

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Montclair State University
Montclair, New Jersey

THE SEARCH

Montclair State University (Montclair or the university) seeks a strategic, forward-thinking, collaborative leader to serve as its next Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Montclair is a public research university with nearly 24,000 undergraduate and graduate students spanning 15 different schools and colleges. The second largest university in New Jersey, it is ranked among the top 30 public colleges in the nation. Montclair is the largest Hispanic-Serving Institution in the state with a long history of accessibility, social mobility, and public service to the local and broader New Jersey community. In 2024, the university achieved a unique distinction by becoming one of only 25 institutions in the country to earn the inaugural Carnegie Leadership for Public Purpose Classification in recognition of the university's campus-wide efforts to advance leadership in pursuit of public good, justice, equity, and diversity. Over the last five years, the university has grown tremendously, merging with nearby Bloomfield College, launching an innovative and flexible online learning program through Montclair Unbound, and investing heavily in research, most recently through construction of the upcoming \$120 million Interdisciplinary Science Building. Montclair aspires to achieve R1 classification while maintaining its long and successful history as a student-centered institution with tremendous success in teaching.

Reporting directly to the President and serving as a key member of the senior leadership team, the Provost is the university's chief academic officer, responsible for overseeing academic operations, long-range planning, support of research, and implementation of programs that advance Montclair's mission. This role, as the institution's academic leader and strategic partner with the president, includes direct supervision of academic affairs and serves as a vital conduit between faculty and administration, with a strong focus on student success.

The next Provost will build on the university's significant growth to set the strategic vision and leadership for these and other initiatives and establish the infrastructure to make them possible. The Provost will be an effective and strategic partner to the president in finding further ways to grow and innovate while maintaining the university's core mission as a public-serving institution. They will confront institutional challenges, including rapid growth and competition across the state of New Jersey, with a spirit of creativity, innovation, and collaboration. The Provost will serve as a senior leader within the university, building consensus and establishing a culture of mutual trust and respect among other senior leaders as well as the deans. They will foster transparent communication and facilitate collaboration across units. Finally, the Provost will serve as a key advocate for faculty, fostering a culture of shared governance and academic excellence in the context of a union environment. The successful candidate will bring experience navigating complex labor environments and demonstrate the ability to build productive relationships grounded in mutual respect and institutional priorities.

In this recruitment effort, Montclair State University has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist the university with the search. All applications, inquiries, and nominations, which will remain confidential, should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Located in Montclair, New Jersey, Montclair State University was established in 1908 and has grown into one of the nation's premier public research universities. Montclair was originally founded as the New Jersey State Normal School, a two-year teacher-training college, and has since grown into a Carnegie R2 institution. It is consistently ranked among the top 10 universities in the nation for social mobility and is the state's largest Hispanic-Serving Institution. The university is ranked among the top 30 public colleges in the nation.

Montclair is a public-serving institution committed to advancing the common good through rigorous teaching and learning alongside research grounded in a desire to develop innovative solutions to society's shared challenges. A commitment to public service and community engagement is at the heart of the university's mission. In 2024, the university achieved a unique distinction by becoming one of only 25 institutions in the country to earn the inaugural Carnegie Leadership for Public Purpose Classification in recognition of the university's campus-wide efforts to advance leadership in pursuit of public good, justice, equity, and diversity. Leadership development initiatives like the [NextGen Service Corps](#) (which prepares undergraduates for public service careers) and [The Bonner Leader Program](#) (a four-year program that provides civic engagement and public service opportunities) are only two examples of Montclair's deep commitment to student leadership and community engagement.

Montclair is home to nearly 24,000 undergraduate and graduate students, and it is the second largest institution in New Jersey. Montclair serves a truly diverse student body with students from 42 U.S. states and territories and 113 countries and a majority-minority population. For three years, Montclair has been recognized as a Fulbright Hispanic-Serving Institution Leader, one of only 46 nationally. Over 40% of incoming undergraduates are the first in their families to pursue a college degree, and nearly 44% are Pell-

eligible. Montclair provides these students with exceptional post-graduate outcomes and ranks in the top 13% of U.S. universities for return on investment. As one of the most affordable schools in New Jersey, the university lives its mission by broadening access to exceptional learning opportunities for a truly diverse population.

University Leadership

Jonathan Koppell is the ninth president of Montclair State University and a nationally recognized scholar of public administration and global governance. His career has been defined by a belief that public universities have a profound responsibility — not only to educate students, but to strengthen democracy, expand opportunity and help solve society's most pressing challenges. To that end, Koppell is driven to establish Montclair as the model of a public-serving university.

Since joining Montclair in 2021, President Koppell has led a period of significant momentum and growth. Montclair has welcomed the three largest first-year classes in its history and achieved record enrollment and retention, reflecting rising demand for the university's distinctive combination of academic excellence, access and public impact. He also guided the historic merger with Bloomfield College — New Jersey's only four-year Predominantly Black Institution — marking the first merger between a public and private institution in the state and expanding educational opportunity for generations of students.

Under his leadership, Montclair has advanced as a top-tier doctoral research university and federally designated Hispanic-Serving Institution, nationally recognized for social mobility and student success. President Koppell has championed the strategic re-imagining of the university's schools and colleges to align academic programs with the needs of today's learners and tomorrow's workforce, while strengthening Montclair's role as a partner to communities across New Jersey.

Before coming to Montclair, President Koppell served as Dean of the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions and Vice Provost for Public Service and Social Impact at Arizona State University, where he led the nation's largest comprehensive public affairs college. He began his academic career at Yale University, holding faculty appointments in the School of Management and leading the Milstein Center for Corporate Governance and Performance.

President Koppell earned his doctorate in political science from the University of California, Berkeley and his bachelor's degree in government from Harvard University. He is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration and author of numerous books and articles including award-winning "World Rule: Accountability, Legitimacy, and the Design of Global Governance."

Faculty and Staff

Montclair boasts an exceptionally committed group of faculty and staff whose expertise and dedication help advance the university's mission. Montclair's renowned faculty include a MacArthur Genius Grant Fellow, a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers winner, and numerous other NSF

CAREER Award recipients. Montclair employs over 2,000 total instructional faculty, including nearly 700 full-time faculty and over 1,300 part-time, non-tenured faculty as well as 15 librarians. Most faculty are unionized, either through the AFT Local 1904 for full-time faculty or the AFT Local 6025 for adjunct faculty. These unions are a key part of the university and represent faculty and librarians at Montclair through the process of shared governance.

Montclair is served by more than 1,600 staff members who are deeply committed to student success, wellbeing, and excellence. Staff support and advance the university's mission through exemplary management and oversight of dining, facilities, housing, counseling, technology, student support, libraries, academic affairs, and more. Montclair staff play a critical role in the university's success.

Students

Montclair has a total enrollment of nearly 24,000 students, including over 19,000 undergraduates and over 4,500 graduate students. Reflecting its deep commitment to inclusive excellence, Montclair is a majority-minority and the largest Hispanic-Serving Institution in New Jersey, while 57% of undergraduates identify as women, 43% are first-generation students, and nearly half receive federal Pell Grants as they come from lower-income families. This year's cohort of incoming undergraduates hail from 29 states and 75 countries. More than 5,000 students live across 17 residence halls in a supportive, vibrant community, while 75% of Montclair students commute through car, two on-campus train stations, and three NJ Transit bus lines. On and off campus, students have access to the arts and entertainment, while the campus community boasts a vibrant scene. With 130+ clubs, nationally recognized Greek life, and organizations representing cultures from around the world, students can build community on campus across many different dimensions.

Academics and Research

Montclair offers more than 300 doctoral, master's, and baccalaureate programs through fifteen schools and colleges.

- [Bloomfield College of Montclair State University](#)
- [College for Community Health](#)
- [College for Education and Engaged Learning](#)
- [College of Communication and Media](#)
- [College of Humanities and Social Sciences](#)
- [College of Science and Mathematics](#)
- [College of the Arts](#)
- [Feliciano School of Business](#)
- [John J. Cali School of Music](#)
- [School for Interdisciplinary Studies](#)
- [School for the Humanities](#)
- [School of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences](#)
- [School of Computing](#)
- [School of Nursing](#)
- [School of Social Sciences](#)

On July 1, 2023, Montclair completed its merger with Bloomfield College, the first merger between a public and private institution in New Jersey. The merger preserved Bloomfield's status as a small college and Predominantly Black Institution, and its students now benefit from Montclair's lower costs and resources as a large research university. Both campuses are united by a commitment to providing traditionally underserved students access to a high-quality education and social mobility.

In 2025, Montclair launched an ambitious effort to rethink higher education in response to evolving technology through [Montclair Unbound](#). Through blended learning and Montclair Online, the initiative creates flexible, student-centered degree pathways that meet students where they are. By expanding access and embracing innovation, Montclair Unbound helps advance a more adaptable and responsive learning environment for more students. Montclair's excellence in teaching and commitment to student success promise to create new models of education.

In 2019, Montclair earned its R2 designation and is actively working to grow and enhance its research enterprise with a goal of reaching R1 status. With more than \$45.43 million in research funding this year, the university continues to embody its public-serving mission to tackle complex challenges, strengthen communities, and improve lives. In July 2026, Montclair broke ground on a \$120 million [Interdisciplinary Science Building](#) scheduled to open for the 2028-2029 academic year. The 110,000-square-foot facility will triple the amount of on-campus science lab space and support expanded chemistry, physics, and interdisciplinary science programs. It will feature an immersive data visualization, and innovation space called the "Imaginarium" and a fourth-floor research space specifically designed for collaboration with private-sector partners. The Interdisciplinary Science Building will empower students, faculty, and staff to embrace innovation and think beyond the traditional confines of their discipline. Montclair's combination of growing research activity, community engagement, and commitment to access for a diverse undergraduate, graduate, and professional student body differentiates it from many other public research universities in the country.

Location

Montclair State University's beautiful 252-acre campus sits just 12 miles from New York City in suburban Montclair, New Jersey, a town of 40,000 people. Alongside easy commuter access to Manhattan, the town of Montclair is home to a vibrant art scene, a lively downtown, and abundant parks and greenspace. Just seven miles from the Montclair campus, Bloomfield College boasts an additional 12-acre campus in the neighboring town of Bloomfield, New Jersey. Montclair's commitment to its surrounding community is central to the university's mission as a public-serving institution. Long-term initiatives include Paterson One Square Mile, where students tackle projects in education, health, and economic development to help build stronger communities. Similarly, the [Charles J. Muth Museum of Hinchliffe Stadium](#) tells the story of the Negro Leagues and Paterson history to elevate local neighborhoods. Cementing its ongoing commitment to the local community and the state of New Jersey, beginning in July 2026, Montclair assumed operational control of NJ Public Television Stations (NJ PBS) to help ensure that public television continues to thrive across the state. The College of Communication and Media will house, build, and support the organization, and students will have the opportunity to participate through internships and

experiential learning opportunities. The NJ PBS partnership represents one more in a long line of efforts to engage and enrich the local community.

ROLE OF THE PROVOST AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The Provost is the chief academic officer and second-ranking executive officer of Montclair State University, providing both intellectual and administrative leadership to the Division of Academic Affairs. Reporting directly to the president, the Provost works closely with the president and other senior leadership to formulate the university's goals and policies. The Provost oversees the university's 15 schools and colleges and is responsible for the development and administration of academic programs and policies relating to instruction and curriculum, enrollment management, faculty and academic staff appointments, academic facilities, and academic support services for students, including student retention. Given the wide scope of responsibilities and the large number of units reporting to the Provost, the position requires an experienced and energetic leader with a proven record of success as both a scholar and academic administrator.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Provide strategic leadership and vision for the future of Montclair State University that centers student success and inspires innovation.

The next Provost will collaborate with the president, faculty, students, and staff to articulate an academic vision and strategy that deepens and expands Montclair's impact in the state of New Jersey and beyond. The Provost will be responsive to the changing higher education landscape—both nationally and within the state—while remaining attuned to the distinct needs and culture of the campus community.

The Provost will support and promote a vision for Montclair that centers teaching and high-quality education. They will leverage a committed workforce of teacher-educators and a long history of student-centered practice to seamlessly integrate colleges, online offerings, academic programs, and research. The Provost will unify senior leadership under a cohesive charge and encourage and support the deans and other academic affairs leaders to continuously innovate to meet the needs of students. By rethinking departmental boundaries, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, and encouraging creative approaches to teaching and research, the Provost will work to ensure that the university remains adaptable and competitive in a rapidly changing academic landscape.

Align university infrastructure with the needs of a growing institution.

Montclair has experienced tremendous growth over the last five years, reaching record-high enrollment in 2026 with nearly 24,000 students, up from 18,000 in 2020. The Provost will creatively allocate resources to create systems, processes, and staffing plans to meet the university's needs and enact President Koppell's bold vision for the future. The historic merger with Bloomfield College, the upcoming Interdisciplinary Science Building, and a steadfast commitment to research all present opportunities for

the next Provost to connect vision to impact. In particular, the Provost will collaborate with other senior leaders to expand the university's strategic research initiatives by fostering interdisciplinary research and collaborations across colleges and with industry partners. A successful candidate will approach this work with an eye toward efficiency, the mindset of an implementer, and a demonstrated ability to build consensus toward shared goals.

Cultivate a culture of trust and foster a commitment to shared governance.

The next Provost must foster a culture of shared governance, transparency, and mutual respect, ensuring that faculty voices are meaningfully engaged in institutional decision-making. This leader will be expected to support faculty development, promote academic excellence, and strengthen the infrastructure for teaching, research, and service. The successful candidate will bring experience building productive relationships with faculty, managing and mentoring deans, and working collaboratively with academic unions. In both the shared governance contexts and union relationships, the Provost will serve as a model of good judgment and principled action, called upon to balance with care the interests of all stakeholders while keeping open channels of communication to promote a culture of engagement, trust, and innovation. This is an opportunity to lead with clarity and fairness, balancing institutional priorities with a deep understanding of faculty needs and contributions.

Champion the university's student-centered approach and excellence in teaching.

Teaching and learning are at the center of Montclair's mission and history. The next Provost will understand the need for enhanced coordination within and support of student success initiatives for undergraduate, graduate, and online programs. While the university invests in research, the Provost will ensure the prominence and centrality of its teaching mission and develop avenues to promote teaching and mentorship within that research infrastructure.

Advance Montclair's impact as a community-engaged, public-serving institution.

Montclair is a national university with a long-standing commitment to its local community. As the second largest university in New Jersey, the next Provost must champion, bolster, and promote efforts to deepen that commitment. The Provost will advance the university's presence in the surrounding area and state through partnerships, student engagement, research, and other novel opportunities. The Provost will serve as an advocate and spokesperson for the university and its community, inspiring the community to live the public service mission.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The chief academic officer must hold a doctorate or equivalent terminal degree and have a distinguished record of scholarship, research, and teaching sufficient to qualify for appointment as a tenured full professor at Montclair State University.

The Provost serves as acting president in the absence of the president, and as head of the Division of Academic Affairs, overseeing the university libraries, its 15 schools and colleges, and several administrative units. While no candidate will embody every quality, the successful candidate will possess many of the following qualifications:

- A record of successful administration and leadership at or above the level of dean in a doctoral-granting, research university;
- A commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, scholarship and the application of knowledge;
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in student programming, faculty and staff hiring and promotion, and management;
- A broad understanding of current issues in higher education;
- A champion for higher education and the liberal arts;
- The ability to manage significant and ongoing institutional change and growth;
- Familiarity and comfort with the newest technologies, including AI, and a penchant for innovation;
- A decisive and collaborative leader with a talent for team building;
- The ability to build trust and foster a collegial and collaborative academic environment;
- Independent judgment, authority, and an ability to lead at the highest levels;
- A demonstrated record in the acquisition of external resources;
- Familiarity with a collective bargaining environment;
- Excellent communication skills and the ability to communicate effectively within and beyond the university community.

COMPENSATION

Compensation will be commensurate with experience, with an anticipated salary range of approximately \$400,000-\$450,000.

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 in confidence via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/montclair-state-university/provost-and-senior-vice-president-academic-affairs>

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Montclair State University values access and educational excellence. We are committed to an environment of diverse perspectives which ensures that graduates will be civically engaged, committed to democracy, and prepared to thrive as global citizens. We foster a community that promotes varied experiences and voices. We seek applicants who will contribute diverse ideas and perspectives and who value an environment that promotes educational growth and advancement for all.

Montclair State University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution with a strong commitment to diversity. Additional information can be found on the website at <https://inside.montclair.edu/administration/university-counsel/equity-and-title-ix/maintaining-equitable-workplace-and-learning-environment>

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