

**YORK** College



# Search for the President

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2024



ISAACSON, MILLER

## THE SEARCH

York College is part of The City University of New York (CUNY) system and is a vital community asset in southeast Queens. CUNY Chancellor Félix Matos-Rodríguez and the CUNY Board of Trustees invite applications and nominations for the next president of York College. Located in Queens, the most ethnically diverse borough in New York City, York College has established itself as an engine of social mobility, enabling largely first-generation college students to earn undergraduate degrees and prepare for graduate education and the competitive marketplace. Committed to the values of integrity, diversity, intellectual discovery, creativity, intentional interactions, self-reflection, accountability and civic engagement, York fosters a culture of student success with the support of talented faculty and staff who represent the best of CUNY.



York College's next president will be integral to the future success and longevity of the institution by leading a transformational, strategic and collaborative vision for the college. The president will be a firm believer in and champion of the highest ideals for public higher education. They will place high value on ensuring that budgetary priorities, infrastructure needs and academic imperatives are aligned and will seek out opportunities to further collaborations, develop new opportunities for innovative programs, uphold the long-standing system of shared governance and nurture connections with the surrounding community.

York's next leader must serve as a steadfast advocate for the needs of the College, upholding the ideals of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in all aspects of the institution while also working with the

leaders of the CUNY system to ensure that the college and the system remain functional and forward-looking. CUNY/York College is supported in this search by Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to the firm as described at the end of this profile.

## ABOUT YORK COLLEGE

York College's mission is to enrich lives and enable students to grow as passionate, engaged learners with the confidence to realize their intellectual and human potential as individuals and global citizens.

## HISTORY

On October 24, 1966, the CUNY Board of Higher Education voted to create a fifth senior college to serve the city's growing student population. Former Queensborough Community College President Dumont F. Kenny was York's first president, and he hoped to build a bucolic, suburban liberal arts college near Fort Totten in Queens. But these plans quickly fell through.

York opened its doors in the fall of 1967 without firm plans for a permanent home. Its first classes took place in rented rooms at the Oakland Jewish Center in Bayside, Queens. An entering class of 371 students, largely white and American-born, and a full-time instructional staff of 50 occupied that site for the first academic year.



In May 1968, in response to pressure from local business, community and religious leaders, the CUNY Board of Higher Education selected Jamaica, Queens as the future site of York's permanent campus. While York waited for authorization to build the new campus, it relocated to a variety of rudimentary quarters throughout Queens. Milton G. Bassin, who had been president of New York City Community College (originally New York City College of Technology), assumed the presidency of York in 1971 and found it housed in temporary classrooms on the Queensborough Community College campus in Bayside. York stayed there for three years before moving to various buildings in Jamaica, including a former Montgomery Ward department store.

In May 1978, the CUNY Board authorized the construction of the new campus in Jamaica while the College underwent expansive curricular development. In addition to its emphasis on liberal arts, York also began to offer career-related majors in the health professions and opened the Office of Continuing Education to give classes on practical subjects to Jamaica's residents.



In 1986, York held its first classes in the newly completed Academic Core building. In 1990, York opened the Performing Arts Center and the Health and Physical Education facilities, followed by the athletic fields one year later.

The CUNY Aviation Institute was established in 2003 and since 2005, with the construction of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's regional headquarters and laboratory facility on York's campus, students

in relevant majors have been able to take advantage of collaborative internships, fellowships and research with world-class scientists.

York has organized its 17 academic departments into three schools: the [School of Arts and Sciences](#), the [School of Business and Information Systems](#) and the [School of Health Sciences and Professional Programs](#).

## ACADEMICS

York College prides itself on being a liberal arts college and offers over 60 [undergraduate and graduate programs](#) as well as select professional programs at its three schools. Together, these schools offer an undergraduate liberal arts education and programs in business and healthcare professions. York also offers the following programs at the Master's level: MS in Pharmaceutical Science and Business, MS in Clinical Trial Management, MS in Aviation Management, MS in Nursing Education, MS in Physician Assistant, Master of Social Work (MSW) and one combined program in Occupational Therapy (BS/MS). Through some of its programs, York offers 4+1 degrees, where undergraduate students can take up to 16 graduate credits a year and obtain a master's degree after completing one additional year.

The College strives to provide an opportunity for students to connect what they are studying in the classroom to practical, hands-on experiences and careers. As part of the college's aviation management program, York acquired a new state-of-the-art flight simulator for students studying for flight dispatcher and air traffic controller positions with the Federal Aviation Administration. Through the BS in aviation management program, students are empowered to capitalize on the plethora of job opportunities available at the nearby John F. Kennedy International Airport as well as at other local and national airports. The music program includes an emphasis on jazz, with the opportunity for students to play in the college's popular jazz band. The English major includes an optional minor in journalism, with hands-on training available at Pandora's Box, York's award-winning college newspaper. York also offers a journalism major that is designed to feed into CUNY's Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism.



Beyond its undergraduate and graduate offerings, York is proud to participate in programs that target middle and high school students. [CUNY Explorers](#) has a mission to bring middle school students to the campus to promote success in high school, college and life, reinforcing the message that all students can go to college, demonstrating the steps they can take now to achieve their aspirations and stressing the affordability of York and its sister institutions. [College Now](#), a program serving New York City public high school students, offers college-credit courses that are aligned with the first year of study at CUNY. Students are able to take up to 12 credits, the equivalent of almost one full semester of work. The [University Skills Immersion Program \(USIP\)](#) works to place students in required math and English classes to prepare them to do well in first-year courses, particularly in the STEM field, and ultimately seeks to support and provide students with the skills needed to meet the requirements of York College.



## ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

York's current enrollment is 5,906 undergraduate students and 255 graduate students, with the majority of students (66.2%) under the age of 23, and close to half (41%) living in households with an income of \$30,000 or less. Over sixty-four percent (64.5%) of students are from Queens County, with 25.6% coming from the other boroughs of New York City. Students who identify as women constitute 64.1% of the student population. Just under 92% of undergraduate students and 75% of graduate students identify as

a minority, with the majority of both student populations identifying as Black/African American. Well over half the student body are first-generation college students. As part of CUNY's new [Reconnect initiative](#) to help more adults return to higher education, York has been able to re-enroll more than 800 individuals who were once students but had to leave due to various life circumstances.

York College students avail themselves of the opportunities provided to them. Recently, students have starred at the Honda Campus All-Star Challenge National Qualifying Tournament, a prestigious, quiz-style competition, and attended both the State of the Black World Conference in Baltimore and the annual meeting of the Geological Society in Denver, where they were able to present their research.

CUNY's affordability is unrivaled. Undergraduate tuition for the current academic year costs \$6,930 for full-time, in-state residents and \$18,600 for full-time, out-of-state residents. Depending on the master's degree program being pursued, graduate tuition costs for the current academic year total between \$11,090 and \$14,630 for full-time, in-state residents, and \$20,520 to \$24,000 for full-time, out-of-state residents.

In the Spring 2023 semester, almost 70% of the York college degree-seeking students received some type of financial assistance to support their educational expenses. Seventy-eight percent of the undergraduate student class graduated debt-free.



## FACULTY AND STAFF

York's faculty and staff, who are dedicated to fostering a culture of student success, truly represent CUNY's brightest talent. York's award-winning faculty members pride themselves not just on their teaching ability, but on their dedication to helping their students become successful global citizens.

The institution has a total of 215 full-time and 331 adjunct faculty members. Over 64% of the full-time faculty hold PhDs or terminal degrees. The college is also bolstered by a committed group of 582 full-time and part-time support staff. Sixty new faculty were hired between 2019 and 2023; 63.8% identify as female and 60.9% as a minority. The faculty and staff as a whole are incredibly diverse with 49.3% and 85.14% identifying as minorities, respectively.



## RESEARCH

Research plays an integral role at York College, and is in line with CUNY's strategic plan, which recognizes that cutting-edge research in service to the public elevates teaching, expands the frontiers of knowledge and culture and generates innovative and transformative advances for the city, state, nation and world.



During fiscal year 2023, York faculty received over \$8 million in external grants from federal, state and private sources.

Students have the opportunity to participate in research and are supported by York's [Office of Undergraduate Research](#). The office works to promote course-based or faculty-mentored undergraduate research across all disciplines and supports students in developing their written, oral and poster presentation skills, providing access to workshops and other academic enrichment activities, as well as linking undergraduate students and faculty members with similar research, scholarship and creative endeavors. The office celebrates an annual [Research Day](#), to acknowledge undergraduate research and creative scholarship in all disciplines at York.

York is home to the [CUNY Aviation Institute](#) (AI), which was established in 2003 by a grant from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. The institute promotes high-quality research, education and the academic exchange of ideas in the field of aviation and acts as the center for a network of global partners comprising the private sector, educational institutions, international organizations, trade associations, governments and other entities with an interest in aviation management.

There have been a number of noteworthy research initiatives that showcase the impactful work that is taking place at York. A group of students is participating in a \$1.3 million EPA-funded study designed to strengthen southeast Queens residents' health advocacy efforts, train Jamaica-based residents to collect fine-particle air pollutants, analyze tree leaf samples for toxins and use portable, low-cost technology for air sampling. Recent grants obtained by the college include a \$750,000 grant from the Department of Education to fund the [York STEM Academy](#), and \$16,000 from the Department of Defense through the National Science Teaching Association to fund the Metro New York City Junior Science and Humanities Symposium. Two York professors obtained more than \$300,000 in grant funding from the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research to develop a new method to detect nuclear contraband in an effort to stem terrorist attacks.



## FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING

York College's current budget is \$56.4 million, mostly funded through New York State tax-levy appropriations and student tuition, which is \$6,930 per year for full-time undergraduate students who are New York State residents. During fiscal year 2023, the faculty received over \$8 million in external grants.

York has enjoyed some success in fundraising. In the past year, the York College Foundation was able to raise more than \$600,000 towards scholarships, student success initiatives, and strategically focused programs. York works with industry and community leaders to provide opportunities for its students, including generous support of partners such as Resorts World, the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation, Rudin Foundation, National Grid, Con Edison, and numerous private donors. Specific examples include the development of upskilling gaming courses, support of teaching STEM Education to K-12 students, and externship programs. Since 2019, York's day of giving and gala activities have raised over \$1 million dollars, which support student success initiatives, emergency funding, faculty research, study abroad programs, and campus beautification efforts. York is also poised to connect with partners to create pipelines and networks to support student success through efforts like the York Opportunity Network, workforce development initiatives, and continuing education.



## STUDENT LIFE

York College takes great pride in investing in the development of its students both inside and outside the classroom, and they can take advantage of a number of opportunities and services provided by the College. Students can participate in short-term, semester or year-long study abroad opportunities through CUNY's study abroad program offerings with the chance to apply for financial support through York. The College has over forty [student clubs and organizations](#) that span academic, cultural, performing arts and other special interest areas that host a variety of events and discussions throughout the year. York's Student Affairs and Enrollment Management division is made up of a number of offices and centers that provide important services and build community. These include the [Center for Students with Disabilities](#), [the Percy Ellis Sutton SEEK Program](#), the [Office of Veterans Affairs](#), the [Women's Center for Gender Justice](#), the [York College Counseling Center](#) and the [Male Initiative Program](#). [Career Services](#) hosts resume clinics, career and internship fairs, and career readiness workshops that all work to integrate students' academic, personal, experiential and career ambitions to meet the marketplace.

York's mascot is the cardinal, and there are [17 varsity athletic teams](#) that compete at both the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III level and as part of the City University of New York Athletics Conference (CUNYAC). The Cardinals have captured 31 CUNYAC Championships in their history, with men's outdoor track and field leading the way with seven of those titles. In 2010, York won five conference titles, the most in school history for a single season.



## THE CAMPUS

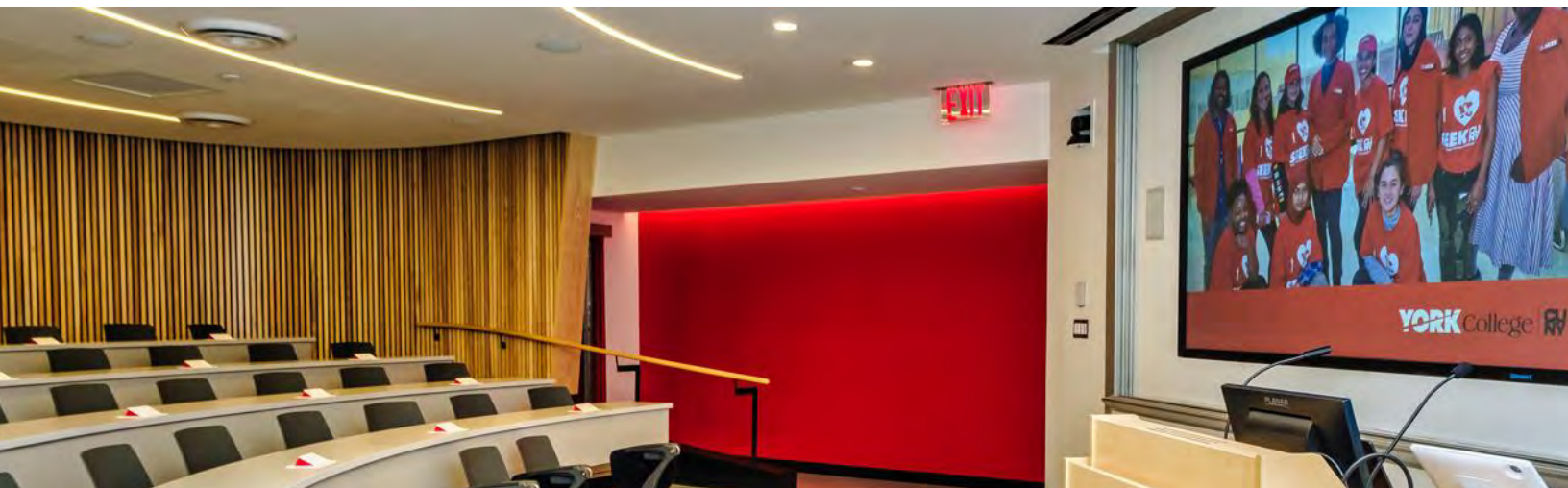
The CUNY York College campus is located in Jamaica Queens, New York. On the west, the campus borders a major transportation hub that provides access to many parts of New York City including the major regional airports. To the north of the campus is the central Jamaica business improvement district (BID), the main downtown in southeast Queens.

The campus features a number of buildings that include a main Academic Core Building (ACB), Health Physical Education Building (HSEB), Performing Arts Building (PAC), two dedicated instructional facilities named Classroom building and Science Building, a Children's Day Care Center and track and field. All facilities are located across 50 acres of land in Southeast Queens, crisscrossed by local streets in an urban setting.

The ACB features recently renovated state-of-the-art biology and chemistry labs, lecture halls, two flight simulators, micro computer lab, and continues to receive ongoing improvements to its facilities. The HSEB houses the gymnasium that features two basketball courts, an indoor running track, weight rooms, an Olympic sized swimming pool and adjacent practice field. The Science Building houses the nursing simulation lab, and the Occupational Therapy (OT) program opened the first and only complex rehab technology Seating and Mobility Clinic in CUNY so that student-athletes across all of CUNY would have access to prompt, professional care on York's campus.

When reopened, the PAC will be a state-of-the-art performing arts venue able to accommodate a wide array of live performance productions. From large to small, with its two theaters that have seating capacities of 1500 and 100 respectively, the PAC will attract local and well-known performers of all stripes and capabilities, providing the community exposure to a culturally rich environment.

The campus continues to improve its facilities through major capital project initiatives. Recently completed work on the track and field, the first and only NCAA level track and field in Southeast Queens, show CUNY's commitment to improving the campus environment at York College. Approximately \$130 Million in capital funds have been spent towards improving the campus within the past 4 years.



## YORK AND THE COMMUNITY

York College has had a strong relationship with the Queens and Jamaica communities, since its inception. Stemming from a protest by members of the community demanding for a college to be placed in Southeast Queens, the close relationship that York has had working with and serving the community in which it lies has been a unique and pivotal strength of the institution from the very beginning. York takes a great deal of pride in the outreach and fostering of relationships with local organizations which has been reciprocal with the level of support that it receives in return, championing for it to succeed. With Queens being the center of the state's political sphere with government representatives, York leadership has the valuable opportunity to work with legislators when it comes to both policy and funding.

## THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

[The City University of New York](https://www.cuny.edu) is the nation's largest urban public university, a transformative engine of social mobility that is a critical component of the lifeblood of New York City. Founded in 1847 as the nation's first free public institution of higher education, CUNY today has seven community colleges, 11 senior colleges and seven graduate or professional institutions spread across New York City's five boroughs, serving more than 233,000 undergraduate and graduate students and awarding 50,000 degrees each year. CUNY's mix of quality and affordability propels almost six times as many low-income students into the middle class and beyond as all the Ivy League colleges combined. More than 80 percent of the University's graduates stay in New York, contributing to all aspects of the city's economic, civic and cultural life and diversifying the city's workforce in every sector. CUNY's graduates and faculty have received many prestigious honors, including 13 Nobel Prizes and 26 MacArthur "genius grants." The University's historic mission continues to this day: provide a first-rate public education to all students, regardless of means or background. To learn more about CUNY, visit <https://www.cuny.edu>.



## ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT

The search for York's next leader begins after the departure of the college's former president, Berenecea Johnson Eanes. During her tenure, President Eanes led the campus community through the pandemic by working to transition the academic program to distance learning, upgrading the IT networks to facilitate the hybrid delivery of courses and overseeing the implementation of a large-scale vaccination site on campus that vaccinated more than 175,000 New York City residents. At the height of the pandemic, York College served as a COVID-19 testing and vaccination site providing over 250,000 shots.

Over the last few years, the campus saw the completion of numerous capital improvements and infrastructure upgrades totaling more than \$100 million. York also established the [One-Stop Welcome Center](#) to support current students and former students who are looking to re-enroll through the CUNY Reconnect Initiative.

York's next president will build on this legacy and will be integral to the future success and longevity of the institution.

The president reports to the CUNY Chancellor and serves as a member of the CUNY Council of Presidents. The president leads a senior leadership team that currently includes the following: provost and vice president of academic affairs, deans of schools, institutional advancement and communications, chief diversity officer and title IX coordinator, executive director of government relations and strategic initiatives, vice president of enrollment management and student affairs, vice president of finance and administration, chief information officer, executive legal counsel and labor designee, assistant vice president of institutional effectiveness and strategic planning, and chief of staff.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

At this pivotal and exciting moment in its trajectory, York College seeks a visionary, strategic and transformative president whose work and leadership will bolster and differentiate the college. Specifically, the president will address the following leadership opportunities:

### Develop and implement a comprehensive strategic plan for York College.

York College is in a period of transition and the next president will be instrumental in establishing an inspirational and courageous vision that will chart the course for the future of the institution within the ever-changing higher education landscape. The next president will lead a transparent and inclusive process to develop a comprehensive strategic plan that will provide York the ability to optimize its strengths, foster the college's growth through shared vision and collaboration and elevate its place within the CUNY system, New York City and beyond. Through the execution of the plan, a strong narrative will

emerge around York's excellent academic programs, its impact on the students served and the integral role it plays in the surrounding Jamaica community. It will be important for the new president to conduct a comprehensive assessment of York's entire operations to determine opportunities for growth, to activate and galvanize the broader campus community in co-creating and implementing a vision and strategic plan within a shared governance structure and to serve as a strong advocate for York across CUNY, the city and the state.

## Spearhead efforts to increase student enrollment and retention.

By being responsive to national and regional trends, including declining enrollment at higher education institutions and the pending "enrollment cliff," the next president, working with leadership, must utilize data to identify ways to increase both undergraduate and graduate enrollment, capitalizing on the strengths of York's academic programs, talented faculty and support structures to enhance student success. In addition to increasing enrollment, the next president should ensure that the institution has comprehensive and effective structures in place to retain and aid students in their academic pursuits by bolstering robust academic and career advising and other support areas.



## Champion faculty and staff hiring and retention efforts.

York College has exceptionally talented faculty and staff members who are dedicated to the success of the students at the institution. To increase the overall efficiency and effectiveness of York and to continue to attract and retain students, the president, working with senior leadership, must support efforts to identify, attract and retain a diverse and impressive group of faculty and staff committed to York's education and research mission. In partnership with the provost and other senior leaders, the president will encourage and support efforts to promote a welcoming and inclusive environment in which faculty and staff can thrive, innovate and achieve their career aspirations. The president will ensure structures are in place to solicit and address feedback from faculty and staff members. Given that shared governance is an important part of the York College culture, it will be essential for the president to develop clear expectations around shared governance ensuring that faculty, student and staff voices are heard and valued, maintaining transparency and openness of communication.

## Prioritize the ongoing development and improvement of York's academic curriculum and learning opportunities.

With a strong liberal arts curriculum and popular professional programs, York students are provided a top-notch education. In partnership with the provost and the division of academic affairs, the next president will work towards continual assessment and improvement of the academic curriculum to ensure that upon graduating, York College students are prepared to meet the demands of the ever-evolving global marketplace. The president, working with the senior leadership team, will develop an academic master plan outlining opportunities to explore, expand and sunset degree and course offerings as needed; support the creation of academic-community partnerships; expand learning opportunities; and update advisement structures to provide students with the appropriate support.

## Enhance York College's fiscal health and advancement efforts.

York's next president will be a strong steward of financial and other assets by working with the senior leadership team to use limited resources in the most impactful ways. The president will gain a deep understanding of the college's financials and potential budgetary shortfalls. The president will carefully weigh the needs of all aspects of the institution and will communicate decisions transparently, maintain respect, build trust and encourage continued innovation. This leader will be expected to help secure new resources, dedicating significant time to fundraising and advancement efforts. This will require significant external engagement with the community, donors, state and city officials and alumni to build relationships and networks that benefit York and its students.



## Modernize and improve York's infrastructure and facilities.

York has made exciting headway in enhancing its physical landscape over the past few years. The president will serve an integral role in ensuring that continued attention is given to improving all aspects of the campus infrastructure. Working to assess the needs of the York community, the president will initiate the development of a comprehensive campus master plan that will address ongoing enhancements and improvements to existing campus infrastructure, increased resources for facilities and custodial personnel and plans for future additions to the campus. The president will work with CUNY, the state and other federal funding sources to spearhead efforts to secure fiscal resources and support to ensure that the York College facilities instill a sense of pride, admiration and overall enhancement of the college experience.

## QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

York will conduct an expansive and comprehensive search for experienced, motivated, strategic and passionate candidates who can lead effectively and with vision in a complex higher education environment. While no one individual will embody them all, the successful candidate will bring many of the following professional qualifications, skills, experience and personal traits to the role:

- **A Proven Leader:** A demonstrated track record of visionary, strategic, transformational and collaborative leadership in a complex higher education environment; a record of success that inspires the York College community, resonates with the core mission of the college and provides a clear vision for where their leadership can take the college; demonstrated work in developing partnerships with local or neighboring communities and experience in or prowess in working in a shared-governance environment.
- **A Commitment to Academic Excellence:** A strong appreciation of the academic world and its scholarly value; the ability to earn and command the respect of faculty; strong commitment to a liberal arts education, critical thinking, shared governance and academic freedom; the capacity to support excellence in teaching and learning; leading-edge, interdisciplinary opportunities and high-impact research. Strong work experience and an understanding of the nuances of a public higher education institution are preferred.
- **A Champion for Diversity:** A demonstrable commitment to, and track record of, accomplishment around equity, diversity and inclusion; sensitivity to and broad experience with diverse students, faculty, staff and communities.
- **Demonstrable Financial Acumen:** Strong planning and financial proficiencies; experience in setting strategic financial and programmatic priorities that balance short-term and long-term objectives.

- **Exemplary Communication Skills:** Excellent oral and written communication skills; ability to learn from others, translate thoughts for broader consideration and build unity around difficult issues; ability to foster collaboration amongst disparate groups.
- **An Accomplished Fundraiser:** Proven success and appetite for fundraising; the ability to represent York College to a wide range of constituents; a willingness to engage alumni.
- **Education:** Ph.D. or terminal degree preferred.

## Compensation

The salary range for this position is \$250,000 - \$380,000 with competitive benefits including but not limited to a housing allowance.

## TO APPLY

York College has retained Isaacson, Miller to assist in this search. For full consideration, application materials should be received by October 1, 2024. Please direct all inquiries, nominations, and applications (CVs and letters of interest) electronically and in confidence to:

Keight Tucker Kennedy, David Grimes, and Alexis Scott  
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/york-college/president>

CUNY encourages people with disabilities, minorities, veterans and women to apply. At CUNY, Italian Americans are also included among our protected groups. Applicants and employees will not be discriminated against on the basis of any legally protected category, including sexual orientation or gender identity. EEO/AA/Vet/Disability Employer

