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Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom, watches over campus from her perch in Minerva Plaza. The College’s original Minerva statue dates to 1892, and is located in the Lougheed Learning Commons. She is fondly known as “Minnie” by alumni.

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

The State University of New York (SUNY) and the SUNY Potsdam College Council invite inquiries, applications and nominations from skilled and experienced administrators who are committed to student success and academic excellence to serve as the College’s next President.
ABOUT SUNY POTSDAM

Founded in 1816, The State University of New York at Potsdam is one of America’s first 50 colleges—and the oldest institution within SUNY. Now in its third century, SUNY Potsdam is distinguished by a legacy of pioneering programs and educational excellence. The College currently enrolls approximately 2,600 undergraduate and graduate students. Home to the world-renowned Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam is known for its challenging liberal arts and sciences core, excellence in teacher training, and leadership in the performing and visual arts.

At SUNY Potsdam, students are encouraged to pursue their passions in a closeknit campus environment that emphasizes community, discovery and creativity. Our faculty and staff are deeply committed to recruiting students with promise, and helping them successfully find their paths and achieve their goals, both before and after graduation.

SUNY Potsdam has been ranked, consistently, in the top tier of public and private institutions in the Northern Regional Universities category of “America’s Best Colleges” by U.S. News and World Report. The College has been regularly designated a Military Friendly School, and is likewise highly ranked on the Best Colleges for Veterans list from U.S. News & World Report. SUNY Potsdam is also recognized in the Princeton Review Guide to Green Colleges.
**Mission statement**

The State University of New York at Potsdam prepares students to act as engaged global citizens and to lead lives enriched by critical thought, creativity and discovery. As an inclusive scholarly community, rooted in our historic role in providing exemplary teacher and music education and our leadership in the fine and performing arts, we are committed to the liberal arts and sciences as an academic foundation for all students. With an abiding sense of responsibility to our region and to the world beyond, SUNY Potsdam fosters an appreciation of and respect for the variety of human experience.

**The Potsdam Pledge**

Being more than a collection of individuals, SUNY Potsdam is a community dedicated to the pursuit of common goals. While these goals can be elusive and controversial, the community described below reminds us not only of what we are seeking to become, but of all that we share in common. Therefore, let it be known that SUNY Potsdam strives to be:

An **Educational Community** sharing academic goals and in which students, faculty and staff work together to strengthen teaching and learning;

An **Open Community** uncompromisingly protecting freedom of thought, belief and expression;

A **Civil Community** expressing disagreements in rational and non-threatening ways, and treating all individuals with consideration, decency and respect;

A **Responsible Community** accepting obligations under clearly articulated principles of behavior designed to support the common good;

A **Safe Community** respecting each other’s rights, privacy and property;

A **Healthy Community** respecting and promoting physical and emotional wellness;

An **Ethical Community** reflecting honesty, integrity and fairness, in both academic and extracurricular activities;

A **Diverse Community** celebrating our differences and learning from our diversity;

A **Socially Conscious Community** seeking to contribute to the betterment of the campus, the local community, the nation and the world;

A **Watchful Community** remaining alert to the threats posed by hatred, intolerance and other injustices, and ever-prepared to combat them.
Our vision
SUNY Potsdam aspires to foster innovative programs that deliver truly transformational student experiences, in a collaborative and creative community environment, emphasizing inclusivity, sustainability, and leadership in scholarship and service.

Our values
SUNY Potsdam is a caring, diverse and inclusive community that values:
- Student centeredness
- Academic excellence
- Liberal education
- Transformative self-discovery, creativity and scholarship
- Collaboration
- Integrity
- Public service
- The uniqueness of our history and place

Learn more:
Strategic Plan: A Vision for Our Best
HISTORY

From our humble beginnings in a one room schoolhouse, The State University of New York at Potsdam has grown to become a leader in applied learning, the arts and educational excellence. In 1816, our institution was founded as the St. Lawrence Academy, making it one of the first 50 established universities in the United States. The New York State Legislature selected the academy to exclusively offer a teacher education program for its senatorial district in 1834, which began the Academy’s, and later the College’s, longstanding tradition of excellence in teacher education. In 1866, Potsdam became one of only four Normal Schools established in the entire state. In 1886, Potsdam became the first Normal School in the nation to train public school music teachers, through the Crane Normal Institute of Music, which later became The Crane School of Music. In 1948, Potsdam became one of the founding members of the State University of New York, and was renamed the New York State Teachers College at Potsdam. Construction began on the new Pierrepont Avenue campus two years later. The College adopted its current name in 1964, along with an expanded mission and new programs. Learn more about our history here.

SUNY Potsdam would like to acknowledge with respect the Kanien’kehá:ka/Mohawk Nation, Protectors of the Eastern Door of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the indigenous peoples on whose ancestral lands our campus now stands. Learn more about the native heritage of our area.
ACADEMICS

The School of Arts and Sciences exposes students to a variety of fields within the fine arts, sciences, humanities and social sciences. The School’s strong foundation in the liberal arts prizes creativity and inquiry, offering a full palette of study across the disciplines, with majors, minors and interdisciplinary programs that encourage hands on learning opportunities for every student. The School of Arts and Sciences has the largest enrollment of the three Schools at SUNY Potsdam and provides a majority of the general education courses.
Founded by pioneering educator Julia Etta Crane in 1886, The Crane School of Music has a long legacy of excellence in music education and performance, and is known as the birthplace of music education in America. Life at Crane includes an incredible array of more than 300 recitals, lectures and concerts presented by faculty, students and guests each year. The Crane School of Music is the State University of New York’s only All-Steinway institution and was one of the first Yamaha Institutions of Excellence in the country.
The **School of Education and Professional Studies** at SUNY Potsdam has at its roots the College’s 206-year experience in preparing educators, with an emphasis on pedagogy that meets the needs of the day. Today, that legacy of educational excellence also stretches to undergraduate and graduate programs in business administration, public health and human performance, to help students prepare for professions in the global economy. The School of Education and Professional Studies continues to expand its growing list of career-ready [online graduate programs](#) to meet the needs of working professionals.
Leadership in applied learning

**Applied learning** is at the heart of a SUNY Potsdam education, and we want every single graduate to have the chance to apply what they are learning inside the classroom, outside the classroom. The Lougheed Center for Applied Learning connects students with internship opportunities, service learning courses, career services, study abroad programs, funding for research and creative projects and much more—all in one location, bolstered by generous donor funding.

Culture of excellence

SUNY Potsdam’s faculty of scholars, artists and accomplished educators are committed to engaging students in research and inquiry as they prepare them for future success. Among our faculty are Fulbright Scholars and Chancellor’s awardees for teaching excellence. They are published authors, well-known researchers, accomplished artists and musicians. The College has a student-to-faculty ratio of 11:1, with an average class size of 14 students and the vast majority of faculty being full-time tenure track. Beyond the numbers, the faculty and staff at Potsdam have a culture of close engagement with students and involvement in the community. There is a palpable commitment to students, with a faculty devoted to individualized education, student research and fieldwork.
ACCREDITATION

The State University of New York at Potsdam is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

Additional program specialized accreditations and certifications include:

- National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Preparation (now the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Preparation)
- National Association of Schools of Music
- National Association of Schools of Theatre
- American Chemical Society
- New York State Law
- Enforcement Accreditation Council
- National Strength and Conditioning Association
- Education Recognition Program

A LEADER IN GIVING

SUNY Potsdam enjoys an excellent relationship with the Potsdam College Foundation, Inc., which is singularly committed to providing annual support to meet ongoing campus needs and to establish permanent endowed funds to support such things as student scholarships and programs. More than simply an “honorary” board of individuals, the Foundation is a dynamic group of extraordinarily accomplished professionals who actively participate in the ongoing development activities of the College, including the highly successful investment of the Foundation’s $51 million endowment and management of comprehensive fundraising campaigns. Preparations are underway for the next campaign, the last of which raised more than $33 million. Annually, the Foundation contributes $3 million in new gifts to the College and an additional $1.8 million in endowment earnings. The Foundation boasts nationally and internationally recognized leaders in business, technology, marketing, education and the arts, making it a uniquely vibrant group of dedicated alumni and supporters truly committed to working collaboratively with the College’s administration and staff to increase revenue to meet the needs of SUNY Potsdam students, faculty and programs (see Foundation).
Alumni

SUNY Potsdam alumni are fiercely loyal and share a deep connection with both their alma mater and each other. The College has more than 42,000 active alumni worldwide, many of whom stay engaged by mentoring current students, volunteering at events, supporting endowments and critical endeavors, and providing leadership through service on alumni boards.

Notable graduates

1. Stephanie Blythe ’92, world-renowned mezzo-soprano
2. Lynne Boles ’74, retired VP for global marketing, Procter & Gamble
3. T.C. Boyle ’68, bestselling award-winning novelist
4. Ron Fishbeck ’80, innovative technology CEO, with wife and artist Teresa Fishbeck (Hon. ’19)
5. Renée Fleming ’81, internationally acclaimed soprano
6. Kathleen Friery ’84, Emmy Award-winning executive producer, formerly produced “Anderson Cooper 360”
7. Linda Gibbs ’82, former NYC deputy mayor for health and human services
8. Saad Hajidin ’88, creative director at InPhorm, former designer/senior director for Ralph Lauren
9. Keisuke Hoashi ’89, television actor
10. Chuck Lorre ’74, creator/producer, “Big Bang Theory,” “Two and a Half Men” and “Mike & Molly”
11. Dan Mertzlufft ’15, composer, arranger and global TikTok star
12. Adebisi Oje ’12, software engineer/business leader and founder of Africode
13. Stephan Savoia ’75, Pulitzer Prize-winning photojournalist
14. Jamie Szafrań ’08, aerospace technologist, NASA/Kennedy Space Center
15. Lisa Vroman ’79, award-winning soprano
16. Marilyn Weiner ’63, Emmy Award-winning filmmaker
17. Jerry Welsh (Hon. ’79), national championship basketball coach
A location that inspires

SUNY Potsdam is located in New York’s North Country region, bordered by the Adirondack Mountains to the south and the Thousand Islands to the north, all along the Canadian border. The Village of Potsdam is a classic historic college town, surrounded by forests and fields, where outdoor recreational opportunities and cultural activities abound. The region offers some of the best freshwater fishing in the world, as well as a wonderful setting for hiking, biking, cross country skiing, and much more.

With three other higher education institutions located within a 10-mile radius (including Clarkson University, SUNY Canton and St. Lawrence University), SUNY Potsdam collaborates with its neighboring Associated Colleges campuses to offer cross registration, and benefits from the vibrancy of a culturally active college town environment.

Potsdam is also home to St. Lawrence Health and Canton-Potsdam Hospital. The Potsdam Central School District is consistently ranked among the top rankings of best high schools in U.S. News & World Report.

Potsdam’s high quality of life and welcoming community atmosphere are enhanced by a low cost of living. The region’s food scene is centered around local agriculture, with popular farmer’s markets, craft breweries and local wine producers, complemented by unique downtown eateries and restaurants, ranging from vegan and gluten-free offerings to international cuisine.

Potsdam is located within two hours’ drive of popular vacation and tourism sites, including Lake Placid, NY, Burlington, VT, and the Canadian cities of Ottawa and Montréal.

The North Country is the proud home of the U.S. Army’s 10th Mountain Division, located at Fort Drum. SUNY Potsdam’s programs at its Watertown, N.Y., extension site, located at Jefferson Community College, particularly serve military families.

Explore more:
- Discover St. Lawrence County (Visitor and Relocation Guide)
- Life Undiscovered (St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce)
Our campus

With small class sizes, a friendly community, rigorous academic programs and top-rated arts facilities, SUNY Potsdam is a great place for students to find their calling. The main campus is distinguished by its iconic clocktower building, Satterlee Hall, which can be seen for miles and stands above the Academic Quad. The residential campus is busy throughout the academic year, and frequented by community members and visitors. The 240-acre campus houses 46 buildings, including academic facilities, laboratories, art studios, residence halls, the bustling Barrington Student Union and Lougheed Learning Commons, award-winning dining locations, a popular athletic complex and fields (see Page 21), a childcare center, performance halls, theaters and galleries, plus a riverside park—all within quick walking and biking distance of downtown Potsdam. For more on our arts facilities, see Page 19.

SUNY Potsdam offers undergraduate and graduate programs at its Watertown, N.Y., extension site, thanks to a partnership with Jefferson Community College. Students in the Jefferson County area can transition straight from associate programs at JCC, to finish their advanced degrees through SUNY Potsdam without ever leaving Watertown. These flexible programs were designed specifically to serve this audience of working and nontraditional students.
Community impact

Going back to our founding in 1816, SUNY Potsdam’s success has always relied on strong community support. SUNY Potsdam employs 682 full and part-time faculty and staff. Combined with Potsdam Auxiliary and College Educational Services (PACES), which employs 200 full and part-time employees (not including student positions) to serve the campus, SUNY Potsdam is one of the largest employers in St. Lawrence County—making the College a major economic driver and leader within the region. SUNY Potsdam is proud to open its campus to the community for arts enrichment, youth programs, athletic events, research and engagement opportunities. The campus takes pride in providing refuge and resources in times of need, sheltering families during adverse weather events, and hosting community COVID testing and food distribution sites during the pandemic. The College’s state vaccination clinic administered a total of 87,346 doses from January to June 2021. Students, faculty and employees give back to the region through volunteer work, service projects and community-focused programs.
Student life

The student body is made up of 2,352 undergraduate students and 255 graduate students in three academic divisions (Fall 2021). SUNY Potsdam’s student body is now more diverse than ever—with 26 percent identifying as students of color, and 20 percent identifying as LGBTQIA+. The College has traditionally had a significant population of indigenous students, thanks to our proximity to Akwesasne and longstanding relationship with the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe. We also attract a number of Canadian students, both for our on-campus programs and now for our online graduate programs as well. There are more than 100 active duty, National Guard and Reserve service members, veterans and their family members currently enrolled as undergraduate and graduate students at SUNY Potsdam.

Campus life at SUNY Potsdam is vibrant, with an active student government and 114 student clubs and organizations to choose from.
Diversity, equity and inclusion
SUNY Potsdam is dedicated to embracing the diversity of its community members. Students, employees, families, alumni, friends, allies, neighbors and guests to our campus are all recognized as valued members of our community. Our campus has become an increasingly diverse community, reflecting the diversity of the nation and the world as a whole, and we strive every day to create an educational environment built on trust and respect for all. Our College mission and the Potsdam Pledge (see Page 5) outline our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice. The College's Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion leads an array of programs to bring campus together and ensure all are welcomed and supported, including the Center for Diversity, college entry programs and other initiatives.
A culture of creativity

SUNY Potsdam’s **culture of creativity** crosses boundaries and transcends disciplines. As one of only three arts campuses within the SUNY System, the College has programs in all of the artistic disciplines to choose from—and even non-majors can get involved. The integration of the arts, both into campus life and into the curriculum, means that students, faculty and community members all get unique opportunities to engage with people and viewpoints representing all different backgrounds.

In addition to the world-renowned [Crane School of Music](#), the campus is home to the award-winning $55 million [Performing Arts Center](#), housing the [Department of Theatre and Dance](#). The [Art Museum at SUNY Potsdam](#) is the College’s center for visual arts, hosting both guest artist exhibitions and student/faculty shows, as well as displaying works from the College’s collection of nearly 2,000 pieces—both in the Gibson Gallery and in displays across campus.

The **Community Performance Series** is a college-community partnership that brings world-class performing artists and educational opportunities to the North Country. The [Orchestra of Northern New York](#) was founded at Crane and remains in residence at the College. SUNY Potsdam was the first campus in SUNY to offer a rigorous Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in creative writing, and students and faculty alike share poetry and prose in the **Blueline** literary magazine and other venues.

Each spring, the **LoKo Arts Festival** brings together campus and community for a free community celebration of creativity, with visiting artists, renowned conductors, family-friendly entertainment and hands-on workshops offered—all thanks to generous donor support.
Sustainability

At SUNY Potsdam, an appreciation for the environment is integral to the student experience. With the Adirondacks as a backyard, SUNY Potsdam is committed to fostering a College-wide culture of sustainability by promoting environmental stewardship and social responsibility, to inspire ecological solutions that forge a healthier campus, community and world. SUNY Potsdam is a member of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education, and is dedicated to creating a sustainable future by taking steps to reduce negative environment impacts. The College is rated in the Princeton Review’s Top Green Colleges list. The Wagner Institute for Sustainability and Ecological Research is a donor-funded center for research and community collaboration around environmental issues facing the region. Among other initiatives, SUNY Potsdam recently erected its first wind turbine, engineered and produced by a local firm, Ducted Wind.
Potsdam Bears Athletics

SUNY Potsdam’s 19 intercollegiate athletic teams represent the maroon and gray for the Potsdam Bears. As charter members of the Division III SUNYAC conference, the SUNY Potsdam Bears have a long history of competition. Our current intercollegiate teams include:

- Basketball: Men’s & Women’s Teams
- Cross Country: Men’s & Women’s Teams
- Ice Hockey: Men’s & Women’s Teams
- Lacrosse: Men’s & Women’s Teams
- Soccer: Men’s & Women’s Teams
- Softball: Women’s Team
- Swimming & Diving: Men’s & Women’s Teams
- Indoor Track: Men’s & Women’s Teams
- Outdoor Track: Men’s & Women’s Teams
- Volleyball: Men’s & Women’s Teams

The Maxcy Hall Athletic Complex is the home of the Potsdam Bears. At the heart of Maxcy is the 2,500-seat Ice Arena, plus the Jerry Welsh Gymnasium, which seats 3,600 people. Maxcy also offers a swimming and diving pool, plus a Fieldhouse, complete with an indoor track and rock climbing/bouldering walls. The Shane T. Shaul Fitness Center has an extensive collection of cardiovascular and strength training equipment. Maxcy is a popular public facility, as fans attend games and community members of all ages take advantage of the recreation facilities and free fitness and dance classes. Just outside Maxcy is the all-weather, lighted Turf Field, surrounded by a quarter-mile track.

SUNY Potsdam student athletes are consistently named to the SUNYAC All-Academic Team and the Commissioner’s List for academic and athletic excellence.

In addition to varsity sports, SUNY Potsdam offers club sports and intervarsity athletics and competitions—so all students can stay active. To support student health and wellness, the campus offers ongoing programs such as the Venture Outdoors and Live Now initiatives, which open up recreational opportunities for individuals of all ability levels. Weekly “Yoga in the Greenhouse” sessions and a dedicated campus meditation space, the Labyrinth, help support well-rounded students and employees.
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Academic leadership – Next steps
The College currently has key leadership positions that will need to be filled, and has experienced turnover over the years. The president will have a unique opportunity to build a team to support their vision for the College.

Achieving financial sustainability
SUNY Potsdam’s next president will need the fiscal acumen to enable strong financial management across all areas of the College’s programs. As aspirations are weighed against resources, the president will need to be transparent and involve the Potsdam community, along with other stakeholders, in discussions and actions about revenue generation and expenditure reductions to right size the campus. They will be asked to tie together strategic planning and budget planning, oversee reliable operating budgets, build strategic academic business models, integrate financial matrices with long-range plans, identify new and existing resources for program and infrastructure investment, and maintain strong internal controls. This calls for qualities of integrity, care for detail, and transparency to the greatest extent possible moving forward.

Bolstering enrollment management
The president will be expected to lead efforts that more fully engage the entire campus in enrollment management, develop and monitor targets by academic discipline, increase agreements with international universities, identify and approve new degree programs to expand enrollment, and enhance student retention activities. Taken together, these efforts should result in expanding FTE enrollment.
Boosting morale & enhancing the Potsdam sense of community

With many deeply committed students, faculty, and staff, Potsdam has long engendered a strong sense of community, and many speak of the Potsdam “family.” Nevertheless, the budget austerity that has been imposed throughout SUNY colleges and universities has had an impact on morale. The next president can promote trust and nurture a spirit of mutual respect through open and effective communication. Shaping a discourse that leads to principled agreement and consensus around competing issues will help to build an even stronger sense of community at Potsdam. For example, the president should quickly grasp a culture that practices high standards and rigor, values high quality teaching in the arts and sciences, wrestles with meeting enrollment and retention goals, and values shared governance in concert with strong and decisive leadership. Through careful listening and an inclusive dialogue, the opportunity exists to encourage the sense of shared mission and vision among and between all constituencies, which is so important to fulfilling the College’s potential.

Diversity, equity & inclusion

The next SUNY Potsdam president is expected to embrace the cultural differences of students, staff and faculty from diverse backgrounds and demonstrate a commitment to maintaining a strong sense of community and inclusive excellence. This includes recruiting and retaining more diverse, faculty, staff and administrators to better serve an increasingly diverse student population. The successful candidate will demonstrate commitment to the College’s overall mission on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
Enriching a culture of giving

As the College’s chief fundraiser, the president should have direct involvement with the Potsdam College Foundation, Inc., and the campus’s successful advancement program. As one of the most successful fundraising schools in its peer group, Potsdam has a rich history of alumni engagement and giving. The president will be expected to solidify and build upon that, as well as expand outreach efforts. The new president will have the opportunity to establish priorities for future fundraising and play a critical role in the next campaign. The president’s engagement is expected to result in an enriched philanthropic culture for Potsdam.
At 206 years and counting, SUNY Potsdam is the oldest institution in The State University of New York

**Telling the Potsdam story**

As the oldest institution in the SUNY system, SUNY Potsdam holds special stature in New York State. Nevertheless, opportunities exist to further the regional and national reputation of the campus by recognizing programs of excellence through effective communication and publicly championing the excellent work of students and faculty and staff members.

The College will profit from a president that can articulately champion the institution to a broad audience. The president will be expected to articulate a narrative that will lay a foundation for the work that needs to be done in terms of attracting and retaining a diverse group of engaged faculty and students, as well as enhancing the overall fundraising efforts of the institution.
DESIRED ATTRIBUTES

The College has developed the following list of personal qualities and professional qualifications and experiences that match the agenda of opportunities outlined in the previous section. The search committee seeks a strong leader who will work with the campus community and support students, faculty and staff. The successful SUNY Potsdam president will be:

1. An engaged leader, with a personal desire to be visible and accessible to all students, faculty and staff;

2. A person committed to the College’s overall mission of a student-focused environment who supports diversity, equity and inclusion efforts;

3. A transparent leader who listens, communicates and collaborates effectively with all campus constituents, SUNY System Administration, labor unions and other SUNY institutions;

4. Experienced with strategic planning and implementation skills and familiar with accreditation processes;

5. A person who possesses a track record of sound financial management;

6. Keenly interested in and able to successfully engage alumni, donors and the regional community in both fundraising and ongoing relationships;

7. A person who can help to create a feeling of collegiality and shared inquiry;

8. A decision-maker who recognizes that engaging with the College community, embracing shared governance, and exhibiting transparency in deliberations better ensures wise decisions and campus cohesion;

9. A person of good will, a leader with “human touch” and a visionary who can adapt and evolve in the face of change.
About SUNY System Administration

The State University of New York is the largest comprehensive system of higher education in the United States, and more than 95 percent of all New Yorkers live within 30 miles of any one of SUNY’s 64 colleges and universities. Across the system, SUNY has four academic health centers, five hospitals, four medical schools, two dental schools, a law school, the state’s only college of optometry, and manages one US Department of Energy National Laboratory. In total, SUNY serves about 1.3 million students amongst its entire portfolio of credit-and non-credit bearing courses and programs, continuing education, and community outreach programs. SUNY oversees nearly a quarter of academic research in New York. Research expenditures system-wide reached nearly $1.1 billion in fiscal year 2021, including significant contributions from students and faculty. There are more than three million SUNY alumni worldwide, and one in three New Yorkers with a college degree is a SUNY alum.

To learn more about how SUNY creates opportunity, visit www.suny.edu.
APPLICATIONS

Interested candidates should submit only a cover letter and resume/curriculum vitae to RPA Inc. at sunypotsdampresident@rpainc.org.

For a confidential discussion about this opportunity or to make a nomination, please email Isaac Karaffa, Vice President and Senior Consultant, or Dana John Cohick, President, at the email address listed above. The first review of candidates will continue through August 15, 2022.