



Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement





VICE PRESIDENT FOR PHILANTHROPY AND ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Kent State University is the highest-ranked public university in northern Ohio on the Top Public Schools and Best National Universities lists by U.S. News & World Report. The university also holds the esteemed distinction of being recognized as an R1 top-tier research university by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Kent State is one of Ohio's leading public universities and a major educational, economic and cultural resource far beyond the Northeast Ohio region it has served since 1910.

The university has a global footprint with eight campuses throughout Northeast Ohio, a College of Podiatric Medicine, a Twinsburg Academic Center and academic sites around the world, including New York City; Florence, Italy; and Curitiba, Brazil. Kent State offers award-winning student support services that help students succeed. Its diverse student body comprises more than 33,000 students, including 1,800 international students from nearly 100 countries, and the worldwide alumni family exceeds 285,000. Kent State provides transformational educational experiences and leads with its values, which include kindness, respect and freedom of expression.

Learn more about Kent State at www.kent.edu.

ABOUT KENT STATE'S DIVISION OF PHILANTHROPY AND ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

Kent State's Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement builds relationships with alumni, donors, friends and partners to advance the university's mission, strengthen pride in Kent State and expand opportunities for students. Through strategic philanthropy and meaningful engagement, the division cultivates a culture of support that connects graduates and benefactors to the university's priorities and future. The division includes the areas of Philanthropy, Corporate and Foundation Relations, Gift and Estate Planning, Alumni Engagement, Alumni and Donor Communications, Donor and Volunteer Engagement, Annual Giving, Prospect Research, and Data Intelligence and Technology.

The division recently concluded the *Forever Brighter* comprehensive fundraising campaign, raising \$383 million, exceeding its goal by \$33 million and surpassing the \$100 million Student Success Initiatives goal by \$57 million. The campaign also expanded endowed positions from five to 26 and supported major capital projects, including the Ambassador Crawford College of Business and Entrepreneurship, the College of Aeronautics and Engineering expansion and the FedEx Aeronautics Academic Center. Building on that momentum, the Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement helped secure Cleveland Clinic as the official healthcare provider for Kent State student-athletes and raised \$41.1 million in Fiscal Year 2026, \$11.4 million more than the previous year. More than half of this support aligned with the university's top five fundraising priorities, including 10 gifts of \$1 million or more.

To learn more about the division, visit www.kent.edu/alumni-and-giving



VICE PRESIDENT FOR PHILANTHROPY AND ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

POINTS OF PRIDE

- Highest-ranked public university in northern Ohio on the Top Public Schools and Best National Universities lists in 2026 by U.S. News & World Report.
- Named one of the Best Global Universities by U.S. News & World Report for 2026-2027.
- Awarded the prestigious R1 designation from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, placing Kent State in the top 5% of research universities nationwide with respect to research activity.
- Only university in the United States to receive the 2022 Senator Paul Simon Award for Comprehensive Internationalization, recognizing Kent State for overall excellence in integrating international education throughout all facets of the university and its campuses.
- Largest public university in northern Ohio.
- Graduates more than 8,000 students each year from its eight campuses.
- Has more than 285,000 alumni worldwide.
- Recipient of 28 national awards for exceptional student support.
- Located in Kent, Ohio, which has been named Ohio's No. 1 college town and one of the best college towns in America (No. 8 nationally) for 2026.

KENT STATE'S VISION

To be an inclusive community whose collective commitment to learning sparks transformative thinking, meaningful voice and sustainable outcomes to better our world.

KENT STATE'S MISSION

To transform lives by providing access and opportunity, fostering inclusive communities and advancing the power of discovery, learning and creative expression.

KENT STATE'S CORE VALUES

- A distinctive blend of teaching, research and creative excellence.
- Inquiry and discovery that expands knowledge and human understanding.
- Life-changing educational experiences for students with wide-ranging talents and aspirations.
- An inclusive environment for learning, working and living that creates a genuine sense of belonging.
- Collaborative engagement that inspires positive change across campuses, in communities and throughout the world.
- Diversity of thought, beliefs and cultures.
- Freedom of expression and the free exchange of ideas.
- Respect, kindness and purpose in all we do.



VICE PRESIDENT FOR PHILANTHROPY AND ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

As required by Ohio Revised Code section 3345.016, Kent State University will: educate students by means of free, open and rigorous intellectual inquiry to seek the truth; equip students with the opportunity to develop the intellectual skills they need to reach their own informed conclusions; not require, favor, disfavor or prohibit speech or lawful assembly; create a community dedicated to an ethic of civil and free inquiry, which respects the autonomy of each member, supports individual capacities for growth and tolerates differences in opinion; and treat all faculty, staff and students as individuals, hold them to equal standards and provide them equality of opportunity with regard to race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.



LOCATION

The university's academic core is nestled in Kent, Ohio, where more than 1,400 acres of campus are home to about 130 buildings, a variety of landscaped gardens, bike trails, public art, open greenery and, of course, tens of thousands of incredible people. Kent is a contemporary college town full of restaurants, shops and galleries, surrounded by the abounding natural beauty of the Cuyahoga Valley. The city was named the No. 1 college town in Ohio and one of the best college towns in America for 2026. There's a lot to discover in Kent, and visitors quickly understand why most students fall in love with its perfect size. Kent State is also close to Cleveland, Akron, Canton, Youngstown, Columbus and Pittsburgh, where professional sports teams, Fortune 500 companies, theatres, museums and many other attractions are within a two-hour drive of campus.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kent State University seeks a strategic, externally engaged Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement. Reporting to the President, this leader will provide direction for university-wide philanthropy and alumni engagement while serving as a visible partner to the President, Board of Trustees, Foundation Board of Directors, Alumni Association National Board of Directors, deans, campus leaders, alumni, donors and volunteers.

The Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement will lead a comprehensive strategy that strengthens philanthropic support, deepens alumni connection and aligns donor engagement with the university's mission and priorities. This role requires a collaborative and trusted leader who can inspire confidence across internal and external audiences while building the relationships, systems and culture needed to support long-term institutional success.

VICE PRESIDENT FOR PHILANTHROPY AND ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

ROLE OVERVIEW

The Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement is responsible for advancing an integrated, university-wide approach to fundraising, alumni engagement and donor stewardship. The role will bring coherence, coordination and shared direction to advancement work across a large, public, multicampus research institution.

The successful candidate will bring significant experience leading advancement in a large, complex organization with demonstrated success in fundraising campaigns, major and principal gifts, donor stewardship, volunteer leadership and team development. The position calls for both strategic leadership and operational discipline with a focus on relationship-building, accountability, service excellence and responsible stewardship of institutional resources.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

COMPREHENSIVE ADVANCEMENT STRATEGY

The Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement will develop and lead a university-wide advancement strategy that aligns philanthropy and alumni engagement with Kent State's mission, priorities and long-term institutional goals. The role will bring continued focus and coherence to advancement and alumni relations efforts across colleges, campuses and major institutional initiatives and engage academic and administrative leaders in fundraising to create a stronger culture of philanthropy university-wide.

The Vice President will have a significant opportunity to elevate philanthropic support for the university by developing and executing a highly strategic major and principal gifts program.

ELEVATED MAJOR AND PRINCIPAL GIVING

The Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement will strengthen the university's ability to identify, cultivate, solicit and steward donors capable of making significant and transformational investments in institutional priorities while building a strong foundation for potential future campaign activity. This includes enhancing systems for prospect development and portfolio management, sophisticated and individualized donor strategies, engaging volunteer leaders effectively and advancing meaningful stewardship that deepens confidence and inspires sustained and increased philanthropic investment.

CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION RELATIONS

The Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement will have an important opportunity to strengthen and expand corporate and foundation relations with a particular focus on growing corporate engagement and philanthropic support throughout the region. The Vice President will cultivate strategic partnerships with business and industry leaders, foundations and other organizations whose interests align with Kent State's academic, research, workforce development and community priorities.

ALUMNI CONNECTION AND LIFELONG ENGAGEMENT

The Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement will advance a more intentional approach to alumni engagement that strengthens connection and participation across generations of Kent State graduates. The role will help position alumni as advocates, ambassadors, volunteers and philanthropic partners in support of the university's future.

VICE PRESIDENT FOR PHILANTHROPY AND ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

PARTNERSHIP WITH UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

The Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement will serve as a trusted partner to the President, Board of Trustees, Foundation Board, Alumni Association Board, President's Cabinet, deans and campus leaders. Success will require collaboration, clear communication, strong internal alignment and the ability to translate institutional priorities into compelling philanthropic opportunities for donors, alumni and friends of the university.

FOUNDATION BOARD PARTNERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement will work in close partnership with the Foundation CEO and the Board to advance shared philanthropic priorities, support effective governance and strengthen alignment between the Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement and the Foundation. This includes ensuring clear communication, thoughtful board engagement, donor stewardship, investment in university priorities and long-term advancement goals.

ADVANCEMENT OPERATIONS, CULTURE AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT

The Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement will provide leadership for a high-performing advancement organization with an emphasis on coordination, accountability, service excellence and responsible stewardship of resources. This includes developing and retaining talent, strengthening operating practices, leveraging data and technology, and fostering a positive and collegial culture that supports collaboration, responsiveness and measurable results.

LEADERSHIP PROFILE AND QUALIFICATIONS

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Significant advancement leadership experience in a complex institution or similarly mission-driven organization.
- Demonstrated success with major and principal gifts, campaign planning, donor stewardship and alumni engagement.
- Ability to serve as a trusted partner to the President, Board of Trustees, Foundation Board, Alumni Association Board, President's Cabinet, deans and senior leaders.
- Strong external presence with donors, alumni, volunteers and community partners.
- Experience leading teams, strengthening operations and building a culture of accountability, collaboration and service excellence.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree required
- Experience in higher education or similarly complex, mission-driven organizations preferred.

Position title and compensation are potentially negotiable based on candidate qualifications and experience.

APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

AGB Search is pleased to assist Kent State University with this leadership search.

For best consideration, applications should be submitted by **August 31, 2026** to the AGB Search portal at: [Kent State VP for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement](#). The search will remain open until an appointment is made.

Nominations and expressions of interest in the Vice President for University Advancement position are encouraged. Please direct them to [KentStateVP_PAE@agbsearch.com](#) or the AGB Search consultants listed below:

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Advancing Higher Education Leadership



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