



ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR PRINCIPAL GIFTS
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA



Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Florida State University in the search for an Associate Vice President for Principal Gifts.

The Associate Vice President for Principal Gifts will develop a robust, university-wide principal gifts program which will strategically broaden and deepen support from principal gift level donors (\$5M+). The Associate Vice President will carry a portfolio of principal-level prospects and donors of paramount importance to the university, with a focus on leading the identification, cultivation, solicitation, closure, and active stewardship of principal gifts. The successful candidate will partner with the Vice President for University Advancement to develop and solicit an increasingly refined and well-researched pool of transformational principal gift prospects warranting presidential involvement and attention. The Associate Vice President will have the opportunity to transform individual giving to historic levels while maintaining a portfolio of high-level principal and transformational gifts prospects and donors of the utmost importance to the university in preparation for, and during, the university's next comprehensive campaign. The Associate Vice President will expand the nucleus of transformational gift donors and establish an agile and effective development program scaled, and scalable, to the university's needs. The successful candidate will strategically engage and support the President, Vice President for University Advancement, university leadership, deans, faculty, colleagues, volunteers, and alumni to identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward the university's most significant donor relationships. The Associate Vice President will craft and execute strategic and operational plans for the identification, qualification, engagement, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of high-net-worth donors and prospects and using a coordinated, donor-centric, expansive, and collaborative approach to fundraising within FSU's Division of University Advancement, secure and accelerate the commitment of principal, planned, and blended gifts.

One of the nation's elite research universities, Florida State University preserves, expands, and disseminates knowledge in the sciences, technology, arts, humanities, and professions, while embracing a philosophy of learning strongly rooted in the traditions of the liberal arts and critical thinking. FSU was founded in 1851 and the welcoming campus is located on the oldest continuous site of higher education in Florida, in a community that fosters free inquiry and embraces diversity, along with championship athletics, and a prime location in the heart of the state capital. The university is home to more than 45,000 students from every Florida county and 130 countries. Students enjoy the personalized education afforded by a 17:1 student-to-faculty ratio and can choose from the nearly 300 degree programs offered at the bachelor's, master's, doctoral, specialist, and professional level.

Florida State University is dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, creative endeavors, and service. The university strives to instill the strength, skill, and character essential for lifelong learning, personal

responsibility, and sustained achievement within a community that fosters free inquiry. Florida State University strives to be among the nation's most entrepreneurial and innovative universities, transforming the lives of its students and shaping the future of the state and society through exceptional teaching, research, creative activity, and service. FSU amplifies these efforts through its distinctive climate—one that places a premium on interdisciplinary inquiry and draws from the rich intellectual and personal diversity of its students, faculty, staff, and alumni. These three forces—entrepreneurship, interdisciplinarity, and diversity—deepen FSU's impact and result in a powerful return to its students and the people of Florida for their continued support and trust.

Florida State University is fortunate to have a faculty who are widely acknowledged as the finest in their fields. They have distinguished themselves in many disciplines and have gained the high regard of peers around the world. Their academic careers are marked by excellence and the excitement of discovery so important to educating the next generation. Faculty members continually strive to build stronger programs in critical areas of technology and science and in the arts and humanities. The result is the expansion of knowledge as well as the discovery of new inventions, products, and processes benefiting the state of Florida, the nation, and the world. Florida State's more than 45,000 students work and study amidst an outstanding faculty that includes members of the National Academies, Guggenheim Fellowship recipients, and many Fulbright Scholars. Florida State faculty members lead several scholarly fields in citations of published work and hold multiple honors in the arts, including the Academy Award, Kennedy Center Honors, the Grammy Award, the Capezio and BESSIE Dance Awards, and the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award.

Florida State University is leading a growing movement to involve undergraduate students in the highest levels of academic engagement, helping students take advantage of the very best a preeminent research university has to offer. Through their participation in research, innovation, and creative endeavors, undergraduate students become better thinkers, innovators and problem solvers, cultivating a depth of understanding needed to make a positive difference in the world. About 25 percent of FSU undergraduate students currently conduct out-of-class research with research mentors, with hundreds of FSU undergraduates co-authoring research publications and presentations with faculty members and graduate students every year. The university's signature undergraduate research program, the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program, helps students from any major participate in undergraduate research by serving as research assistants to faculty members and others across campus.

Florida State University delivers an affordable, high-quality education and offers distinctive opportunities to engage its students. FSU has been named the No. 8 Best Value College in the nation among public colleges and universities according to *U.S. News & World Report's* "Best Colleges 2024" guidebook. Florida State continues to be a strong investment with the highest-rated credit of any public university in the state of Florida with an AA+ rating by S&P and Fitch and an equivalent Aa1 rating by Moody's.

Florida State University reaffirmed its place in the Top 25 among national public universities in the latest *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. FSU is number 23 on the list, marking the fifth consecutive year that the university placed in the Top 25. FSU has also scored its highest-ever ranking among national universities (both public and private) at No. 53. The rankings appear in *U.S. News & World Report's* "Best Colleges 2024" guidebook. *U.S. News & World Report* also ranked 20 of FSU's graduate programs and specialties in the Top 25 among public universities in 2022. *The Journal of Criminal Justice Education* ranked Florida State's College of Criminology and Criminal Justice faculty No. 1 in the nation for research productivity and influence, 2023. *U.S. News & World Report's*, "Best Graduate Schools," 2024 edition, ranks the College of Nursing's Doctor of Nursing Practice No. 1 among Florida's public universities.

The College of Education ranked No. 14 among all public and private universities and No. 1 among Florida's public universities. FSU's College of Motion Picture Arts is ranked No. 15 in the nation among all colleges

and universities and No. 4 among public schools by *The Hollywood Reporter*, “Top 25 Film Schools,” 2023. Filmschool.org also ranked FSU No. 1 in the category of “Best Affordable Film School” for 2022. Florida State ranks No. 19 in *The Hollywood Reporter’s* Top 25 drama schools, 2022, reaffirming the School of Theatre as a mainstay in the publication’s annual list of best schools for an acting degree. Numerous other programs at Florida State rank in the Top 5. *U.S. News & World Report* currently ranks Florida State No. 30 overall and No. 23 among public universities in its “Best National Universities for Veterans” rankings, which are published annually.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Associate Vice President for Principal Gifts will report to the Vice President for University Advancement and President of the FSU Foundation, Inc., Marla Vickers. The Associate Vice President will lead a team of at least four frontline fundraising professionals who serve as university wide central fundraisers and members of the Principal Gift Team or the Gift & Estate Planning Team. As a member of the University Advancement Leadership Team within the Division of University Advancement, the Associate Vice President will interface regularly with the President, Provost, academic deans and unit leaders, principal gift level donors and prospects, and volunteer leaders university wide, as well as with the University Board of Trustees and the Foundation Board of Trustees.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Associate Vice President for Principal Gifts will

- build a best-in-class principal gifts program at Florida State University;
- lead, grow, and enhance university wide fundraising efforts in collaboration and coordination with the Vice President for University Advancement across all colleges, schools, and units, and the Gift & Estate Planning Team from a best-practices, donor-centric orientation in a comprehensive campaign environment while maintaining a portfolio of at least thirty \$1,000,000 and above rated prospects;
- partner with the most senior members of the University Advancement team across all colleges, schools, and units to serve as a thought partner on fundraising priorities and individual prospect and donor strategies;
- drive the donor engagement process (identification, qualification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship) through a donor-centric approach for prospects with capacity to give \$5,000,000 or more across all colleges, schools, and units;
- provide leadership, direction, thought partnership, and influence strategies to secure gifts of \$5,000,000 and above across all colleges, schools, and units and the Gift & Estate Planning Team;
- lead ideation sessions with academic leadership in partnership with the Vice President for University Advancement to generate a suite of transformational gift opportunities around FSU’s “big ideas” tied to campaign priorities;
- support colleges, schools, and units fundraising at the principal gift level in alignment with the foundation's operating principles and driven by the pursuit of fulfilling the university's mission;
- provide oversight and leadership in determining the feasibility and type of giving vehicle best suited to the needs of prospects and current donors at the principal gift level;
- partner closely with the Associate Vice President for Advancement Services to track progress with all \$5,000,000 and above rated prospects across all colleges, schools, and units and the Gift & Estate Planning Team;

- manage budget development and management for the Principal Gifts Team and the Gift & Estate Planning Team;
- cultivate long-term, collaborative relationships with key internal stakeholders;
- protect confidential information and follow all foundation, university, and the State of Florida Sunshine Law pertaining to public records and constituent information;
- train, coach, mentor, supervise, and hold accountable the fundraisers on the Principal Gifts Team and the Gift & Estate Planning Team while ensuring the overall performance, success, and growth of each area, helping staff excel in their work and grow professionally;
- facilitate the development, maintenance, and monitoring of strategically aligned work plans; and
- partner with the Vice President and follow a universal goal-setting methodology to establish individual and team fundraising and meeting goals as well as overall campaign goals, while monitoring a suite of metrics to track and report progress against fundraising and meeting goals both individually and collectively.

LEADERSHIP

Marla Vickers

Vice President for University Advancement and President, FSU Foundation, Inc.

In her role as Vice President for University Advancement and President of the FSU Foundation, Marla Vickers leads Florida State University's academic fundraising, alumni relations, advancement services, and real estate giving and works closely with the Seminole Boosters while launching FSU's next comprehensive campaign July 1, 2024.

Vickers, an FSU alumna who previously served as Associate Vice President of Advancement in the Division of Advancement & Alumni Engagement at Emory University in Atlanta, is an accomplished development professional with more than 20 years of experience in higher education at some of the nation's elite universities. She has worked on five different multibillion-dollar campaigns.

At Emory, Vickers provided leadership and strategic direction for fundraising and alumni and constituent engagement efforts in eight academic schools and units. She also led efforts to build Emory's major and principal gifts pipeline in a campaign environment and played a key role as a thought partner in the university's current \$4 billion campaign. Prior to Emory, Vickers held development positions at Yale University, The University of Chicago, George Washington University, Duke University, and Georgetown University.

Vickers earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Georgia, a master's degree in public history and historic administration from Florida State University, an MBA from The George Washington University, and a doctorate from Vanderbilt University. She also holds a certificate in Non-Profit Executive Leadership and Management from Indiana University's Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. She is a Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE), a voluntary credential that is recognized globally among philanthropic fundraising professionals.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Florida State University seeks an Associate Vice President for Principal Gifts with

- a commitment to the mission of Florida State University—to preserve, expand, and disseminate knowledge in the sciences, technology, arts, humanities, and professions, while embracing a philosophy of learning strongly rooted in the traditions of the liberal arts;
- experience developing, leading, growing, and enhancing fundraising efforts in collaboration and coordination with stakeholders across institutions, preferably within a higher education environment;
- deep knowledge of and an ability to strategically apply best practices and principles in the field of advancement to align tasks and people with the goals and objectives of the institution;
- an ability to partner with advancement teams within a decentralized enterprise and serve as a thought partner on fundraising priorities and individual prospect and donor strategies;
- an ability to drive the donor engagement process and implement leadership, direction, thought partnership, and influence strategies that secure gifts with significant institutional impact;
- an ability to manage a personal portfolio of high-net-worth prospects, serving as a successful frontline fundraiser and leading by example;
- experience developing alumni and donor management strategies that deepen engagement and increase impact;
- experience hiring, training, managing, mentoring, and supervising successful fundraising teams while helping individual staff excel in their work and grow professionally;
- exceptional communication skills—verbal, writing, and presentation—across platforms and audiences; and
- an ability to interpret and apply federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations as needed.

A bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and experience is required for this position as is at least six years of principal and planned gift fundraising experience.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is \$250,000 to \$275,000 annually. Florida State University offers a [comprehensive package of benefits](#).

LOCATION

This position is in Tallahassee, Florida. As daily engagement with colleagues across the university is critical to the success of this position, remote work is not offered for this role

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Florida State University as well as the responsibilities and qualifications stated in the prospectus.*** All inquiries will be held in confidence.

To apply for this position, visit: [Associate Vice President for Principal Gifts, Florida State University](#).

To nominate a candidate, please contact Don Hasseltine: donhasseltine@aspenleadershipgroup.com.