

**An invitation to apply for the position of**



**Vice Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion  
Amherst, Massachusetts**

*"The University's mission is to provide an affordable and accessible education of high quality and to conduct programs of research and public service that advance knowledge and improve the lives of the people of the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world."*

— University of Massachusetts Amherst Mission Statement

## **THE SEARCH**

The University of Massachusetts Amherst ("UMass Amherst" or "UMass"), the land-grant, flagship university of the University of Massachusetts System, seeks an experienced, strategic leader and demonstrated collaborator to serve as the university's Vice Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion (VCEI). Reporting to the Chancellor and responsible for leading the Office of Equity and Inclusion, the next VCEI will have the opportunity to work with multiple campus partners and units to strengthen and deepen justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) efforts and initiatives by using a relational and future forward approach to leadership and collaboration.

UMass Amherst serves approximately 32,000 students (24,000 undergraduate students and 7,800 graduate students) in 11 schools and colleges, taught by over 1,400 faculty with 1,084 tenure-track faculty. It enrolls more first-year students from Massachusetts than the Commonwealth's top eight private universities combined. UMass Amherst has nearly 300,000 alumni worldwide, the majority of whom live and work in the state. They provide the essential workforce for the booming Massachusetts economy.

The University has a \$1.5 billion budget and an endowment of \$1.31 billion. Over the last ten years, with support from the state and private philanthropy, it has invested \$1.8 billion in its 13 million square feet of space and plans to invest an additional \$1.8 billion in the next four years. With new, renovated, and essential facilities, it has revived what was always a beautiful and large 1,500-acre campus.

The University is in the heart of the Pioneer Valley, offering a rich cultural environment in a rural setting close to major urban centers. It is among the largest employers in the region and the engine of the local economy. With its elevated national profile and inspiring new leadership, the University is a magnet for talented faculty, increasing state funding, and an increasingly competitive student body. UMass Amherst seeks a vice chancellor who will embrace its ethic of kindness and generosity, its public mission, its commitment to social justice, and its ambition for enhanced academic and research eminence.

Isaacson, Miller, the national executive search firm, has been retained to assist the search committee and UMass Amherst in this recruitment. Confidential applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS**

The University of Massachusetts is the public university system and the only public research system in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The system encompasses four comprehensive undergraduate and graduate campuses (Amherst, Boston, Dartmouth, and Lowell), a world-class medical school (Chan Medical School), and the state's only public law school (UMass Law School).

The University of Massachusetts is governed by a 22-member Board of Trustees that represents various interests of the public at large on a non-partisan basis. Seventeen members of the board are appointed by the Governor and five members are UMass students elected by the student body on each of the five campuses. The Board of Trustees plays an important role in directing strategy and overseeing the financial and strategic direction of the UMass system. It functions as a legislative body dealing mainly with general policies governing the University. The Board is not an administrative or management board.

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST**

Founded in 1863, UMass Amherst was originally established as Massachusetts Agricultural College under the Federal Morrill Land-Grant Colleges Act. Today, with its 11 colleges and schools, it is the flagship and the largest of the five campuses of the statewide University of Massachusetts system.

UMass Amherst serves its community, its state, and the nation. It is estimated that the University's impact on the Massachusetts economy is \$2.5 billion. UMass Amherst is constantly identifying new ways to prepare students for lives as citizens and leaders in the state: in the past five years alone, the University has launched new degree programs in biomedical engineering, data analytics and computational social science, finance, informatics, interdisciplinary studies, managerial economics, materials science and engineering, public policy, and veterinary technology, in anticipation of or in response to the needs of the state and society.

Public service is at the core of UMass Amherst's purpose; so too is a commitment to social change and social justice. The University is home to the papers and memoirs of W.E.B. DuBois, as well as the papers of Horace Mann Bond, Daniel Ellsberg, and Kenneth R. Feinberg, and hundreds of other collections documenting the lives and work of innovators, activists, political figures, and spiritual leaders. In 2020, the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education ranked the University seventh among U.S. doctorate-granting institutions in recognition of its commitment to achieving a more just, healthy, and sustainable world. In 2022, the University unveiled [UMass Carbon Zero](#), an ambitious vision to limit the dangers of climate change and power its 1,500-acre campus with 100 percent renewable energy by 2032.

The University is located in the historic Pioneer Valley of western Massachusetts, about an hour from the scenic Berkshires, two hours from Boston and three hours from New York City. The campus includes more than 13 million square feet of buildings. The University's transformational investment of \$1.8 billion in facilities during the past decade has created a revitalized learning and living environment. This decade of

renewal has focused on new and renovated facilities including classroom and learning buildings, administrative offices, laboratories for the life sciences, a student union, athletics facilities, and a host of other impressive projects. The current [Capital Plan](#) calls for \$1.86 billion to be spent between FY22 and FY26 to refurbish existing buildings and invest in new facilities.

In 2018, UMass Amherst acquired a secondary instructional and residential site (the former Mount Ida College), eight miles from Boston, Massachusetts, as a center for student experiential learning and professional development. The goal is to facilitate connections between UMass Amherst and the Greater Boston region, thereby amplifying UMass Amherst's impact in the Commonwealth.

### ***Strategic Planning Efforts***

In April of 2018, UMass unveiled the [2018-2023 Strategic Plan](#), "Be Revolutionary: A Vision for the Future." The plan outlines three overarching objectives: establishing UMass Amherst as a *destination* of choice where academically accomplished, socially responsible seekers of a world-class education succeed; a *partner* of choice in advancing and applying knowledge and innovation for the betterment of society; and a *community* of choice for students, staff, and faculty that exemplifies the power of diverse perspectives and mutual respect.

Strengthening diversity, equity, and inclusion is a prominent theme in the plan—it is one of six key strategic areas and is woven throughout the other five areas as well. In 2014 a Diversity Strategic Planning Steering Committee was formed, and the following year a [Diversity Strategic Plan](#) was established. The plan named several major goals to realize the promise of a culturally diverse campus: making UMass Amherst a destination of choice for students of color and underrepresented groups; improving the campus climate of inclusion; enhancing the effectiveness of curriculum and educational programs with regard to diversity and inclusion; increasing focus on recruiting, retention, and promotion of a diverse corps of faculty and staff; and increasing outreach and engagement with external communities/schools with large proportions of underrepresented minorities.

UMass Amherst has a commitment to social progress and social justice, a reverence for varied perspectives, and a drive for inclusive excellence. As the university engages in the development of a new strategic plan under its new chancellor, JEDI will remain a core value. It will be expected that the next VCEI will help craft and execute a new strategic plan for justice, equity, and inclusion that is unique to the UMass Amherst community, influenced by its history and context.

### ***Students and Enrollment***

UMass Amherst has one of the largest residential life systems in the nation, with more than 14,000 students on campus. Among students and their families, the University has an excellent reputation for offering high value, a student-centered approach, and attention to the whole student. Over the last decade, first-year undergraduate applications have increased by 30 percent. The six-year graduation rate has increased steadily to 84 percent. In FY23, UMass Amherst awarded \$157 million in campus funded financial aid.

UMass Amherst accounts for 43 percent of the systemwide student headcount and attracts a higher proportion than other campuses of out-of-state and international students. Student diversity continues to grow, with 37 percent of the 2022-23 entering class representing ALANA students (African-American, Latino, Asian, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Native American).

UMass Amherst has a rich history of student expression and activism. For generations, students have been involved with national and campus activism on a wide variety of political and social issues. UMass Amherst students are motivated and empowered to create and run clubs and organizations of their choosing. There are currently more than 400 active student groups on campus.

UMass Amherst athletes compete in nine men's and ten women's NCAA Division I sanctioned sports, primarily in the Atlantic 10 Conference. UMass is one of only 16 universities in the nation that plays Division I football and Division I men's ice hockey. UMass Amherst won its first National Hockey Championship in the 2021 NCAA Tournament.

### ***Finances and fundraising***

UMass Amherst is on solid financial footing, despite the year-to-year uncertainties of state funding. Part of this can be attributed to the ability of UMass Amherst to make internal allocations and reallocations that have improved quality and service, despite minimal increases in state appropriation. (40 percent of the University of Massachusetts system's annual revenue and expenses derive from the Amherst campus.)

For FY23, the campus operating budget is over \$1.5 billion. In FY21, it received more than \$287 million in sponsored research awards including 455 federal awards totaling \$221 million.

### ***Leadership and Governance***

**Javier A. Reyes, Ph.D.**, became the 31st leader of the University of Massachusetts Amherst on July 1, 2023, following his selection as chancellor of the commonwealth's flagship campus by the UMass Board of Trustees.

Reyes is an economist who has devoted his career to the cause of public higher education, holding leadership positions at the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC), West Virginia University, and the University of Arkansas. He most recently served as interim chancellor of UIC, Chicago's largest university campus. Born and raised in Mexico, Reyes is the first Hispanic person to serve as chancellor of UMass Amherst.

Reyes received his bachelor's degree in economics from the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, Campus Estado de Mexico, in 1998, and his doctorate in economics from Texas A&M University in 2003. He is actively engaged with the TIAA Diversity Council and the Association of Latino Professionals For America (ALPFA).

**Martin (Marty) Meehan, JD** is the 27th President of the University of Massachusetts and the first undergraduate alumnus to lead the five-campus University of Massachusetts system. A first-generation college student, he graduated cum laude from UMass Lowell in 1978 with a degree in education and political

science. He was elected to the presidency in 2015 after eight successful years as chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Lowell, where he led the campus on its rise to top-tier national university status, improving its performance in every sphere of activity.

The UMass President's Office provides leadership, financial management and oversight to the University and its five campuses, spearheads joint academic, financial, and economic development initiatives, and provides shared services in the areas of information technology, treasury, procurement, legal, auditing, and others to drive maximum efficiency and effectiveness on behalf of its 75,000 students. The office works with the Governor, Legislature, executive branch agencies, Congress, federal agencies, and professional organizations to build support for the University. Overall planning, policy development, and initiation of university-wide programs are carried out through the office by several departments that report to the President and Vice Presidents who are located in both Boston and Shrewsbury.

More information about university governance can be found [here](#).

### ***The Office of Equity and Inclusion***

The [Office of Equity and Inclusion](#) was launched within the chancellor's office in 2017 to guide the University's efforts related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Office values diversity and equity and strives for inclusive excellence in our classrooms, research labs, residence halls, workspaces, and beyond. As such, all campus community members seek to uphold the following values of diversity, equity, and inclusion:

- The University of Massachusetts Amherst, as a public land-grant institution, has a responsibility to provide access and opportunities for all people while demonstrating a commitment to the inclusion of historically underrepresented groups.
- The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to ensuring freedom of expression and dialogue among diverse groups in a community defined by mutual respect.
- Institutions of higher education are entrusted with significant resources and commensurably significant responsibilities. UMass Amherst affirms its responsibility by creating and ensuring a respectful, safe, and inclusive campus for all members of the community.
- The University of Massachusetts Amherst does not tolerate incidents of discrimination, assault, harassment, threats, intimidation, profiling, or coercion based on membership or perceived membership in a particular racial, religious, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation group nor based on color, national origin, disability, or veteran status. Such acts are antithetical to the values of the campus and damage individuals and the free and open environment of the university.

This office will report to the Vice Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion.

## **THE ROLE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

The Vice Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion is a cabinet-level position that reports directly to the chancellor and will oversee the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI). The OEI consists of eight staff members who provide critical services and support to students, faculty, and staff. This office provides consultation, educational resources, and guidance to leadership, departments and units across the university, employee resource groups, UMass Black Advisory Council, UMass Native Advisory Council, and the UMass JEDI Collaborative. This individual will work collaboratively with other University senior executives, deans, faculty, staff, and students to develop and implement a comprehensive JEDI strategic plan.

As a catalyst to leverage best practices across campus, the VCEI will articulate a cohesive and inspiring vision and develop shared accountability to promote a culture of inclusion throughout the University.

## **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FACING THE NEXT VICE CHANCELLOR OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

The next Vice Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion for the University of Massachusetts will build upon the institution's impressive success to address the following challenges and opportunities:

### ***Coordinate and advance a university-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy***

The Vice Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion will shape the strategy and coordinate efforts around justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. The current Diversity Strategic Plan was developed in 2015. Since then, OEI has expanded, [a climate survey](#) has been conducted, and the JEDI priorities across UMass have shifted. The VCEI will focus on the development of a comprehensive and strategic framework to support justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts across the university and will work to infuse and coordinate these efforts across the decanal units, leverage resources, learn more from one another, and provide consistency across the university. The result will be the crafting of a vision that integrates inclusive excellence and equity into the fiber of the institution. This individual must demonstrate a command of the language and literature on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion and understand the significance of moving beyond a traditional paradigm to a perspective that appreciates the intersection of identities in a pluralistic and global society.

### ***Serve as a collaborative partner and trusted advisor to empower and coordinate action across a complex, multifaceted institution***

The VCEI will position the Office of Equity and Inclusion as a center of collaboration that drives visionary change, growth, and provides resources and support to constituents across UMass Amherst. UMass Amherst is a large institution with multiple stakeholders and campus partners working on various needs and priorities. Because UMass Amherst is a highly decentralized institution, it will be necessary for the VCEI to advance institutional JEDI priorities while working closely with academic and administrative partners as well as other relevant campus stakeholders.

This work will require a deepening of collaborative partnerships with other units on campus and in-house expertise that can and should be leveraged. Thus, it is imperative to the success of this position that key stakeholders across UMass Amherst view the VCEI and their office as a knowledgeable and supportive

partner and trusted advisor. The VCEI will be charged with developing and continuing partnerships with multiple units and offices and use a strategic approach to building relationships. The successful VCEI will see this as an advantageous opportunity to leverage JEDI efforts from all sides of campus and provide a cohesive vision for UMass' justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts as a whole.

***Provide strategic leadership for the Office of Equity and Inclusion and promote its initiatives***

The VCEI will be responsible for leading the Office of Equity and Inclusion including leading staff and having broad oversight into programs and initiatives. The office has developed an infrastructure to infuse JEDI efforts throughout campus and is now looking to further enhance and deepen its impact. The VCEI must improve communication of JEDI related programs, initiatives, best practices, successes, and events occurring across campus. Currently, many campus members are not aware of the array of JEDI events and activities that OEI facilitates. By elevating the existence of these important initiatives, participation will increase and a sense of energy around JEDI will follow.

This individual will empower and advocate for department staff, encourage collaboration, and champion well-being in support of clear, measurable, and substantial goals. It will be critically important that the VCEI be a visible, empathetic, and knowledgeable leader with a demonstrated capacity to build trust and support. A successful candidate will have previous experience leading staff and an office, and will be well-versed in balancing diverse opinions, voices, and priorities. The VCEI will also be charged with contributing to important conversations and communicating the office's mission to the campus at large.

***Serve as a trusted leader and voice for the campus community during times of both celebration and crisis***

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is home to an extremely diverse and active campus community. While there are often occasions for celebratory moments, UMass Amherst is not immune to moments of crisis that impact both individuals and the entire campus community. The VCEI will be trusted to serve as a leader and voice to help address and respond in critical moments that impact the campus community, including nationally and globally. To do this effectively and successfully, the VCEI must be a forward-thinking leader and communicator who can remain levelheaded in times of celebration and conflict.

***Provide a data-informed yet relational approach for improving campus climate and a sense of belonging for all students, staff and faculty***

As the needs and priorities of students evolve, creating and centering an environment where students and members of the UMass community of all backgrounds and identities feel welcomed remains paramount. Achieving this requires a positive and engaging relationship between students and administration while also being receptive to both positive and critical feedback from students. To be successful in this role, the VCEI will need to partner with colleagues in Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and Human Resources and use data gathered from surveys and trends to craft an informed and action-based approach to improving the sense of belonging for our community within the campus climate. The VCEI will also need to remain knowledgeable on trends impacting students and campus and provide ample opportunities for students and community members to express their needs.



## EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

The successful candidate must bring extensive knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion practices sufficient to participate in conversations at the highest levels of the University and with constituents beyond the University such as alumni, local officials, community groups, and national organizations. The search committee recognizes that no single candidate will bear all the ideal qualifications, but it seeks candidates with many of the following qualities and characteristics:

### *Experience & Education*

- At least five to ten years of experience in a senior administrative leadership role (with higher education experience strongly preferred).
- Minimum of five years' experience designing, implementing, and sustaining diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives in a complex organization, preferably higher education.
- An advanced degree, with a Ph.D. preferred.

### *Skills & Knowledge*

- Demonstrated experience in an academic community as a faculty member or administrator; or work experiences that demonstrate an understanding of and effectiveness of working on JEDI issues within a complex higher education institutional setting;
- Recognition of intersectionality in approaching DEI, with a specific understanding of how multiple identities (such as race, gender, class, sexuality, nationality, religion, ability status, etc.) intersect to affect the experiences of staff, faculty, and students;
- A strong understanding of and commitment to the mission of a higher education institution;
- knowledge related to working within a public institution that is unionized is a plus;
- A strategic, collaborative leadership style; the ability to capitalize upon UMass Amherst's highly relational culture and build positive relationships with a wide range of constituencies and stakeholders; capacity to navigate a matrixed organizational reporting structure with skill and grace;
- Demonstrated ability to articulate a compelling vision, supported by skills in effective strategic planning, curriculum, resource development, and assessment administration;
- Strong and savvy communication skills in order to listen, share, inspire, inform and report;
- Demonstrated ability to use data-driven approaches, both quantitative and qualitative, to inform decisions and adjustments for the overall advancement and improvement of the university;
- An understanding and/or experience of the procedural knowledge for responding to bias-motivated incidents when they occur on university campuses;
- Anticipatory, solution-oriented thinking around broad cultural and societal concerns;
- Demonstrated leadership experience with generating a positive environment of diversity, equity, and inclusiveness for students, faculty, and staff;
- A strong commitment to collaboration with colleagues and partners across campus.



## TO APPLY

The University of Massachusetts has retained Isaacson, Miller to assist in this search. Please direct all inquiries, nominations, and applications (CVs and letters of interest) electronically to:

Keight Kennedy, Partner  
Alycia Johnson, Managing Associate  
Alexis Ditaway, Associate  
Alexis Scott, Senior Search Coordinator  
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-massachusetts-amherst/vice-chancellor-equity-and-inclusion>

*UMass Amherst is committed to a policy of equal opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, age, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, military status, or genetic information in employment, admission to and participation in academic programs, activities, and services, and the selection of vendors who provide services or products to the University. To fulfill that policy, UMass Amherst is further committed to a program of affirmative action to eliminate or mitigate artificial barriers and to increase opportunities for the recruitment and advancement of qualified minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and covered veterans. It is the policy of the UMass Amherst to comply with the applicable federal and state statutes, rules, and regulations concerning equal opportunity and affirmative action.*