



## Director of Athletics Position Profile

Kent State University seeks an experienced and innovative leader to serve as its next Director of Athletics. A member of the President's Cabinet, the Director of Athletics reports to the President and serves as the senior officer providing overall leadership for the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics in a manner consistent with the university's educational mission.

### Kent State University Overview

Consistently among Ohio's top three largest public universities in terms of enrollment, Kent State University is ranked by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching among the nation's 91 public higher-research universities. Kent State is the highest-ranking public university in Northern Ohio on the Top Public Schools and Best National Universities lists by *U.S. News & World Report*. For the second year in a row, Kent State University has the distinction of ranking among the top 20 companies nationwide in *Forbes'* list of America's Best Employers for Diversity and ranks No. 1 among Northern Ohio and No. 4 in the state of Ohio on the *Forbes* 2020 Best-In-State Employers.



With eight campuses across Northeast Ohio, the College of Podiatric Medicine, Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative, Twinsburg Academic Center and academic sites in major world cities including New York City and Florence, 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.

Kent State University boasts a population of more than 37,000 students, 5,700 full-and part-time faculty and staff members and 257,000 alumni worldwide. The university comprises eight campuses:

- [Kent Campus](#)
- [Kent State University at Ashtabula](#)
- [Kent State University at East Liverpool](#)
- [Kent State University at Geauga \(in Burton\) and the Twinsburg Academic Center](#)
- [Kent State University at Salem](#)
- [Kent State University at Stark \(in Canton\)](#)

- [Kent State University at Trumbull \(in Warren\)](#)
- [Kent State University at Tuscarawas \(in New Philadelphia\)](#)

Kent State is a powerful economic engine, directly contributing more than \$1 billion annually to the Northeast Ohio region's prosperity. When coupled with the earnings of the Kent State alumni, the university's annual economic impact on the region soars to nearly \$3.4 billion and more than \$3.8 billion statewide, according to a 2018 external study.

The university's Kent Campus, which has a student body of nearly 27,000 and a thriving residential population, is located on a beautiful 950-acre campus in Kent, Ohio, a city of 30,000 within the greater Cleveland-Akron metropolitan area. The campus provides the intellectual, scientific, social, economic, and artistic resources of a major research university in a safe and serene campus setting. In 2018 Kent State was ranked the safest big college campus in Ohio and 25<sup>th</sup> safest in the country, according to the National Council for Home Safety and Security. In 2018 the Kent Campus launched a 10-year, \$1-billion facilities master plan to better serve the needs of students and the entire Kent State community. The plan enhances the welcoming feeling of the university's iconic Front Campus and genuine sense of place, elevates inclusive healthy living-learning environments, links a campus-wide series of spaces focused on innovation, and expands the dynamic synergy with the city of Kent.

Kent State University's seven regional campuses draw full- and part-time students, now totaling more than 10,000, primarily from their local communities across Northeast Ohio. Like the Kent Campus, each regional campus is thoroughly engaged in its surrounding community, making available the rich resources of a comprehensive and diverse university, significantly impacting that area's economic well-being and quality of life. Each campus has the flexibility to meet wide-ranging local needs through associate and selected baccalaureate programs; continuing education and training; research/technology parks; and facilities for advanced technology, manufacturing, and the performing arts.

Since 2015, Kent State has pursued an ambitious strategic plan, known as [A Strategic Roadmap to a Distinctive Kent State](#). The university's priorities are as follows:

- **Priority 1:** Students First. Provide an inclusive and engaged living-learning environment where all students thrive and graduate as informed citizens committed to a life of impact.
- **Priority 2:** A Distinctive Kent State. Drive innovation, idea generation, and national distinction through top-tier academic and research programs including the recruitment and support of talented faculty and staff.
- **Priority 3:** Global Competitiveness. Advance Kent State's impact and reach as a leading international university.
- **Priority 4:** Regional Impact. Serve as the innovative engine and engaged partner to meet community needs and enhance quality of life in the region and state.

- **Priority 5: Organizational Stewardship.** Ensure a culture of continuous improvement and the efficient stewardship of university resources and infrastructure.

## **Northeast Ohio: A Major Population and Economic Center**



Kent State is located in a major population and economic center. Northeast Ohio is home to more than 4.5 million people and eight Fortune 500 firms and is one of the nation's top five industrial markets and a leader in new technology. The region is rich in natural and cultural amenities, including the splendor of the Great Lakes, one of the country's most-visited national parks, the nation's second-largest theatre district, a world-class symphony orchestra, renowned museums, three major sports teams, eclectic neighborhoods, and multicultural experiences in settings from urban to rural. KSU employees obtain their healthcare from several leading hospital systems, including the Cleveland Clinic, which is currently the second-ranked hospital in the United States.

### **Our Community**

In recent years, the city of Kent has experienced dramatic revitalization as a result of a \$130-million public and private investment. Kent State University officials, city administrators, the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA), and other partners have collaborated to make the city of Kent an excellent place to live, work, study, visit and play. The Kent community genuinely supports its hometown university sports teams and offers a welcoming, supportive, and engaged community for Kent State's athletic programs, teams, coaches and student-athletes.





City of Kent, Ohio

Cultural elements in Kent include various arts, environmental and entertainment events during the year as well as the Kent State University Museum, which focuses on the history of fashion design and decorative arts in the U.S. and around the world. The Kent Stage, located downtown, is an iconic venue for a variety of arts performances in music and theater, including concerts, theatrical productions, film festivals and movie premieres. In addition, the City of Kent operates nearly 20 parks and preserves, the largest of which is the 56-acre Fred Fuller Park along the Cuyahoga River. Haymaker Farmers Market is held year-round in Kent and is one of many weekly markets in communities surrounding the university.

The city of Kent is just 20 minutes from Akron, home of more than 20,000 businesses, including the global headquarters of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. Northeast Ohio is home to some of the world's leading liquid crystal and polymer research programs and companies.

Kent is less than an hour from Cleveland, situated on the southern shore of Lake Erie, which is the second largest city in Ohio and the largest media market in the state. With 33,000 protected acres and 2.2 million visits each year, the Cuyahoga Valley National Park is located less than 30 minutes from campus and provides connectivity on the Towpath Trail all the way to Cleveland. Cleveland's professional sports teams include the Cleveland Browns (National Football League), the Cleveland Indians (Major League Baseball), the Cleveland Cavaliers (National Basketball Association), and the Cleveland Monsters (American Hockey League). Cleveland is home to Playhouse Square Center, the second largest performing arts center in the U.S. behind New York's Lincoln Center. Playhouse Square includes five theaters within what is known as the Cleveland Theater District, with resident companies such as Cleveland Playhouse, Opera Cleveland, and the Great Lakes Theater Festival. Cleveland is home to the Cleveland Orchestra, widely considered one of the finest orchestras in the world, and also boasts the I.M. Pei-designed Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Great Lakes Science Center, boating, fishing, swimming, and other waterfront recreation. The city's University Circle is a 550-acre concentration of cultural, educational, and medical institutions, including the Cleveland Botanical Garden, Case Western Reserve University, University Hospitals, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, and the Western Reserve Historical Society.

## The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics



By nearly every measure, Kent State's Department of Intercollegiate Athletics is a national leader in the education and development of student-athletes. A member of NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), Kent State sponsors 19 varsity sports and is a member of the Mid-American Conference (MAC). Kent State has a proud tradition of success in supporting student-athletes who achieve at the highest levels in both academics and athletics.

### Mission

*Graduate student-athletes and win championships.  
#FlashesForever*

### Vision

*We are nationally recognized for the exemplary character, achievements and contributions of our student-athletes to better our society.*

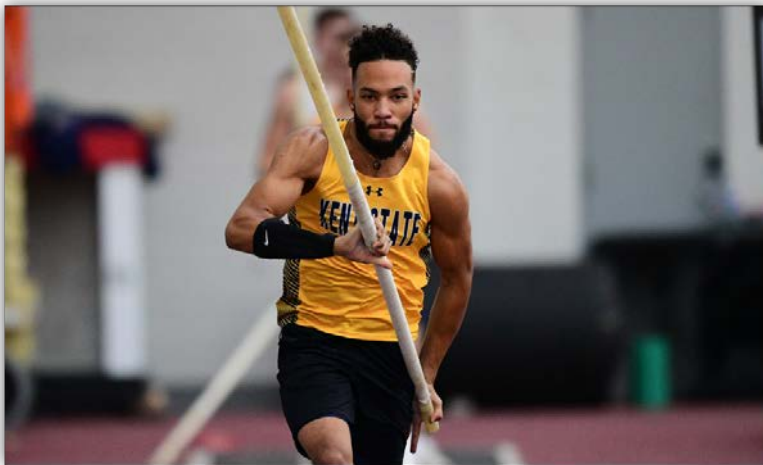


### Core Values

- **Student-Athlete Well-Being.** We are committed to the health, safety, academic, athletic and personal growth of each student.
- **Integrity.** We do the right thing and hold each other accountable.
- **Respect.** We respect all people, their cultures, beliefs, identities and thoughts.
- **Stewardship.** We are responsible guardians of the University's resources, relationships and reputation.
- **Family.** We are a collaborative team supporting one another.

## Women's Sports

Basketball  
Cross Country  
Field Hockey  
Golf  
Gymnastics  
Lacrosse  
Soccer  
Softball  
Track and Field  
Volleyball



## Men's Sports

Baseball  
Basketball  
Cross Country  
Football  
Golf  
Track and Field  
Wrestling

## Accolades

### General

- Cumulative student-athlete department GPA has grown from 2.997 in Fall 2010 to a record-high 3.348 as of Fall 2020.
- Kent State captured the 2020 MAC FAR Award in Women's Sports, an award presented annually and designed to recognize the conference institution with the highest overall combination of GPA and Academic Progress Rate.
- 60+ conference championships over the last decade.
- Five Jacoby and Reese Trophy honors, which recognize the MAC's top women's and men's athletics programs.
- 63 MAC regular season or tournament championships, and three individual national championships.
- The Golden Flashes football team won its first bowl game in school history in 2019, to win the Tropical Smoothie Café Frisco Bowl, and led the NCAA in scoring and total offense in 2020.



- The Golden Flashes women's golf team has won every MAC title since the conference adopted the sport in 1999.
- Kent State alumnae Holly Speers will become the second Golden Flash to play softball in the Olympic games this summer.
- 94 Individual Athlete Awards: All-American and Player of the Year.
- 37 Team Awards: NCAA appearances and MAC Tournament titles.
- 34 Academic All-Americans since 2014.

### **2019-2020 Accolades on the National Stage**

- TJ Lawson (men's track and field) earned a NCAA invite in heptathlon to the 2020 NCAA Indoor Championships.
- Track and Field Alum Danniell Thomas-Dodd won silver in the shot put at the IAAF World Championships.
- Women's Golf nationally ranked as high as #3; highest team ranking (for any team) in KSU history.
- Erin Gardner (volleyball) ranked in the top-20 nationally in total digs (594) and digs per set (5.26). Also, the fastest player to the 1,000-dig mark in school history.
- Antwan Dixon (football) was named to the 2019 Uplifting Athletes Rare Disease Champion Team.
- Lisa Strom, women's golf head coach, was named LPGA Professionals Coach of the Year.
- 5 All-Americans.
- Leah Pasqualetti, the #1 pole vault recruit in the country, signed to compete in the 2020-21 season with the Golden Flashes.
- VonCameron Davis, the first Ohio Mr. Basketball student-athlete in school history, signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball for the Golden Flashes Men's Basketball Team.

### **2019-2020 Academic Excellence**

- In Spring 2020, all 19 teams posted a 3.0 or higher term GPA for the first time in Kent State history.
- A record 124 student-athletes received a perfect 4.0 GPA.
- A record 292 student-athletes finished the Spring term with a 3.4 GPA or better.
- Two CoSIDA Academic All-Americans.
- 100 Academic All-MAC selections.
- In Spring 2020, the Golden Flashes boasted the highest cumulative department GPA (3.331) in school history.
- Six programs - gymnastics, men's golf, volleyball, lacrosse, women's golf and field hockey - posted a Spring GPA of 3.7 or higher.
- In Spring 2020, the gymnastics team earned a department record 3.89 GPA.



- Eight additional programs – women’s track and field, soccer, baseball, women’s basketball, men’s track and field, wrestling, football and men’s basketball – earned their best term GPA in history.

### **Successful Alumni: A Hallmark of Kent State University Athletics**

Kent State takes great pride in its Golden Flashes, who go on to successful careers in wide-ranging fields from business to healthcare to professional and collegiate athletics. Some of the KSU Athletics alumni who have excelled at the next levels of their sport: Thurman Munson (baseball); Antonio Gates (basketball); Nick Saban, Lou Holtz, Jack Lambert, James Harrison, Josh Cribbs, and Julian Edelman (football); Ben Curtis, Mackenzie Hughes and Corey Connors (golf); Jenna Hellstrom (soccer); Madison Thompson (field hockey); Jennifer Ha and Karoline Stormo (golf); Hall of Fame coaches such as Judy Devine (field hockey) and Herb Page (golf); and many Olympians such as Danniell Thomas-Dodd (shot put), Kim Kreiner (javelin), Betty-Jean Maycock (gymnastics), Gerald Tinker (Gold medalist, track), and Holly Speers (softball).



### **Athletics Facilities**

Kent State University offers a variety of state-of-the-art facilities for its athletics programs.

- **Athletic Training and Education Center.** Completed during the 2016-17 academic year, the KSU Athletic Training and Education Center is a 10,000-square foot, two-floor sports medicine facility with key features including three therapy pools, underwater treadmill, cryotherapy room and an AlterG anti-gravity treadmill.
- **Basketball/Volleyball Development Center.** In Fall 2019 the new Basketball/Volleyball Development Center was opened within the Annex adjacent to the Memorial Athletic and Convocation Center. The newly renovated addition provides 10,000-square feet of multi-sport flexible space to support volleyball and men’s and women’s basketball. This addition generates flexibility for practice and training both in a team and individual setting, working with the unique course schedules of student-athletes. The wood floor matches the competitive playing surface in the M.A.C. Center arena.



- **David and Peggy Edmonds Baseball and Softball Training Facility.** Opened in 2014, the David and Peggy Edmonds Baseball and Softball Training Facility includes dirt pitching mounds and moveable batting cages on a pristine turf surface and office space for the coaching staffs.
- **Diamond at Dix.** Considered one of the premier softball venues in the MAC, the Diamond at Dix serves as home to Kent State's softball team.
- **Dix Stadium.** Long-time home of the Kent State Golden Flashes football team and recent home of the women's lacrosse and soccer teams.
- **Ferrara and Page Golf Training and Learning Center.** Opened in 2007, the Ferrara and Page Golf Training and Learning Center provides Kent State men's and women's golfers a state-of-art training suite.
- **Jenkins Student-Athlete Academic Center.** Unveiled in 2017, the Jenkins Student-Athlete Academic Center is a 5,000-square foot facility designed to assist more than 100 student-athletes at a time with their academic needs.
- **Kent State Field House.** The men's and women's indoor track and field teams call the Kent State Field House home. The facility includes a six-lane, 292-meter surface track with eight-lane straightaway; long jump, high jump, and pole vault pits; throwing areas; observation towers; and the James Harrison Weight Room. Installation of the new Field House indoor turf project was completed in December 2019. The new surface installed by FieldTurf, showcases a custom thatch layer replicating the Dix Stadium playing surface with increased durability.
- **M.A.C. Center.** Located in the heart of the Kent campus, the Memorial Athletic and Convocation (MAC) Center is a bustling hub for intercollegiate athletics hosting Golden Flashes basketball, gymnastics, volleyball and wrestling events, and other campus and community events such as graduations, convocations, speakers, concerts and other entertainment events.
- **Murphy-Mellis Field.** The Murphy-Mellis Field opened in 2005 as home to the Kent State field hockey team.
- **Olga A. Mural Field at Schoonover Stadium.** The Olga A. Mural Field at Schoonover Stadium was dedicated in 2005 and is one of the finest college baseball facilities in the Midwest.



## **Director of Athletics, Kent State University**

Kent State University is pursuing a dynamic leader who is committed to the ideals of higher education and the values of participation in intercollegiate athletics. The next Director of Athletics must be a servant leader who is committed to continued academic success and graduation, student-athlete well-being, and the personal development of every student-athlete while continuing the tradition of winning MAC championships, participating in post-season competition, and garnering athletic accomplishments.

The Director of Athletics will report directly to the President and be a contributing member of the President's Cabinet, comprised of excellent leaders who are excited to support and engage in mutual collaborations across campus to provide benefit for both the university and the Athletics program. The Director of Athletics will provide leadership to outstanding coaches, administrators, support staff and most significantly the student-athletes while managing and providing oversight to the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics.

The Director of Athletics will uphold the integrity of the KSU Athletics program through compliance to NCAA rules and regulations, policies and procedures of the university and the State of Ohio. Revenue generation, marketing and demonstrated fundraising skills will be necessary assets to assist in the viability and sustainability of the department's budget. Kent State is seeking a director who will be a strategic forward thinker, a visionary leader who has the ability to articulate their vision while understanding the needs of the Athletics program, university and a changing NCAA environment. As an effective communicator both to internal and external constituents, the Director of Athletics will need to build relationships and be a goodwill ambassador to students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, former student-athletes, corporate partners, media entities, community leaders, the city of Kent and Northeast Ohio.

As the leader of this multi-faceted organization, the Director of Athletics must support and embrace diversity, equity and inclusion while welcoming a variety of perspectives that will better serve decision making and important initiatives. The director will need to adapt to the current challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent recovery process. The director should utilize the Mission, Vision and Core Values of Kent State University Athletics to align with the campus and to establish a caring and supportive culture that engages all members of the department and provides opportunity for open communication and dialogue.

The preferred candidate will have Division I experience, exceptional organizational skills, and experience in the hiring, evaluation and professional development of coaches and staff members. For more information on Kent State University, its highly successful Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, and information regarding the city of Kent and Northeast Ohio region, go to [www.Kent.edu/AD-search](http://www.Kent.edu/AD-search).

## Application Process

Bachelor's degree is required, master's degree preferred. Compensation is competitive and will be commensurate with experience and qualifications. Candidates should apply through [CarrSports Consulting](#) and include a cover letter describing relevant experiences and interest in this position, curriculum vitae/resume; and names, titles and contact information for five references. To assure full consideration, application materials should be received by **February 28, 2021**, and the applicant portal will remain open until the hiring process is completed. Documents submitted to Kent State University for employment opportunities are subject to disclosure under the Ohio Public Records law.

*Kent State University values diversity and is committed to equal opportunity for all persons regardless of age, color, disability, ethnicity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other status protected by law.*

