



# Vermont State Colleges System: *N.C.E. Presidential Search*

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Meeting with the Board of Trustees  
August 4, 2021

Presented by  
Steve Leo & Matt Bunting

StorbeckSearch  
DIVERSIFIEDSEARCHGROUP

# Storbeck Search: Points of Distinction

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- Leading search firm specializing in higher education executive search
- 100+ searches conducted annually
- 50 consultants and support staff nationally
- A division of the Diversified Search Group, the largest woman-founded executive search firm in the world
- More than half of placements are women and 30 percent are people of color
- 87 percent of presidential placements since the firm's 2007 founding are either still in office or served for five years or more
- Two-thirds of searches are conducted for returning clients

# Your Team: Steve Leo, Managing Director

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- More than 20 years of recruiting and search experience
- More than 300 searches successfully completed
- Recent and relevant presidential searches include SUNY Plattsburgh, SUNY Brockport, SUNY Fredonia, Indiana University South Bend
- Education
  - B.A. The George Washington University



# Your Team: Matthew Bunting, Managing Associate

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- More than 10 years in executive search
- More than 80 searches successfully completed
- Recent and relevant presidential searches include Mercy College, Indiana University Northwest, University of Southern Indiana, and Sewanee: The University of the South
- Education
  - M.S. Boston University
  - B.A. Saint Michael's College



# The Presidential Search Process

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# The Board of Trustees Role

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“The responsibility for selection of institutional presidents lies with the Board of Trustees after consultation with the Chancellor and representatives of the affected institution, including faculty, staff and students”

*Article V, Institution Chief Officers*

*Bylaws of Vermont State College System Board of Trustees*

“The Board of Trustees ...shall appoint ...a president for each institution under its control and prescribe their duties, salaries, and terms of office.”

*Vermont Statutes Annotated § 2174 – Board of Trustees*

*(as amended 1961 and 2015)*

# Early Outreach and Engagement

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- Time engaging with groups through September and into October
- Online survey
- Open forums/small group meetings
- Senior staff
- Faculty and faculty leadership
- Staff and staff leadership
- Students and student leadership
- Community leaders

# Recommended Search Timeline and Key Junctures

September/October	October-December	December/January	January/February	March
Initial consultation with PSSC and key campus constituents	Conduct research	Continue to identify and recruit candidates	First-round interviews	Finalist(s) visit(s)
Send out an alert of the forthcoming search to strong prospects	Identify and recruit prospective candidates	Assess/evaluate candidates	Reference and background checks	Board selects next President at a specially called meeting
Develop position description with community and PSSC	Assess/evaluate prospective candidates	Meet to select candidates to interview	Second-round interviews	Contract negotiation
Formulate search strategy	Progress meeting with search and screen committee	Schedule candidate interviews	Additional references	Public announcement and celebration
Confirm search process and timeframe	Refine candidate profile/modify search strategy	Devise transition plans	Identification of lead candidate(s)	Search successfully closed
				Execute transition plans



# Communications

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- Presidential search website
  - Information to the community
  - Information for candidates
  - Regular updates to the community as the search achieves certain milestones
- Regular updates to the Board from the Chair of Search & Screen Committee
- Confidentiality – Essential for the success of the search

# The Market for Presidential Candidates

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# Profile of College/University Presidents Nationwide

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- Age: 58% aged 61 or older
- Gender: 30% female; 70% male
- Diversity: 17% of underrepresented minority
- Average tenure: 5 to 7 years
- Experience: 81% served as faculty at some point

*Source: The American College President Study (ACE, 2017)*

# Pathways to the Presidency

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Prior position in higher education: 85%

- President/Interim President: 23.9%
- Chief Academic Officer (Provost, VPAA, etc.) or other academic officer (e.g. Dean): 42.7%
- Non-academic officer (CFO, CDO, Student Life, etc.): 16.3%
- Chair/faculty: 2.1

Prior position outside higher education: 15%

*Source: The American College President Study (ACE, 2017)*

# Trends and Changes

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- The aging of the presidency
- Decreasing length of tenures; possibility for a 2nd or 3rd presidency
- Increase in percentage of women
- Increase in overall diversity
- Dramatic increase in the number of retirements/resignations in the wake of covid-19

# Thank You – Q&A