



ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT

[SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY](#)

SYRACUSE, NEW YORK



Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Syracuse University in the search for an Associate Vice President for Athletic Development.

The Associate Vice President for Athletic Development will be responsible for the creation, strategic development, and implementation of all athletic fundraising and engagement efforts in support of the 18 men's and women's Division I Varsity sports programs and athletic facilities at Syracuse University. The Associate Vice President will manage a comprehensive advancement program, directly oversee the Athletics advancement staff, and have strategic oversight for fundraising efforts related to NIL campaigns and the donor priority point system. The Associate Vice President will have front line responsibility for the identification, solicitation, and stewardship of a portfolio of major donors and prospective donors. Serving as a part of the Athletics Senior Management Team, the Associate Vice President will work closely and collaboratively with the Director of Athletics, coaches, and staff to achieve a high level of engagement and financial support from alumni, parents, friends, corporations, and foundations whose philanthropic priorities match the mission, programs, and initiatives of the unit. The Associate Vice President will serve as the primary contact and support for Athletics' volunteer leadership boards and will work directly with central advancement offices to strategically coordinate and utilize the central infrastructure and services that are critical to achieving Athletics' fundraising goals.

Syracuse University is a student focused R1 research university fueled by more than 150 years of tradition, academic distinction, and a spirit of discovery. Founded in 1870, Syracuse University is a private research institution located in the heart of Central New York. With 13 schools and colleges, 200 customizable majors and 100 minors, and online degrees and certificates, Syracuse University provides limitless educational pathways. New interdisciplinary areas ranging from social justice and artificial intelligence to energy and environment provide hands-on research experiences that broaden perspectives and prepare students for the careers of tomorrow. Syracuse University has five award-winning study abroad centers, and international programs in 60 countries, where students gain global perspectives that last a lifetime.

There are more than 22,000 students from all over the world taking part in clubs, athletics, and gatherings of all kinds at Syracuse. With over 300 student organizations, students have opportunities to explore interests, pursue passions, and engage with the Syracuse University community. The university's global footprint includes more than a quarter of a million alumni in 160 countries.

Syracuse University aspires to be a pre-eminent and inclusive student focused research university, preparing engaged citizens, scholars, and leaders for participation in a changing global society. As a university with the capacity to attract and engage the best scholars from around the world, yet small enough to support a personalized and academically rigorous student experience, Syracuse University faculty and staff support student success by encouraging global study, experiential learning, interdisciplinary scholarship, creativity, and entrepreneurial endeavors; balancing professional studies with an intensive liberal arts education; fostering a richly diverse and inclusive community of learning and opportunity; and promoting a culture of innovation and discovery.

Syracuse is a university of national stature and international opportunity, known for its investment in research and innovation, its professional programs, and its undeniable school spirit. Syracuse University offers many highly ranked programs and co-curricular opportunities. The university is ranked number one for Best Public Affairs Schools and number two for Information Technology Management by *U.S. News & World Report*. Other top ten rankings by the publication include its learning communities and study abroad opportunities.

Syracuse also receives top ranking for Best Photojournalism Schools and second spot for Best Elementary Special Education by *College Factual*. In addition, Music Management; Public Relations, Advertising and Applied Communications; Design and Applied Arts; Information Science; and Food and Nutrition all received top ten rankings by *College Factual* in 2023.

SYRACUSE ATHLETICS

Syracuse Athletics fosters and creates a culture of educational and athletic excellence to holistically prepare student-athletes as leaders in a global society, providing the best experience for student-athletes by nurturing productivity, communication, and strategic decision-making within all facets of the division. Student-athletes and staff are engaged to service and support of the community, striving to win ACC (Atlantic Coast Conference) and conference championships while advancing all sports to participate in NCAA Championships. The division provides student-athletes and staff with opportunities for continuous improvement that inspire their growth while fostering a global and inclusive environment where all backgrounds and beliefs are valued and respected. Syracuse Athletics provides the best possible experience to fans and donors as it supports student-athletes. It maximizes and carefully stewards resources to support student-athletes in a conscientious and creative manner—treating everyone with respect and representing Syracuse University proudly while supporting the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of student-athletes.

Syracuse University fields eight men’s and twelve women’s Division 1 athletics teams, ensuring fans have plenty of opportunities to cheer on the Orange. The home of the Orange is officially the John A. Lally Athletics Complex. Named after alumnus and three-time football letterwinner John Lally ’82, the state-of-the-art academic and athletics village is home to all 20 Syracuse Athletics teams. This facility is currently undergoing a \$150 million renovation. Syracuse’s football, men’s basketball, women’s basketball, men’s lacrosse, and women’s lacrosse teams compete in the JMA Wireless Dome.

Syracuse University student-athletes are successful on and off the playing field. On the field, Syracuse University has won 15 NCAA team national championships over time and had 14 teams represented at national championship events last season. Off the field, for the third year in a row, Syracuse University Athletics ranked in the top five among Power 5 schools Graduation Success Rate scores (GSR). It’s 94% GSR is tied for fifth highest score among Power 5 schools, and the Orange is one of 22 Power 5 schools nationally to score 94% or higher.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Associate Vice President for Athletic Development will report jointly to the Director of Athletics, John Wildhack and the Senior Vice President and Chief Advancement Officer, Tracy Barlok. The Associate Vice President will serve on the Athletics Senior Management Team and will oversee a team of at least 12 staff. In addition, this role is part of the Advancement and External Affairs Senior Leadership Team which is the management team for 190 development staff in 23 departments of the division.

**FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS AND
THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER**

Syracuse Athletics stands at the threshold of a transformative new era, poised to elevate our storied programs to unprecedented heights of competitive excellence and national prominence. As the new Associate Vice President for Athletic Development, you will play an essential role in fueling this vision through innovative engagement and philanthropic strategies.

This is a unique inflection point to join a university steeped in rich athletics tradition. With strong momentum across several marquee programs, conference titles, national championships, top recruiting classes, and high-profile coaching hires, Syracuse Athletics is experiencing a resurgence and setting the stage for sustained future success to build upon this storied tradition.

With Syracuse's prestigious ACC membership, a passionate nationwide alumni base and fan following, and growing prospects from name, image, and likeness opportunities, the stage is set for advancement success. You'll help drive critical fundraising priorities like enhancing facilities, providing competitive support and scholarships, and supporting the student athlete experience in and out of the classroom.

The university's commitment to top ranked academics in world-renown schools like the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs and the Newhouse School of Communications, combined with groundbreaking research and a vibrant campus life make this an exciting time to join our community. And, with less than one year left on our \$1.5B Forever Orange Campaign, we are on track to set new records for engagement and investment and have laid the groundwork for future philanthropic support.

Reporting dually to senior advancement and Athletics leadership, you will spearhead a comprehensive advancement operation dedicated to Syracuse Athletics. You will inspire a talented development team while collaborating across campus to optimize fundraising impact for student-athletes, coaches, and championship programs. With significant potential, a bold facilities vision, and strategic goals, you can elevate Syracuse Athletics philanthropy to historic new levels.

We invite you to explore this tremendously exciting opportunity at a pivotal moment for our proud tradition of national athletics excellence. The chance to lead this next chapter of impact is both unique and compelling.

—John Wildhack, Director of Athletics and
Tracy Barlok, Senior Vice President and Chief Advancement Officer

**SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY'S COMMITMENT TO
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

Syracuse University maintains an inclusive learning environment in which students, faculty, administrators, staff, curriculum, social activities, governance, and all other aspects of campus life reflect a diverse, multi-cultural, and international worldview. The Syracuse community recognizes and values the many similarities and differences among individuals and groups. The university is committed to preparing students to understand, live among, appreciate, and work in an inherently diverse country and world made up of people with different ethnic and racial backgrounds, military backgrounds, religious beliefs, socio-economic status, cultural traditions, abilities, sexual orientations, and gender identities. To do so, it commits itself to promoting a community that celebrates and models the principles of diversity and inclusivity.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Associate Vice President for Athletic Development will

- in coordination with the Director of Athletics and the Senior Vice President and Chief Advancement Officer, serve as the Athletics chief development officer, directing the department in strategic planning, organizing, implementing, and managing all aspects of the cultivation, solicitation, stewardship, and fundraising functions including direct supervision and assignment of Athletics fundraising and engagement staff;
- travel nationally to cultivate, solicit, and steward major gift donors and prospects;
- build and manage a portfolio of major and leadership gift prospects in support of Syracuse Athletics;
- plan, manage, and staff prospect visits for the Director of Athletics and coaches;
- cultivate relationships between donors and Athletics consistent with identified strategies;
- measure and evaluate gift officer performance consistent with divisional metrics, and ensure that the use of all available resources and support services are being optimized;
- serve as a liaison between the Athletics department and the central advancement units, assuring the teams utilize services, leverage data and analytics, and are properly aligned with institutional priorities and objectives; and
- oversee all initiatives including planning, solicitation, and acknowledgment related to the donor priority point system.

LEADERSHIP

John Wildhack

Director of Athletics

A uniquely qualified leader with a vast knowledge of and passion for Syracuse University Athletics, former ESPN executive John Wildhack was named Syracuse's 11th Director of Athletics in July 2016.

At Syracuse, Wildhack leads the daily operations of a 20-sport athletics department with more than 600 student-athletes. During his tenure, he has worked diligently to create an environment that fosters academic and athletic excellence, which prepares student-athletes to be leaders in a global society. Those efforts have resulted in tremendous success both on and off the field.

In Wildhack's seven years, 71 teams have represented Syracuse at national championship events, including 64 NCAA competitions. The 2022 men's soccer team won the National Championship, while the women's lacrosse team has advanced to the national championship game in two of the last three years and the men's rowing team has finished in the top five at the Intercollegiate Rowing Association National Championship in each of the past three seasons. In addition, the football team has made two bowl appearances—playing in the 2018 Camping World Bowl and 2022 Bad Boy Mowers Pinstripe Bowl.

The Orange have won 23 conference championships (seven team, 16 individual) in that span, and three national championships (one team, two individual). The Orange men's soccer team claimed their first national title in program history in 2022, while both individual national titles were courtesy of Justyn Knight, who won the NCAA Cross Country Championship and the NCAA Indoor Championship in the 5,000-meter run during the 2017-18 academic year.

Syracuse student-athletes are succeeding at a high rate in the classroom, as well. The Orange have had at least four teams receive perfect four-year scores in the NCAA's Academic Progress Rate (APR) for five straight years. In 2021-22, four Orange teams achieved a perfect multi-year rate, while 12 recorded a perfect single-year score. As a group, the Orange student-athlete body achieved a 3.16 cumulative GPA in 2022-23, marking the seventh consecutive year student-athletes have recorded a GPA better than 3.0.

Since his arrival on campus, Wildhack has overseen multiple strategic initiatives to ensure the future success of the department. Among the most impactful have been launching the John A. Lally Athletics Complex project, facilitating a new 10-year naming rights agreement for the JMA Wireless Dome, securing \$118 million investment from the university for enhancements to the building, and the formation of an in-house production unit, increasing visibility of Syracuse student-athletes on ESPN and the ACC Network.

Named after alumnus and three-time football letterwinner John Lally '82, the state-of-the-art academic and athletics village is home to 20 Syracuse University athletics teams. The hub of activity and the center of student-athlete life for Syracuse University athletics, the John A. Lally Athletics Complex supports the academic and athletic experience of the Orange 600 student-athletes. It is currently undergoing a multi-million, multi-year transformation that has one singular goal—elevating the student-athlete experience.

Before joining the Orange, Wildhack most recently served as ESPN's Executive Vice President for Programming and Production. He was responsible for oversight of all ESPN and ABC game, event, and studio production work for domestic and international television and radio, as well as programming acquisitions, rights-holder relationship management, and scheduling. He managed all league and conference relationships, negotiated all live sports television rights, and was responsible for 50,000 hours of on-air content annually. From 2007 to 2012, Wildhack was ESPN's Executive Vice President for Programming and Acquisitions. In that role, he oversaw all rights negotiations and managed relationships with rights holders for all ESPN entities. These included ESPN, ESPN2, ESPN Classic, ESPNNews, ESPN Deportes, ESPNU, ESPN International, ESPN Radio, ESPN.com, ESPN3, ESPN Mobile Properties, print, and more. In 2009, he began leading strategic program planning for all ESPN television networks, ESPN on ABC and ESPN's digital platforms.

A native of Buffalo, New York, and an alumnus of the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications with a degree in telecommunications, Wildhack joined ESPN in its first year of operation immediately following his graduation. An active alumnus of the university, he sits on the Advisory Board for the David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics and was an honoree at the "Newhouse at 40" Gala.

Tracy Barlok
Senior Vice President and Chief Advancement Officer

Tracy Barlok serves as Senior Vice President and Chief Advancement Officer at Syracuse University. She joined the university in Sept. 2022 as Special Assistant to the Chancellor for Advancement and External Affairs and was appointed Chief Advancement Officer in July 2023. Prior to joining the university, Barlok served as the Vice President for Advancement at the College of the Holy Cross, a position she held from July 2012 to July 2022. She has more than three decades of experience working in the field of higher education, serving in several leadership roles at the College of the Holy Cross, Skidmore College, and Colgate University.

During Barlok's tenure at Holy Cross, the College raised more than \$510 million for a range of initiatives, including new and renovated building projects, faculty and student support, financial aid, athletics, and more. Barlok led the design and execution of the largest and most successful fundraising campaign in Holy Cross history, the *Become More Campaign*, which raised more than \$420 million for strategic priorities, including four transformational new building projects. In her last 18 months at Holy Cross, Barlok facilitated the launch and successful completion of the college's \$40 million *Hope + Access Campaign for Financial Aid*. This effort secured 90 new endowed scholarships and raised \$56.3 million to support students. Additionally, during Barlok's tenure, Holy Cross continued to rank in the Top 10 across all U.S. colleges for highest percentage of alumni participation.

Barlok began her career in advancement at Colgate University, where she served as the Director of Alumni Affairs, Director of Special Gift Programs, and Special Assistant to the President. Before being named Skidmore's Associate Vice President, she served as Director of the college's successful \$200 million comprehensive campaign from 2002 to 2010 and was Director of Leadership Gifts from 1997 to 2002. Over the course of her career, she has served on the staff of six institutional campaigns.

Barlok is a national leader in the field of advancement, serving on the Board of Trustees of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and in active leadership within the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, and other professional organizations. She has been a frequent lecturer and panelist and is recognized for being an adaptive, strategic, and accomplished higher education executive with a strong record of success in managing alumni relations, fundraising, marketing, and communications programs and in building partnerships across academic and administrative units.

She earned her B.A. in English from Colgate University.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES, EXPERIENCES, AND QUALIFICATIONS

Syracuse University seeks an Associate Vice President for Athletic Development with

- a commitment to the mission of Syracuse Athletics—to create and foster a culture of educational and athletic excellence which holistically prepares student-athletes as leaders in a global society;
- experience in all aspects of advancement work with a focus on major gift fundraising;
- an ability to lead and manage a comprehensive athletics advancement operation and team;
- a history of leadership gift fundraising success within a higher education environment;
- experience with campaign fundraising for capital projects;
- an ability to recruit, manage, supervise, and motivate staff;
- knowledge of donor related NCAA compliance and NIL rules and regulations;
- a desire to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment; and
- outstanding communication skills, both written and oral, and an ability to build collaborative relationships.

A bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and experience is required for this position as is at least seven years of higher education fundraising experience. Syracuse University will consider candidates with a broad range of backgrounds. If you are excited about this role and feel that you can contribute to Syracuse Athletics, but your experience does not exactly align with every qualification listed above, we encourage you to apply.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is \$185,000 to \$230,000 annually. Syracuse University offers a [comprehensive benefits package](#).

LOCATION

This position is in Syracuse, New York. Syracuse is a medium-sized city situated in the geographic center of New York State approximately 250 miles northwest of New York City. The metro-area population totals approximately 500,000. The area offers a low cost of living and provides many social, cultural, and recreational options, including parks, museums, festivals, professional regional theater, and premier shopping venues. Syracuse and Central New York present a wide range of seasonal recreation and attractions.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Syracuse University as well as the responsibilities and qualifications stated in the prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit: [Associate Vice President for Athletic Development, Syracuse University.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Don Hasseltine, [donhasseltine@aspenleadershipgroup.com.](mailto:donhasseltine@aspenleadershipgroup.com)

All inquiries will be held in confidence.