



Search for the Vice President for Student Development
Joliet Junior College
Joliet, Illinois

THE SEARCH

Joliet Junior College, the first, public community college in the United States, seeks a mission-centered, committed leader to serve as the Vice President for Student Development.

Founded in 1901, Joliet Junior College (JJC) provides a student-centered, career-enabling education to 27,000 students. Located just 40 miles outside of Chicago, JJC is an innovative and accessible institution, dedicated to student learning, community prosperity, cultural enrichment, and inclusion. The student population at the college is diverse in every sense of the word, representing a cultural plethora of gender, ethnic, racial, age, and socioeconomic status diversity. In 2023, JJC was designated a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) with 34% of the student body identifying as Hispanic/Latina/o. The College delivers quality lifelong learning opportunities empowering diverse students and the community through academic excellence, workforce training, and comprehensive support services.

The Vice President for Student Development (VPSD) has the opportunity to continue developing student development and engagement across JJC. This is an outstanding opportunity for an accomplished student affairs administrator with a pulse on the national landscape of student development to join and shape the student experience. The VPSD will work collaboratively to strengthen the overall work of student development, amplify diversity, equity, and inclusion, foster a sense of belonging and close-knit community, and prepare students for the next chapter of education or a career. To be successful, the VPSD will be expected to address a number of opportunities and challenges, listed below, and outlined in detail beginning on page four of this document:

- Provide visionary and strategic leadership**
- Optimize the Student Experience**
- Nurture the work of Student Development staff**
- Advocate for Student Development across the College**
- Foster a climate of equity, diversity, and inclusion**

Joliet Junior College has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in conducting this important search and to help identify outstanding candidates. All inquiries, applications, and nominations for this opportunity should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE

JJC offers pre-baccalaureate programs for students planning to transfer to a four-year university. A comprehensive community college, JJC provides occupational education leading directly to employment, adult education and literacy programs, workforce development services, and student support services.

America's first public community college began in 1901 as an experimental postgraduate high school program. It was the "brain child" of J. Stanley Brown, Superintendent of Joliet Township High School, and William Rainey Harper, President of the University of Chicago. The college's initial enrollment was six students. Today, JJC serves more than 27,000 students in credit classes and noncredit courses.

Established in 1973, the Joliet Junior College Foundation – a separate 501c3 - has been instrumental in providing financial assistance to students pursuing their academic goals at Joliet Junior College. Over the past 50 years, the Foundation has seen remarkable growth, with total assets surpassing \$36 million and \$18.5 million in endowments. The Foundation awarded \$1,000,522 in donor-funded scholarships to students in the 2023-24 school year. The substantial amount awarded positions the JJC Foundation as one of the leading entities among Illinois community college foundations, emphasizing its commitment to fostering educational advancement and access.

In 2023, the Board of Trustees adopted the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. The plan outlines five goals and objectives: value diversity, student lifecycle, strength from within, infrastructure, and grow JJC possibilities. More information about the strategic plan can be found at <https://jjc.edu/about-jjc/strategic-plan>.

Academic Programs

Students at JJC have the opportunity to earn more than 180 degree and certificate programs across nine pathways: Agricultural Sciences & Veterinary Technology; Architecture, Manufacturing, & Automotive; Business, Finance & Information Technology; Culinary, Hospitality & Tourism; Health, Public Safety, & Human Services; Liberal & Fine Arts; Social & Behavioral Sciences; Science, Technology, Engineering, and Medicine (STEM); Workforce Training.

Joliet Junior College has established itself as a statewide leader in dual credit enrollment, reporting a record 23.93% increase in dual credit enrollment hours from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023. This is the first milestone since the Fall 2022 introduction of the [12x12x12 program](#), an aggressive dual-credit that

encourages the 40,000 high school students in Illinois Community College District 525 to earn 12 college credits for \$12 per credit hour by 12th grade.

Students

Students are the heart of the College. JJC has benefitted from consistently increasing enrollments, from spring 2023 to spring 2024. The student body is 34% Hispanic/Latino/a, 10% Black, 4% Asian, 50% white, 4% other. There is a broad representation of life experience in the student body, including veterans, and adult students over the age of 25.

Athletics

The Joliet Junior College Athletic Department prides itself on being a team of good students and athletes, classmates and teammates, coaches and staff, and members of the community. There are approximately 300 athletes competing across 19 athletic programs at JJC. The JJC Wolves are part of the Division 3 athletics program.

Student Mental Health & Wellness

Through the Student Wellness Program, JJC has clinically licensed mental health providers that provide up to ten free sessions of confidential individual counseling to assist students with problems or concerns that are negatively impacting their educational and social experience at Joliet Junior College. Mental health services are offered in-person and via tele-health. All college credit seeking students are eligible for brief-individual counseling services and all students are eligible to meet with a Coordinator and Case Management to connect with resources outside of JJC as deemed appropriate.

Partnerships

JJC is proud to be an educational partner to the Amazon Career Choice Program. This education benefit empowers Amazon employees to learn new skills for career success at Amazon or elsewhere. This program provides a variety of education and upskilling opportunities, including pre-paid college tuition, industry certifications designed to lead to in-demand jobs, and foundational skills such as English language, high school diplomas, and GEDs.

Leadership

JJC is directly governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees, all of whom are elected from within the district for six-year terms. A student representative, elected annually by the student body, is a non-voting member of the Board. The officers of the Board are chairman, vice chairman and secretary, all of whom are elected by their peers for a one-year term.

President Clyne Namuo

Dr. Clyne Namuo joined JJC in July 2022 as the institution's 10th president. He has set forth an ambitious agenda for JJC which includes; the 12x12x12 dual credit initiative, expansion of the College's presence into neighboring Grundy County, support for first-generation students through the Namuo Family Scholarship and the Roots & Branches storytelling project.

Namuo holds a Doctor of Philosophy degree in higher education strategy from the University of Arizona's Center for the Study of Higher Education, a master's degree in information systems from San Diego State University, and a bachelor's degree in marketing from the University of Hawaii.

Executive Vice President Yolanda Farmer

Dr. Yolanda Farmer is the inaugural Executive Vice President (EVP) at JJC. She serves as the strategic institutional partner for the college president and provides leadership for the Academic Affairs, Finance & Administrative Services, Information Technology, and Student Development divisions.

Prior to her time as EVP, Dr. Farmer served as the Vice President for Student Development for nine years, championing many initiatives to advance accessible and diverse student services and resources. Dr. Farmer has held many respected positions in the State of Illinois, such as the dean of Student Services at Moraine Valley Community College, director of Minority Student Affairs at JJC, and assistant dean of students at DePaul University.

Dr. Farmer holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Eastern Illinois University, a Master of Education degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from DePaul University.

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

The [Student Development](#) division provides services and programs which support the academic mission of the institution through a focus on enrollment, retention and student success. The division supports the strategic goals of the college, including:

- Improve student success with an emphasis on enrollment, retention, graduation, and transfer rates and effective teaching strategies and learning outcomes.
- Utilize technology strategically to advance teaching and learning, expand online and alternative delivery methods, and enable effective administrative and support services.
- Improve the success of minority, underrepresented and underprepared student populations in addition to closing the gap between high school and college performance.
- Strive to treat each student as an individual and to model JJC's core values in the delivery of all programs and services. These values include respect, integrity, collaboration, humor and well-being, innovation and quality.

Student Development is comprised of 250 staff across the following six departments: Academic Intervention and Support; Center for Multicultural Access & Success; Enrollment Management; Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities; and Student Success.

Students at JJC are fully non-resident, with 56% attending in person or hybrid classes, and 30% student body online. In 2024, JJC is breaking ground on the new JJC Student Mental Health and Wellness Center.

It will be approximately 4,400 sq. feet and house the Student Mental Health and Wellness program and will include a food pantry.

THE ROLE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

This is an opportunity for an accomplished and creative student development professional to join the student development team at an exciting time of JJC growth and to play an active role in shaping the unit for the next chapter. The new VPSD will be a leader who thinks deeply about the student experience, fosters a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and considers the success and well-being of every student as their highest priority.

Reporting to the Executive Vice President, the VPSD is a member of College's senior staff and participates in setting strategic direction, anticipating, and responding to opportunities and challenges, managing resources, formulating policy, and developing critical relationships with academic and administrative colleagues to further the mission and goals of the Student Development unit.

The VPSD has four direct reports: Dean of Enrollment Management, Dean of Student Success, Dean of Students, and Dean of Academic Intervention and Accommodations.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES + CHALLENGES

The VPSD joins JJC at an exciting moment with substantial opportunities for impact. The College is poised to further build upon its strong reputation and unique position as a foundation and leader in the world of community colleges. The Vice President will be central to expanding and promote a holistic student experience that prepares them for next steps in higher education or pursuing careers.

Specifically, the VPSD will work to address the following opportunities and challenges:

Provide visionary and strategic leadership

The work of student development touches on many of the most complex and important areas in higher education: diversity and inclusion, advising and mentorship, health and wellness, safety, and student success. The VPSD will partner with College leadership to set a strategic vision for student development that is responsive to current and evolving needs and in alignment with JJC's strategic plan. The VPSD will develop and support programs throughout the college that serve students, qualitatively improve their experiences, promote student success and retention, and encourage and support student health and wellness. The VPSD will need to pay particular attention to making sure student development maintains a personal touch and individualized approach while scaling services and programs for a growing and continually diversifying student population.

Optimize the Student Experience

The Vice President for Student Development has the opportunity to take hold of the student lifecycle and optimize it to create a more efficient, modern student experience from admission to graduation. Assessing the current systems and processes in use will be critical to identifying effective new mechanisms for the student experience. There is no CRM system, and many business processes across enrollment, advising, and financial aid would benefit from greater technology integration. The VPSD has the opportunity to create a system that closes gaps for students and advances the student experience. Advising is undergoing changes with enhanced training and additional staff being added, thus improving the student to advisor ratio.

Nurture the work of Student Development staff

JJC is fortunate to have a team of student development professionals who are devoted, knowledgeable, and passionate. The next VPSD will fully apprehend the talents of the team and seek to maximize their impact, by breaking down and eliminating any impediments to collaboration. The VPSD should possess the experience and sophistication to develop and formalize systems that are conducive to organizational success and exemplify best practices in higher education. The VPSD should assess roles and responsibilities in the context of institutional growth and student needs. The VPSD should continue to develop the strength of the team and their capacity at all levels with an emphasis on flexibility and synergy.

Advocate for Student Development across the College

The VPSD has a seat on the President's cabinet and interacts with deans and other senior administrators at JJC. As such, the VPSD is well positioned to make a resounding impact for the role of Student Development at JJC. The College is undergoing a SaaS restart, an ERP migration, and there is a need for a system to communicate with students. As a student leader with a pulse on the trends and best practices in higher education, the VPSD will commit to advocating for the best in programming and support for the students of JJC. Enrollments continue to grow at JJC, and the student body continues to evolve and diversify. It's critical that the VPSD is a vocal champion for the division of Student Development and for the needs of students across the campus.

Foster a climate of equity, diversity, and inclusion

JJC is a diverse community that brings students together from around Illinois, including the Chicago metro area as well as students from rural communities, with different backgrounds and cultures. They share a common spirit of intellectual curiosity and commitment to academic success. The College accommodates students with a wide range of interests, learning styles, personal needs, and abilities. The next VPSD will embrace the diversity of JJC and lead the student development team to effectively and sensitively meet the evolving needs and interests of students who embody complex and intersecting identities.

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

While few individuals will embody all of them, the successful candidate will bring many of the following experiences and qualities:

- A visionary, energetic, collaborative, and hands-on approach to student engagement
- Thorough understanding of student affairs best practices
- A demonstrated track record of enhancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility and improving the culture and climate for students and staff
- Executive leadership experience as a successful administrator with direct oversight of areas that deal with student health and well-being, student leadership, student conduct
- Experience in a leadership role coordinating with appropriate units at times of student concern and crises
- Demonstrated excellence in establishing and refining student-centered programs and services
- Experience with change management and implementing a strategic vision
- Proven ability to cultivate and develop staff and an aptitude to become an effective leadership team member
- An astute understanding of college budgetary operations and finances, experience establishing budget priorities, and serving as a responsible steward of resources
- Ability to work and collaborate effectively across areas and adjust priorities as needed
- Experience partnering with faculty and strong knowledge of the process that supports programmatic and curricular development and implementation
- 8-10 years of substantial, relevant, and progressively-responsible experience in a complex higher education organizational setting
- A masters or terminal degree

Compensation

The anticipated salary range for the role is \$150K – \$225K (midpoint \$188K).

APPLICATIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND INQUIRIES

Confidential inquiries, nominations/referrals, and applications (including resumes and letters of interest responding to the opportunities and challenges outlined above) should be sent electronically to the Isaacson, Miller executive search team via the link below.

Dan Rodas, Partner
Stephen Kalogeras, Associate
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/joliet-junior-college/vice-president-student-development>

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Joliet Junior College is committed to equal opportunity in employment, employment actions, and in the administration of educational programs, admission of

students, athletics or other sponsored activities. The College complies in letter and spirit with appropriate federal and state legislation, including but not limited to Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974.

JJC provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, gender identity, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age, citizenship status, results of genetic testing, service in the military, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local laws. Equal employment opportunity applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leave of absence, compensation, benefits, and training.

JJC expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment or discrimination based on any of the characteristics mentioned above. Improper interference with the ability of other employees to perform their expected job duties will not be tolerated.

The College has established procedures by which individuals may bring forward concerns or complaints of discrimination and harassment. The College will promptly, thoroughly and fairly investigate every issue that is brought to its attention in this area and will take disciplinary action, when appropriate, up to and including termination of employment. Retaliation against any individual who brings forward such a complaint or who cooperates or assists with an investigation of such a complaint is both unlawful and strictly prohibited by the College.

Individuals with questions or concerns regarding Equal Opportunity may contact the executive director, human resources, Joliet Junior College.