
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC

ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF ADVANCEMENT OPERATIONS AND STRATEGIES

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Washington, D.C.

THE SEARCH

The George Washington University (GW) seeks an innovative, strategic, and broadly experienced fundraising leader to serve as the inaugural associate vice president of advancement operations and strategies (AVP). A critical partner and direct report to GW's vice president (VP) for development and alumni relations (DAR), [Donna Arbide](#), the AVP will function as the 170-person division's senior-most internal leader and a key member of DAR's Executive Leadership Council. The AVP will work closely with the VP to establish the strategic direction of fundraising programs, direct short- and long-term fundraising plans, and strengthen infrastructure and systems to support a robust and best-in-class advancement enterprise. Blending both strategic and tactical skills, the AVP will directly manage a team of more than 30, including three direct reports, across development operations, donor relations, prospect research, gift processing, and analytics. Importantly, the AVP will also serve as a key leader in the planning and implementation of the most ambitious comprehensive campaign in GW history, building upon the exciting arrival of new president [Dr. Ellen Granberg](#) in 2023.

This is an exceptional opportunity for a creative and data-driven leader to partner with an inspiring vice president and create lasting impact for a preeminent R-1 research university and the largest institution of higher education in the nation's capital. Success for the AVP will be defined, in part, by this leader's ability to further elevate DAR operations and infrastructure through the implementation of best practices, team and capacity building, calculated risk-taking and innovation, and the application of data-driven strategies. With the right leader in place, such efforts will help raise near- and long-term sights for GW philanthropy and guide the institution through its next campaign and third century.

The ideal candidate will demonstrate superb strategic vision and at least 10 years of leadership and management experience, preferably in a complex research university environment. The AVP must be analytical, entrepreneurial, and collaborative, with an ability to build consensus and transform new ideas into actionable and enduring programs. The ideal candidate will possess a keen understanding of

fundraising best practices, as well as comprehensive knowledge and broad-based experience across all major development functions, including a depth of campaign experience. GW seeks a candidate with a high level of integrity and trust who will motivate, mentor, and leverage a team's existing capacity to strengthen performance, deepen dedication, and incentivize all members of the advancement community to achieve new levels of success. Of equal importance, the AVP must demonstrate the credibility, maturity, and sophistication to effectively engage with executive leaders and diverse groups of internal and external constituents. Extraordinary communication and negotiation skills, political savvy, flexibility, and cultural agility to navigate a complex academic community will be essential. In addition, candidates must demonstrate a deep appreciation for, and an ability to articulate, the educational mission and aspirations of GW. A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

The George Washington University has retained the services of Jack Gorman of Isaacson, Miller, the national executive search firm, to conduct the search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

The George Washington University is a dynamic, diverse, and student-centered research university committed to educating the next generation of citizen leaders. Chartered by Congress in 1821, the university is the largest private institution located in the nation's capital. Nationally ranked and competing with some of the finest research universities in the nation, GW's commitment to academic excellence, forefront research and scholarship, and cultural and intellectual diversity is built upon its founding values of integrity, creativity, and openness to the exploration of new ideas. For over two centuries, the university has produced well-informed, ethically grounded citizens, an extraordinary number of whom have gone on to seek and find creative solutions to society's most complex problems.

GW's undergraduate programs offer over 136 majors across eight schools and colleges. The university offers more than 240 master's, doctoral, and certificate programs and enrolls a diverse graduate student body across 14 graduate and professional schools and colleges. The university's enrollment totals approximately 26,000 students, of which about 10,800 are undergraduate students, 14,400 are graduate and professional students, and 800 are non-degree students. GW has 1,376 regular full-time faculty, 163 specialized research and teaching staff, and 75 visiting faculty members.

Advancing GW's research agenda has been one of the university's top priorities. The university has made great strides in federally funded research and the quality and impact of scholarship. Total research expenditures from federal sources for fiscal year 2020 were approximately \$157.5 million, an increase of 72 percent since 2009. GW attributes its rise among premier research institutions to its emphasis on cross-disciplinary collaboration, recruitment of top talent across all disciplines, and investment in research administration. For more information on GW and its leaders, please visit www.gwu.edu and the addendum of this document.

Development and Alumni Relations (DAR)

Through a combination of focused and broad-based fundraising, engagement, and communication strategies that are both metrics-driven and aligned, DAR builds and strengthens relationships with the GW community to encourage investment, advocacy, and support of the university's mission and priorities. DAR's 170- staff is led by Vice President Donna Arbide and her ten-person [Executive Leadership Council](#). The division's five-year annual fundraising average is \$114 million. In Fiscal Year 2023, GW DAR raised \$132M. The institution's last comprehensive campaign, *Making History*, closed in June 2017, surpassing its \$1 billion goal one year ahead of schedule.

In 2021, GW launched [Open Doors: The Centuries Initiative for Scholarships & Fellowships](#), a university-wide effort to raise funds for undergraduate scholarships and graduate student fellowships and to spark conversations across the GW community about the pressing need for greater financial support to attract and retain talented students. *Open Doors* is the fundraising priority for DAR and the start of an ambitious new chapter for GW. Looking ahead to the university's third century, GW is preparing for the next comprehensive campaign, which will take an investment in a sustainable culture of philanthropy.

Finances

GW's operating budget for Fiscal Year 2023 was approximately \$1.2 billion. The university's endowment net assets as of June 30, 2022 (unaudited) totaled \$2.3 billion and generated \$99 million in support of university activities in Fiscal Year 2022.

ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF ADVANCEMENT OPERATIONS AND STRATEGIES

Reporting to the vice president for development and alumni relations, the AVP will lead strategic and tactical planning, priority setting, and decision-making for major advancement operations and strategies projects and initiatives. The AVP will oversee development operations, campaign strategy, donor relations, prospect research, gift processing, and analytics across a 34-person staff, including three direct reports. Those reports include the assistant vice president, strategic advancement solutions; assistant vice president, advancement analytics; and director, gift agreement.

Duties & Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Innovation:

- Serve as the internal leader of DAR, working closely with the Executive Leadership Council to ensure the smooth functioning of the department.
- Work with the vice president and the Executive Leadership Council to establish the strategic direction of fundraising programs, direct and short-term and long-range plans, develop budgets to support each unit's goals, and ensure that performance is traced and monitored.

- Serve as a thought partner to the most senior members of the advancement team across DAR on campaign planning, advancement services, and prospect and donor strategies.
- Develop an extensive understanding of the university's academic and fundraising priorities.
- Develop and implement the infrastructure needed to support multi-year mega-campaigns or initiatives. Oversee the campaign team and collaborate with internal partners to set priorities and devise strategies for meeting campaign objectives.
- Provide oversight and leadership to a staff of more than 30 across advancement services and strategic advancement services, including three direct reports.

Advancement Operations and Information Services:

- Lead a CRM migration over a two-year period of staging, testing, and capacity building, followed by a lengthy implementation period in a pre-campaign and campaign environment. Oversee the timely and accurate processing of philanthropic gifts and grants, campaign, and donor reporting while continuously improving policy and procedural options to facilitate compliance, engagement, and information exchange for advancement professionals university-wide.
- Build data mining and data modeling capacity and accelerate the availability of prospective donor assessments, model outcomes, and other data to inform solicitation and engagement strategies, utilizing both proprietary and commercial data for internal decision-making.
- Provide training resources, system applications, and user resources to professionals at DAR for the university's advancement software to ensure the effective usage of this software.
- Conceptualize a scalable suite of reporting tools and products for management information data-informed decision-making for use by the VP, executive officers, deans, school development officers, and DAR staff in a campaign environment – accounting for gifts and pledges, measures of donor engagement, estimates of and philanthropic capacity, campaign and other budget performance, and other tools needed for DAR staff.

Executive Partnership and University-Wide Collaboration:

- Provide guidance and demonstrated competency across functional areas including finance/accounting and human resources/talent management, while working closely with the university's chief financial officer and vice president of human resources and as a thought partner at the executive level.
- Facilitate inter-departmental partnerships to achieve full divisional alignment, and long-term, collaborative relationships with key university colleagues including with the GW Information Technology (GWIT) team.

Qualifications & Experience

- Ten or more years of relevant professional experience, including senior or executive-level experience and a successful track record in management.
- The credibility, intellectual prowess, and relationship-building skills to engage, motivate, and support the VP, high-caliber administrative and academic leadership, staff, and colleagues.
- Proven ability to expand and strengthen partnerships with administrative colleagues, superiors, and supervised staff, ideally in a complex, research-intensive higher education institution.
- Demonstrated ability to facilitate communication regarding multi-unit planning, budgeting, human resource, and information technology opportunities for win-win partnerships across the university, resulting in a thorough and inclusive planning and execution process.
- Superb strategic vision and leadership and management experience, providing staff with the direction, motivation, and support needed to continually surpass ambitious goals.
- Results-oriented professional comfortable with quantitative performance measurement with excess initiative and sound judgment.
- Proven competence in developing and implementing management information tools, data mining, and data modeling that produce actionable findings.
- Network administration experience within a multi-unit organization.
- Genuine team player with a creative manner of approaching issues and devising sound solutions based on good judgment, collaboration, and excellent communication skills.
- An inspirational leader with the ability to motivate, mentor, and leverage a team's existing capacity to strengthen performance, deepen dedication, and incentivize all members of the advancement community to define and embrace high performance.
- Deep appreciation for, and an ability to articulate eloquently, the educational mission and aspirations of GW.
- Bachelor's degree is required; advanced degree preferred.

TO APPLY

The George Washington University has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this search. Jack Gorman is leading the search with Grace Zakim and Ryan Cheung. For more information, to make a nomination, or to apply for this role, please visit:

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/gw/avp-advancement-operations-and-strategies>

The George Washington University is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer that does not unlawfully discriminate in any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or on any other basis prohibited by applicable law.

ADDENDUM

Leadership

Ellen M. Granberg **President**

Ellen M. Granberg is the 19th President of the George Washington University. She is an accomplished academic leader who has a record of strengthening teaching and research excellence across disciplines, supporting a diverse and inclusive community of students, faculty, and staff, and collaborating with all stakeholders to drive transformative change and increase institutional prominence. President Granberg became the first woman to serve as GW's President on July 1, 2023.

Previously, President Granberg served as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and was a professor and senior leader at Clemson University.

As RIT's chief academic officer, President Granberg oversaw nine colleges, two degree-granting units, and international campuses in Croatia, Dubai, Kosovo, and China. In this role, she oversaw key initiatives, including increasing undergraduate student success, expanding doctoral education, improving facilities for instruction and research, and leveraging RIT's strengths in innovation, creativity, and cross-disciplinary collaboration to advance the university's academic mission.

At Clemson, President Granberg was the Senior Associate Provost and Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs. She chaired the development and implementation of the institution's strategic plan, which spurred growth in research, graduate studies, and inclusive excellence. In addition, President Granberg developed a university-wide strategy for faculty recruitment, retention, compensation, and development.

A nationally recognized scholar in the sociology of self, identity, and mental health, President Granberg began her career in academia as a Professor of Sociology.

Prior to pursuing graduate studies, she spent eleven years in the telecommunications industry, leading large integrated software development teams that replaced aging billing and customer service systems. President Granberg holds a B.A. in history from the University of California at Davis and an M.A. and Ph.D. in sociology from Vanderbilt University.

Donna Arbide **Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations**

Donna Arbide joined GW on March 1, 2018, after more than 30 years at the University of Miami, including serving as interim senior vice president for development and alumni relations. During her tenure at the University of Miami, Donna oversaw the university's alumni relations, annual giving, and parent programs, as well as fundraising efforts of the school and college development programs.

As interim senior vice president for development and alumni relations, she worked closely with the university's board of trustees and the institutional leadership to implement the University of Miami strategic plan and development efforts for its three campuses. She helped greatly expand alumni and parent giving, led several award-winning programs to establish a vibrant national and international network of University of Miami alumni and parents, and was the lead visionary and fundraiser for a new alumni center on the university's Coral Gables campus.

Donna has served as a board member for the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), where she chaired the Commission on Alumni Relations, helping to launch the international initiative, creating standards of practice and alumni engagement metrics for the profession. She chaired the 2018 CASE Summit for Leaders in Advancement. Donna has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Alabama in Huntsville and a master's degree from the University of Miami.

Location: Washington, D.C.

As a comprehensive, research university, GW has the special advantage of location in the nation's capital and a storied history of influencing public policy. GW's main campus is located on 43 acres in the historic Foggy Bottom section of Washington, D.C. The university's remarkable setting is just blocks from the White House, the U.S. State Department, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, embassies, and the National Mall. Also nearby are the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the U.S. Institute of Peace as well as other prominent national and international organizations.

In addition to the Foggy Bottom campus, the university has two other campuses. Its Mount Vernon campus is located on Foxhall Road in Northwest D.C. and includes residential housing, a library, and academic and athletic space. Roughly one-third of GW's first-year undergraduate class resides on the Mount Vernon campus, and it is home to a growing number of innovative living and learning communities. Spanning 122 acres in Ashburn, Va., the Virginia Science and Technology Campus serves as GW's hub for discovery through research and academic programs. The campus is home to research labs and centers and institutes advancing knowledge in a wide range of interdisciplinary areas.

These multiple locations provide a strategic advantage for GW and differentiate the university from its peers. The Washington, D.C., campuses are a "learning laboratory" for the students and afford students and faculty extraordinary opportunities to engage with the vast number of government agencies, elected officials, nonprofits, advocacy groups, foreign diplomats, and leading medical/scientific laboratories and hospitals located within and around the beltway.

This position is based on-site at the Foggy Bottom campus in Washington, D.C. Development and Alumni Relations works in a hybrid schedule.