



Search for the Director of the Marian Miner Cook Athenaeum
Claremont McKenna College
Claremont, CA

Claremont McKenna College (CMC), a premier liberal arts college and member of the prestigious Claremont Colleges, seeks an energetic and innovative leader to serve as the next Director of the Marian Miner Cook Athenaeum, known as the Ath. A unique program in American higher education, the core of the Ath is the Ath Speaker Series, which brings distinguished scholars, public figures, thought leaders, artists, and innovators to engage with the CMC community. The Director is a crucial leader in CMC's project to promote intellectual growth, artistic and cultural appreciation, and College-wide, Open Academy commitments to free expression, viewpoint diversity, and constructive dialogue. **CMC seeks a deeply engaged thought leader and skilled program administrator with wide-ranging interests, superior social and communication capabilities, and a commitment to promoting civil discourse. This is an unparalleled opportunity to improve civil discourse through undergraduate education.**

CMC leads its peers in providing the education needed to address the urgent issues of our time. The College's mission is to prepare its students for thoughtful and productive lives and responsible leadership in business, government, and the professions, and to support faculty and student scholarship that contribute to intellectual vitality and the understanding of public policy issues. Uniquely positioned in higher education, CMC aims to develop the world's most influential and entrepreneurial leaders and has the capacity to attract the very best students due to a clarity of mission, its top ranking for return on investment, and its commitment to supporting a diverse student body. CMC currently enrolls approximately 1400 students and is a member of The Claremont Colleges, a consortium of five undergraduate liberal arts colleges and two graduate institutions.

Established in 1970, the Ath is a fixture in the academic and co-curricular life of CMC. Its Director is a senior campus leader, reporting to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty (VPAA/DOF), collaborating regularly with the President and leading alumni, parents, and members of the Board of Trustees, and engaging daily with faculty, staff, and students from a wide span of viewpoints and backgrounds. Many students see the Ath as a second home on campus, and the Director serves as a formal

and informal mentor. By building deep connections with the campus community, the Ath Director will understand the intellectual and cultural tenor of campus and create compelling programs that advance the campus conversation in service of developing students ready for responsible leadership in a range of industries and fields.

A list of the desired qualifications and characteristics of the Director can be found at the conclusion of this document, which was prepared with the assistance of Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm. All confidential applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed to the parties listed at the conclusion of this document.

ABOUT CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE

CMC provides its student body with powerful tools to learn and lead responsibly. The College strives to create conditions that allow students to reinforce and amplify their academic learning through a range of co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences. Through these intensely complementary academic and co-curricular programs and experiences, students are empowered to be resourceful, independent problem-solvers, responsible and engaged community members, and successful leaders beyond graduation.

CMC offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in 33 undergraduate majors, a Master of Arts in Finance, a combined BA/MA program in Finance, and a variety of curricula in cooperation with the other Claremont Colleges. Consistent with its mission, the most popular undergraduate majors include economics, government, international relations, psychology, and the biological sciences. CMC proudly employs a faculty of research-active teacher-scholars. 81% of full-time faculty hold tenured or tenure-track positions and 97% hold terminal degrees. The average class size is small, typically no more than 18 students, and the student-to-faculty ratio is 8:1. Students cite the accessibility of the faculty and their eagerness to teach engaged students in their field, regardless of major, as a large and compelling aspect of campus life.

CMC is financially secure, with a current endowment value of more than \$1.2 billion. This allows the College to provide generous financial support for students, academic programs, and institutional priorities. CMC offers need-blind admission to U.S. citizens and permanent residents and supports a variety of merit-based scholarship opportunities.

CMC operates within the Claremont Colleges Consortium and enjoys a close association with its sister institutions, Pomona, Scripps, Harvey Mudd, Pitzer, Keck Graduate Institute, and Claremont Graduate University. The Colleges reside on a single, lovely geography, and students and faculty move freely among them for classes and projects. They jointly operate a number of centralized services including Campus Safety, Monsour Counseling & Psychological Services, Student Health Services, Health Education Outreach, Chaplains Office, Queer Resource Center, EMPOWER Center, Chicano/Latino Student Affairs, Office of Black Student Affairs, and the Student Disability Resource Center.

ABOUT THE MARIAN MINER COOK ATHENAEUM

The [Marian Miner Cook Athenaeum](#) is a signature program intimately connected to CMC's [Open Academy](#), a nationally-recognized initiative that develops a critical response to the educational imperative of our time: overcoming what divides us to solve the world's most challenging problems. Through core commitments to Freedom of Expression, Viewpoint Diversity, and Constructive Dialogue, students are given the tools to listen respectfully, ask incisive questions, and engage with greater curiosity and openness to differences of opinion in service of strengthening the national practice of our democracy.

Located in an elegant, central building, the Ath is CMC's great room for dining and dialogue. Four nights a week during the academic year, the Ath brings scholars, public figures, thought leaders, artists, and innovators to engage with the CMC and Claremont College community. In addition, the Ath also hosts lunch speakers, roundtables, and smaller presentations in its two auxiliary dining rooms. A typical Ath Speaker Series event includes a dinner for up to 120 attendees—free for students, faculty, and staff of the Claremont Colleges—as well as a presentation from the speaker and a question-and-answer session. These events are well-attended by students, faculty, staff, and other interested community members. CMC students, faculty, and staff recommend potential speakers, which the Director uses to develop the schedule in coordination with the Athenaeum Advisory Committee, a group of faculty, staff, and students who help design themes and specific events.

At the core of the Ath is a longstanding commitment to student growth and learning. Central to the Ath are its student fellows, selected annually to host, introduce, and moderate discussion with the featured speaker. During the question-and-answer session following every presentation, priority is given to students in attendance, and only students are able to sit with the visiting speaker during dinner. Question-and-answer sessions are robust and are frequently cited by speakers as a defining characteristic of their visit to CMC. Moreover, speakers often take extra time to visit a class, meet with student interest groups, or give an interview to the student press and podcast team.

ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR

The Director of the Marian Miner Cook Athenaeum will lead and oversee all aspects of the Ath and will enhance its status as CMC's co-curricular center for intellectual, culture, and civil discourse. The most important role of the Ath Director is to attract and curate a world-class group of experts from nearly every domain of thought and action leadership to create the Ath's signature Speaker Series. In support of the Ath and CMC's overall goals, the Director of the Ath will be responsible for creating a conducive environment for the social exchange and engagement of students, faculty, staff, trustees, alumni, parents, and prospective students of Claremont McKenna College. In doing so, the Ath Director will help prepare students to be responsible leaders with the crucial skills of speaking across difference, engaging in constructive dialogue, and combatting polarization and misinformation in support of a robust and healthy democracy. Given the Ath's unique blend programming and deep integration with campus life, there is a significant opportunity to establish it as a national exemplar of undergraduate civic education.

The Director is responsible for developing, coordinating, and implementing the Ath Speaker Series four nights a week as well as occasional weekday lunches during the academic semester. Responsibilities extend to planning and supervising additional special events, workshops, and conferences, as well as daily community “Ath Teas.” The Director is also responsible for coordinating and managing smaller lunch engagements and various dinner for class programming, student organizations, and other groups.

Reporting to the VPAA/DOF, the Director will supervise, evaluate, and mentor the Athenaeum Manager, who is responsible for the operations of the Ath; the Athenaeum Coordinator, who is responsible for managing the logistics for guest speakers and performers; and the Athenaeum Chef, who leads the culinary staff in preparing meals for Ath events. The Director assists in the selection and training of up to three or four Student Fellows each year, in partnership with the Athenaeum Advisory Committee. The Director also manages the Ath’s budget, made up of endowed programming and College operational budgets.

In addition, the Director of the Ath will be responsible for and evaluated on performing the following essential functions:

- Invite and schedule distinguished guests to speak/perform at the Athenaeum, in each instance cognizant of maintaining the intellectual integrity of the institution. The Director is responsible for maintaining the calendar for all events open to the public. The Director is responsible for gathering information for all events to be published online. This includes biographical information with photo, description, and title of each presentation.
- Work closely with CMC’s research institutes on partnerships for speaker programming.
- Coordinate named lectures with CMC’s Advancement Office.
- Attend most evening programs at the Athenaeum, until approximately 8pm, Monday through Thursday, when the academic calendar is in session.
- Meet with the Athenaeum Advisory Committee at least twice per semester, to discuss possible themes for speaker series, ideas for specific speakers, and to evaluate overall operations of the Athenaeum.
- Maintain open communication with faculty, students, and staff about campus life, and remain receptive to suggestions from all members of the community.
- Maintain good working relationships with representatives of speaker agencies and bureaus.
- Assist the President and commencement committee with the selection, invitation, and confirmation of a Graduation Ceremony speaker.
- Represent CMC on the Claremont Colleges’ planning committees for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Cesar Chavez Day programs.
- Write an annual report on activities.
- Meet with the VPAA/DOF or their Designee to review programs, campus life, and administrative issues.
- Attend CMC programs and events unrelated to the Athenaeum to fully understand the experience of students, faculty, and staff.

- Keep up-to-date with political, social, technological, and global issues (among others) that are important to the intellectual development of CMC community members in a dynamic world.
- Serve on campus-wide leadership committees, such as the Senior Leadership Council.
- Other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

CMC seeks a collaborative and energetic leader with a minimum of three years' experience in leading academic or intellectual programming. The ideal candidate will have familiarity with a liberal arts educational setting. A master's degree, or the equivalent combination of education and experience, is required and a terminal degree is preferred. In addition, the ideal candidate will have most, if not all, of the following qualifications and characteristics:

- Detail-oriented with excellent organizational skills and the ability to work independently with minimal direction
- Goal-oriented management skills with the ability to work collaboratively and professionally with student employees and volunteers
- Strong interpersonal skills and a high level of social energy, with the ability to interface professionally with students, alumni, parents, administration, faculty, and community members
- Excellent communication skills in a variety of media and the ability to listen both for content and emotion
- Ability to manage budget operations, including monitoring and tracking budgetary expenditures
- Ability to filter good ideas and to filter ineffective strategies and ideas with tact
- A collaborative spirit and service-oriented attitude
- Skill in fostering shared values, especially the CMC community-wide values of open inquiry, inclusion, social warmth, and community building

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

While the actual salary will depend on the chosen candidate's level of skills and experience, the current budgeted salary for the role is between \$120,000 and \$145,000. Located on the eastern border of Los Angeles County, just 30 miles from downtown Los Angeles, Claremont is a classic college town. With a size of 14.14 square miles and a population of around 35,000 citizens, Claremont is a primarily residential town boasting tree-lined streets, historic buildings, and nearly 2,000 acres of public parkland, most of which is wilderness. Nestled in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains, Claremont has been nationally recognized for its pleasant quality of life. The city was rated by CNNMoney as among the top places to live in the country and received the Tree City USA award from the National Arbor Day Association. The annual average temperature is 63 degrees Fahrenheit. To learn more about Claremont and the surrounding areas, please see www.discoverclaremont.com and www.ci.claremont.ca.us.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/claremont-mckenna-college/director-marian-miner-cook-athenaeum>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

David Bellshaw, Hayden Lizotte, Aku Ammah-Tagoe, Christina Errico

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In addition to its commitment to a harassment-free educational and working environment, Claremont McKenna College is an equal employment opportunity employer. The College is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunities for all applicants and employees and complies with all applicable state and federal laws on the matter. The College does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including gender, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ancestry, age, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition or medical leave, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other category protected by law. The College also prohibits the harassment of any employee on any of these bases.