

SEARCH PROFILE:

PRESIDENT



OLYMPIC COLLEGE

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THE OPPORTUNITY

The Board of Trustees of Olympic College (OC) invites applications, inquiries, and nominations for the position of president. This is an extraordinary opportunity for a proven leader to guide a nationally recognized institution at a pivotal time. The next president will bring vision, collaboration, and financial acumen to advance the College's mission of transforming lives through education, workforce development, and community engagement.

OC is a central partner in the vitality of Kitsap and Mason Counties in Washington state, serving a diverse student body and playing a critical role in preparing the region's workforce for evolving opportunities in healthcare, technology, defense, and the trades. With campuses in Bremerton, Poulsbo, and Shelton, OC is deeply woven into the economic and cultural fabric of the communities it serves. The next president will be a visible and engaged leader—an advocate for students, a partner to business and industry, and a trusted voice for higher education in the region.

The College recently launched a [2024-2028 Strategic Plan](#) focused on being student-ready and student-centered, closing achievement gaps, and strengthening institutional resilience. OC is expanding bachelor's degree programs, enhancing guided pathways, and advancing its long-standing commitment to equity, inclusion, and belonging. The new president will find a dedicated community eager to move forward, while also bringing fresh perspective and leadership to guide the College through complex challenges such as shifting enrollment, evolving funding streams, and the need for continued innovation in student success.

OC is recognized for its strong academic programs and transfer pathways, innovative workforce programs, and affordability. It was named a Top 10 community college in the nation by the Aspen Institute and continues to be a model of student support and achievement. The next president will lead an institution with established strengths and national

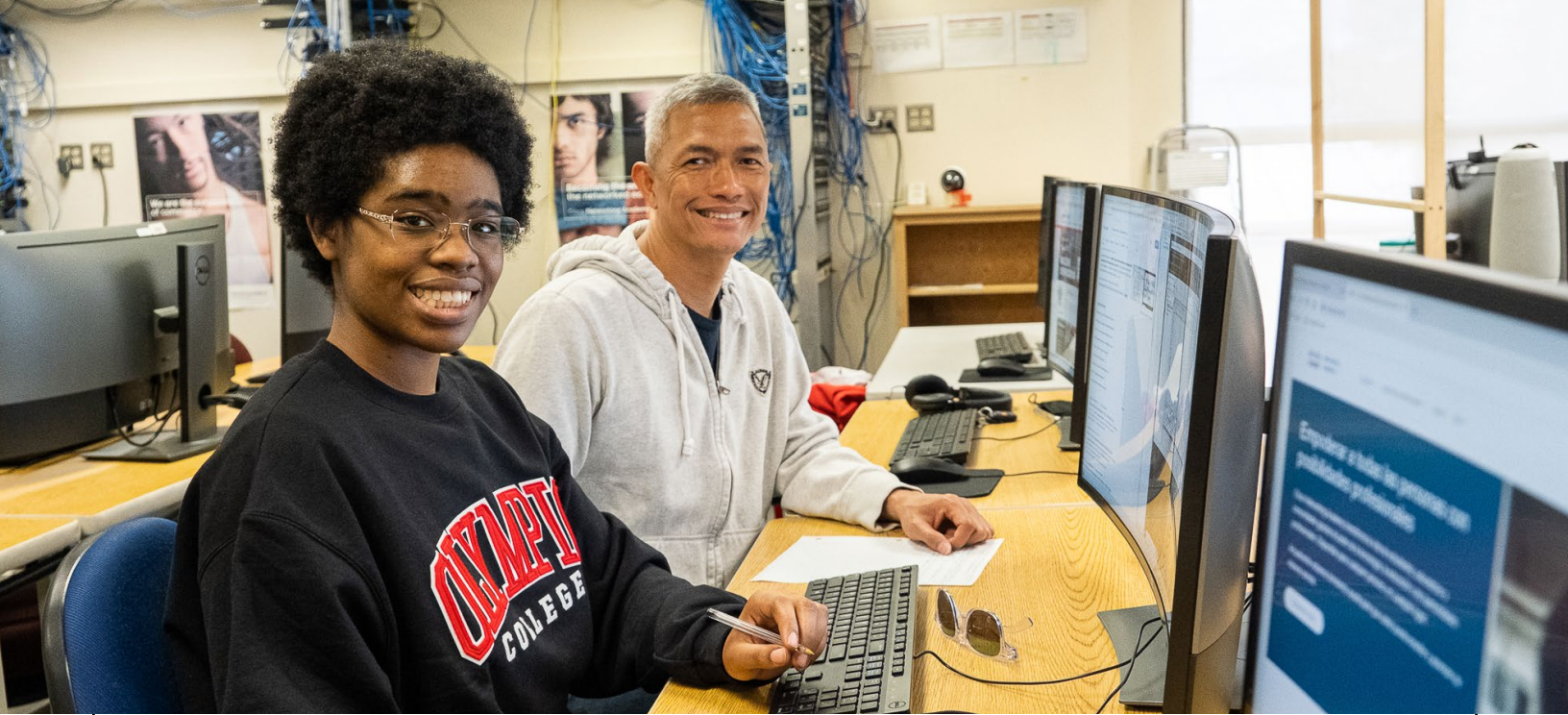
recognition, while shaping the next chapter of growth, innovation, and community impact.

For an experienced, mission-driven leader, this presidency presents an opportunity to make a visible and lasting impact—expanding opportunities for students, strengthening regional partnerships, and ensuring that OC remains a beacon of educational excellence in the Pacific Northwest.

For the next president, the region also offers an exceptional place to live, work, and thrive. OC is situated in the heart of the Kitsap and Mason County region, a vibrant area of western Washington renowned for its natural beauty and thriving communities. The region is home to a diverse and growing population, enriched by the presence of Naval Base Kitsap and the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, which bring both economic vitality and a strong tradition of service. Healthcare systems, tribal governments, advanced manufacturing, and small businesses also play important roles in shaping the regional economy. OC partners with these employers and organizations to align academic programs with workforce needs, ensuring that education translates directly into opportunity.

Residents and visitors alike are drawn to the area's exceptional quality of life. With the Olympic Mountains to the west, the Cascade Range to the east, and Puget Sound in between, outdoor recreation is abundant year-round, including hiking, boating, fishing, and skiing. The region's cities and towns offer a blend of cultural amenities, local festivals, and close-knit neighborhoods, while Seattle is only a short ferry ride away, providing access to world-class arts, sports, and economic opportunities.

The community places a high value on education, collaboration, and civic engagement. OC enjoys broad support from local leaders, alumni, and residents who recognize the institution as a cornerstone of regional development and a gateway to opportunity for thousands of students each year.



ABOUT OLYMPIC COLLEGE

Founded in 1946, OC is one of 34 colleges in Washington's community and technical college system, playing an essential role in promoting educational achievement, workforce development, and community growth across the region.

OC serves a diverse student body of approximately 9,000 learners annually, comprising recent high school graduates, working adults, active-duty military personnel, veterans, and first-generation college students. Nearly half of OC students are the first in their families to attend college, and many balance studies with work and family responsibilities. Through programs such as Running Start, Worker Retraining, and Basic Education for Adults (BEA), the College provides multiple entry points that reflect the varied needs of its service area.

The College has earned national recognition for excellence. OC was named a Top 10 community college in the nation by the Aspen Institute for student outcomes and institutional performance. Its strong transfer partnerships with universities across Washington, along with locally offered bachelor's degrees in Behavioral Healthcare, Information Systems, Computer Science, Filmmaking, Nursing and Organizational Leadership, ensure that students can pursue advanced credentials without leaving the region.

OC also plays a vital role in regional economic and workforce development. With strong connections to the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, healthcare systems, tribal governments, and local industries, the College develops programs that meet employer needs. Recent investments in allied health facilities, advanced manufacturing labs, and technology learning centers show OC's dedication to innovation and community responsiveness.

OC has three campuses in Kitsap and Mason Counties. The main campus is in Bremerton, Washington, on a 33-acre site. OC Poulsbo is a 20-acre campus located in North Kitsap,

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

OC honors and acknowledges that the land on which we meet, learn, and work is the aboriginal territory of the People of the Clear Salt Waters, specifically the Suquamish and Duwamish Tribes (for OC Bremerton and OC Poulsbo) and the Squaxin Island and Skokomish Tribes (for OC Shelton).

We also acknowledge and appreciate the enduring presence and deep traditional knowledge of the Indigenous People with whom we share this land today.

We pay our respects to the People of the Clear Salt Waters and their Elders—past, present and emerging. We also acknowledge the important role the Suquamish and Duwamish Tribes (for OC Bremerton and OC Poulsbo) and the Squaxin Island and Skokomish Tribes (for OC Shelton) continue to play within the People of the Clear Salt Waters' territory.

providing convenience for students from Bainbridge Island and the northern part of the Kitsap Peninsula. OC Shelton is a 27-acre campus located in Mason County. The campus is home to the John Bremer Welding Center, modern computer labs, a media center, student services, study and social areas, and the Johnson Library. The College's campuses sit amid some of the most striking natural beauty in the country, offering students, employees, and visitors ready access to mountains, waterways, and vibrant cultural communities.

As OC approaches its 80th year, it stands as both a regional anchor institution and a catalyst for opportunity. By combining academic excellence, workforce innovation, and deep community partnerships, OC continues to transform lives and contribute to the economic and cultural vitality of Kitsap and Mason counties.

THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

OC provides students with an accessible, supportive, and flexible environment that meets diverse learning needs and life circumstances. With programs delivered face-to-face, hybrid, and fully online, the College ensures that learners can choose the format that best aligns with their schedules, responsibilities, and goals.

Students benefit from small class sizes and active faculty involvement—key features of the OC experience that encourage personalized learning, mentorship, and strong connections with instructors. Faculty are passionate about teaching and student achievement, offering the support and motivation that help students build confidence alongside academic skills.

The College serves a diverse student body that includes recent high school graduates, working adults, active-duty military personnel, veterans, and first-generation students. To support this wide range of learners, OC offers programs such as Running Start, Math, Engineering & Science Achievement (MESA), and Worker Retraining, along with extensive advising, tutoring, and online support.

Beyond academics, OC fosters a lively and inclusive campus environment. The Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion works to ensure every student feels welcome and appreciated, while student clubs, activities, and athletics offer opportunities for connection and involvement. Holistic services—including counseling, wellness programs, and a resource center with food, supplies, and emergency funding—highlight the College's dedication to supporting students as whole individuals.

Students describe a campus where individuals from all backgrounds feel supported and empowered to succeed. Access to behavioral health and recovery programs, along with vital resources like food, textbooks, and financial aid, ensure that students can focus on their studies. OC's dedication to accessibility, diversity, and community involvement fosters an environment where intergenerational learning flourishes, and a rich "rainbow of cultures" is celebrated. Students appreciate the openness of the College, the kindness of its community, and the chance to learn from each other in ways that inspire hope and foster a sense of belonging.

OC students consistently describe their experience as one of support, belonging, and empowerment. With strong academic programs, dedicated faculty, and a culture that places students at the center, OC provides an educational journey that prepares graduates not only for transfer or the workforce but also for personal and professional growth beyond college.

MISSION

Olympic College enriches our diverse communities through quality education and support so students achieve their educational goals.

The college measures its effectiveness and fulfillment of its mission through the Mission Fulfillment Indicators found on the [Accreditation](#) webpage.

VISION

At Olympic College we envision learning as a life-enhancing journey of discovery.

- Our students are lifelong learners in a global society.

To realize our vision, we will focus on student learning and success, promoting learning through accessible education, personalized service, adaptive and innovative teaching, and an ongoing commitment to academic excellence.

- Our employees are empowered to achieve the college mission.

To realize our vision, we will appreciate and value our employees, providing opportunities to enhance professional skills, encouraging learning and advancement, and prioritizing and sharing institutional resources.

- Our community recognizes the college as its cornerstone of learning.

To realize our vision, we will develop strong community partnerships and fulfill our role as a cultural center, enriching those we serve by creating relevant educational options and bringing a diverse array of activities to the region.

VALUES

- A dedication to public service and higher education
- A commitment to lifelong learning
- The practice of civil and constructive discourse and respect for diversity
- A quest for community and environmental health
- The thoughtful use of our finite resource, including ourselves



GOVERNANCE, FUNDING, AND ACCREDITATION

At the state level, OC is part of Washington's community and technical college system. Although each college board manages governance locally, the 29 community colleges and five technical colleges submit a single combined budget request for operations and capital needs to the Legislature through the State Board for Community & Technical Colleges (SBCTC). The State Board acts as the system's policy and fiscal agency, and it is the main advocate for the system. After the legislature approves the budgets, the state funds are allocated to the SBCTC, which then distributes the funds to the 30 college districts.

The system operates with an annual budget of \$1.2 billion, and its biennial capital budget for 2023-2025 is \$480 million. Across the colleges, on average, about 54% of college revenue is covered by state funds, while the other 46% comes from tuition, grants, contracts, fees, and income from enterprises like bookstores, parking, and food services.

The [Board of Trustees](#) holds legal authority and responsibility for running OC. It creates and reviews college policies and oversees the management of funds and properties. The Board is in charge of hiring and keeping the college president, awarding tenure to faculty, adopting or changing policies, and approving collective bargaining agreements, tuition and fees, along with the College's operating and capital budgets. The Board consists of five trustees appointed by the Governor of Washington and confirmed by the Senate for rotating five-year terms.

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities accredits OC, which was reaffirmed in January 2019. Documents for the current and most recent past accreditation cycles can be found [here](#).

COLLEGE PRIORITIES, PLANNING, AND STRUCTURE

OC has identified seven institutional priorities in its [2024–2028 Strategic Plan](#), which guide planning, budgeting, and program development across all campuses.

The OC Governance System supports the College's mission of ensuring student success at all levels. Shared governance offers a structured platform for diverse voices, including students, to engage in thoughtful deliberation on college policy, planning, and assessment. Governance stakeholders include students, classified professionals, faculty, and exempt administrators.

The College governance structure operates through aligned councils and stakeholder groups that include the following members.

- Governance Coordinating Council
- Budget & Finance Council
- Data & Technology Council
- Facilities & Safety Council
- Learning Council
- Student Achievement Council
- Classified Staff
- Diversity Advisory Council
- Exempt Staff
- Faculty
- Students
- Sustainability Advisory Council

OC's planning model is iterative and data informed. The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness maintains [dashboards and peer comparison data](#) to track enrollment, retention, completion, and equity results. Findings are shared widely across governance groups, including the Budget & Finance Council and the Student Achievement Council, to ensure planning decisions are transparent and collaborative.

The College actively participates in the Achieving the Dream Network, which offers a nationwide framework for enhancing student outcomes, especially for historically underserved populations. This effort supports OC's dedication to disaggregated data analysis and ongoing improvement.

Implementation of Guided Pathways remains a key planning focus, aimed at simplifying choices for students, linking programs to careers or transfer opportunities, and providing advising and support from initial contact to completion. Additionally, OC is broadening comprehensive student services—including financial aid, wellness, and academic support—so that planning addresses not only classroom needs but also the barriers that can hinder persistence.

Finally, the Board of Trustees plays a crucial role in the planning cycle by establishing policies such as the Financial Reserve Policy and supervising budget assumptions and adjustments. These policies make sure that planning decisions are both ambitious and financially responsible, balancing innovation with long-term stability of the institution.

Together, these efforts foster a culture of ongoing improvement and shared responsibility, ensuring that OC stays adaptable, equitable, and highly responsive to the needs of its students and communities.

POINTS OF PRIDE

Strong Alignment with Local Workforce Needs: OC is proactively expanding its allied health programs and recently added new programs in response to community need, including bachelor's degrees in Behavioral Healthcare and Computer Science.

Commitment to Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging: The 2024-2028 Strategic Plan adopts a whole-institution approach to closing performance gaps and removing barriers for historically marginalized students; implementing a graduation requirement focused on diversity and social justice is another concrete step.

Transfer & Bachelor's Degree Pathways Locally: OC offers pathways for students to transfer to four-year universities, offers six of its own bachelor's degrees, and partners with WSU and WWU to offer numerous bachelor's degrees at its Bremerton and Poulsbo campuses. This allows students to stay local and reduce costs or travel burdens while still achieving higher credentials.

Recognition & High Rankings: OC has been recognized by the Aspen Institute, previously in the top tiers nationally, for student outcomes, learning, and equity. OC also received the American Association of Community Colleges Outstanding College Partnership Award for its long-standing apprenticeship program with Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

Student-Centric Strategy and Support Services: The College's strategy is explicitly "student-ready/student-centered," with attention to holistic support (not just academics): services, advising, helping students overcome obstacles, and making programs accessible.



FACILITIES

OC operates three main campuses in Bremerton, Poulsbo, and Shelton, each designed to provide accessible, modern learning environments for students across Kitsap and Mason counties. Together, these locations support a wide range of programs, from transfer degrees and workforce certificates to applied bachelor's degrees, while also serving as community hubs.

The College has invested significantly in its physical and technological infrastructure to ensure that facilities align with evolving student and program needs. Recent projects have included upgraded science and allied health labs, advanced manufacturing and technology learning spaces, and expanded student support centers. These improvements not only enhance academic quality but also strengthen OC's ability to prepare students for high-demand careers in healthcare, information technology, the trades, and beyond.

As part of the statewide community and technical college system, OC participates in the SBCTC's capital planning process, which prioritizes new construction, major renovations, and maintenance projects across all 34 institutions. This process ensures that OC's facilities remain competitive, sustainable, and aligned with systemwide goals.

In addition to large-scale capital projects, the College receives an annual allocation for minor repairs and maintenance, allowing it to preserve and modernize campus



spaces consistently. Investments have also extended to infrastructure such as utilities, IT systems, and accessibility upgrades, reflecting OC's commitment to providing a safe, inclusive, and technology-ready environment.

Looking forward, OC continues to align its Facilities Master Plan with the goals of its 2024-2028 Strategic Plan, ensuring that space and infrastructure support the College's mission of equity, student success, and community engagement. The College's facilities represent both its long-standing history in the region and its readiness to meet the demands of an increasingly technology-driven future.

BUDGET

OC's financial operations are supported through a combination of state allocations, tuition and fees, contracts, and grants. Like all of Washington's 34 community and technical colleges, OC receives biennial operating funds based on enrollment targets and program priorities established by the SBCTC. Tuition and fee revenues supplement these state allocations, while external contracts—including dual-enrollment partnerships and workforce training agreements—further diversify revenue streams.

The College also benefits from federal and private grant funding, which supports student success initiatives, workforce programs, and capital improvements. These competitive funds expand the College's ability to innovate and serve students beyond the limits of state and tuition resources.

CAPITAL BUDGET

Capital planning is coordinated statewide through the SBCTC, which submits a prioritized request to the Washington State Legislature for new construction, renovations, and facility replacements. OC participates actively in this process, ensuring that its facility needs—such as upgraded labs, instructional spaces, and student support areas—align with both regional demand and statewide priorities. In addition, the College receives an annual allocation for minor repairs and renovations, ensuring that facilities remain safe, modern, and functional.

In 2026, OC will break ground on a 22,000-square-foot Innovation & Technology Learning Center, providing a modern base for its growing Information Systems, Computer Science, and Cybersecurity programs.

AUXILIARY SERVICES

The College operates several auxiliary enterprises designed to enhance student life and community engagement, including the bookstore, food services, and facility rentals. These self-supporting operations are expected to generate sufficient revenue to cover expenses while contributing to the overall vibrancy of the campus experience.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

The Board of Trustees plays a central role in budget oversight, adopting policies such as a financial reserve policy to ensure long-term stability. Budget development and modification processes are transparent and inclusive, engaging governance councils and campus stakeholders to align financial decisions with institutional priorities.

Overall, OC has maintained a reputation for responsible fiscal stewardship, balancing its commitment to affordability with investments in innovation, facilities, and student success.



OC FOUNDATION

In 1993, the OC Foundation was established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The Foundation's mission states, "We transform lives by partnering with the community to support OC and its students."

The Foundation awards over \$400,000 in scholarships annually to more than 200 students. These scholarships are often transformative, enabling students from diverse backgrounds—including first-generation, low-income, and military-connected learners—to pursue their academic and career goals with confidence.

Beyond scholarships, the Foundation raises funds to support instructional equipment, program innovation, and student success initiatives. Contributions from alumni, donors, and community partners have helped equip advanced

laboratories, expand library and tutoring resources, and provide emergency assistance for students facing unexpected challenges.

The Foundation also serves as a key convener for the region, bringing together business leaders, civic organizations, and community members to support OC's role in workforce development and community vitality. Annual events and campaigns highlight the impact of philanthropy, celebrate student achievements, and sustain a culture of giving across the College's service area.

Through its work, the OC Foundation ensures that the College can extend its reach, amplify its resources, and respond more flexibly to emerging needs—making it an essential partner in the College's long-term success.



LEADERSHIP AGENDA

OC is widely seen as a jewel in the region: a well-respected institution with proud alumni, dedicated faculty and staff, and deep community ties. The next president will inherit this strong foundation, with the opportunity to expand the College's reach and impact—transforming lives while shaping the educational future of the Kitsap Peninsula.

The next president will work closely with the Board of Trustees and internal leadership to guide the College as it strengthens its position in the community, expands its regional influence, focuses on organizational well-being, and continues its relentless pursuit of student success. This role requires a leader who is student-centered, community-engaged, and unafraid to navigate complexity with clarity and resilience.

Key priorities for the next president will include:

LEAD WITH A PEOPLE-FIRST, COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

The President will attend carefully to internal relationships and communications with a leadership style rooted in respect, listening, and shared governance inspired by authentic engagement with faculty, staff, and students. The President will pursue new initiatives with a collaborative spirit, ensuring that the shared governance voices of the College community help shape the institution's direction. Fostering a culture of mutual respect, trust, and inclusivity in decision-making, the President will value transparency in policy and finances through frequent and collaborative communications. Leveraging the leadership team to share the work of engagement, the President will ensure that the processes leading to decisions are explained clearly, consistently, and openly.

LEADERSHIP AGENDA (CONT.)

CHAMPION STUDENT SUCCESS

The President will keep students at the center of every conversation and ensure that all employees understand their role in advancing student achievement and success and that all programs and services reflect OC's commitment to equity and belonging. Continuing the College's proud tradition as an early Achieving the Dream institution, the President will guarantee the College uses data and best practices to close equity gaps and help students thrive.

EXPAND REGIONAL ROLE AND PARTNERSHIPS

The President will enhance OC's position as the nexus for higher education on the Kitsap Peninsula by advancing opportunities for collaboration with universities and business/industry in areas including nursing, cybersecurity, computer science, and mechanical engineering. Approaching competitive dynamics with diplomacy, the President will emphasize "win-win" outcomes that expand educational opportunities for students and strengthen the region with workforce development.

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY VISIBILITY AND ENGAGEMENT

The President will lead visibly and relationally in a community that values presence, trust, and connection. By being active in civic life—attending events, serving on boards and committees, and partnering with business, civic leaders, and alumni—the President will ensure that the College's voice is heard in chambers, councils, and community forums, reinforcing OC's role as a trusted partner in regional economic development. The next President should also understand and respect sovereign relationships and the unique educational needs of Indigenous communities.

EXEMPLIFY TRANSPARENCY, RESILIENCE, AND INTEGRITY

The President will provide steady leadership through inevitable challenges and crises that may arise by balancing competing priorities, communicating decisions effectively, and remaining committed to the College's mission and sustainability, even when choices are tough. A strong communicator, the President will need both transparency and resilience, making timely decisions based on the best interests of students and the institution as a whole.

STEWARD RESOURCES AND FACILITIES FOR THE FUTURE

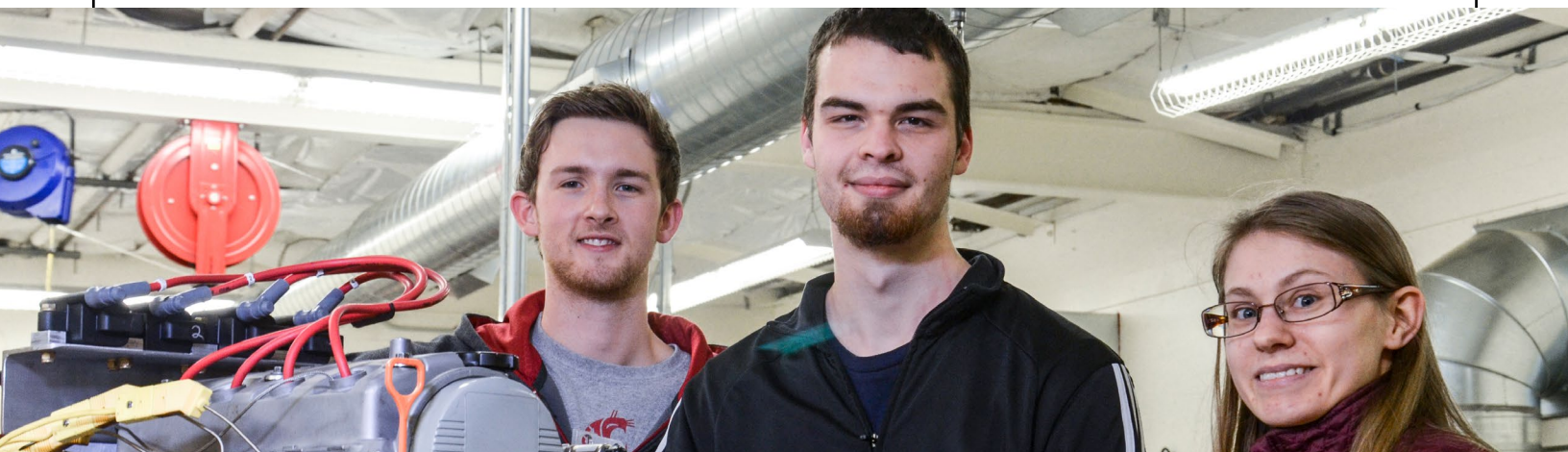
The President will advance thoughtful planning for all three campuses, ensuring responsible stewardship of their land, water, and other natural resources. The President will support healthcare and workforce expansion while maintaining strong fiscal oversight in programs that may not be self-supporting but are essential to community needs. The President will work closely with the SBCTC to secure capital funding, while aligning entrepreneurial efforts with successful models such as the University District in Spokane.

ADVANCE HEALTHCARE AND WORKFORCE INNOVATION

The President should view education as integral to community wellbeing and understand the interconnectedness of academic, economic, and health outcomes. As the College works to deliver on its promise to expand Allied Health and Health Sciences programs and facilities in Poulsbo, the President will calibrate these aspirations with master planning for the Poulsbo campus that includes financing, feasibility timelines, and deliverables.

LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLY AND INCLUSIVELY

The President will address the opportunities and challenges of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and environmental sustainability with clear policies and training for ethical use while ensuring full ADA compliance through universal design across all digital platforms. The President will strike a balance between innovation, equity, accessibility, and academic integrity.





QUALIFICATIONS

MINIMUM

- Master's degree from a regionally accredited institution.
- Significant, progressively responsible senior-level leadership in higher education administration or an organization of comparable complexity.

PREFERRED

- Community college leadership experience.
- Experience in a collective bargaining environment.
- Teaching experience.
- Multi-campus leadership experience.
- Strategic operational expertise with the capacity to lead with a growth mindset.
- Demonstrated commitment to equity and inclusion.
- Strong financial acumen, including proven success in philanthropy and support from external partners.
- Demonstrated record of advancing student success initiatives.
- Experience working with boards of trustees, state systems, legislatures, and government agencies.
- Excellent communication skills.
- A relationship builder with demonstrated expertise creating and maintaining partnerships with community members, business and industry, K-12, higher education institutions, and other entities.
- Champion for shared governance.



APPLICATION AND NOMINATING PROCEDURE

OC is being assisted in this search by Academic Search. Nominations, applications, and inquiries may be sent in complete confidence to OlympicCollegePresident@academicsearch.org. Initial screening of applications will begin immediately. The position is open until filled, and applications received by January 15, 2026, can be assured best consideration. Salary will be commensurate with experience and be between \$280,000 and \$320,000.

Application materials should include:

- A concise cover letter that addresses the expectations discussed in the Leadership Agenda above with specific actions and accomplishments;
- A resume or curriculum vitae;
- A list of at least five professional references with contact information, including telephone and email, and a note indicating the candidate's working relationship with each. References will not be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate.

Nominators and prospective candidates also may arrange a confidential conversation about this opportunity with Richard Cummins, Ph.D., Senior Consultant, rich.cummins@academicsearch.org, or Andrea Cowser, M.A., Consultant, andrea.cowser@academicsearch.org.

Olympic College provides equal opportunity in education, employment and college activities regardless of race, color, national origin, age, perceived or actual physical or mental disability, pregnancy, genetic information, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, creed, religion, honorably discharged veteran or military status, use of a trained guide dog or service animal, or any other unlawful basis.

Olympic College does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and 34 CFR §106, including in admission and employment.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Olympic College in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience. Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.

