

SEARCH PROFILE:

PRESIDENT



Cal Poly
Humboldt.

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CAL POLY HUMBOLDT PRESIDENT SEARCH

[California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt](#), a comprehensive public university located in the North Coast region of California, seeks an exceptional leader to serve as President. Uniquely shaped by the surrounding environment, the Cal Poly Humboldt curriculum combines STEM and the liberal arts with creative interdisciplinary approaches to solving real problems facing society, inspiring a new generation of thinkers and doers to transform California for the better. The new President will not only hold a place at the heart of the University, but also within the regional community it serves.

Backed by California's historic \$458 million investment, the California State University Board of Trustees approved a new designation and name change from Humboldt State University to Cal Poly Humboldt in 2022. Today, Cal Poly Humboldt is the third polytechnic institution in the state and the first in northern California. Students live and learn in one of the world's most beautiful natural environments. The University offers dozens of majors and minors, including programs in natural, terrestrial, aquatic, and marine resources management, science, and engineering that are considered among the best in the nation. Hands-on learning is an important part of Cal Poly Humboldt, with students participating in lab research, fieldwork, volunteer work, and internships. Humboldt's curriculum demonstrates a long-standing commitment to social and environmental justice and the local community, providing an extraordinary college experience to students.

Standing on 144 acres nestled between ancient redwood forests, Humboldt Bay, and the northern coast range of mountains, the University was originally founded as a teacher's college in 1913 and has grown into an accredited University with extensive research facilities. Today, with nearly 600 faculty members and over 6,000 students, Humboldt boasts an intimate student experience centered in experiential, place-based learning, as well as one of the best higher education values in the nation. The University offers

60 majors and 15 graduate programs across three colleges, and faculty members are among the top teachers and researchers in their fields. Students are involved in over 100 campus clubs and 13 NCAA Division II athletic teams, and Cal Poly Humboldt Presents brings nationally recognized performers and speakers to campus each year. Humboldt offers specialized programs related to climate resiliency, wildfire management, natural resources, renewable energy, traditional ecological knowledge, marine sciences, and more that address workforce shortages in the state and provide solutions to the complex social and environmental issues California faces today. The University's students and the education they receive at Cal Poly Humboldt will have a long and lasting impact on their communities, the region, and the world.

Cal Poly Humboldt is the northernmost university of the 23 California State University (CSU) system. It serves the highest proportion of Native American students in the system and is a designated Hispanic-Serving Institution. The CSU system is the largest and most diverse university system in the country and one of the most affordable. Reporting to the Chancellor of the CSU System, the President serves as the chief executive officer for the Cal Poly Humboldt campus. The successful candidate for this position will leverage Humboldt's many strengths—including its verdant natural surroundings, sustainable practices, and vibrant community—and lead this vital institution in fulfilling its mission to provide affordable, high-quality education that is responsive to the needs of a fast-changing world and regional economic and workforce needs.

The leadership agenda for the President was prepared by the search committee with the assistance of consultants at Academic Search, an executive search organization servicing higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. All confidential applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed to the parties listed at the conclusion of this document.



ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT

The President of Cal Poly Humboldt reports to Dr. Mildred García, Chancellor of the CSU System, and serves as the senior academic and administrative leader for the campus, overseeing strategic planning, financial management and fundraising, human resources, academic programming, facilities maintenance, and all other areas of operation. Positions reporting to the President include the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Vice President for Administration & Finance; Vice President for University Advancement; Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Affairs; Executive Director of Intercollegiate Athletics & Campus Recreation; Special Assistant to the President for Tribal & Community Engagement; and the Chief of Staff.

LEADERSHIP AGENDA FOR THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF CAL POLY HUMBOLDT

Cal Poly Humboldt seeks a visionary, inclusive, and student-centered leader to guide the institution through its next chapter of growth and transformation as a polytechnic institution. Building on the university's unique history, values, and strengths, the next president will prioritize academic excellence, student success, and community engagement while embracing the university's commitment to social and environmental responsibility. The president must lead with integrity, foster a sense of belonging across the campus, and be a visible, engaged member of both the university and the surrounding community. It is essential that the President be prudent and skillful in financial management with a commitment to realizing the full potential of the California State Polytechnic designation.

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF CAL POLY HUMBOLDT

Inclusive and Transparent Leadership: The next president will foster a culture of openness and accountability by promoting shared governance and ensuring communication with all stakeholders. They will engage the entire campus

community—faculty, staff, students, and alumni—and demonstrate a commitment to integrity and a willingness to engage in difficult conversations in order to foster trust and mutual respect across the institution. In key decision-making, the president will ensure inclusivity and transparency and work collaboratively with key stakeholders, while demonstrating the values of fairness and equity that characterize Cal Poly Humboldt.

Student-Centered Approach: The new president will put student success and well-being at the center of their leadership approach. Cal Poly Humboldt's diverse student population—first-generation students, students of color, and students with varying needs and abilities—will be supported through policies and initiatives aimed at academic and personal growth. The president will prioritize a holistic student experience, integrating career readiness, service learning, and experiential education opportunities. They will advance policies that address students' basic needs and promote accessibility across campus. Furthermore, they will lead efforts to foster balanced and sustainable enrollment growth that does not compromise the quality of the student experience.

Community and External Engagement: The president will build strong, lasting partnerships with local stakeholders – including the business community, tribal nations, alumni, and nonprofit organizations – strengthening Cal Poly Humboldt's role as a key contributor to regional social and economic development. They will engage actively with community partners to foster mutual support and collaboration, including exploring the use of local resources in campus operations. By maintaining and growing these partnerships, they will ensure the university remains deeply connected to its local community, especially in areas of climate action, sustainability, and community-based learning.

ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT (CONT.)

Commitment to Social Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Cal Poly Humboldt has a deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and the next president will champion these values across all levels of university life. They will promote policies and programs that support underrepresented groups, fostering a sense of belonging for all students, faculty, and staff. The president will recognize and elevate the contributions of Indigenous and multilingual communities, ensuring that programs that serve these populations are supported and preserved. Additionally, they will advance Humboldt's status as a Hispanic-Serving Institution. By embedding diversity, equity, and social justice into the academic and extracurricular experience, the president will strengthen Humboldt's vibrant and inclusive campus culture.

Visibility, Availability, and Engagement: The president will be a visible, accessible, and engaged leader, making regular, meaningful connections with students, faculty, and staff. They will participate in campus events, engage with student organizations, and attend faculty and staff functions, fostering a culture of inclusiveness and belonging. Their presence on campus will demonstrate a genuine commitment to building relationships and addressing the needs and concerns of campus constituents. Balancing the demands of off-campus duties with a strong on-campus presence will be essential to ensuring that the president remains closely connected to the heart of the Cal Poly Humboldt community.

Visionary Leadership for Sustainability and Growth: As Cal Poly Humboldt continues its transformation into a polytechnic university, the next president will play a key role in guiding this exciting journey. They will provide a clear and compelling vision for the university's future, focused on

academic excellence, innovation, and sustainability. Leading the university with a growth agenda, the president will ensure that expansion aligns with the institution's mission and the local community's resources. They will seek partnerships and resources that support innovative programs. Balancing long-term goals with the immediate needs of the campus, the president will promote a strategic, thoughtful approach to growth that fosters student success while advancing regional development.

Cal Poly Humboldt's next president will be a bold, empathetic, and visionary leader, capable of navigating the complexities of a rapidly changing higher education landscape while remaining deeply committed to the university's values. By prioritizing inclusion, student success, community engagement, and sustainable growth, the president will lead Cal Poly Humboldt to new heights, ensuring that the university thrives as a beacon of academic excellence, innovation, and social responsibility in the region and beyond.

QUALIFICATIONS

The next President of Cal Poly Humboldt must have a terminal degree and significant higher education leadership experience. A strong track record in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion is essential. Integrity, effective communication, and the ability to build trust within the campus community are crucial. The ideal candidate should also demonstrate skills in building community partnerships, fundraising, and collaboratively developing and implementing institutional goals.





ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

The California State University is the nation's largest four-year public university system, providing transformational opportunities for upward mobility to more than 450,000 students from all socioeconomic backgrounds. More than half of CSU students are from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds, and more than one-quarter of undergraduates are first-generation college students. Because the CSU's 23 universities provide a high-quality education at an incredible value, they are rated among the best in the nation for promoting social mobility in national college rankings from

U.S. News & World Report, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *Washington Monthly*. The CSU powers California and the nation, sending nearly 127,000 career-ready graduates into the workforce each year. In fact, one in every 20 Americans holding a college degree earned it at the CSU. Cal State graduates have an immeasurable impact in fields as diverse and interconnected as education, health care, agriculture, government, arts and entertainment, medicine, finance, technology, and non-profit leadership. To learn more about the California State University system, visit calstate.edu.

ABOUT CAL POLY HUMBOLDT

Originally founded as a teacher's college in 1913, the University has undergone many name changes over the past century, which reflected its evolving identity: Humboldt State Normal School; Humboldt State Teachers College; Humboldt State College; California State University, Humboldt; Humboldt State University; and, since 2022, California Polytechnic State University, Humboldt (Cal Poly Humboldt).

As a comprehensive, residential campus, Cal Poly Humboldt welcomes students from across California and around the world, providing them with a wide array of programs and activities that promote understanding of social, economic, and environmental issues, and preparing them to be responsible members of diverse societies. The University is nationally recognized for its graduates' contributions to creating a better world. *Washington Monthly* recently ranked Cal Poly Humboldt 13th of 589 master's degree-granting colleges across the nation. The University also placed in the 'Best Bang for the Buck' category, being named #41 of 201 colleges in the West. The University also ranks #6 among medium-sized universities in the number of alumni who join the Peace Corps (and is ranked #1 in California).

Cal Poly Humboldt has established a vision as a campus of choice for individuals who seek above all else to improve

the human condition and the environment. To do so, the University has laid out the following aspirations:

- To be the premier center for the interdisciplinary study of the environment, climate crisis and resilience to climate change, and the conservation of ecological systems and natural resources. The University's focus will continue to be on sustainability through environmental, economic, and socially responsible action.
- To be a center for the interdisciplinary study of just global societies. The University will approach this work with an equity mindset and continue to emphasize inclusion across multiple dimensions of the University, modeling what they want to see in the world.
- To serve as a regional center for the arts inclusive of diverse arts traditions and contributions, and to fully engage with community arts partners and employers on behalf of Cal Poly Humboldt's students.
- As a designated Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and as a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI), to be an institution in which Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC) students thrive.
- Continue to foster authentic partnerships with Indigenous communities.

ABOUT CAL POLY HUMBOLDT (CONT.)

- To be exemplary partners across the region and state by integrating community engagement and contributing to workforce development in Cal Poly Humboldt's academic enterprise and beyond.

ACADEMIC LIFE

Cal Poly Humboldt offers 60 baccalaureate degree majors, 79 minors, 15 graduate programs, 5 credential programs, and several certificates of study. These programs are divided among three colleges:

- The [College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences](#) serves about 25% of the majors of the University and is home to approximately 140 full-time equivalent faculty.
- The [College of Natural Resources & Sciences](#) serves about 38% of the majors of the University and is home to approximately 150 full-time equivalent faculty.
- The [College of Professional Studies](#) serves about 27% of the majors of the University and is home to approximately 90 full-time equivalent faculty.

Collectively, the colleges:

- Provide an interdisciplinary liberal arts education.
- Foster artistic, creative, and intellectual communities.
- Center around equitable partnership of staff, faculty, and students devoted to teaching, learning, and creative endeavors.
- Deliver high quality education through student-centered, hands-on learning in inclusive learning environments.
- Collaborate with campus and community partners to apply core competencies in experiential, real-world contexts through internships, clinical, practicum, research, professional, and service-learning experiences.
- Carry out transformative research that advances scientific understanding and benefits all members of society.
- Seamlessly integrate core competencies within practical contexts through a variety of immersive experiences.
- Foster the growth of our students to become exceptional leaders in their respective professions and communities, embodying a steadfast dedication to social, economic, and environmental justice.

Cal Poly Humboldt employed 557 faculty in Fall 2023: 242 tenured or tenure-track faculty and 315 lecturers. 56% of the faculty identify as female and 44% identify as male. The ethnic distribution was 3% American Indian/Alaska Native, 3.7% Asian, 1.9% Black, 7.6% Hispanic, 72.2% White, 2.1% Two or more, and 9.5% Unknown.

The Office of Research & Sponsored Programs is home to various centers and institutes which encourage and pursue research and other creative activities that are consistent with the purpose and character of the University. For a list of current centers and institutes, visit research.humboldt.edu. Cal Poly Humboldt boasts a variety of research labs and special facilities which promote scholarly activity and are available to students for hands-on experiential learning.

STUDENT LIFE

As of Fall 2024, Cal Poly Humboldt enrolled 6,045 students: 5,463 undergraduates and 582 post-baccalaureate students. 32% of students were living in campus housing. 55% of students identified as female and 45% identified as male. The ethnic distribution was 2% Black, 2% American Indian, 3% Asian American, 28% Hispanic/Latino, 1% Non-Resident Alien, 3% Two or more, 5% Unknown, and 52% White. 18% of students were local, 73% of students came from the rest of California, and 10% of students came from other U.S. states. It serves the highest proportion of Native American students in the system. Enrollment has been growing over the past few years, correcting a multi-year enrollment decline, and growth has continued into the Fall 2024 semester.

Students enjoy rich extracurricular lives through their participation in over 100 clubs and organizations which promote involvement and engagement. Please visit humboldt.edu/clubs for a full list of student clubs.

ATHLETICS

The Cal Poly Humboldt Intercollegiate Athletics program serves as a vital component of both the University's academic and social environments, as well as the broader community. The Lumberjacks represent the university through 13 Division II teams—5 men's and 8 women's—in intercollegiate competitions, the earliest of which dates back to 1923. In conjunction with intramural and club sports, student-athletes



ABOUT CAL POLY HUMBOLDT (CONT.)

utilize a variety of facilities, including the Redwood Bowl, Lumberjack Arena, College Creek Field, Softball Field, Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center, Fieldhouse Indoor Training Facility, and the Student Recreation Center.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The University continues to evolve as an institution known for high-quality academic programs, strong values related to sustainability and social justice, hands-on learning, and a strong connection with its unique location. In 2014, the University undertook a strategic planning process where it gathered broad input through community discussions, large planning sessions, small-group meetings, online submission of ideas, gatherings that involved communities off campus, and more. The current Strategic Plan (2021–2026) identifies key themes focused on an Academic Roadmap, Community Collaboration & Shared Success, Employee Engagement & Success, Future Proofing Humboldt, Resources Stewardship & Sustainability, and Student Experience & Success. The full strategic plan, as well as the Divisional Assessment & Planning Documents which show the status of projects across campus which support its ongoing implementation, is available at strategicplan.humboldt.edu

FINANCE & BUDGET

Cal Poly Humboldt has a budget of over \$300 million. The General Operating Fund Budget, consisting primarily of tuition and state funding, represents approximately \$178 million of the total budget. The University recently worked through \$8.3 million in reductions in order to achieve a balanced operating budget for Fiscal Year 2024-25. The University continues to experience modest enrollment growth (+1%) from Fiscal Year 2023-24, and continues to receive Polytechnic funding to build out academic programs as well as capital infrastructure projects.

Self-support operations, including housing, dining, and health, comprise \$58 million of the University's total budget, while the remaining \$68 million represents auxiliary operations. Cal Poly Humboldt's first comprehensive fundraising campaign, Boldy Rising, recently surpassed its goal of \$50 million well ahead of schedule, with \$59 million received from more than 10,000 donors. Charitable gifts to the University total \$6-\$8 million annually, usually designated to support specific programs, and the endowment of over \$44 million distributes earnings of approximately \$1.8 million each year for scholarships and programs. Cal Poly Humboldt Sponsored Programs Foundation currently has over 695 active grants awarded totaling \$189 million.

As the University looks ahead, uncertainty and financial challenges remain. The State of California's budget deficit grows, and the California State University (CSU) system faces a \$397 million reduction to the state appropriation beginning 2025-26 as well as a signaled multi-year deferral of the compact as indicated in the Governor's final budget. The University will continue to evaluate its evolving needs as it transforms and invests resources to ensure it positions itself for success as a thriving polytechnic campus in the years to come. Additional information about the budget can be found at humboldt.edu/budget.

FACILITIES

The Cal Poly Humboldt Capital project portfolio, representing nearly \$700 million in investment, encompasses 500,000 new square feet of construction and 100,000 square feet of renovated space. This includes the addition of 1,300 new student beds, along with 85 active projects in various stages of development.

Current projects under construction include a 964-bed student housing project (\$226m), a new 72,000-square-foot engineering and technology academic building (\$100m), and the renovation of Jenkins Hall (\$12m) relocating ceramics and sculptures programs within the primary art core of campus. Upcoming projects include the new Energy Research & Sustainability Center (\$24m), Science complex space renovations (\$36m), the Health, Dining, and Housing complex, and the Healthcare Education Hub in partnership with College of the Redwoods.

After a two-year effort, the campus is in the final stages of completing the Campus Physical Plan update. As Northern California's first Polytechnic University, the campus is set to redefine higher education at both the state and national levels while revitalizing North Coast communities. The Physical Campus Plan, a strategic tool for reassessing and prioritizing campus improvements every 10 to 20 years, will guide the University's physical development. It focuses on enhancing academic life, sustainability, campus life, infrastructure, mobility, and open space with a visionary and actionable framework.

Additional information can be found at the following links:
www.humboldt.edu/about/polytechnic/infrastructure-projects
www.humboldt.edu/facilities-management/capital-projects
<https://physicalplan.humboldt.edu/>





THE HUMBOLDT COUNTY AND ARCATA COMMUNITIES

Cal Poly Humboldt is located in Arcata, 270 miles north of San Francisco and 95 miles south of the Oregon border, on 144 acres of land, nestled in a spectacular setting of redwood forests, rushing rivers, ocean beaches, and mountain ranges. The natural environment around campus is an outdoor paradise, highlighted by ancient redwood forests and wild coastline. Summer temperatures average 63 degrees in Arcata and 92 degrees just 40 miles inland in Willow Creek. Year-round temperatures average 57 degrees. Overall, Humboldt County receives an average of 37.5 inches of rain per year. The area is accessed by U.S. Route 101, which has seen major upgrades over the last 10 years, and California State Route 299, as well as daily flights from the Arcata's airport to both San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Arcata is a great college town, and nearby Eureka also offers small-town charm. They both have excellent coffee houses, clubs, art galleries, restaurants and bookstores, and the area is also home to a slew of fun annual festivals and events. Within just a few minutes of campus, one can bike, camp, canoe, climb, hike, kayak, surf and much more. In 2011, the National Geographic Adventure magazine called Arcata one of its "50 next great adventure towns." Cal Poly Humboldt serves as an important educational, cultural, and economic focal point for communities throughout the region, including those in Del Norte, Mendocino, and Trinity counties.

Humboldt County is a densely forested, mountainous, and rural county with about 110 miles (180 km) of coastline and

a population of about 135,000 centered around Eureka and Arcata. There are 16 tribes affiliated with the Northern California Tribal Chairman's Association, with the three largest tribes in California (Karuk, Yurok, and Hoopa) and 9 of the 16 tribes located within approximately a 100-mile radius of Cal Poly Humboldt. Tribes in this area have fisheries, forestry, eco-friendly, climate change, and natural resources programs (such as the Karuk TREX program that reduces fuels for forest fires) that are known all across America. There is a vibrant and creative cultural mix and ecosystem in the county that has developed through its varied history and a population that is committed to the region.

With nearly 1.5 million acres of combined public and private forest in production, Humboldt County alone has produced twenty percent of the total volume and thirty percent of the total value of all forest products produced in California. At the same time, the county contains over forty percent of all remaining old growth Coast Redwood forests, the vast majority of which are protected or strictly conserved within dozens of national, state, and local forests and parks. The region is known for its environmental innovation and interests in environmental protection, and Arcata is the location of the Arcata Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Land Management, which is responsible for the administration of natural resources, lands, and mineral programs. With the Cal Poly Humboldt student body equaling nearly half the city's total population, Arcata is a classic example of a traditional college town.



HOW TO APPLY

Applications should consist of a substantive cover letter, a CV, and a list of five professional references with full contact information. No references will be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest can be submitted electronically, and in confidence, to: CalPolyHumboldtPresident@academicsearch.org.

The position is open until filled but only applications received by July 28, 2025, can be assured full consideration. The University is being assisted by Academic Search. Confidential discussions about this opportunity may be arranged by contacting consultants Ann Die Hasselmo at Ann.Hasselmo@academicsearch.org, Jay Lemons at Jay.Lemons@academicsearch.org, and Chris Butler at Chris.Butler@academicsearch.org.

The expected annual salary range for this position is \$396,150 to \$435,765, commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Cal Poly Humboldt is a Title IX/Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer. We consider qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, medical condition, disability, marital status, protected veteran status, or any other legally protected status. If accommodations are needed during the recruitment and interview process, please contact Human Resources at (707) 826-3626 or hr@humboldt.edu.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Cal Poly Humboldt 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.

