure, he recruited leading faculty, expanded doctoral and specialized master's programs, established new research centers, and helped advance the school's strategic engagement with the business community. An expert in valuation, corporate finance, credit ratings, corporate governance, and executive compensation, he has also served as an advisor to private firms and the U.S. Department of Justice. Dr. Milbourn previously taught at London Business School and the University of Chicago and earned a PhD in finance from Indiana University's Kelley School of Business and a bachelor's degree in economics, finance, and mathematics from Augustana College.

Dedman School of Law

The School of Law at Southern Methodist University was established in February 1925. Highlighting the celebration of its 75th year, the school was named Dedman School of Law in 2001 in honor of Dallas benefactors Nancy and Robert H. Dedman, Sr., and their family. With more than 17,000 graduates, Dedman Law has a national and international reputation of training prominent lawyers in both law and business.

In the 2026 “Best Law Schools” rankings, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Dedman Law No. 42 overall and No. 28 among law schools with the most graduates in Big Law firms. In addition, *U.S. News* ranked Dedman Law’s Business/Corporate Law program No. 25 in the nation and its Intellectual Property Law program No. 38. For the Class of 2025, 100 percent of job seekers secured employment opportunities by March 15, 2025.

Jason P. Nance, an internationally recognized scholar of education law and policy, serves as the Judge James Noel Dean of SMU’s Dedman School of Law. His work focuses on educational inequality and the intersection of law, education policy, and the criminal justice system. Dr. Nance began his professional career as an educator, teaching mathematics to middle school students and GED and English courses to adults before pursuing graduate studies in education policy and administration. He later earned both a PhD and a law degree, combining his passion for education with a commitment to advancing legal and policy solutions that improve educational outcomes. His scholarship has been widely cited by courts, legal scholars, policymakers, and national media, and he played a key role in the American Bar Association’s efforts to address the school-to-prison pipeline through research, policy recommendations, and adopted resolutions.

Before joining SMU, Dr. Nance served on the faculty of the University of Florida Levin College of Law, where he held senior leadership roles including Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development and Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs. There, he also directed programs designed to help first-year law students develop the skills and professional competencies needed for successful legal careers. Earlier in his career, he clerked for federal judges on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and the U.S. District Court for the District of Delaware and practiced corporate and securities litigation with Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP. Dr. Nance earned a bachelor’s degree from Brigham Young University, a PhD in education policy and administration from The Ohio State University, and a JD from the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

Leadership Profiles

President Jay C. Hartzell

A nationally recognized university leader with extensive expertise in business education and research, President Hartzell began his tenure on June 1, 2025. He guides the university at a time of significant opportunity and growth, working alongside students, faculty, staff, trustees, alumni, and supporters to

advance a bold new era of impact. Along with university leadership, President Hartzell championed a comprehensive listening effort during his first year on campus to better understand what makes SMU distinctive. Informed by perspectives from across the Hilltop and far beyond, the resulting strategic framework and plan reflect shared pride, confidence, and purpose while charting an ambitious path forward for the coming decade.

Before joining SMU, President Hartzell served as president of The University of Texas at Austin, where he led the university to record highs in applications, enrollment, graduation rates, research expenditures, and philanthropic support. His presidency followed more than 20 years on the faculty, including serving as dean of the McCombs School of Business, one of the nation's largest and most prestigious business schools. He began his academic career as an assistant professor of finance at New York University's Stern School of Business. A respected scholar, President Hartzell has published research in leading journals centered on corporate finance, corporate governance, and real estate.

Beyond campus, President Hartzell serves on the Dallas Citizens Council, the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas CEO Advisory Council, and the boards of MGIC Investment Corporation and Susser Bank. He previously served on the boards of Austin Habitat for Humanity and the American Real Estate and Urban Economics Association, and earlier in his career worked as a consultant with Hewitt Associates. He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration and economics (cum laude) from Trinity University and a PhD in finance from UT Austin.

Shontel Grumhaus, Senior Vice President for Development and External Affairs

Shontel Grumhaus joined SMU in March 2026 as Senior Vice President for Development and External Affairs. As a veteran development and fundraising executive, Grumhaus has more than 18 years of experience driving transformative philanthropy in higher education. At SMU, she is charged with translating bold ambition into tangible results, all for the betterment of students, research, and the community.

Before SMU, Grumhaus was Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Development and Chief Strategist for Schools and Units at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC Chapel Hill), where she led advancement strategy across the university and managed a team of development professionals. Previously, she was Senior Associate Dean for Advancement at the Kenan-Flagler Business School, where she and her team surpassed a \$400 million campaign goal. The campaign included securing \$75 million to support construction of a new academic building, which was matched by an equal commitment from the North Carolina Legislature. Prior to her time at Kenan-Flagler, Grumhaus oversaw the major gifts team for the College of Arts and Sciences. During her six-year tenure, she led a team that successfully launched a \$750 million campaign, significantly strengthening the college's fundraising capacity and long-term philanthropic pipeline.

An alumna of UNC Chapel Hill, Grumhaus holds a bachelor of science in business administration and a master of accounting.

Paula Voyles Jewell, Vice President for Schools and Unit Development

Paula Voyles Jewell serves as Vice President for Schools and Unit Development at SMU. She joined SMU in 2018 and brings more than 25 years of advancement and nonprofit leadership experience.

Prior to SMU, Paula held senior advancement leadership roles at Oklahoma State University, where she helped lead constituency fundraising during the university's \$1 billion campaign and played an important role in expanding and strengthening its development organization. Throughout her career, she has built and led high-performing fundraising teams, developed strong partnerships with academic and institutional leaders, and advanced strategies designed to deepen donor engagement and philanthropic support.

A Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE), Paula is recognized for her collaborative leadership style, extensive development experience, and commitment to building relationships that advance institutional priorities.