

# Bucknell UNIVERSITY

## Vice President for Human Resources

Bucknell University invites nominations and applications for the position of Vice President for Human Resources (VPHR). Reporting directly to [President John Bravman](#), the VPHR is a visible and valued campus leader who will recommend, implement, and evaluate strategies that put the University's faculty and staff in the best position to accomplish Bucknell's institutional mission and goals.

### ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Originally established in 1846 as the University at Lewisburg, Bucknell University was renamed in 1886 in honor of William Bucknell, an institutional benefactor. Bucknell stewards more than 500 acres of campus property, and maintains 150 buildings, the oldest of which dates to 1840; the newest, [Holmes Hall](#), was completed in 2021. Students live on campus all four years, fostering a vibrant, close-knit living and learning community. About 50 percent of Bucknell students participate in one of the seven fraternities and nine sororities that make up Bucknell's [Greek community](#).

Bucknell is supported by 1,250 full-time employees (400 faculty and 850 staff) and has a dedicated network of more than 56,000 alumni. Over 3,700 undergraduates and 35 graduate students, representing most U.S. states and 66 countries, are enrolled across Bucknell's three colleges: the [College of Arts & Sciences](#), the [College of Engineering](#), and the [Freeman College of Management](#). Approximately 63 percent of Bucknell's students are enrolled in the College of Arts & Sciences, 19 percent in the College of Engineering, and 18 percent in the Freeman College of Management. Bucknell awards [bachelor's degrees in more than 50 fields](#), including nine interdisciplinary programs. A small number of [master's degrees](#) are awarded in selected fields. Bucknell has an operating budget of \$236 million and an [endowment that surpassed \\$1 billion in fiscal year 2021 for the first time](#). Bucknell's 450-acre campus is [among the most attractive in the country](#), and the University offers a competitive [benefits package](#), including tuition remission.

### LEWISBURG

[Lewisburg, Pennsylvania](#) (pop. 45,000) is centrally located in the state and features beautifully maintained Victorian homes; the restored art deco [Campus Theatre](#) (owned by the University); a variety of restaurants, shops, and boutiques; and the [Barnes & Noble at Bucknell University Bookstore](#). The city of [Williamsport](#) is about a 30 minute drive from campus, and [Penn State University's](#) main campus in State College is a little more than an hour away, as is [Harrisburg](#), Pennsylvania's state capital. Bucknell is about three hours from New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C.

As the leading University in the [Susquehanna Valley](#) and one of its largest employers, Bucknell regularly partners with other major institutions and local and state government to improve the region. Bucknell's faculty and students collaborate on research with [Geisinger Health System](#) and take the lead in studying the [Susquehanna River](#). The institution also serves as a hub in a fiber-optic network that spans Pennsylvania.

The cost of living is low in Lewisburg, compared to that of major U.S. cities and suburbs. Bucknell's surroundings yield fresh produce, cultural activities and events, and outstanding opportunities for outdoor activity on the Susquehanna River and in the nearby state parks and forests. The [Lewisburg Area School District](#) receives excellent reviews for its schools at all grade levels, and [Lewisburg Area High School](#) consistently ranks among the top 50 high schools in Pennsylvania for SAT scores and statewide exams.

### **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ANTI-RACISM**

Bucknell is committing to improving its campus climate, so that all who work, study, and live on campus can thrive. Priorities set out in [The Plan for Bucknell 2025](#) commit the University to fostering a campus environment that recognizes the impact of power and privilege while addressing historical and emerging barriers to equity and inclusion. Bucknell intends to provide all students, faculty, administrators, and staff the structures and programs to thrive in a diverse world. To do so, Bucknell commits to a comprehensive, coordinated approach to supporting underrepresented students, faculty, administrators, and staff while continuing to build diverse communities.

Bucknell is also committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse community and promotes the full participation and inclusion of all its members. The VPHR will monitor and develop programs and resources in human resources at the University to ensure that the department embodies inclusive excellence for all constituencies. More on Bucknell's approach to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging can be found [here](#).

### **SENIOR LEADERSHIP**

The VPHR reports to [Dr. John Bravman](#), who became Bucknell's 17th president in 2010. President Bravman has built a foundation of support with Bucknellians around the world, and his leadership has helped foster an unprecedented period of expansion and improvement to the University's facilities and programs. President Bravman also led the campus through the pandemic without furloughs or layoffs, and Bucknell successfully operated with students on campus and remotely for the full 2020-2021 academic year and on campus instruction for the 2021-2022 academic year. The University's [Board of Trustees](#) unanimously approved an extension of his contract through June 2025.

During Dr. Bravman's presidency, the University has:

- ◆ [Increased the minimum wage to \\$15](#) to recognize the critical role staff play in the overall success of the institution;
- ◆ [Recognized Juneteeth as a campus holiday](#), commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the United States;
- ◆ Established the [President's Diversity Council](#) to implement Bucknell's Strategic Plan for Diversity, which included establishing an Antiracism Fund, joining the Racial Equity Leadership Alliance as an inaugural member, creating the Presidential Diversity Fellowship, and establishing departmental DEI councils across many departments and divisions within the University;
- ◆ Put into action [The Plan for Bucknell 2025](#), which focuses on cultivating academic excellence, strengthening and sustaining a diverse community, improving the residential experience, and enhancing sustainability across all University operations;

- ◆ Completed the largest comprehensive campaign in its history, the [2012-17 WE DO Campaign](#), which exceeded its \$500 million goal;
- ◆ Established the [President's Sustainability Council](#) to define, support, and/or coordinate sustainability programs and activities across the University and oversee the development and implementation of a sustainability plan for Bucknell;
- ◆ Established the [Freeman College of Management](#);
- ◆ Opened Academic West and East, four new apartment residence halls, a student commons building, and the [Graham Building](#), home to student health, wellness, and counseling services as well as a state-of-the-art wrestling facility; and,
- ◆ Opened [Holmes Hall](#) in fall 2021 to house the Freeman College of Management and the Department of Art & Art History.

### Operations & Management Group

The [Operations & Management Group](#) is the University's senior administrative leadership team. This includes: the President; the Provost; the Vice Presidents of Advancement, Communications, Enrollment Management, Finance & Administration, Human Resources, Library & Information Technology, and Strategic Initiatives; the Associate Vice President for Facilities; the Associate Provost for Equity & Inclusion; the Deans of the three colleges; the Dean of Students; the Director of Athletics & Recreation; the General Counsel and Chief of Staff; and the Executive Director of the President's Office and University Secretary. The VPHR also convenes regularly with the President's Direct Reports group (PDR) to collaboratively and strategically advise the president.

### Board of Trustees

The University is governed by a volunteer [Board of Trustees](#). While the Board's bylaws allow for up to 50 voting trustees, it currently comprises 39. The President is a member of the Board of Trustees, which meets three times per year. The President, Provost, and other senior administrators support various Board committees, with the VPHR providing direct support to committees reviewing human resources issues and executive compensation.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

In 2019, the Board of Trustees approved [The Plan for Bucknell 2025](#). As the University's first strategic plan in 13 years, it established institutional goals and four overarching commitments. The plan ensures a sustainable, vibrant future amid the challenges confronting higher education, including demographic shifts in the college-age population, increased scrutiny of the value of a four-year degree, and the rising costs of college.

The plan commits Bucknell to:

- ◆ Cultivating academic excellence across the institution;
- ◆ Building and sustaining a diverse community in which all students, faculty, and staff experience a sense of belonging supported by a foundation of inclusion, equity, and access;
- ◆ Providing an integrated and exemplary residential student experience; and,
- ◆ Creating a sustainable future through the responsible stewardship of the University's financial, natural, human, and other resources.

## **FINANCES, FUNDRAISING, AND FACILITIES**

The [WE DO](#) campaign raised more than \$170 million for financial aid endowment, more than \$100 million for academic programs and support, and more than \$60 million for facilities. The University has weathered the pandemic in [excellent financial standing](#), requiring no layoffs or furloughs of staff. Bucknell has operated with a budget surplus for the past three years, and takes pride in its conversion to being [self-funded](#) for medical coverage.

- ◆ \$236 million Operating Budget (77 percent tuition, 23 percent gifts and spendable endowment)

- ◆ \$1.1 billion [Endowment](#)
- ◆ Financial Aid (AY 21-22) \$72 million in grants awarded to 53 percent of undergraduates
- ◆ 150 campus buildings, 15 of which are LEED-certified

### FACULTY

The core of Bucknell's commitment to its students lies in Bucknell's outstanding faculty. They are exceptional teachers who practice a direct, energetic, and committed form of pedagogy, which creates a rich variety of close intellectual engagement between faculty and students. The University employs roughly 400 full-time faculty, 98 percent of whom hold a Ph.D. or another terminal degree. Bucknell is a top producer of Faculty [Fulbright Scholars](#), and faculty perform nationally and internationally acclaimed research, including awards from the [National Science Foundation](#), among many others. Bucknell provides excellent and well-maintained facilities with state-of-the-art equipment to support faculty research and teaching. The faculty includes:

- ◆ 407 full time faculty, 98 percent holding terminal degree
- ◆ 70 faculty members who identify as Black, indigenous, and/or persons of color

For more information on the makeup of the Bucknell faculty, see the [Bucknell Fact Book 2021-22](#).

### STAFF

Bucknell staff are the lifeblood of the University. Bucknell is a top employer in the region, and the average term of service for employees is 10 years, evidencing strong commitment from the institution to its people and vice versa. Over 850 staff serve in 21 occupational categories, and the vast majority are full-time, with most serving in exempt roles. The staff includes:

- ◆ 853 full-time and 22 part-time staff
- ◆ 68 staff members identify as Black, indigenous, and/or persons of color
- ◆ 21 occupational categories, of which facilities is the largest department, with 200 staff members
- ◆ 4:3 ratio of women to men
- ◆ 507 exempt, 368 non-exempt

For more information on the makeup of the Bucknell staff, see the [Bucknell Fact Book 2021-22](#).

### STUDENTS

Highly qualified and motivated students from diverse backgrounds compete to gain admission into Bucknell. The Class of 2025 was selected from over 11,000 applicants. The top 20 schools with which Bucknell competes for applicants include private research universities, large state universities, Ivy League institutions, and several liberal arts colleges. Of the 3,886 students admitted to Bucknell's Class of 2025 (for a 34.5 percent admittance rate), 1,027 enrolled, of which 21 percent identify as students of color, and 8.1 percent are first-generation students. Since 2005, Bucknell has partnered with the [Posse Foundation](#) and currently welcomes student cohorts from Washington, D.C., Boston, and Los Angeles.

Bucknell students achieve recognition for their research, service, leadership, and creative work during their time on campus. For instance, in the last few years students have received [Fulbright Teaching Assistantships](#) and [Goldwater Scholarships](#), among other prestigious academic honors; organized and secured funding for international service projects; been listed as co-authors on peer-reviewed, published research papers across the disciplines; developed their own theatre productions; designed medical devices to improve emergency medicine; started their own companies to sell products they created; and much more.

Bucknell's retention and graduation rates are well above the national average. In the University's [annual survey of graduating classes](#), 94 percent of members of the Class of 2020 reported being either employed, in graduate school, preparing for graduate school, serving in the military, or volunteering within nine months of graduation.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES AT BUCKNELL**

[Human Resources](#) is located in the historic [Cooley Hall](#). Currently 13 professional staff oversee the department, which provides onboarding for new staff and faculty, and oversees the implementation of the University's benefits for employees. Bucknell employees enjoy tuition benefits; a University-backed mortgage guarantee program; wellness plans including [Be Well](#); an [EAP program](#); and medical and life insurance and retirement savings programs, all of which are administered by HR. Bucknell successfully implemented the [Workday](#) platform in 2017 for personnel, payroll, and financial management.

Bucknell's Human Resources Department is committed to:

- ◆ Recruiting candidates who will contribute to a climate that supports the growth and development of a diverse campus community;
- ◆ Offering excellent benefits and competitive wages;
- ◆ Providing a friendly and safe environment;
- ◆ Providing professional development and advancement opportunities;
- ◆ Partnering with department heads/managers in strategy execution;
- ◆ Serving as a champion for faculty and staff; and
- ◆ Serving as an agent of continuous transformation.

Also of note, [DEI Councils](#) exist across departments at Bucknell. The Human Resources DEI Council meets regularly to monitor and improve best practices. Recent activities and accomplishments include having all search committee members attend proactive search strategies training before serving on a committee and initiating several training programs over the past few months that specifically address biases when conducting performance reviews.

### **ROLE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR HUMAN RESOURCES**

The VPHR is a valued and vital member of the University's leadership team who oversees a departmental operating budget of \$1.02 million and manages a self-insured employee health care plan with a budget of \$14.22 million. The successful candidate will be responsible for developing a progressive, innovative, efficient, and collaborative HR organization that supports a culture of engagement. They will also design, implement, and evaluate strategies and policies to ensure that the University attains its objectives related to employee resources and needs. The VPHR is responsible for the oversight and administration of all HR services and functions, including a strategic focus on anticipating changing faculty and staff needs, proactively improving support systems, and strengthening trusting partnerships between HR and all constituents of the campus community.

The VPHR will have an influential role at an institution that is a national leader in preparing students to make a difference in the world. The ideal candidate will be energized by the opportunity to impact a dynamic and diverse community that values relationships, excellence, and forward momentum. The successful candidate will lead by example in modeling trust, transparency, compassion, enthusiasm, and encouragement across all constituencies of the University community.

Specifically, the VPHR will:

- ◆ Drive success by developing and implementing HR policies, procedures, and programs, and by effectively leveraging technology to meet strategic goals;
- ◆ Serve as a key advisor to campus leaders;

- ◆ Be a proven human resources leader in higher education or a similarly complex environment comprising many constituencies;
- ◆ Be a strong advocate for meeting employee needs and desires that help them thrive at work and at home;
- ◆ Be current on employment trends that will have immediate and long-term impact on University staffing, including coordination of a hybrid workforce;
- ◆ Hold a broad skill set in employment, benefits, compensation, and organization; and
- ◆ Have demonstrated leadership promoting a diverse and inclusive environment.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The VPHR will have the opportunity to work with a dedicated staff on transformative changes in the areas of policy development, establishment of best practices, improving communications and visibility, team-building through new department hires, and enhancing professional development opportunities for staff on campus. The VPHR will also update and improve policy standards around inclusive hiring, recruitment, and retention, while ensuring an excellent level of customer service to all staff, faculty, and student employees. The President and the University's senior leadership represent an outstanding and dedicated leadership team, ready to support the Vice President in introducing new perspectives and strategies for human resources at Bucknell. The VPHR will be a champion of faculty and staff and will lead in strengthening campus climate and advancing the University's priorities for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The VPHR is responsible for the oversight and administration of all HR services and functions, including a strategic focus on the following:

- ◆ **Strengthen partnerships between human resources and all divisions of the campus community.** The VPHR will recognize that people are the most critical resource at Bucknell and will champion the University's faculty and staff at all levels. They will strengthen the department's image and professionalism through improving accessibility, availability, and the welcoming nature of the office. Advocating for staff and faculty, assisting and supporting all employees at all stages of their careers, and holding the community accountable for making forward progress on campus climate initiatives are all priorities for the VPHR.
- ◆ **Serve as a strategic thought partner and collaborative leader with the President and the Operations & Management Group.** The leadership team at Bucknell is a highly collaborative group, and the President is an effective, empathetic leader. The VPHR will serve as an important advisor within the leadership group on all matters relating to personnel, staffing, recruitment and retention, improving equity and inclusion best practices, and other issues critical to the success of the University's mission. Additionally, the VPHR will be an active listener and representative for the internal and external constituencies of the institution.
- ◆ **Anticipate the changing needs of faculty and staff, and proactively improve support systems at the University.** Fortifying, building, and advancing human resources at Bucknell, the VPHR will provide excellent mentorship and professional development opportunities for their team. Additionally, the VPHR will advocate for the evolving needs of all University faculty and staff members as the pandemic shifts and changes. The VPHR will help their team provide exceptional customer service, efficient management of issues, and professionalism and understanding to the entire Bucknell community, with a focus on recruitment as well as the retention of valued employees.
- ◆ **Identify where policy development, management, and communications can be strengthened.** The VPHR will collaborate with institutional partners to make use of relevant social media, apps, and web tools to expedite and facilitate interactions with users. The VPHR will be highly transparent, collaborative, and

communicative throughout the process, building consensus, buy-in, and understanding from all constituencies, and they will empower their team to implement changes accordingly.

### **ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:**

- ◆ Maintaining hiring, retention, and compensation strategies to support a diverse and committed employee base;
- ◆ Developing and administering HR policies in compliance with local, state, and federal laws;
- ◆ Partnering with the President’s Diversity Committee and the DEI councils to build a more inclusive environment for all employees and community members;
- ◆ Monitoring and reviewing the University’s benefits, including retirement and health benefit plans;
- ◆ Directing the development of long-range planning of HR programs and objectives;
- ◆ Analyzing complex issues and communicating findings and recommendations to stakeholders at all levels;
- ◆ Leading annual performance management processes;
- ◆ Partnering with the finance team to determine annual salary and benefits budgets;
- ◆ Ensuring benefit accounts are reconciled on a consistent basis;
- ◆ Conducting confidential investigations and related employee relations actions as needed;
- ◆ Serving on advisory committees and shared governance groups as appropriate; and,
- ◆ Overseeing all policies, procedures, and functions related to HR information processing of personnel transactions and appointments.

### **DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The ideal candidate will have a growth mindset and will be an energetic partner to all stakeholders on campus. The VPHR will collaborate with their staff to continue strengthening the University’s commitment to supporting and retaining individuals, especially those from groups historically excluded from higher education, including BIPOC, women, and all LGBTQ+ individuals, among others. The VPHR will bring experience understanding and serving the needs of multiple different stakeholders in disparate roles. They will also have demonstrated emotional intelligence and excellent listening and communication skills. The VP will be a collaborative leader, a team-builder, and a compassionate advocate for Bucknell employees. Finally, the VPHR should be familiar with HR workflow management and software systems.

In addition, the VPHR will possess the following experiences, capabilities, and personal attributes:

- ◆ An appreciation for, and ability to thrive in, a team-oriented environment;
- ◆ Project management and facilitation skills in settings with multiple and competing priorities and deadlines;
- ◆ Demonstrated skills in the leadership of organizational change;
- ◆ An ability to engage with, mentor, and develop staff;
- ◆ Demonstrated experience with HRIS/ERP systems for HR and payroll;
- ◆ An understanding of the management of international exchange issues (J1 visas/SEVIS);
- ◆ Exceptional interpersonal skills, judgment, and communication skills, including the ability to communicate complex concepts to a variety of constituencies and in highly emotional environments;
- ◆ An ability and desire to provide excellent service and to work in a collegial manner with students, faculty, staff, and other constituencies;
- ◆ An understanding of shared governance and employment issues in an academic setting; and,
- ◆ A collegial, collaborative, transparent, and responsive professional nature.

The successful candidate will have held roles of increasingly responsible experience as an HR professional, with experience in: compensation and benefit plan design and administration, employment and benefits law, strategic planning, and recruitment. Significant supervisory experience is required.

For best consideration, please send all nominations and applications to:



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For more information about Bucknell, please visit the University's home page at <https://www.bucknell.edu>.

*Bucknell University is committed to excellence through diversity in its faculty, staff, and students. An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer, Bucknell University especially welcomes applications from candidates underrepresented in higher education.*