



Amherst College

Boyden Executive Search Contact

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Position Summary

The Assistant Vice President (AVP) for Development is a senior leader within the Advancement division, charged with developing and executing a bold, unified strategy for all leadership, major, and planned giving activity at Amherst College. The AVP will lead efforts to strengthen the donor pipeline, deepen constituent engagement, and secure transformational philanthropic support during a pivotal period of institutional momentum and ambition.

Reporting to the Senior Associate Vice President for Advancement, the AVP will join the division during an exciting time of cultural transformation. This leader will elevate a high-performance, data-informed culture, guide strategic donor engagement, and serve as a visible ambassador for Amherst's mission and values.

The AVP serves as a senior leader for frontline fundraising programs and plays a central role in aligning individual giving strategies with institutional priorities, campaign planning, and cross-campus partnerships. The AVP will drive performance, cultivate innovative donor strategies, and lead efforts that support long-term philanthropic growth.

With deep expertise in donor strategy and prospect development, the AVP will shape high-impact engagement plans, advance best practices in portfolio management, and foster a culture of accountability, collaboration, and continuous learning across the team. In addition to team leadership, the AVP will manage a focused portfolio of major- and principal-level prospects (approximately 25) and will work in partnership with the principal gifts team to advance key priorities. The AVP will collaborate with the Vice President for Advancement to manage presidential-level donor conversations and will partner with senior administrators and faculty leaders across campus.

This critical leadership role requires exceptional leadership and relationship-building skills; a deep understanding of frontline fundraising strategy and donor engagement; fluency in data and performance metrics; outstanding communication and judgment; and the ability to inspire, coach, and lead diverse teams in a complex, mission-driven environment. This is an outstanding opportunity for a leader eager to notably elevate a major gift fundraising program, and to play a visible role in cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding critical support for the College.

The Assistant Vice President for Development is a full-time, year-round position with a compensation range of **\$200,000–\$225,000** per year, commensurate with experience.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Fundraising Direction

- In partnership with the senior leadership team, shape and implement a long-term fundraising vision that aligns with Amherst's institutional goals and evolving campaign strategy.
- Serve as a senior thought partner to the Vice President for Advancement, Senior Associate Vice President for Advancement, and other institutional leaders in setting philanthropic direction.
- Lead innovation and enhance Development programs by incorporating industry best practices, emerging trends, and internal performance insights.

Team Leadership and Talent Development

- Directly supervise and mentor directors and gift officers within Major Gifts, Planned Giving, Leadership Annual Giving, and Parent Giving.
- Foster an inclusive, high-performance culture grounded in accountability, collaboration, and continuous learning.
- Set strategic goals, provide coaching and regular feedback, and support professional development across the team.

Donor Strategy, Portfolio Management, and Prospect Engagement

- Guide donor engagement strategies and portfolio development for top-tier prospects, ensuring alignment with institutional priorities.
- Champion the use of data and analytics to optimize donor pipelines, improve portfolio health, and drive team performance.
- Personally manage a portfolio of approximately 25 high-capacity, high-priority donors; partner with senior leadership, the President, and faculty on relationship management and strategic solicitations.
- Lead cultivation strategies that result in transformational philanthropic commitments.

Cross-Functional and Campus Collaboration

- Build strong partnerships across Advancement, including with Alumni Engagement, Advancement Operations, Donor Strategy, and Analytics, to ensure cohesive planning and execution.
- Collaborate with academic leaders and faculty to develop compelling, mission-aligned gift opportunities.
- Engage and support campaign volunteers, trustees, and external champions to enhance Amherst's philanthropic reach and visibility.

Qualifications

- A minimum of **10 years of progressive experience** in development, with a demonstrated ability to lead high-functioning fundraising teams.
- A strong record of major gift fundraising, with success cultivating and soliciting six- and seven-figure gifts.
- Experience managing frontline fundraisers, coaching to metrics, and leading with integrity.

- Deep knowledge of **major gifts, planned giving, leadership annual giving, and donor cultivation and stewardship strategies.**
- Demonstrated success in leading, developing, and motivating high-performing fundraising teams and elevating data-driven cultures of fundraising.
- Familiarity with campaign planning, donor pipeline development, and advancement best practices.
- Skilled at **articulating mission and vision** to a wide range of constituents with authenticity and impact.
- Track record of **building a culture of accountability**, collaboration, and continuous improvement.
- A deep commitment to the values and principles of liberal arts education, including critical thinking, creativity, and the expansion of knowledge and discovery.
- A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

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About Boyden

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