ABOUT SAMUEL MERRITT UNIVERSITY (SMU)

Founded in 1909, Samuel Merritt University is an innovative, dynamic, private, and nonprofit health sciences institution with four distinct campuses in Oakland, Sacramento, San Mateo, and Fresno, California. Samuel Merritt University is dedicated to educating highly skilled, compassionate, and community-based healthcare professionals who will positively transform healthcare in diverse communities. With acclaimed academic programs in nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, physician assistant studies, social work, health sciences, health administration, and podiatric medicine, SMU offers high-quality health sciences instruction, outstanding and committed faculty, staff, and leadership team, in state-of-the-art facilities. SMU is committed to training health sciences students in the importance of social determinants of health, health equity, and care for a diverse range of patients with integrity, compassion, and community service. Samuel Merritt University is the largest educator of registered nurses in the state of California and the largest provider of physical and occupational therapists, physician assistants, and podiatric physicians in Northern California. SMU is regionally accredited by Western Association of Schools and Colleges – Senior College and University Commission.

Samuel Merritt University provides exemplary undergraduate and graduate health science education programs to over 2,000 students across their four campuses. SMU first began as a credential nursing program affiliated with Samuel Merritt Hospital in 1909. SMU became a regionally accredited college of nursing in 1984 andtransitioned to regionally accredited university status in 2009. SMU’s academic programs are organized into three colleges that operate across the Bay Area and Northern California.

Together, SMU’s colleges offer bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees in nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, physician assistant, social work, health sciences, health administration programs, and podiatric medicine.
SMU attracts a highly diverse student body: 56% of SMU students come from disadvantaged backgrounds, 21% are first generation students, and 15% are students with children. SMU has an impressive 8:1 student to faculty ratio that ensures personalized learning for every student with its outstanding faculty. SMU provides student-centered services and faculty support and resources that promote best practices in student learning, teaching, and educational performance. SMU’s financial aid office provides 84% of its students with support to cover the cost of tuition, fees, and living expenses. SMU’s continuous striving for student-centered programs and strong academic excellence is reflected in their 94% timely graduation rate across all degree programs.

In 2023, Samuel Merritt University was ranked as one of the top healthcare and nursing higher education institutions in the United States by Intelligent.com. Forbes Magazine recently ranked SMU at No. 1 in the country for their graduates’ average starting salaries, outranking other schools like Stanford, Cal Tech, and MIT. College Factual has ranked SMU’s College of Nursing No. 2 nationally, No. 1 for nurse anesthesia nationally, and No. 1 in California for its first-rate bachelor programs. SMU has been named the “best college in California for getting a job” by career website Zippia. SMU currently enjoys a 97% job placement rate with 93% of healthcare employers reporting they “often to always” prefer SMU graduates over other candidates. All master’s and doctoral graduates are generally employed in their profession within six months of graduation.

Since its founding, SMU has become an unparalleled healthcare workforce development hub for the growing Northern California region with the most students matriculating to major healthcare systems. Students across programs are trained to become skilled, caring, world-class professionals motivated by improving health outcomes and access to care in underserved communities and beyond. Students, faculty, and staff regularly provide health care and education outreach at local nonprofits and churches, hosting free public health clinics and offering inspiring mentorship programs to young people.
Academics, Faculty, and Colleges

For 115 years, Samuel Merritt University has been preparing compassionate and skilled clinicians and nurse leaders. SMU’s Academic Division is comprised of three colleges offering baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degrees that operate across the Bay Area and Northern California. SMU’s curriculum is deeply steeped in the University’s mission to educate students to become highly skilled and compassionate healthcare professionals who will transform care within their respective communities. The 126 full-time faculty and 423 part-time faculty are regularly published in peer-reviewed journals and books, awarded professional honors, and many are invited to serve on national boards and professional committees.

The College of Health Sciences is training a new generation of highly skilled health sciences students as physician assistants, occupational therapists, physical therapists, social workers, and health administrators. The College focuses on science, research, and hands-on clinical training as the core of their educational experience. Students are trained in the importance of community input, social determinants of health, and healthcare inequities so they can strive for more compassionate care. The College is comprised of academic departments of Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant, Social Work, Health Science/Administration, and Basic Sciences (non-degree support). Degree programs include Bachelor of Health Sciences, Master of Health Administration, Master of Physician Assistant, Master of Social Work, Doctor and Master of Occupational Therapy, and Doctor of Physical Therapy on their Oakland campus.

The College of Nursing is a top provider of registered nurses in Northern California and the Central Valley, offering undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and nursing certificate programs at four campuses and online courses. The College of Nursing has 15-degree programs include the Bachelor of Science in Nursing, the Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing, the RN to BSN and graduate programs (MSN), including Entry-Level Masters, Nurse Anesthesia, Case Management, Family Nurse Practitioner, and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP). Notable degree programs include Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program, Master of Science in Nursing – Case Management Program, Doctor of Nursing Practice - Psych Mental Health, Doctor of Nursing Practice - Family Nurse Practitioner Online Program, and Doctor of Nursing Practice Program – Anesthesia. SMU's licensure RN pass rates at 91% far exceed the national average year-after-year with over 86% of their graduates being employed within six months.

One of only eleven schools in the United States, the College of Podiatric Medicine is a national leader in podiatric medical education and patient care. The College has a long history of successful alumni. Established in 1914, the College of Podiatric Medicine prepares students to specialize in foot and ankle diseases, disorders, and injuries with a robust curriculum that accelerates practical understanding and giving hands-on learning by the second year, far earlier than most comparable programs nationwide. The College’s metropolitan location in Oakland allows students to be immersed in a range of care for a highly diverse group of patients. Degree programs include Bridge to Podiatric Residency (Advanced Placement) and Doctor of Podiatric Medicine.
Centers and Facilities

Samuel Merritt University has expanded both its academic program offerings and institutional settings to fundamentally improve healthcare through better systems and evidenced-based care. SMU provides healthcare education that is grounded in best practices, interprofessional collaboration, research, and experiential learning. To further SMU’s pursuit of excellence in healthcare education, the university has major centers, institutes, and libraries that serve as central hubs for this work. They include:

- The Health Sciences Simulation Center (HSSC) located on three campuses is one of the West’s most advanced healthcare simulation facilities offering the full range of simulation experiences, patient safety, and positive patient outcomes. SMU students, faculty, and working health professionals collaborate to respond to life-like scenarios, take on different roles, and become better healthcare team members.

- The Motion Analysis Research Center (MARC) is a premier, interdisciplinary laboratory for students and faculty to collaborate on evaluation and research related to human motion, kinesiology, sports medicine, and rehabilitation. The MARC also allows students and faculty to work side-by-side on significant research initiatives and clinical trials to find solutions to movement challenges impacting people’s lives.

- The Center for Community Engagement (CCE) works to create healthier communities by employing an equity lens with a multidisciplinary, collaborative approach to community engagement through free clinics, field trips, labs for disadvantaged students, and providing health services and education to low-income communities. CCE is home to SMU’s Ethnic Health Institute, a hospital-based community benefit program that advances health equity education and practice.

- The Academic and Instructional Innovation (A&II) center engages directly with faculty, staff, and students to support teaching and learning, faculty development, and professional growth. Their bench of experts including instructional designers, educational technologists, system administrators, and software developers help ensure teaching best practices are fun, rewarding, and transformative.

- The Center for Innovation and Excellence in Learning (CIEL) is grounded in excellence in learning by collaborating with health care professionals to help them develop as educators, scholars, and researchers. Through collaborative partnerships, CIEL prepares health care professionals across all practice domains to teach masterfully using leading-edge tools and strategies that address health inequities and inspires students to be outstanding clinicians, creative thinkers, collaborative health care partners, and lifelong learners.

- Samuel Merritt University Libraries supports students and faculty by providing access to evidence-based research, case studies, exam review guides, and intercampus and interlibrary loan materials. The SMU Library supports both digital and physical spaces on all four campuses with an extensive health science collection of books, journals, materials, digital databases, resources, and information, providing human-centered service to the SMU community. The John A. Graziano Memorial Library serves as their flagship library in Oakland.
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Samuel Merritt University’s mission is built on transforming the experience of care in diverse communities. In light of the shifting demographics of their regional communities and the vital role a diverse healthcare workforce plays in reducing healthcare disparities, SMU has identified diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as a strategic imperative for the University. In 1999, Samuel Merritt University first embraced “celebrating diversity” as one of its core values. Since that time, DEI has been a core strategy embedded in the ongoing work of the institution at all levels. In late 2020, SMU formed a standing committee of faculty, staff, and student representatives to launch a new and robust strategic plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion. This intensive work culminated into a vibrant new plan: Strategic Vision for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 2021 – 2026. A pillar of Samuel Merritt University’s Strategic Plan is to foster a sense of belonging in their diverse leadership, faculty, staff, and students who advance learning, scholarship, and service to the community. This visionary DEI plan furthers Samuel Merritt University’s mission and will ensure that the University will achieve its institutional vision to become nationally recognized as a premier, multi-specialty health sciences institution.

Leadership and Governance

Since November 26, 2018, Samuel Merritt University has been led by President Ching-Hua Wang, who succeeded Sharon Diaz, who had served for 36 years prior to announcing her retirement. President Wang has long been a dynamic and innovative leader in higher education. Prior to assuming the role of SMU president, Wang was provost at California State University, Sacramento who previously had served as Dean of the School of Health and Natural Sciences at Dominican University, where she managed extramural grants and raised $9.3 million from corporations and other private sources. President Wang’s personal experience as an impoverished schoolteacher exiled to a remote village of Inner Mongolia during the Cultural Revolution, led to her strong commitment to higher education, especially her abiding passion for helping disadvantaged and underrepresented children and students. President Wang was recently recognized by the San Francisco Business Times as the Bay Area's Most Influential Women in Business Award.

The SMU Board of Regents is the principal governance authority of Samuel Merritt University. The 17-member Board of Regents guides the University’s effort to advance and sustain its excellence in clinical education and secure financial resources to meet the University’s needs. SMU’s highly diverse Board of Regents brings a variety of senior executive experiences in health care, educational leadership, investment, real estate, and business development. Together, the Board of Regents and President Wang work to fulfill the University’s strategic vision by overseeing the ongoing improvements to SMU’s infrastructure and facilities. SMU recently developed a strategic growth initiative that will double enrollment over the next 10 years and contribute greatly to the increasing demand for healthcare workers in California and throughout the United States.
Financial Health, New Flagship Campus, and Campaign

As a national leader in health science education, SMU is poised for unprecedented growth. In January 2022, Samuel Merritt University became an independent not-for-profit private university, officially disaffiliated from Sutter Health Corporation. Despite their recent disaffiliation from Sutter Health, Samuel Merritt remains in robust financial health. SMU’s endowment and special purpose fund have grown to $80 million, and the University has a strong financial reserve of $280 million of unrestricted liquid assets and restricted investments. SMU has recently broken ground on a new $240 million flagship campus in Oakland City Center. After securing municipal approval, SMU secured $139 million in bond financing in December 2022 for the new building. Moody’s Investor Services assigned initial A3 issuer and revenue bond ratings to SMU a few months earlier, allowing them a highly favorable 30-year, tax-exempt series bond financing. SMU plans to invest an additional $120 million of its own reserves to complete the facility. The 260,000-square-foot City Center Campus was announced November 3, 2022, and construction broke ground on April 10, 2023. The 167-foot-tall structure will showcase the most advanced capabilities in health science education, including a new 41,000-square feet simulation center, a new Motion Analysis Research Center, as well as classrooms and cutting-edge anatomy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and podiatric medicine labs. The new building is slated to open in January 2026 and will be easily accessible by public transportation with a BART station less than half a block away.

In 2019, SMU began to invest fully in a new institutional advancement program, including developing their annual, major, planned giving, and corporate and foundation relations programs. In addition, SMU developed a new brand identity and marketing program and made significant infrastructure and systems improvements. The advancement program has experienced significant increases in individual, alumni, board, and employee giving, including several $500,000 and $1 million grants and contributions. In 2022, SMU received the largest gift in the University’s history—a $10 million gift to fund their podiatric medicine and nursing programs. In 2023, SMU enjoyed considerable growth in both private support and grants totaling $11.4 million. In November 2023, SMU retained Campbell & Company to conduct a campaign assessment to determine a new fundraising strategy to support the construction of SMU’s new flagship campus. SMU is currently exploring a comprehensive campaign that will offset the cost of the new building.

To build on the SMU’s past success and launch the campaign, SMU seeks a mission-driven and dynamic Vice President for University Advancement who will help expand their philanthropic support, strengthen their culture of philanthropy, establish effective funding partnerships, and lead their landmark comprehensive campaign to advance SMU as a premier, comprehensive health sciences institution.

We invite you to learn more at samuelmerrit.edu.
THE POSITION

The next Vice President for University Advancement will have a tremendous opportunity to build upon SMU’s recent fundraising success and lead a health sciences institution through an exciting period of unprecedented growth and impact. The Vice President for University Advancement, an inclusive, strategic, and collaborative leader, provides vision, leadership, and management for all facets of SMU’s advancement programs to attract philanthropic support from individuals, corporations, and foundations, including annual, major, and planned giving, corporate and foundation gifts and grants, stewardship programs, alumni relations, donor marketing, and other external relations activities. This position reports directly to Ching-Hua Wang, President of Samuel Merritt University.

The Vice President for University Advancement serves as an essential member of the President’s Cabinet and works closely with the highest levels of senior university staff, deans, faculty, regents, donors, funders, and volunteers. Peers include the Executive Vice President, Chief Operating Officer, and Treasurer; Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs; Chief of Staff, Vice President of External Affairs; and Vice President of Strategic Growth and Marketing. The Vice President for University Advancement also works closely with the SMU’s college deans and other academic leaders to develop fundraising priorities and strategies to increase the engagement, cultivation, and solicitation of new and existing donors and prospects. This creative, entrepreneurial, and energetic leader is expected to build strong, beneficial relationships throughout the SMU community, facilitate greater regional engagement, and increase annual, foundation, major, planned, and principal gifts. The Chief Advancement Officer will work closely with volunteer leaders and be a key leader in the creation and execution of a comprehensive campaign. This position is based in Oakland with the flexibility for working remotely.

The Vice President for University Advancement, an accomplished closer of gifts and accelerator of high-capacity donor prospects, leads an integrated team of advancement, development, and communications professionals and currently oversees nine positions, including Director of Alumni Engagement and Annual Giving, Advancement Services Manager, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, Director of Development of Nursing and Campaign, Director of Development, Planned Giving and Podiatric Medicine, Director of University Communications, and Executive Assistant (part-time). The Vice President for University Advancement manages the team with the highest degree of integrity, accountability, and professionalism and works closely with the President to build a performance-driven advancement environment that leverages the collective strengths of the advancement and communications staff and all SMU stakeholders including the Board of Regents, President’s Cabinet and senior leadership, faculty, alumni, funders, campus partners, and volunteers. The Vice President for University Advancement works collaboratively on marketing and communications for the University that advances their bold mission, vision, and values. Since equity and inclusion are of the utmost importance to SMU, the new Vice President for University Advancement must bring a deep, abiding commitment to being open, transparent, and inclusive in all professional engagements. To be successful, the Vice President for University Advancement must be a collaborative, creative, confident, and results-oriented leader who can articulate clear and compelling cases for support and lead teams successfully to ensure the growth and vitality at one of California’s best health sciences university.
RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vice President for University Advancement will have the following primary responsibilities:

**Leadership and Management**
- Lead, actively recruit, hire, inspire, and grow SMU’s dynamic, talented team of advancement professionals, ensuring staff are fully trained, resourced, and supported and provided professional development opportunities.
- Develop and manage divisional budgets effectively to support the functions of the division.
- Work in close partnership with Deans and other university leadership as appropriate, ensuring clearly defined expectations, goal setting, and accountability for staff utilizing all institutional performance tools.
- Develop robust constituent programs that contribute to a culture and tradition of lifelong affiliation and advocacy among alumni and volunteers.
- Develop and foster supportive working relationships, motivation, and engagement and communicate information to staff on an ongoing basis to influence and increase staff engagement throughout the greater SMU community.
- Recognize the value of and promote a diverse workforce; champion Samuel Merritt’s shared values and encourage inclusion, diverse perspectives, creativity, and teamwork.
- Build a strong achievement-focused advancement infrastructure that optimizes SMU’s fundraising potential and leverages the strengths of the advancement team.
- Continue to develop and maintain positive, collaborative working relationships with the President, Board of Regents, President’s Cabinet, deans, faculty, students, and the university community to maximize philanthropic impact for SMU and for their donors.

**Campaign Planning, Strategy, and Integration**
- Oversee overall campaign planning, development, communications, and implementation for a robust and fully functioning fundraising and marketing strategy for the university, including staffing, training, and professional development of all relevant staff.
- Oversee all fundraising outcomes assessment and program evaluation.
• Contribute to and participate in UA’s leadership decisions and strategies as a senior member of the Advancement Leadership Team.

• Contribute to and occasionally lead the updating and development of new development policies and procedures.

• Actively work to maintain an equitable and inclusive workplace and promote a culture of mutual respect, collegiality, and collaboration.

Major and Principal Giving

• Build and maintain a personal portfolio of SMU’s top major and principal gift donors and prospects; work closely with the President, the Board of Regents, and the university community to identify new major and principal gift donors and prospects.

• Lead the development team to identify, solicit, cultivate, close, and steward major and principal gift prospects that meet and exceed all activity metrics and revenue goals.

• Develop and implement individualized strategic cultivation plans for new and existing donors and prospects that meet annual or major gift objectives for each assigned prospect.

QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will bring most of the following qualifications and skill sets:

• A deep and passionate commitment to the mission, vision, and values of Samuel Merritt University and health science education, particularly SMU’s strong commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity.

• A minimum of 8 to 10 years of progressively responsible leadership experience in managing successful comprehensive advancement programs. Experience with multi-year campaigns, preferably in a university, healthcare, or education setting, would be an advantage.

• Demonstrated ability to hire, manage, motivate, and retain a diverse team that strives to achieve and exceed annual fundraising goals in an open, transparent, and inclusive manner.

• Demonstrated experience in raising and leading teams to secure significant major gifts at the six- and seven-figure level.

• A proactive, goal-oriented, and data-informed advancement leader with demonstrated success in building productive, long-term relationships with senior university administrators, deans, faculty, staff, community leaders, boards, volunteers, and donors as well as developing and managing budgets.

• A confident, collaborative, and flexible leader who brings strong emotional intelligence and exceptional skills as an active listener, consensus builder, and effective coach/advisor on short- and long-term advancement strategies and goals.

• Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with an inspiring and persuasive ability, including superior written, verbal, research, critical thinking, and presentation skills.

• Solid command of advancement technology and donor database management, ideally Raiser’s Edge NXT software.

• Ability to travel as necessary and attend program and fundraising activities, frequently including evenings and weekends.

• A bachelor’s degree from an accredited university or college is required.
ABOUT THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Consistently voted the best places in the world for living, San Francisco Bay Area has always been the epicenter of beauty, charm, and elegance. With a combined population of over 1.2 million residents, Oakland and San Francisco are located at the heart of the Bay Area, a nine-county, major metropolitan complex with a population of close to 8 million, making it one of the largest metro areas in the nation. The Bay Area’s coastal Mediterranean climate makes weather extremely mild throughout the year. Temperatures range from the fifties and sixties during the winter months to the seventies during the summer. San Francisco Bay Area has one of the world’s leading regional economies with thousands of technology and professional-services firms, regional and international airports, and attractive seaports.

One of the world’s most ethnically diverse communities, the art scene in Oakland and San Francisco is vibrant and dynamic, with a rich history of artistic tradition in a wide range of media, from painting and sculpture to video and performing arts. In its energy, its diversity, and its creativity, the San Francisco Bay Area art and culture scene embodies all the best of everything: a world-class symphony, museums, zoos, libraries, and theaters. With sweeping vistas and rolling hills, the Bay Area enjoys year-round free cultural activities due to its mild climate, including a range of restaurants, shopping, and outdoor activities.

Bay Area residents are bound by a strong sense of pride in their region; despite the region’s relatively high cost of living, many residents will tell you that they can’t imagine living anywhere else. Residents in the Bay Area enjoy many transportation choices and commute to work locations by car, BART, bus, train, ferry, or bicycle. The new SMU campus in Oakland City Center is ideal for many area commuters, located only half a block from 12th Street Oakland City Center BART station. SMU’s new central location in Oakland also provides a range of other public transportation options, making the campus accessible to a wide range of residential communities.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is $280,000 to $320,000 that includes an annual incentive plan. Benefits include health, vision, and dental care (UnitedHealthcare HDHP, HMO, EPO and PPO medical plans, Delta Dental coverage, and VSP vision coverage); qualified 403(b) retirement plan with 2% employee match and a 5% end-of-year employer match; an unqualified 457(b) retirement plan; life insurance (basic and term) and AD&D insurance; employee assistance plan; voluntary plans (accident insurance, critical illness insurance, hospital indemnity insurance; legal services plan); health savings account (HSA); flexible spending accounts (FSAs); voluntary tax-deferred annuities; 15 days of paid vacation, 11 paid holidays, paid holiday leave (December 26-31), 12 paid sick pay days; various leave allocations such as educational, daycare, personal, military, jury duty, bereavement, reproductive loss, and volunteer workday; paid time off for voting, domestic violence, crime victims and/or family members; commuter benefits; pet insurance; tuition reimbursement and remission; and a warm, collaborative, innovative, and agile work culture.

Relocation assistance will be provided for the successful candidate.
APPLICATION

Samuel Merritt University has retained Campbell & Company to conduct this search. The team for this project includes Dan Nevez, Vice President, and Emily Miller, Senior Consultant.

Use the Apply Now button below or visit www.campbellcompany.com to learn more about this opportunity.

*Samuel Merritt University has an institution-wide commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We strive to build a welcoming and supportive campus environment and acknowledge that diversity is an educational imperative to achieve excellence.*

APPLY NOW >
Drawing on our deep expertise in environmental/conservation, human services, arts and culture, education, healthcare, and association/membership organizations, Campbell & Company offers a high-touch, human-centered executive search experience for clients and candidates. We recruit from our extensive national networks leveraging the relationships and reach of our entire firm, which for 47 years has partnered with organizations across the nonprofit sector to advance their missions and deepen their impact.

We are proud to be the executive search firm of choice for hundreds of nonprofit organizations. Campbell & Company has been listed four times as one of the country’s best executive search firms by Forbes Magazine and named one of Women of Color in Fundraising and Philanthropy (WOC)’s Top 10 search firms for placing extraordinary leaders of color for two consecutive years. Crain’s Chicago recently named us one of Chicago’s Best Places to Work; Seattle Business Magazine also named us one of Washington’s Best Companies to Work For.

As members of this employee-owned firm, everyone at Campbell & Company has a personal stake in the success of each client. Through our culture driven by integrity, candor, rigor, partnership, inclusion, and creativity, we empower every team member to innovate for the good of our clients.

Combining your mission and our passion, Campbell & Company leverages our entire team to be an effective and supportive partner before, during, and after complex leadership transitions. We are driven to place not just a capable candidate, but one who complements your existing culture, can move your organization forward, and will make a meaningful contribution to the nonprofit sector.

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