THE OPPORTUNITY

The State Board of Higher Education invites applications and nominations for the position of President. Valley City State University is one of 11 institutions of higher education in the North Dakota University System and is governed by the State Board of Higher Education.

The President is the chief executive officer of the university and reports to the Chancellor and the Board of Higher Education. Reporting directly to the President are the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Business Affairs, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Executive Director for University Advancement, the Chief Information Officer, the Director for Athletics, and the Director for Marketing and Communications.

The successful candidate will succeed Tisa Mason, Ed.D., who served as president from December 2014–December 2017. It is anticipated that the next president will begin service on or before January 1, 2019.

OVERVIEW

For 20 consecutive years, Valley City State University has been ranked by U.S. News & World Report among its “Best Colleges.” In the last three consecutive years (and in five of the last seven years), it received the No. 1 ranking among “Public Regional Colleges in the Midwest” from U.S. News.

VCSU, founded as a normal school in 1890, now offers more than 80 undergraduate programs in art, business, communication arts, computer systems and software engineering, education, kinesiology and human performance, language and literature, mathematics, music, science, social science, and technology education.

Among the university’s premier academic programs receiving special emphasis for recruitment and growth are teacher education, fisheries and wildlife science, health science, and computer systems and software engineering.

VCSU makes courses and degree programs available through traditional on-campus courses, distance learning (online or interactive video), and hybrid formats that combine both elements.

In 2005, VCSU began offering its first graduate program in education, the Master of Education degree. Today, VCSU’s completely online M.Ed. program has six concentrations: elementary education, English education, library and information technology, teaching and technology, teaching English language learners, and technology education. A Master of Arts in Teaching degree program, also completely online, was added in 2016.

In 2012, VCSU earned a 10-year reaccreditation from the Higher Learning Commission. The university has been accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education since 1954. The VCSU music program received accreditation in 1997 and a comprehensive review in 2007; its next review is scheduled for 2018–19. The VCSU athletic training program was granted a five-year initial accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) in April 2016.

To enhance student learning and preparation, VCSU provides all faculty and full-time, on-campus students with laptop computers, easy access to high-speed wireless networking, advanced multimedia technology, and classrooms equipped with the latest educational technology. The laptop program, begun in 1996, has helped shape the innovative, technology-supported campus learning culture, a hallmark of the university.
The VCSU Viking intercollegiate athletic program has a rich tradition of success and enjoys strong support from the campus and local communities alike. Student-athletes are visible on campus and among the university’s student leadership, and athletic recruitment is a key component in VCSU’s ability to sustain and grow enrollment.

The 55-acre VCSU campus is bordered on the south by a forested hillside and on the north by the Sheyenne River. Campus architecture features a graceful blend of historic and modern buildings. The entire campus is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a Historic District. In May 2017, the VCSU campus was named the most beautiful college campus in North Dakota in an article on BuzzFeed.

DEFINING COMMITMENTS

Mission
Valley City State University is a public, regional university offering exceptional programs in an active, learner-centered community that promotes meaningful scholarship, ethical service, and the skilled use of technology. As an important knowledge resource, the university offers programs and outreach that enrich the quality of life in North Dakota and beyond. Through flexible, accessible, and innovative baccalaureate and master's programs, VCSU prepares students to succeed as educators, leaders, and engaged citizens in an increasingly complex and diverse society.

STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF

With a total headcount of approximately 1,500 students and a student-faculty ratio of 11:1, the university meets the needs of individual students through personalized attention. Valley City State University employs 169 full-time faculty and staff.

Students live and learn in 16 campus buildings, including five residence halls, all providing a clean, safe, and healthy work environment for students, faculty, and staff, alike. (See campus map online at catalog.vcsu.edu/undergraduate-catalog/campus-map/.) A vibrant student life program offers many cocurricular activities, including student government, athletics, music, and student clubs and organizations. The VCSU Viking athletic program, a National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics member, competes in 14 intercollegiate programs for men and women.

The university primarily serves southeastern North Dakota, but its students also come from locations across the country and around the globe, including Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Canada, and Australia.

TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

In recent years under the leadership of Tisa Mason, institutional accomplishments have included the following:

- VCSU achieved record enrollments, national recognition, and successful accreditation and reaccreditation efforts
- the Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) program was added in fall 2016
- a data-driven analysis produced methods to more effectively leverage student financial aid packages and enhance enrollment numbers
- strategic initiatives were begun to capitalize on academic growth areas and enhance retention and completion
- pathways to three-year degree programs were identified and strengthened
- implementation of free OER (Open Educational Resources) in place of textbooks was emphasized
- a state-of-the-art heat plant was constructed, with a plan to add an innovative, income-producing activated carbon plant to the facility moving forward
- a strategic plan was developed to help guide the institution in the years to come (www.vcsu.edu/president/strategic-plan-2017-22)
Accomplishments begun by President Mason’s predecessors were also celebrated recently, including:

- the ribbon was cut on a newly renovated Vangstad Auditorium in May 2016
- the first phase of Valley City’s flood protection to protect campus was completed in summer 2016
- the 20th anniversary of the laptop program was celebrated in September 2016
- the Gaukler Family Wellness, Health and Physical Education Center opened in November 2016

VALLEY CITY STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

The mission of the VCSU Foundation is to support Valley City State University by involving alumni and friends in activities and private giving that meet the university’s needs and advance its welfare. The foundation is guided by a 25-member board of directors. The incoming VCSU President will take a lead role in fundraising and actively cultivate, solicit, and secure major financial support for the university.

One of the primary responsibilities of the VCSU Foundation is to support the university’s scholarship program; the foundation also supports other projects throughout the campus. Additionally, the VCSU Foundation supports and coordinates the work of the Alumni Association, V-500 Scholarship organization, Athletic Booster Board, and other giving activities. Today, the foundation’s asset base is over $18 million, and in 2017–18, the foundation provided $1.425 million for VCSU student scholarships.

ACADEMIC CENTERS

VCSU is the home of three academic centers. The Great Plains STEM Education Center provides professional development opportunities for K–12 teachers and hands-on, inquiry-based learning opportunities for K–12 students. Prairie Waters Education and Research Center provides environmental learning opportunities focused on North Dakota waters for students, teachers, and professionals, while also conducting research on aquatic biological resources. The Don Mugan Career and Technical Education Leadership Center promotes the recruitment, retention, and succession of high-quality career and technical education (CTE) teachers and administrators.

COLLABORATIONS

Partnerships with other higher education institutions extend Valley City State University’s reach and provide rich learning experiences for students.

Dakota College at Bottineau and VCSU work together in a number of ways. DCB students may reside on the VCSU campus and participate in DCB two-year degree and certificate programs; the DCB nursing program at VCSU is a popular option, and a portion of Rhoades Science Center is dedicated to the program.

The DCB/VCSU Bridges Program allows incoming students not eligible for full admission to VCSU to enroll in the program as DCB students on the VCSU campus and then make the transition to full VCSU student status after successful completion of the Bridges Program. DCB also delivers the developmental courses needed by some VCSU students.

North Dakota State University and VCSU collaborate on a human development and family science/elementary education program for NDSU students; VCSU faculty teach the elementary education coursework on the NDSU campus, and students who complete the program earn degrees from both institutions. Another teacher education collaboration is the Valley Partnership of VCSU, NDSU, and Minnesota State University Moorhead, established through a Bush Foundation grant to prepare more effective teachers.

VCSU also maintains articulation agreements with several Wyoming community colleges and offers bachelor’s degree programs in elementary education, English education, and history education, delivering instruction in Wyoming and also via distance learning.

BUILDING THE FUTURE

The next VCSU President will have a unique opportunity to embrace current momentum and address important challenges to take the university to new levels of excellence.

The President will:
- support a campus climate characterized by innovation, collegiality, and collaboration
- promote teaching, learning, and student success by championing innovative approaches and supporting staff development that leads to best practices
- identify and market academic and athletic programs of distinction within VCSU’s mission that will drive enrollment growth and serve North Dakota’s needs
- secure and prioritize the resources necessary to support high-quality programs and services, to maintain student affordability, and to address capital projects and deferred maintenance
- take a lead role in fundraising and actively cultivate, solicit, and secure major financial support for the university
• continue to explore collaborative and distance education programs as a means of flexible delivery
• drive the process to secure an activated carbon plant addition to the VCSU heat plant
• establish positive relationships and partnerships with business, government, public agencies, and K–12 and other educational institutions
• support economic and workforce development enhanced by partnerships with area industries, businesses, and public schools
• promote and pursue opportunities to further grow the technology base in the community and state through the university’s deep commitment and innovative leadership in technology, and creative and effective use of technological resources
• nurture ongoing campus and community ventures to provide access and opportunities in the arts and recreation for all
• work within the North Dakota University System to leverage its collective assets to effectively and efficiently carry out the State Board of Higher Education’s strategic goals and serve the students and the state of North Dakota

ABOUT VALLEY CITY

Nestled in the beautiful Sheyenne River Valley, Valley City’s population is about 6,600. The city features a robust retail district, several beautiful parks, and many restaurants. An article on Expedia in March 2017 named Valley City the most beautiful town in North Dakota.

Valley City, the county seat of Barnes County, offers the peacefulness and security of small-town living along with a host of outdoor activities. Within minutes, a person can go from work to recreational pursuits, such as birding, fishing, golfing, hunting, hiking the North Country National Scenic Trail, or participating in wellness/fitness activities and city-league sports.

The Sheyenne River Valley National Scenic Byway, with 40 interpretive sites, presents an immersion in local and regional history. Eight of the sites are included in the City of Bridges Tour, a walking tour of Valley City’s historic bridges.

Valley City is located on Interstate 94 less than an hour’s drive from Fargo, North Dakota’s largest city.

TOWN AND GOWN

According to a North Dakota University System study, Valley City State University’s impact on the Valley City area economy is estimated to be in excess of $91.5 million. The large financial impact is recognized by area leaders, and the university and the local community enjoy a mutually beneficial relationship.

Valley City State University faculty and staff serve leadership roles in community organizations; and community leaders, likewise, are on university boards. VCSU students are an integral part of the Valley City workforce, and VCSU campus facilities serve the local community, as well as the university. The Valley City area includes a high percentage of VCSU alumni. The university receives much of its private financial support from these loyal alumni, local individuals, and businesses.

NOMINATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

To assure best consideration, nominations and applications should be received by July 12, 2018. The application must include a letter of interest of not more than three pages; a current résumé (or curriculum vitae); and the names of five professional references with each person’s position, office or home address, e-mail address, and telephone numbers. References will not be contacted without prior authorization from the applicant. The new President will assume office on or before January 1, 2019.

The North Dakota University System and university presidential search committee are being assisted by James H. McCormick and Janice S. Fitzgerald, executive search consultants, AGB Search. Nominations and applications should be sent electronically to valleycitypresident@agbsearch.com (MS Word or PDF Format). Additional university information may be found at www.vcsu.edu. The consultants may be contacted at 651-238-5188, jim.mccormick@agbsearch.com, or 717-580-0663, janice.fitzgerald@agbsearch.com.

Pursuant to N.D.C.C. § 44-04-18.27, applications and any records related to the applications which contain information that could reasonably be used to identify an applicant are confidential until finalists are designated by the State Board of Higher Education. Only information about finalists will be public.

As employers, the State of North Dakota and political subdivisions prohibit smoking in all places of state and political subdivision employment with N.D.C.C. § 23-12-10.

Equal Opportunity Employer: The State of North Dakota and this hiring agency do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, genetics, religion, age, or disability in employment or the provision of services, and comply with the provision of the North Dakota Human Rights Act. Effective August 1, 2015, veterans’ preference is applicable to this position (N.D.C.C. § 37-19.1-02). Applicants who are residents of North Dakota and eligible to claim veterans’ preference must upload Form DD214. Claims for disabled veterans’ preference must include a current statement of disabled status from the Veteran Affairs Office.

valleycitypresident@agbsearch.com