

# ASPEN LEADERSHIP GROUP

ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT  
[CENTRE COLLEGE](#)  
DANVILLE, KENTUCKY



CENTRE  
COLLEGE

Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Centre College in the search for an Associate Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement.

The Associate Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement will serve as a key strategic and operational leader responsible for overall management of the development team and the units within donor relations, database services, major gifts, annual giving, corporate and foundation relations, planned giving, alumni relations, and events. The Associate Vice President will work collaboratively to advance the goals of the Office of Development and Alumni Engagement as a proven leader who values collaboration, innovation, and creativity, and will be well-versed in all facets of institutional fundraising.

Centre College was founded by Presbyterian leaders and officially chartered by the Kentucky Legislature on January 21, 1819. The name reflects the college's location in the geographic center of Kentucky. Instruction began in Old Centre—the college's first building—in the fall of 1820 with a faculty of two and a student body of five. Today, there are approximately 1,400 students and 150 full-time faculty members dedicated to the college's mission of preparing students for lives of learning, leadership, and service.

Centre College is committed to providing a deeply engaging, intensely personal education with guaranteed opportunities for all students to explore the world, gain on-the-job experience, and conduct research alongside their professors. It is easy for students to make their mark at Centre. With over 85 clubs and organizations, 25 NCAA Division III athletics teams, and more than 2,000 events each year, there is always something to do, somewhere to go, and someone to cheer on.

Centre helps to ensure success after graduation from day one. The Center for Career & Professional Development offers personal coaching to help students explore majors and careers, find summer jobs and internships, work on resumes and cover letters for graduate schools and jobs, and network with alumni. Personal attention from outstanding professors allows students to progress faster. The 10-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio means professors know students by name and can offer personalized support.

With a variety of international study options that broaden student perspectives while providing a competitive advantage in the global economy, Centre is ranked among the top in the nation for percentage of students who study abroad with 85% of Centre students taking advantage of the opportunities available.

Centre's nearly 14,000 alumni are fiercely loyal and eager to help students make valuable job contacts in almost any field and location imaginable. Memorable alumni from the past include two U.S. Vice Presidents, two U.S. Supreme Court justices, and a founder of the Hard Rock Café. More recent alumni are equally distinguished and love to talk to Centre students.

*College Raptor*, a college planning platform, has recognized Centre College among some of the nation's best colleges and universities. Centre was named a 2024 "Hidden Gem" and was recognized as the no. 1 "gem" in the state of Kentucky. It is also one of the top-ranked colleges in the Southeast and a top five Division III college in the rankings. The 2023 edition of *The Princeton Review's* guide to America's "Best 389 Colleges" recognizes Centre College as one of the best in the country. Professors took center stage for the college in its rankings: Centre faculty ranked 13<sup>th</sup> in the country as "Professors Get High Marks," and ranked 24<sup>th</sup> nationally for "Most Accessible Professors." Earlier in the year, the publication listed Centre as one of the Best Value Colleges for 2023.

### **REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS**

The Associate Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement will report to the Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement, Kelly Knetsche. The Associate Vice President will oversee a team of eight to ten staff.

### **FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT**

*This is an especially exciting time to be part of the growth in the Office of Development and Alumni Engagement at Centre College. Centre alumni are loyal supporters of the college and want to pay the Centre Experience forward to our current students. Our current student body is more diverse than ever with 25% of the incoming class identifying as Pell Eligible and more than 21% of the student body identifying as a first-generation college student. Our alumni, parents, and friends give back at rates seen at very few other colleges and are passionate about the Centre Experience.*

*As a leader and senior member of the Development and Alumni Engagement team the Associate Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement will lead strategies to increase philanthropic support for Centre College that will benefit our talented students, faculty, and staff—all while working alongside a talented team who strive to put students first. Centre is a special place with special people who want nothing more than to impact the lives of students. The Centre Experience includes experiential learning, community engagement, and career readiness all while receiving a top National Liberal Arts and Sciences Education.*

*The city of Danville continues to expand with access to bigger cities, including Lexington and Louisville less than an hour away. Join us for a stroll down historic main street, a trip to a renowned bourbon distillery, and plenty of outdoor recreational opportunities, along with some of the best public schools in the state of Kentucky. We embrace work and life balance. We are looking for the next great teammate, and I hope you will take the opportunity to apply and learn more about Centre College and the Danville community. It truly is a great place to work and live!*

—Kelly Knetsche, Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement

### **CENTRE COLLEGE'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND EQUITY**

Centre College pledges continuing efforts to build and strengthen a community enriched by differences and founded upon common humanity. Centre College respects the right of all members of the community to express their individuality in a manner that is consistent with the dignity and welfare of others. Centre strives to create an environment where differences are celebrated rather than discouraged, where individuals can exchange ideas and share in the richness of mutual experience.

By valuing the individual's total character over any single characteristic, Centre maintains its unique community. Centre embraces the values of diversity, inclusion, and equity as integral to its mission. Diversity, inclusion, and equity are central to teaching, learning, service, scholarship, and community to stimulate creativity, critical thinking, leadership, discovery, love, and global citizenship.

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Associate Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement will

- partner with the Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement to provide strategic vision, leadership, direction, and coordination in the areas of Development and Alumni Relations;
- personally manage a portfolio of leadership and principal gift donors and prospects;
- serve as a key partner in preparation for Centre College's upcoming comprehensive capital campaign including strategic planning and campaign feasibility—ultimately working with the Vice President to manage and direct all phases of the campaign;
- provide oversight on the conceptualization and execution of events designed to engage and cultivate alumni and friends of Centre College to drive advancement goals;
- oversee the database services function to ensure data is up-to-date, easily accessible, and actionable for use by the appropriate offices throughout the college;
- provide guidance, coaching, and development of direct reports, creating opportunities which foster interdependencies and synergies among and between departments;
- provide program and budget oversight to the entire unit, ensuring resources are effectively utilized;
- collaborate effectively with other offices on campus, including Finance, Human Resources, Athletics, Academics, Communications, ODI, and Legal Affairs; and
- demonstrate an appreciation of and commitment to furthering an inclusive culture for those of diverse backgrounds including ability, age, class, ethnicity, faith background, gender expression, gender identity, geographic region, national origin, neurodiversity, race, and sexual orientation that comprise individual and group expressions of identity.

### **LEADERSHIP**

#### **Kelly Knetsche**

##### **Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement**

Kelly Knetsche's career in fundraising started in 2006 when she began work as a major gift officer at Davidson College, her alma mater. Within a year, she transitioned to oversee parent programs, an area she directed for six years. In 2013, Knetsche was promoted to manage Davidson's \$550 million *Game Changers Capital Campaign*, overseeing a portfolio of approximately 100 major gift prospects and leadership donors. Additionally, she served as one of the lead fundraisers for the E. Craig Wall, Jr. Academic Center, helping to secure \$74 million in new commitments.

In 2017, Knetsche accepted the position of Associate Vice President for Development at Lenoir-Rhyne. Highlights of her tenure there include strengthening overall fundraising efforts, best seen in increasing total annual fundraising commitments from \$9.5 to \$14.5 million from 2018 to 2019 and increasing overall total fundraising commitments by 40 percent.

While earning her B.A. in English from Davidson, Knetsche was a member of Kappa Delta Pi and the National Education Honor Society. She also studied abroad in 1994 at Cambridge University. Knetsche later pursued professional development through the Duke University Nonprofit Management Program, earning certification in nonprofit management.

### **PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Centre College seeks an Associate Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement with

- a commitment to the mission of Centre College—to prepare students for lives of learning, leadership, and service;
- fundraising success including donor cultivation, solicitation, and closure of gifts with significant institutional impact;
- experience in program development, implementation, and review, as well as budget and resource management;
- experience managing a comprehensive capital campaign;
- an ability to manage and lead dynamically and energize multidisciplinary teams;
- comprehensive knowledge of all areas of nonprofit development, including campaigns, major gifts, individual and institutional giving, donor acquisition, planned giving, and annual giving;
- strong leadership capability and an ability to effectively translate plans into tangible, achievable goals;
- strong organizational skills and an ability to successfully manage multiple projects simultaneously;
- an ability to establish credibility and confidence with stakeholders and volunteer leaders;
- excellent verbal, written, presentation, and communications skills;
- an ability to lead based on data-driven decisions and a metrics driven approach to fundraising; and
- experience in higher education advancement (preferred), including an ability to articulate the benefits of a liberal arts education to internal and external constituents.

A bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and experience is preferred for this position as is at least 10 years of experience leading, supervising, and managing development teams of at least five direct reports. Centre College will consider candidates with a broad range of backgrounds. If you are excited about this role and feel that you can contribute to Centre College, but your experience does not exactly align with every qualification listed above, we encourage you to apply.

### **LOCATION**

This position is in Danville, Kentucky.

### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

The salary for this position is between \$100,000 and \$120,000 annually. Centre College offers a [comprehensive benefits package](#) as well as relocation reimbursement.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Centre College as well as the responsibilities and qualifications presented in the prospectus.***

To apply for this position, visit:

[Associate Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement, Centre College.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Clare McCully:

[claremccully@aspenleadershipgroup.com.](mailto:claremccully@aspenleadershipgroup.com)

*All inquiries will be held in confidence.*