

SEARCH PROFILE:

VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE



**LAKE FOREST
COLLEGE**

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Lake Forest College seeks an experienced leader in higher education finance to serve as its Vice President for Finance. Located just 30 miles north of Chicago, and connected by train, students at Lake Forest College have the best of all worlds: an idyllic campus set in a residential community just minutes from Lake Michigan with access to the third largest city in the country and all of the opportunities that affords.

This position is an excellent opportunity for an accomplished higher education professional ready to lead an important functional area at one of the top liberal arts colleges. In the last few decades, over \$100 million dollars have improved campus infrastructure leading to a new science center, an expansion and renovation of the largest academic building, residential improvements, and new and improved athletics facilities. The College is also in the initial phase of a comprehensive fundraising campaign and anticipating it to be the largest and boldest in the institution's history. The focus of this campaign will be to grow the College's endowment.



LAKE FOREST COLLEGE

MIDDLE CAMPUS



ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Lake Forest College is a selective, highly ranked, private liberal arts college recognized for its interdisciplinary curriculum and strong commitment to student success and post-graduate outcomes. The College is renowned for its unique blend of academic excellence, experiential learning, and career preparation, resulting in exceptional outcomes for its students and alumni.

The College was recently ranked as:

- #1 college in the country for Social Mobility by *U.S. News & World Report*
- #13 Best Value national liberal arts college by *U.S. News & World Report*
- #2 Best Science Labs by *The Princeton Review*
- #2 Best Health Services by *The Princeton Review*
- #4 Best Student Support & Counseling Services by *The Princeton Review*
- #18 Best Career Services by *The Princeton Review*

Founded in 1857, the College has experienced growth during the past several years and enrolls approximately 1,850 students, drawn from 43 states and 115 countries. Lake Forest College boasts an excellent faculty, a skilled and dedicated staff, an accomplished and diverse student body, and a picturesque campus just 30 miles north of downtown Chicago, connected by public transportation. More information on the College and recent rankings

can be found at <https://www.lakeforest.edu/about-us/reputation-rankings-and-facts>.

The College's next Vice President for Finance will join an institution already primed for success and ready to take on the challenges of the future. Unlike most national liberal arts colleges, Lake Forest is located near a world-class city with direct access by train, and we have taken advantage of our location in distinctive ways:

- scores of Chicago-area internships
- a residential program in The Loop
- over 200 class trips to Chicago, and much more

Our metropolitan location attracts students, faculty, and staff who know the connection with a major city enhances their research and work.

Lake Forest has married its liberal arts tradition with exceptional career preparation and pragmatism. In fact, our mission statement (approved unanimously by faculty and trustees) notes: "We prepare our students for, and help them attain, productive and rewarding careers."

The Gorter Family Career Advancement Center has gained national attention for this career preparation model and has contributed to a placement rate of 97 percent.



LAKE FOREST COLLEGE MISSION AND VALUES

MISSION

Lake Forest College affirms that education ennobles the individual.

Our curriculum engages students in the breadth of the liberal arts and the depth of traditional disciplines. We encourage students to read critically, reason analytically, communicate persuasively, and, above all, to think for themselves. We prepare our students for, and help them attain, productive and rewarding careers. We foster creative talent and independent research. We embrace cultural diversity. We honor achievement. Our faculty of distinguished scholars takes pride in its commitment to teaching. We know our students by name and prepare them to become responsible citizens of the global community. We enable students, faculty, trustees, and administrators to solve problems in a civil manner, collectively. We maintain a secure residential campus of great beauty. We enrich our curriculum with the vibrant resources of Chicago.

Lake Forest College celebrates the personal growth that accompanies the quest for excellence.

VALUES

As Foresters, we belong to a community that finds strength in its diverse identities and perspectives, and we take pride in our connectedness. As we strive for excellence, we continue to build an environment where every individual is seen, heard, cared for, and supported. The values and traditions we share as Foresters connect us to one another and to our future.

Curiosity

We are curious about the world.
We are curious about each other.
We are curious about the people we may become.

Accountability

We are accountable to our community, leading to transparency and shared governance.
We are accountable for the impact of our actions.
We are accountable for our environment and campus spaces.

Intellectual inquiry

We pursue intellectual inquiry that champions critical thinking.
We pursue intellectual inquiry that invites interdisciplinary and co-curricular learning.
We pursue intellectual inquiry that embraces respectful dialogue.

Engagement

We engage with purpose, bringing our passion, ideas, and energy to everything we do.
We engage respectfully with one another's diverse identities and perspectives.
We engage in bettering our community by connecting across our campus, local community, and beyond.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Lake Forest College faculty are distinguished scholars and dedicated mentors who prioritize student success. Ninety-eight percent of full-time faculty hold PhDs or terminal degrees.

Faculty members actively engage in research, many securing prestigious grants and fellowships from organizations such as the Andrew Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation.

Faculty are regularly contacted by the media for expert commentary. In addition to their academic roles, faculty serve as mentors for student organizations

and collaborate with student leaders on select College governance committees, reinforcing the close-knit academic community that defines Lake Forest College.

In total Lake Forest College employs 116 full time and 114 part time faculty; and 213 full time and 49 part time staff. The diverse and talented employees of Lake Forest College help to foster a friendly and welcoming environment on campus and are dedicated to the College's mission and to students' success.

ALUMNI AND FUNDRAISING

Lake Forest College has more than 15,000 alumni living across the US and around the world. Nearly one in three alumni engage annually with the College by volunteering, mentoring, or attending in person or online programs and events, and one in five alumni are active donors. In recent years, the College has been nationally recognized for our outstanding alumni career network and young alumni giving and engagement.

Under the leadership of Katie Spieth, Vice President for Advancement and Secretary of the College, the College is in the initial phase of a comprehensive fundraising campaign. Taking into consideration results from a recently-completed feasibility study, this campaign will

be the largest and boldest in the institution's history with a goal of \$175 million. The focus of this campaign – Our Forester Future – will be to grow the College's endowment. Income from an increased endowment will allow the College to: empower its students, elevate its academic excellence, enrich its community connections, and enhance its financial stability. The campaign is off to a strong start with more than \$31 million in commitments having already been realized. The Vice President for Finance will serve as a key partner to this effort.



THE CAMPUS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY

Lake Forest College offers a stunning natural setting that enhances both academic and student life. Situated on 107 wooded acres in the historic suburb of Lake Forest, Illinois, the campus is seamlessly integrated into its picturesque surroundings. A short walk to downtown Lake Forest provides access to a direct train line into the city, making Chicago's cultural, professional, and academic opportunities easily accessible.

Designed for walkability, the campus fosters an active and engaged community, whether students are walking, biking, or skateboarding between classes. Open green spaces, tree-lined pathways, and stately buildings create an inspiring environment for learning and collaboration.

Founded in 1857, the city of Lake Forest grew up around the College. As a result, the campus is seamlessly

woven into the historic and charming city of Lake Forest. Spanning three distinct yet interconnected campuses—North, Middle, and South—our grounds offer a blend of classic collegiate architecture, state-of-the-art facilities, and serene natural beauty.

The College enjoys a strong partnership with the surrounding community, with local businesses providing internships, employment opportunities, and exclusive discounts for faculty, staff, and students. In turn, the College serves as a hub for cultural and intellectual engagement, hosting fine art exhibitions, concerts, and academic lectures that are open to the public.

This unique blend of natural beauty, accessibility, and community connection makes Lake Forest College an exceptional place to live, learn, and lead.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Lake Forest College offers distinctive programs both in the liberal arts and professional areas of study, including:

- 34 majors
- 49 minors
- 15 accelerated programs and affiliations
- 3 pre-professional programs
- 2 graduate programs

The College offers business and finance majors, and entrepreneurship and innovation is the most popular minor. The Health Professions Program, in partnership

with Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, provides direct pathways to careers in health care. Our self-designed major enables students to work with a faculty advisor to customize a major suited to their academic interests.

The Richter Scholar Program—a signature program of Lake Forest College—enables first year students to engage in one-on-one summer research with faculty.

Areas of study, including pre-professional programs and graduate programs, can be found online at www.lakeforest.edu/academics.



CAREER PREPARATION

Our Gorter Family Career Advancement Center is a national model. Career development and planning programs take students through four stages of personal exploration and career development through Career Milestones program, which helps students gain the skills and experiences they need to be successful and to build a strong network within their Pathway, connecting them to a network of mentors including faculty, staff, employers and trustees that will provide them with industry insight and help them land meaningful jobs.

Students can join one or all five communities including the Build Your Own community, which is customized to a student's specific interests and connects them to career opportunities across the Pathways:

- Business, Finance, and Data Science
- Creative Arts and Communication
- Law and Public Service
- Science and Health Care
- Build Your Own

These communities have Leadership Teams that consist of alumni, faculty, professional staff, employers, College trustees, and current students. These Leadership Teams are part advocate, part advisory board, and they help to competitively prepare students for jobs and internships to stay on the cutting edge of recruiting trends.

Lake Forest has been featured, along with Stanford and Rutgers, for its institutional focus on career preparation in the *Chronicle of Higher Education's* report on "Transforming the Campus Career Center: New Models for a New Era."

The CAC has 11 professional career center staff—more than twice the national average, including dedicated advisors for particular career industry areas.

Ninety-seven percent of Lake Forest College graduates land jobs, attend graduate school, or pursue other chosen opportunities within six to nine months.

ATHLETICS

In Forester Athletics, maintaining *A Tradition of Excellence* is paramount. Excellence is what the Department of Athletics strives for in every aspect of its programming. Whether it's varsity athletics, club sports, intramurals, physical education, or general recreation, the College encourages participation, honor, achievement, and most of all, effort.

Lake Forest College currently sponsors 25 varsity sports, 12 men and 13 women and in 2026-27 the College will add co-ed dance, co-ed cheer and men's volleyball. Teams are core members of the Midwest Conference, Northern Collegiate Hockey Association, Midwest Lacrosse and Midwest Women's Lacrosse Conferences, and affiliate members for men's and women's golf in the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. Men's and women's handball compete under the United States Handball Association.

Recent sports additions include men's and women's golf (2014), track (2018), and lacrosse (2021). The addition of lacrosse was supported with a new turf field, Mohr Field, and lockers.

Student athletes comprise about 28 percent of the student body.





THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE: OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

The Vice President for Finance is the Treasurer of the College and is charged with the fiduciary integrity of the College and leadership for all financial and physical resources. The Vice President manages a broad portfolio of functions including finance, budget, business operations, investments, treasury, real estate, safety and risk management, facilities, human resources, and Title IX. The College has a balanced budget (as is required by our Board of Trustees), an overall operating budget of approximately \$72 million, and an endowment of \$135 million. The most recent S&P review yielded a ranking of BBB for the College.

The next Vice President for Finance should be skilled at strategically aligning resources with priorities, financial analysis, and modeling, and assessing current and future trends in higher education. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to make major contributions to the continued success of Lake Forest College in areas such as budget modeling/forecasting, improving processes and procedures, fostering innovation, construction projects, and space allocation. As a leader on campus, this individual must be a collaborative and collegial team player with the ability to communicate complex financial information and decisions across a wide range of constituents and audiences.

The VPF will:

- Develop and execute procedures for multi-year financial forecasting and budget planning in partnership with the President and Senior Leadership Team.
- Oversee daily treasury functions of the College including cash management, short-term investments, endowment investments, short-term borrowing, and long-term debt.
- Oversee risk management activities for the College and seek to minimize risks through maintenance, planning, replacement, and insurance.
- Oversee relevant service contracts
- Facilitate revenue generating opportunities in partnership with other Vice Presidents
- Provide day-to-day management and leadership for the areas of accounting, budget, business services, human resources, Title IX, and student financial services.
- Oversee the annual College audit process.
- Remain current and knowledgeable in industry standards, trends, and emerging practices to position the College at the leading edge of higher education finance and management.
- Provide sophisticated modeling and data analytic skills for budget development and support for recommendations for tuition and fees, financial aid discounting, and debt financing strategies.
- Develop timely reporting systems and processes to assure that the President and College Leadership Team are fully informed of the financial impacts of decisions.
- Maintain and advocate the highest level of professionalism, stewardship, compliance, integrity, and transparency in all areas.
- Design and direct the implementation of the College's capital financing strategies to support facilities needs on campus.

THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE: OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP (CONT.)

- Bring an innovative and entrepreneurial spirit especially as it relates to financial and capital needs.
- Work closely with Human Resources to ensure compliance with relevant College policies and government regulations, labor-related financial matters, and risk management.
- Provide leadership for employee committees (budget as well as compensation and benefits).
- Serve as the College liaison to the Board of Trustees' Financial Stewardship Committee providing them with appropriate data and best practices in higher education finance management.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Build a climate of trust, transparency, and openness by working collaboratively and communicating frequently with faculty and staff, with deans, and with executive leaders.
- Cultivate positive working relationships across the College to promote a climate of customer service, innovation, and student-centered practices and services.
- Provide accountability, professional development for all employees and mentoring for all direct reports. Enhance cultural diversity, inclusivity, and well-being for professional staff.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.
- Expertise in Financial and Accounting procedures.
- Successful and progressive professional and leadership experience suitable for appointment at the vice-presidential level.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Higher education or non-profit experience.
- Experience overseeing facilities, human resources and/or Title IX.
- Master's Degree in a related field and/or CPA preferred.
- Experience supervising staff and building successful teams.
- Administrative experience with budgeting and financial planning in an environment of limited resources.

SALARY RANGE

- The anticipated salary range for the Vice President for Finance is \$190-220,000.





PROCEDURES FOR NOMINATION AND APPLICATION

The search for the Vice President for Finance is being assisted by [Academic Search](#). Applications should be submitted as three separate PDF documents and include the following:

- A thoughtful letter of interest addressing, as appropriate, the key responsibilities and qualifications outlined in this profile,
- A current resume, showing relevant administrative responsibilities and accomplishments,
- An annotated list of five professional references with contact information and a brief description explaining the working relationship of each to the applicant. References will not be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate.

Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest can be submitted in confidence to LakeForestVPF@academicsearch.org. Although the position is open until filled, to ensure full consideration by the Search Committee, applications should be received by August 7, 2025. Confidential discussions about this opportunity may be arranged by contacting: Dr. Eric Richtmyer, Senior Consultant, at eric.richtmyer@academicsearch.org. For nominations, please include the nominee's name, position, employer, and email address.

Lake Forest College embraces diversity and encourages applications from women, members of historically underrepresented groups, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. For more information about Lake Forest College, visit www.lakeforest.edu.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Lake Forest 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.

