



Georgia State University

Director

**Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality Administration
Atlanta, GA**

THE SEARCH

Georgia State University (GSU or Georgia State) invites inquiries, nominations, and applications for the role of Director at the Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality Administration within the J. Mack Robinson College of Business (Robinson). The new director will be responsible for formulating a clear vision and strategy aimed at expanding the school's reach and reputation as a leader in the field of hospitality management. The director will align the school with Robinson's core values of impact, community, openness, curiosity, and inclusiveness by strengthening connections with industry partners, enhancing the student experience through innovative curriculum design and experiential learning opportunities, and expanding access to research and teaching development for its faculty.

The Cecil B. Day School celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2023 and is the oldest and largest hospitality administration program in Georgia. It plays a pivotal role in the field of hospitality education and industry leadership and consistently ranks among the top hospitality programs in the nation and the world based on academic quality, reputation, internship opportunities, and experiential learning for students beyond the classroom. The next director will champion the unique and innovative aspects of the school while leading a dedicated and collaborative faculty and staff to enrich the student experience.

The director will play a key role in promoting the mission of the school, motivating students, faculty, and staff to advance Robinson's contributions to business and society. The director will leverage the many benefits of being situated within a large college of business, and identify creative approaches to education that will prepare students to become the next generation of hospitality business leaders. The director will be an advocate for the school, communicating its significant impact on the hospitality industry locally and across the nation, and capitalizing on the school's location in the heart of Atlanta and its proximity to many of the city's largest and most prominent convention centers, arenas, hotels, and restaurants. The ideal candidate should be highly motivated, excel in collaboration, demonstrate a strong capacity to mentor and manage, and display a readiness to develop a vision, strategy, and partnerships.

Georgia State is a public research university within the University System of Georgia and spans six campuses throughout the Atlanta metro area. The university is designated as Research 1 by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, and it is among the fastest-growing research universities in the country. It is well known as a leader in student success and for graduating students at the same rate without regard to race, gender, or socioeconomic status. The university is highly entrepreneurial in its approach, ranking as the second most innovative university in the country. It also ranks among the most diverse universities in the nation, drawing students from every state and 159 nations.

GSU has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in the recruitment of the new director. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence as noted at the end of this document.

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1913, and a public research university since 1995, Georgia State University is now the largest institution in the University System of Georgia. Its 2016 consolidation with [Perimeter College](#) increased its total enrollment to just under 53,000. Georgia State is the only university in the country designated as a Predominantly Black Institution and a Very High Research Activity Institution with an open-access mission through Perimeter College. The university also holds the designation as an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI). The 2024 U.S. News and World Report ranks Georgia State second in the nation among public universities for undergraduate teaching.

The university is made up of twelve schools and colleges: The Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, the Byrdine F. Lewis School of Nursing and Health Professions, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of the Arts, the College of Education and Human Development, the College of Law, the Honors College, the Institute for Biomedical Sciences, the School of Public Health, the J. Mack Robinson College of Business, Perimeter College, and the Graduate School. The university offers more than 250 degree and certificate programs in over 100 fields of study, taught by more than 1,600 faculty members who generate groundbreaking research and educate one of the most diverse student populations in the nation. GSU offers over 30 associate degree pathways on six campuses and through the largest online program in the state. In FY 2022, GSU conferred 10,562 degrees, including certificates, contributing to a total of 299,188 degrees conferred since 1913. Georgia State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

GSU is committed to and recognized for being one of the nation's leaders in educational innovation. Its mission is to be a national leader in expanding access and improving student learning by increasing its research portfolio, global connections, and geographic diversity to ensure that students from all backgrounds graduate at high rates and succeed in a rapidly changing world. Over the last decade, GSU has developed and deployed a model utilizing predictive analytics, innovative student advising, and targeted financial supports that have helped students from all backgrounds and circumstances graduate. This effort has become a national model. Over the past decade, graduation rates have increased by 23

points, and GSU is the only major research university to eliminate achievement gaps based on race, ethnicity, and income.

More information about GSU: [HERE](#)

J. MACK ROBINSON COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

"We prepare people from all backgrounds to lead, innovate, and achieve their potential to advance business and society. Robinson recognizes the unrivaled potential of free enterprise to improve lives. We design and implement solutions that advance how businesses and markets function to make a world where all citizens prosper."

- Robinson College of Business Mission Statement

Georgia State's J. Mack Robinson College of Business (Robinson) is the ninth-largest accredited business school in the United States and the largest graduate business school in the Southeast. Since its founding more than 100 years ago, the college has contributed to Atlanta's impact as a regional, national, and international hub for creativity and innovation. In 1998, the University System of Georgia Board of Regents officially renamed Georgia State University's College of Business Administration as the [J. Mack Robinson College of Business](#) after the Atlanta businessman's \$10 million endowment gift to the school.

The Robinson College of Business is the second-largest college at Georgia State. It is comprised of 12 [academic units](#), including seven traditional departments, three institutes, and two endowed schools. Robinson offers a full suite of nationally [ranked programs](#) ranging from its undergraduate [B.B.A. degree](#) featuring ten different majors, to [graduate programs](#) that include 14 specialty masters degrees, a highly flexible MBA, Executive MBA, DBA, PhD, and three graduate certificates. The college also offers its students additional signature programs, including [WomenLead](#)—Robinson's nationally recognized undergraduate leadership program, the [Panthers Accelerated Career Experience \(PACE\)](#), and experiential [immersion programs](#) in Silicon Valley, Washington D.C., and on Wall Street.

Robinson College has been intentional in its effort to break the business school mold by assembling a faculty comprised of business practitioners, researchers, engineers, scientists, and mathematicians. These experts ensure that Robinson students build business acumen and sector-crossing skills in STEM fields, that college partners benefit from broader thinking, and that cutting-edge interdisciplinary research is prioritized to further develop breakthrough market solutions. Robinson has [broad and deep relationships with the Atlanta business community](#) through its insight (analytics) labs focusing on fintech, operations, and social media. The college also is home to discipline-specific roundtables in financial leadership, human resources, logistics, marketing, and sales.

Robinson has a large population of alumni, some 80,000-plus strong, leading enterprises in Atlanta, throughout Georgia, and beyond. More top Georgia executives hold advanced degrees from the Robinson

College of Business and Georgia State University than from any institution in the nation.

College Leadership

Dr. Richard D. Phillips was appointed the seventh dean of Robinson College in July 2014. Prior to becoming dean, Phillips served as Robinson's Associate Dean for Academic Initiatives and Innovation from 2012-2014, and as the Kenneth Black Jr. Chairman of the Department of Risk Management & Insurance from 2006-2012. Phillips is an economist whose research interests are to study the impact of risk on corporate decision-making and the efficient functioning of insurance markets. He has published more than 50 scholarly publications in academic and policy journals and has received several research awards, including the Robert I. Mehr Award presented by the Journal of Risk and Insurance (2008, 2009). Phillips' doctoral and master's degrees in managerial economics are from the Wharton School. He graduated with honors from the University of Minnesota with a B.S. in mathematics.

During his tenure, Dean Phillips has overseen the school's transformation in the digital era by investing in STEM disciplines – computer science, data science, and engineering – and connecting them to disciplines of business and to industry-specific units. By doing so, Robinson is now recognized as a hot bed of innovation. Over this time period, AACSB International, the world's largest business education alliance, has recognized the Robinson College of Business four times with its [Innovations that Inspire](#) award – the most of any U.S. accredited business school over the lifetime of this awards program.

More information about Robinson College of Business: [HERE](#)

CECIL B. DAY SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY ADMINISTRATION

The Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality Administration (the Day School) was founded in 1973 and today is renowned for preparing students for management and administrative positions in lodging, food service, franchising, event management, and private clubs. The school initially began as a two-year program within the College of Public and Urban Affairs at GSU and later evolved into the School of Hospitality, relocating to the Robinson College of Business in 1996. Over the years, the school has increased its [degree program offerings](#), and grown its strong reputation as one of the top hospitality schools in the world. The school is currently ranked as the #13 hospitality and hotel management school in the nation by CEO World Magazine 2023.

The school is named in honor of the late founder of the Days Inn Hotel Company and Georgia native, [Cecil Burke Day](#). Day's legacy of entrepreneurship serves as the foundation upon which the school bases its mission: to advance the business of hospitality by conducting pioneering research, engaging with strategic partners, and educating the next generation of innovative hospitality leaders. The school is one of about 20 worldwide that is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration (ACPHA) and is one of only 10 programs that boasts dual accreditation from both the ACPHA and the AACSB.

The Day School offers the state's oldest and largest bachelor's degree in hospitality administration, a top ranked [one-year specialized master's degree in Global Hospitality Management](#), a minor in hospitality administration, and undergraduate certificates in event management and hospitality operations. All instructors, both part-time and full-time, have hospitality industry experience. The [School of Hospitality Administration Industry Board](#), comprising of over 50 national and international hospitality leaders from across of the industry, supports the school through guest lecturing in classes, mentoring and hiring students, and providing support with major school projects, and represents the diversity of hospitality and tourism sectors that Atlanta offers.

More information about the Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality Administration: [HERE](#)

Atlanta, Georgia

The Atlanta metropolitan area has a population of 6.1 million and a gross domestic product of \$406 billion, making it the 10th largest economy in the U.S. and the 20th largest in the world. Atlanta provides a vibrant and supportive environment for hospitality education with the hospitality industry supporting, directly and indirectly, over 300,000 jobs in the area. The city's economy is diverse, with other dominant sectors including transportation, aerospace, healthcare, finance, news and media operations, film and television production, biomedical research, and public policy. The city is home to 31 Fortune 1,000 companies, 17 of which are among the Fortune 500. It is also a major transportation hub with Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport serving as the world's busiest airport, and the Port of Savannah operating as the third busiest U.S. port (top 30 worldwide).

Atlanta is a top destination for tourism, regularly hosting national and international conventions, global sporting events, and major corporate conferences. Atlanta has hosted the Olympic Games (1996), the 2019 Super Bowl, several NCAA Men's Final Four Tournaments, and most recently, was added as a host city for the 2026 FIFA World Cup Soccer Tournament. Atlanta's current hotel construction pipeline is the second largest in the country, with 140 projects, including 17,775 rooms. The downtown Atlanta area currently boasts 11,700 hotel rooms that are within walking distance of its convention and tourism district, and 94,500 hotel rooms citywide. In October 2023, the [Michelin Guide](#) released its first-ever guide to Atlanta restaurants, boasting the city's dynamic culinary scene.

Atlanta offers major tourist attractions like the World of Coca-Cola, the Georgia Aquarium, Centennial Olympic Park, the Atlanta Botanical Garden, Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Park, the Fox Theatre, the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum, the College Football Hall of Fame, and more. Atlanta also offers several major sites for sporting events and concerts, including Mercedes Benz Stadium (Atlanta Falcons, NFL, and Atlanta United, MLS), State Farm Arena (Atlanta Hawks, NBA), and Truist Park (Atlanta Braves, MLB). Atlanta was ranked #1 on [NorthStar Meetings Group's List of Best Destinations for Large Events](#), attracting thousands of visitors every year to gather at the Georgia World Congress Center, the Georgia International Convention Center, and the Atlanta Convention Center at AmericasMart. Most of

these sites are within close walking distance of the Georgia State University campus.

Situated in the Piedmont region of the Southeast, Atlanta has a moderate climate and is said to have the densest urban tree canopy of any major city in North America.

THE ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR

Reporting to the dean of Robinson College, the director serves as a key member of the college's academic leadership team and plays a critical role in providing comprehensive and strategic leadership for the Day School. The director is ultimately responsible for overseeing the advancement of the school's mission with respect to academics, research, and service. The director will build upon the historical success of the school and inspire its faculty, staff, students, alumni, and industry partners with a vision and commitment to enhance the Day School's position as one of the top academic units of its kind in the nation. The director will play a pivotal role in developing a diverse pool of talent that is well-prepared to lead and drive innovation in the hospitality industry, benefiting both business and society, and will serve as the school's chief advocate and ambassador.

The director will join a highly dedicated, passionate, and collaborative faculty and staff who are deeply committed to the school's success. The director leads and supports the school's five full-time faculty and three part-time instructors and is supported by an assistant director of business operations, and an administrative coordinator. The director is responsible for managing the school's \$1 million operating budget.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The director will address several opportunities and challenges:

Develop and articulate a compelling vision and corresponding strategy that distinguishes the Day School as a pre-eminent school of hospitality

As the leader of a prominent unit within one of the largest business schools in the country, the director will provide strategic leadership, including articulating and communicating the vision and goals of the School of Hospitality. The director will lead continuous analysis of the needs of hospitality employers and then work collaboratively with the dean, with the leaders of other disciplinary areas within the college and university, and with the school's faculty and staff to develop a strategic vision that builds upon the school's strengths and unique advantages. Harnessing the momentum of the school's 50th anniversary in 2023, the new director will provide inspirational leadership and strengthen the school's reputation as a leader in the field of hospitality. The director will be strategic and convincing, galvanizing the school's faculty, staff, students, alumni, industry board members, and other stakeholders around an exciting and inspirational vision and strategic plan for the future.

Develop innovative academic programs to increase student enrollment

Like many hospitality programs around the world, the Day School has experienced a steady decline in enrollment in recent years due to the pandemic's effect on the hospitality and tourism industry. As a result, recruiting and retaining high-quality students will be an important goal for the school in the foreseeable future. The director will work closely with faculty and staff across Robinson College to partner on curricular development opportunities and enrich the school's current suite of offerings, developing promising new programs that address the unmet needs of the hospitality industry and increase student enrollment at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Recruit, develop, and retain the next generation of world-class faculty

To continue to enhance the reputation of the school, recruiting and retaining outstanding faculty will be a top priority for the new director. They will inspire the ongoing pursuit of excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service, and provide opportunities for professional growth and advancement to faculty at all levels. The director will invest in the mentorship and success of the school's faculty, particularly those in the early stages of their careers. This is a unique opportunity for the director to steer the future direction of the school and its faculty representation.

Strengthen industry partnerships and college-wide community

The Day School benefits greatly from its existing relationships across the hospitality industry in Atlanta and the state, and it is of the utmost importance that the new director maintain and strengthen those partnerships, and build new ones. The director will work closely with the Day School's industry board to drive the school's visibility to even higher levels of recognition. The director will be a visible and energetic participant within the hospitality community at large, promoting deep engagement between industry and the school's academic initiatives, nurturing relationships with employers, and ultimately enhancing opportunities for current students and alumni to maximize the school's impact locally, nationally, and globally.

The Day School also benefits from its location as part of the Robinson College of Business. At present, there are opportunities to strengthen the outcomes of the school in order to achieve its purpose, consistent with its core strengths, by engaging in a collaborative and active set of operating, teaching, research, and activities across the Robinson College of Business for mutual benefit.

Model authentic leadership in advancing and embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion

As a leader at one of the most diverse universities in the nation, promoting and embracing the essential roles that diversity, equity, inclusion, and access play in GSU's mission will be of critical importance for the director. They will cultivate an inclusive community within the school and instill an environment of

trust and transparency where all faculty, staff, and students are respected, supported, and empowered. The director will actively recruit a diverse student body and faculty, focus on retention efforts for historically underrepresented groups across all stakeholder groups, and develop a curriculum that embraces diversity and intercultural competency as essential learning outcomes.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The successful candidate will have a record worthy of tenure and appointment as either an associate or full professor at Georgia State University. The director could have a variety of other professional backgrounds but must have a demonstrable record of success in their ability to build and lead world-class academic programs in hospitality. In such cases, the successful candidate will have a graduate degree with a Ph.D. or other terminal degree preferred, but not required. Regardless, the new director must be adept at working with faculty, staff, a diverse student body, community partners, alumni, and donors. The director will have strong administrative skills and a demonstrated ability to attract talent, empower colleagues, and hold them accountable. While no candidate will embody every quality, the successful candidate will bring many of the following professional qualifications and personal qualities:

- Demonstrated capacity for strategic leadership and the ability to move an organization forward; this should include developing a strategic vision and demonstrating the ability to successfully execute that vision;
- Ability to develop and oversee academic programs, lead administrative efforts, work with faculty, and communicate effectively with the global hospitality industry;
- A proven commitment to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusivity and the willingness to create an inclusive and equitable community, as evidenced by past accomplishments;
- An understanding of and commitment to scholarship, teaching, and faculty governance in the unique organizational structure of a university wherein compliance with bylaws and empowered, collaborative decision-making through consensus are critical components;
- Demonstrated facility with and enthusiasm for engaging business executives in the work of the school, connecting faculty and students with both the opportunities and challenges facing the global hospitality community;
- An appetite for fundraising and the ability to contribute to development efforts and other extramural funding activities;
- Energetic, entrepreneurial, and collaborative leadership experience to inspire faculty, students, and staff and foster pride in and commitment to the vision of the school;
- Excellent interpersonal, written, and oral communication skills;
- A person with integrity and the highest standards of ethical behavior.

TO APPLY

Confidential inquiries, nominations, referrals, and applications with CVs and cover letters are being accepted for the position and should be sent electronically in confidence to:

Micah Pierce, Partner
Lauren Wilkes, Senior Associate
Isaacson, Miller, Inc.

[Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality Director Search](#)

Georgia State University is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate against applicants due to race, ethnicity, gender, veteran status, or on the basis of disability or any other federal, state, or local protected class.