



## **Vice President for Enrollment Management Leadership Profile**

Kent State University seeks a proven, forward-thinking enrollment management leader to serve as its next Vice President for Enrollment Management. A member of the President's Cabinet, the Vice President for Enrollment Management reports to the president and serves as the senior officer providing overall executive leadership and management of the Division of Enrollment Management and leads a university-wide enrollment effort that is highly coordinated with, and responsive to, the needs of the colleges and campuses.

### **Kent State University Overview**

Consistently among Ohio's top three largest public universities in terms of enrollment, Kent State University is on the rise among the nation's top research universities. Kent State is slated to move to the highest rank—Doctoral/Very High Research Activity or "R1"—in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education at the end of this month. Kent State ranks among the top 100 national public universities and in the top tier of national universities in the 2021 rankings by U.S. News and World Report. The university has the distinction of being recognized by Forbes on the Best Employers for Women 2021 list, ranking No. 57 in the nation overall and eighth among colleges and universities nationally. Kent State continues to be highly ranked as a top employer. Forbes and Statista named Kent State No. 1 among employers in northern Ohio on the 2020 America's Best-in-State Employers list that highlights America's best employers, and a top educational institution on the Ohio list. Also in 2021, Kent State was recognized for the 10<sup>th</sup> time as a Great College to Work For by the Chronicle of Higher Education, making its coveted Honor Roll with recognition in seven categories: Compensation and Benefits; Confidence in Senior Leadership; Diversity, Equity and Belonging; Faculty Experience; Faculty and Staff Well-Being; Mission and Pride; and Shared Governance. Kent State was listed as one of the 2021 "Best of the Best" Colleges and Universities for LGBTQ+ Students by Campus Pride. For the 12<sup>th</sup> straight year, the university's Kent Campus received the Military Friendly School designation for 2021-2022.

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, Italy, 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 nearly 35,000 students, 5,000 full- and part-time faculty and staff members and 262,000 alumni worldwide. The university comprises eight

campuses that produce 10,000 career-ready graduates each year.

- [Kent Campus](#)
- [Kent State University at Ashtabula](#)
- [Kent State University Columbiana County \(campuses in East Liverpool and Salem\)](#)
- [Kent State University at Geauga \(in Burton\) and the Twinsburg Academic Center](#)
- [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 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 26,000 and a thriving residential population, is located on a beautiful 953-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. Also, 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 9,000, 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.

Kent State is a member of the Mid-American Conference and participates in 11 women's sports and eight men's sports including football in the Division I Bowl Subdivision level. The university is consistently recognized as one of the top performing programs in the conference academically and athletically; for example, most recently winning the 2021 Jacoby Trophy as the MAC's top women's athletic program and the 2021 MAC Institutional Academic Achievement Award.

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.



The university currently is engaged in a review and refresh of the Strategic Roadmap to a Distinctive Kent State, which will be completed by the end of this academic year. This plan will serve as our North Star for the next five years in making Kent State University even stronger, more inclusive, and more successful.

## Northeast Ohio: A Major Population and Economic Center



Kent State is located in a major population and economic center and is within an eight-hour drive of 80% of the U.S. population. Northeast Ohio is home to more than 4.5 million people and seven 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 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.





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 2.7 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 has professional sports teams in football, baseball, basketball and hockey. Cleveland is home to Playhouse Square, 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, Cleveland Ballet and Cleveland International Film Festival. Cleveland is home to the Cleveland Orchestra, widely considered one of the finest orchestras in the world and 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 Cleveland Institute of Music.

## The Division of Enrollment Management

The Division of Enrollment Management serves students and families directly through the offices of Admissions, Scholarships and Financial Aid, One Stop for Student Services, University Registrar, and Enrollment Management Operations. The division provides leadership and expertise through a strategic enrollment management approach that seeks to serve current and prospective students by providing high-quality services through personal connections, technology, and streamlined business processes throughout the student life cycle, from recruitment through graduation and connection with alumni.

The division also works in close partnership with the divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, working collaboratively to optimize student recruitment and enrollment and to advance retention and completion through advisement regarding the overall student experience. The Division of Enrollment Management is also a resource for academic units and the Provost's Office as they consider the competitive landscape for existing and potential academic programs.

### Vision Statement

To be deeply committed to transforming students' lives through access, engagement and success while working creatively and diligently to attain optimal enrollment to support the academic mission of the institution. Enrollment Management units will work with our colleagues to achieve cohesive, supportive, and seamless navigation for students from the date of first inquiry through graduation and beyond. We strive to become the most innovative, strategic, and visionary enrollment management team in the state and the nation.



### Mission Statement

Advance Kent State University by recruiting, enrolling, and serving diverse and academically prepared students in support of their attainment of a Kent State degree.

### Core Values

**Respect:** We are committed to respect, inclusion and compassion with our colleagues and the people we serve.

**Service:** Provide high-quality service through personal connections, technology and streamlined business processes.

**Student Centered:** Students are at the core of what we do, and we work purposely to meet individual needs to support access and assist students to reach their goals.

**Integrity:** Display a high standard of personal and professional ethics.

**Diversity and Inclusion:** Provide an equitable and inclusive environment where all people feel a sense of belonging across Kent State University and our community.

**Collaboration:** Create partnerships across Kent State University to serve students and support the university's mission.

The division's units are:

### **Admissions**

Kent State University attracts students from all 50 states and the District of Columbia and from nearly 100 countries. In Fall 2021, Kent State's enrollment was 34,761, which includes 29,302 undergraduate students and 5,459 graduate students.

### **Enrollment Management Operations and Administration**

Enrollment Management Operations and Administration supports the Division of Enrollment Management by providing strategic and operational leadership and visioning for initiatives, systems and portfolio management, and planning and support for new initiatives and systems integration. This area coordinates with functional areas to create and maintain system and operational efficiencies, to make process improvements, and to analyze and develop systems, policies, and processes to support and better align academic operations with the university's mission and strategic priorities and improve their operational effectiveness.

### **One Stop for Student Services**

Kent State's One Stop for Student Services at the Kent Campus opened in 2017. As part of the university's "Students First" priority, the One Stop serves as a single point of contact for student customer services previously provided at the Bursar, Registrar, and Student Financial Aid offices. One Stop counselors are cross-trained and provide holistic advising in these areas.

### **University Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid**

The mission of the University Office of Scholarship and Financial Aid is to strive to make a degree from Kent State an affordable option for students and families, regardless of family income. Financial aid specialists help students and families understand the financial aid process and coordinate the award of all scholarships, grants, loans and work-study funding for Kent State University.

### **University Registrar**

The Office of the University Registrar provides efficient, timely and personable services to students, the campus community, and outstanding agencies and consistently and fairly implements state, federal, and institutional policies and procedures. Primary services include

academic scheduling services and records maintenance, diploma and grades processing, transcript services, and development of the schedule of classes.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Vice President for Enrollment Management**

The Vice President for Enrollment Management serves as an executive officer of Kent State University, provides overall leadership for the Division of Enrollment Management, and leads an enrollment effort that is highly coordinated with, and responsive to, the needs of the colleges and campuses. The position reports directly to President Todd Diacon and serves as a member of the President's Cabinet. The Vice President also serves as an administrative liaison to the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee of the Kent State University Board of Trustees and works collaboratively with Cabinet officers on key initiatives and issues.

The Vice President for Enrollment Management leads a divisional team of approximately 130 staff members in the areas of undergraduate admissions, enrollment management operations and administration, One Stop for Student Services, university scholarships and financial aid, and registrar. The Vice President will manage an institutional financial aid budget of more than \$70 million. The division's annual operating and salary budget is approximately \$10 million.

Enrollment management is a vital part of the university's student success plan, covering the student life cycle from recruitment to completion and alumni status. Partnering closely with university leadership, deans, faculty and staff, the Vice President will lead a complex recruiting environment and will work with senior leadership to analyze and understand the competitive landscape of higher education, playing a key role in shaping the university's direction, fiscal strength, stature, reputation, and possibilities. The Vice President is expected to partner on retention as well as recruitment; promote open conversation; and engage the entire Kent State community in working together to achieve the institution's bold vision for enrollment and student success.

The Vice President for Enrollment Management will:

- Promote the mission of Kent State and the success of its students.
- Lead in the execution of the multi-year, comprehensive Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan.
- Serve as a thought partner, strategist, and collaborator across the university system and at all levels, with the overall objective of everyone working toward both college and university-wide imperatives.
- Implement a sophisticated, integrated, analytically informed, and collaborative approach to university-wide enrollment; routinely analyze data to shape enrollment directions and make appropriate adjustments to an integrated and strategic enrollment effort.
- Regularly reassess effectiveness of recruitment activities and financial aid programs and make appropriate adjustments to lead an effort that is continuously proactive and responsive to market forces and university needs.



- Work closely with college and regional campus deans, the vice president for university communications and marketing, and the vice president for regional campuses to develop, implement, and evaluate enrollment marketing plans and strategies designed to attract and retain all students, both traditional and non-traditional, with the overall goal of attracting more students who are excited, challenged, and engaged by the wide-ranging opportunities at Kent State.
- Focus on alignment and integration of administrative student services to optimize efficiencies, enhance service, remove redundancies, support retention, and increase effectiveness and efficiencies.
- Act as a resource to help educate members of the university community about regional and national issues for higher education including shifting demographics, workforce needs, public perceptions of the value proposition for higher education, and student academic interests, which may impact the development and delivery of academic programs and the overall student experience.
- Continue to build an evidence-based culture in Enrollment Management in which all decisions are backed by sound data analysis and data is systematized and disseminated throughout the university.
- Provide the vision for a state-of-art records management and registration operations and empower the registrar to continually assess and refine the strategy and tactics needed to provide excellent service to prospective and current students in a rapidly changing technological environment.

### **Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership**

Kent State University has achieved remarkable successes in recent years including the attainment of its ambitious 65% graduation-rate goal, a dramatic increase in the four-year graduation rate, and significant improvements in degree completion by underrepresented and first-generation students. Kent State has received national recognition for these achievements, including recognition as a 2020 finalist for the prestigious APLU Degree Completion Award. Also in recent years the university has sustained and even doubled down on its historical commitment to serving first-generation students, underrepresented students, and students with high financial need, launching the comprehensive, bold Flashes Go Further program in 2021.

Kent State faces extremely challenging external forces impacting higher education enrollments including escalating competition for undergraduates in Ohio and the Midwest, given a highly saturated higher education market and declining demographics; constrained family incomes and state government funding; and the changing ways in which students prefer to learn, communicate, and seek information. Beyond these challenges that have been on the rise for years, higher education has been deeply affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic, which is likely to affect students' educational choices and demands for the long run. Additionally, the university's success in raising its four-year graduation rate and increased high school student participation in College Credit Plus will affect overall university enrollments with more students graduating in a shorter timeframe.

In the spring of 2019, Kent State launched a financial aid optimization study and began the process of building a multi-year, comprehensive Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan for the university's future. The plan was completed in June 2021, and its implementation now is underway. The plan engages the entire university community through priorities, initiatives, and strategies in six focus areas: academic affairs; data and technology; enrollment, educational access, and completion; external visibility and brand awareness; fiscal sustainability; and student support services and co-curricular experiences. The new Vice President for Enrollment Management will provide critical leadership in implementing and achieving the SEM plan.

From a regional campus perspective, Kent State has made significant progress over the last several years on basic, fundamental structural issues related to processes, the student experience, and communication among student service areas across the institution (e.g., financial aid, admissions). The alignment and leveraging of resources has demonstrated greater efficiencies and has provided optimism as we move forward. Other opportunities for improvement still exist. These include collaboration as an eight-campus system to support our students regardless of point of access, stronger coordination, and philosophical discussion and strategic planning around enrollment management as a "system". The new vice president will continue to build upon the momentum of the last several years, consider possibilities from multiple vantage points, and dive into core issues and opportunities, laying a strong foundation to ensure that Kent State reaches its goals and accomplishes its mission.

### **Qualifications and Qualities of the Vice President for Enrollment Management**

A master's degree in a relevant field, or the equivalent combination of education and experience, and a minimum of 10 years of progressively responsible experience in enrollment management leadership are required.

Qualifications and qualities of the ideal candidate include:

- **Institutional leadership:** Readiness to be an active, valued member of the President's leadership team, build strong relationships with academic affairs leadership, and partner closely with the colleges and schools; a demonstrated commitment to the university's students-first philosophy; honesty and integrity in advising the president on critical issues; an understanding of how to accomplish much in a centralized and decentralized enrollment environment; the ability to build consensus and a sense of teamwork; and the ability to align practices and procedures with Kent State's educational access mission.
- **Experience in leadership and management of enrollment:** Experience participating in leadership and management within an enrollment office in a college or university; the ability to build and implement an appropriate and effective enrollment plan that reflects institutional goals; the capacity to lead and manage the complex interplay of marketing and recruiting strategies, enrollment goals, yield, and financial aid; the ability to optimize financial aid resources to promote affordability and recruit and retain

students; competency in using enrollment-related data, analytics and best practices in research and assessment for decision making and continuous improvement; and ability to collaborate effectively with the Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement to optimize the total amount and awarding of scholarship funding and explore the potential for post-graduate recruiting opportunities.

- **Knowledge of higher education trends:** Understanding of current and projected changes in demographics and other factors affecting higher education, the enrollment landscape, the importance of retention, and technologies in the field; familiarity with national best practices and recruiting students in challenging demographic environments; understanding of financial aid investment and distribution; and ability to create a vision and strategy to target non-traditional student populations including those seeking microcredentials, certificates and other non-degree educational options.
- **Commitment to enhancing diversity, equity, and a sense of belonging:** Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and a track record of success in reflecting and realizing these aims in the work of the division.
- **Demonstrated ability in marketing:** Strong understanding of branding and marketing, closely collaborating with University Communications and Marketing on strategies to enhance university brand and reputation; demonstrated expertise in student enrollment marketing tactics to affect yield and persistence in targeted segments; and proven success in innovative thinking to develop and implement creative enrollment marketing strategies.
- **Exceptional communication skills:** Ability to be articulate, persuasive, and precise in communicating with internal audiences including both highly invested leadership and faculty and external audiences including parents, prospective students, and alumni; desire to interact with a wide range of constituencies including deans and academic partners, engaging many in the dialogue to move the university forward together.
- **Personal qualities:** Ability to drive a vision through engagement, transparency, hard work, and a sense of urgency; strong values aligned with integrity, collaboration, compassion, and transparency; sound judgment backed by self-confidence and a sense of perspective; ability to work effectively in a campus culture that is relationship-oriented; and a capacity to navigate a highly complex institution.

### Compensation

Compensation will be competitive and commensurate with qualifications.

## Application Process

Candidates should apply through [Kent State's employment system](#) 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 4, 2022**. Documents submitted to Kent State University for employment opportunities are subject to disclosure under the Ohio Public Records law.

Questions, requests for information, and nominations may be directed to the search coordinator, Dr. Charlene Reed, Vice President and University Secretary, [creed2@kent.edu](mailto:creed2@kent.edu).

*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.*