

The Sage Colleges

Be. Know. Do. MORE.

PRESIDENT
The Sage Colleges
Troy and Albany, New York

Invitation to Apply

THE SEARCH

The Sage Colleges (Sage), an exciting, transformative teaching and learning community dedicated to serving its students, is seeking a dynamic president to lead Sage as it moves confidently into its second century.

Sage's story, which began in 1916, is intimately intertwined with significant moments in the past 100 years of American history. Sage began as a school for women, in an era when advanced education was denied to most women; it expanded after World War II to meet the needs of returning veterans; and then, decades later, Sage dedicated itself to providing access to a greater diversity of students. Sage, with liberal arts at its core but with an applied nature, is an exemplary model of higher education purposefully growing to educate successive generations of new students.

Today, Sage is a complex institution, like few others of its size, providing liberal arts and professional educational opportunities to women and men, to undergraduates and graduates, and to full-time and part-time students. Sage is dedicated to student success through a contemporary curriculum, close student-faculty relationships, and innovative learning opportunities, on campus, in the community, and on-line.

Of the many attractive attributes of this institution, none stands out more than the deep and palpable sense of community and the remarkable allegiance of faculty, students, staff and alumni. Even through its toughest struggles, the community has pulled together, shared sacrifices and worked tirelessly to ensure the success of Sage.

Sage is seeking a president who will build on recent advances and continue to advance this significant institution and secure its well-being for future generations. Sage was not immune to the economic disruption of 2008 and, as a small tuition-dependent school with a modest endowment, had to manage through considerable financial stress. Today, the school is financially stable and a central task for the next president will be to further strengthen its financial position. The Sage history of flexible adjustment to generational changes and of seizing opportunities to better serve underserved populations has created a complex institution without an easily defined identity. The next president will be expected to knit the story of Sage into a compelling message that brings a greater sense of unity to this complex institution and provides a compelling draw for

future students. For an institution entering its second century, Sage remains less well-known than its history and service deserve. The next president will be expected to shine a light on this educational gem and extend its reputation and reach.

This is an opportunity for an educational leader seeking to be part of a transformative process, who resonates with the Sage story and is energized by the opportunity to lead Sage to greater levels of achievement and a more secure future. In its next president, Sage seeks a leader who will demonstrate passion and commitment to its mission and values; has a record of effective, visionary leadership; brings the expertise to manage its business model; and embraces the community within and surrounding Sage.

The search for the next president of Sage is being led by a search committee comprised of trustees, students, faculty, staff and alumni, chaired by Trustee Patricia Sparrell. The Sage Board of Trustees has engaged Isaacson, Miller, a national search firm that specializes in executive-level searches in mission-driven organizations and higher education institutions. All inquiries and applications should be submitted in confidence to the search firm as noted at the end of this document.

BACKGROUND

Mission: Sage is a community of scholars committed to empowering students;

To Be -To provide the individual student with the opportunity and means to develop and advance personally and professionally, and thus to be successful in achieving life goals;

To Know -To contribute to the larger society a group of diverse, thoughtful and competent citizen-leaders who continue to be engaged in the pursuit of lifelong learning; and

To Do -To translate learning into action and application, recognizing the obligation of educated persons to lead and to serve their communities.

The Colleges

Located in the Capital Region of upstate New York, Sage is an independent comprehensive institution comprised of three distinct Colleges and two campuses: Russell Sage College, an undergraduate college for women in Troy; Sage College of Albany which includes an undergraduate coeducational college and the School of Professional and Continuing Education for adult and non-traditional students; and Sage Graduate Schools which offers programs on both campuses. The colleges share faculty and encourage students to take classes or pursue academic majors on both campuses. Together Sage enrolls nearly 3,000 students in programs in 71 major areas of study.

Susan Scrimshaw has served as President since 2008. She, together with her senior leadership team, led Sage through a dramatic reinvigoration including growing enrollment, expanded academic programs, renewed fiscal health, increased visibility and diversity, and a highly-successful Centennial campaign that is nearing a successful conclusion.

Russell Sage College (RSC): Situated in historic Troy, Russell Sage is a private college for women, featuring interdisciplinary, liberal arts, and professional degree programs. Current enrollment is 826. RSC's general education program, WORLD – Women Owning Responsibility for Learning and Doing – makes Russell Sage one of the only schools in the country to feature a curriculum grounded in women's experience and approaches to learning.

Over 60 percent of the student body is enrolled in the health sciences, with combined undergraduate enrollments in health sciences, nursing, nutrition and psychology. The other popular majors are Visual and Performing Arts; Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services; Social Sciences; and Biological and Biomedical Sciences. The Incubator for New Ventures and Emerging Sciences and Technologies (INVEST) provides space and resources for young companies, while advancing Sage's programs in science, technology and business. The Discovery Degree, "Your Bachelor's Degree in Three," allows exceptional students to enhance almost any major, through interdisciplinary coursework and exploration of the Hudson River Valley.

Russell Sage alumnae are a passionate group loyal to their alma mater. The incoming president can build upon this passion, and lead a vibrant discussion of what it means to be a women's college today.

Sage College of Albany (SCA): Situated in the University Heights neighborhood of New York's capital city, SCA is coeducational and offers four-year degrees in a variety of majors to prepare students for successful careers and engaged citizenship. Sage College of Albany also administers the School of Professional and Continuing Education, a degree-completion program for working adults.

SCA is located on a 15-acre campus with a mix of charming brick buildings and sleek, modern buildings – including the renowned and award-winning Opalka Gallery. The University Heights neighborhood is also home to Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Albany Medical College, and Albany Law School. The campuses share a multi-campus bookstore and participate in academic partnerships and anticipate more opportunities for internships, research and programming in the future.

Founded as a coeducational junior college in 1949, SCA began awarding bachelor's degrees in 2002 and has 723 students today. SCA has historically been known for its programs in art and design; recently SCA has seen its largest growth in two relatively new programs: Applied Biology and Law and Society. Other majors include Business, Nursing, Public Health, Writing and Contemporary Thought, Biology and Computer Science. In Fall 2015 SCA introduced a new general education curriculum called Literacies of Connection. This curriculum includes a two-course sequence in Innovation Thinking, affectionately dubbed i.Think and is designed to impart skills for success in the 21st century. The Sage College of Albany faculty, recognizing the world is becoming increasingly complex and interconnected, designed the Literacies of Connection curriculum to give students an understanding of both the diversity of fields of knowledge and the ways in which those fields are interconnected and interdependent. SCA also offers a celebrated visual arts program as well as interdisciplinary programs that include business, legal studies, and

computer science. In 2016 SCA was named one of the top design schools by Graphic Designs USA.

The Graduate Schools include the schools of Education, Health Sciences, and Management, and currently offer three approved doctoral programs: the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.), the Doctor of Nursing Science (D.N.S.) in Nursing Education and Leadership, and the Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.P.T.). Sage is developing an application for a Ph.D. in Psychology and an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in the Health Sciences. In addition, the Graduate Schools offer advanced study for practice and leadership through master's degrees and post-master's certificates in professional disciplines. Current enrollment in the Graduate Schools is 1,250 students.

Sage also offers a Doctoral program in Educational Leadership at a satellite location in Manhattan in conjunction with the Center for Integrated Teacher Education. The program is open to members of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA). The Esteves School of Education at Sage is nationally accredited by NCATE, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education.

In addition, Sage offers a Master of Business Administration program at a satellite location in the TEC-SMART facility in Malta, New York. Classes are offered in an accelerated format and the Malta program, as well as all Sage School of Management programs, is accredited by the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE).

The graduate schools are a key component of Sage and in part have led to growth in enrollment. The new president will be expected to ensure that graduate students know they are valued and feel the same strong connection to Sage as undergraduate students.

In addition to the two undergraduate colleges and three graduate schools, Sage has an evening continuing education program and eight online Bachelors and Masters programs offered through *Russell Sage Online*: BS in Accounting; Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA); BS in Information Technology and Cybersecurity; MS in Applied Nutrition; MS in Applied Behavior Analysis and Autism; MS in Health Services Administration; MS in Organization Management; a Master of Business Administration (MBA). Sage has an ambitious plan to add three additional programs every year for the next four years.

Academic Program Prioritization

While Sage offers a variety of educational models to appeal to student needs, all institutions know that they can't be all things to all people. To that end, Sage realized the need to focus its academic efforts on areas of stable or growing enrollment. In academic year 2014-2015, with the assistance of department chairs, the Provost collected quantitative and qualitative information on academic programs to evaluate their sustainability and help make decisions to provide a stronger, more effective suite of academic programs. As a direct result of Program Prioritization, Sage has suspended a small number of programs and implemented creative solutions to offer more resilient and appealing programs. For example, the Mathematics major has been suspended in favor of the development of a Biomathematics track within Applied Biology; Public Policy, Advocacy & Civic Engagement (PACE), Political Science and Public Affairs are being

consolidated to a single modified program. Concurrently, Sage is investing in new faculty and staff support positions so that additional students can be accepted into graduate programs that are currently at maximum enrollment.

The Student Body

Sage, with a total enrollment of nearly 3,000 students, has experienced significant overall growth since 2008 but there remain areas of concern. Data collected in 2014 show that Russell Sage College's enrollments since 2011 have increased by 19 percent; Sage College of Albany saw an increase of 26 percent but both saw a slight decline in 2015. Graduate credit hours increased by 24 percent and show a strong upward trajectory. The average high school grade point average of new students at both RSC and SCA remained fairly stable at 3.25 at RSC and 3.09 at SCA on a 4-point scale.

In the past five years, all undergraduate applications have increased by 73 percent. Looking forward, Sage is projecting that the undergraduate enrollment will remain steady at current levels and is expecting graduate enrollments to continue to grow. Because there are graduate programs with waiting lists of qualified students, Sage is investing in new faculty and staff support positions. Programs currently at maximum enrollment are Occupational Therapy, Applied Behavior Analysis, Educational Leadership and Nutrition.

Like many institutions, Sage is paying careful attention to retention and graduation rates. Both campuses have a first-year retention rate of approximately 78 percent. The Russell Sage six-year graduation rate is currently at 79 percent. SCA, having only starting awarding bachelor's degrees in 2002, has a six-year graduation rate of 46 percent but has been showing a strong upward trajectory since 2011.

As of fall 2015, the race/ethnicity composition of the entire student body was 72.4 percent white, non-Hispanic; 11.9 percent Black or African American; 7.9 percent Hispanic, 4.2 percent Asian, 3.2 percent two or more races; 0.3 percent American Indian or Alaskan native; and 0.1 percent Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Within the Colleges and Schools within Sage, there is substantial variation in the racial/ethnic composition of students. Within SCA, the minority student population is 43.3 percent while at RSC it is 22.1 percent.

The majority of Sage students are New York residents, most come from within 150 miles and are first-generation college students. Nearly every Sage student receives financial aid, with nearly 50 percent on each campus Pell eligible. Sage is predominantly female, 75 percent in fall 2015, a number that has remained fairly steady over the past five years.

Student Life

Sage is home to a thriving arts scene. Performances and exhibits are often linked to the curriculum, creating a culturally-rich learning experience. Sage's arts resources enrich both campus and community. The Theatre Institute at Sage provides arts-in-education programming to area youth and enhances the education of Sage students through involvement as support staff

and student teachers. The Opalka Gallery holds exhibitions showcasing artists of national and international importance.

Sage students are engaged in the community in a wide range of activities, including service projects, academic service learning and work-study positions in non-profits. Sage provides a global perspective through study abroad opportunities, undergraduate research, internships and academic and co-curricular programming that celebrate diversity. Formal partnerships with the Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade, Mahidol University in Thailand and the Initiative to Educate Afghan Women integrate global and cultural awareness into life at Sage.

Sage's athletics teams, the Gators, participate in 15 intercollegiate athletics teams at the NCAA Division III level. Men and women compete in basketball, soccer, tennis, cross country, outdoor track and field, and volleyball; men compete in golf and women in softball and lacrosse. Sage competes in the Skyline Conference and, since 2014; four teams have captured their conference tournament titles, garnering berths to the NCAA championships. In the same period, the Gators have won or shared six regular season Skyline Conference titles and earned three CoSIDA Academic All-American citations. Recently, Sage was accepted into the Empire 8 Athletic Conference; the Gators will become the ninth full-member. Sage is proud of the fact that Sage athletes have a combined GPA of 3.0 and participate in hundreds of hours of community service annually.

Faculty/Staff

Sage has a total of 142 full-time and 20 parttime faculty. Eighty-four percent of the faculty hold a doctorate or other terminal degree. Faculty are nationally-recognized researchers, authors, and performers who are active researchers and have been recognized for their accomplishments by their respective professional associations. They are also dedicated teachers and advisers committed to helping students develop intellectually and to building the confidence and skills they will need for future success. *Colleges of Distinction* has recognized Sage for three years for the quality of their teaching; student life has been recognized three years in a row as a *New York College of Distinction* for the quality of the teaching and graduate success.

In 2012, criteria for tenure were revised and strengthened after the Board of Trustees reaffirmed their commitment to tenure and their support for the work of the faculty in service to Sage students. Faculty leaders have done an extraordinary amount of work to define the criteria required for tenure and the factors considered in the tenure review process. Over the past several years, new and revised language has been added to the Faculty Handbook to increase clarity and ensure consistency on faculty evaluation, tenure review, and promotion. Because Sage is still undergoing a transition associated with creating more tenured positions through the conversion of previously non-tenured positions, there are a fairly large number of faculty members who are preparing to go through the tenure process. Continuing to provide mentoring to faculty preparing for tenure review remains an important priority for the future.

One of the many assets of Sage is its 280 full and part-time staff. Together with its committed faculty these are the people who often serve as the go-to for students seeking assistance. Their dedication and efforts make Sage work.

Alumni

Sage has 38,000 dedicated alumni living across the U.S. and internationally continuing the commitment to making a difference in their communities and their career fields. They serve in positions of influence in Congress, national and international agencies, in the private, non-profit and government sectors as CEOs and presidents, research scientists and inventors, teachers and health care professionals, authors and performing artists.

Board Governance

Sage is governed by a dedicated 26 member Board of Trustees comprised of alumni, local and national leaders from diverse backgrounds including law, science, technology, finance and corporate leadership. The Current Board Chair, Nelson “Tip” Simons, Relationship Manager at TD Bank, has served on the Board of Trustees for 16 years and became Board Chair in 2014.

Finances

The financial condition at Sage from 2013 to 2014 reflected a difficult time. However, this period allowed Sage to recognize the crucial roles enrollment, financial aid, tuition pricing, and room and board revenues played in moving forward comprehensively. Acknowledging the success of the very disciplined financial work Sage has done, Moody’s Investor Service revised the Sage’s outlook to stable in February 2016.

Today Sage, which has an annual budget of \$50.5 million and an endowment of \$30.5 million, is financially stable. The fiscal year 2015 financial results reflect continued effort to improve the financial position through strong fiscal management, without dramatic and potentially debilitating expense reductions. Through stable undergraduate enrollment, graduate enrollment growth, and diligent management of financial aid, Sage saw tuition and fee revenue grow by 7.5 percent when compared to FY2014 results. In addition, auxiliary services increased by 3 percent.

In 2014, Sage completed a comprehensive 10-year review of its budget and ongoing expense structure. This resulted in a three-tier strategic financial plan to stabilize Sage’s long-term financial goals and practices, while maintaining a strong core academic structure. Recognizing the changing demographics of higher education over the last five years, Sage was diligent in making sure this was reflected in the new strategic financial plan. The Office of Financial Affairs goals from Fall 2015 included a reduction in financial aid reliance through: an increase in students’ abilities to pay; lower financial aid awards to students with less than strong academic records and extremely high financial need; balanced operations per the approved general fund budget; a reduction in reliance on the line of credit throughout the year; and an improved position with regard to institutional liquidity.

In FY 2013, there were parity adjustments for faculty and in FY2015 and in FY 2016, full time faculty, including lecturers, received cost of living and equity adjustments to their salary for the first time in seven years. Sage also gave raises to almost all employees, with the exception of new hires, and has budgeted a three percent raise pool for FY 2017. Although Sage has made progress there is still work to do to achieve comparable salaries with similar institutions.

The Capital Campaign

To celebrate The Sage Colleges Centennial in 2016 Sage embarked on \$50 million capital campaign, the most ambitious in its history, to raise funds in four key areas:

- ***Endowment for faculty support:*** The endowment for faculty support provides perpetual funding support for retaining best-in-class faculty and creates opportunity to enhance academic programs by inviting leading-edge professors and lecturers to Sage;
- ***Endowment for Campus needs:*** Unrestricted funding to support projects and Sage's maintenance and operations;
- ***Facilities Renovations and upgrades:*** Sage is fortunate to have a number of historic buildings, however they need attention. To continue to attract top faculty and students, Sage must continue to upgrade its facilities to provide students with the facilities they need to receive a quality education and be prepared to enter a global workforce;
- ***Support for academic programs:*** To further strengthen the academic programs for Russell Sage College, Sage College of Albany, and the Sage Graduate Schools, significant investment is required in developing and enhancing current programs aimed to position Sage as an innovative and focused institution that prepares its students to excel and lead.

Through the generosity of alumni and friends more than \$48 million has been raised to date, which has provided funding to support many areas throughout the institution including operating budgets, physical plant maintenance, scholarships, and financial aid for students while also strengthening the net assets of Sage.

For more information please go to www.sage.edu.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The next president of Sage will assume leadership of a stable, resilient, well-governed institution that is moving progressively to a stronger future. The president will be supported by a dedicated Board, a versatile and accomplished faculty and staff, a diverse and striving student body, and a caring alumni base. But, the challenges facing higher education in general, and Sage in particular, are significant and call for a leader of exceptional vision, ability and commitment. The following Challenges and Opportunities and Ideal Qualifications are foremost:

Vision

Sage has struggled for some time with understanding and articulating its identity both within and outside the Sage community. As the preceding description demonstrates, Sage is a complex institution with two campuses, co-ed and single-sex colleges, and graduate and undergraduate degree and certificate programs. These colleges are part of Sage's success and critical to its viability in the future. But this variety and complexity make marketing and communications a challenge. A well-articulated, shared vision would knit the community closer together and help attract future students, parents, community supporters and donors. Creating and promoting a unifying vision will be a top priority for the next president.

The process of creating this vision, as well as the strategy and benchmarks of implementation, are vital to its success. Sage expects the president to lead a strategic planning process that is broadly inclusive and draws upon internal and external expertise. Sage is looking for a vision and plan that leverages existing strengths, moves it to university status, enlarges its applicant base and supports the professional growth of faculty and staff. Clear outcome measurements matched to budget will be essential to track implementation and to illuminate any aspects that require change or adjustments.

Visibility

Throughout its history, Sage has been a less well-known institution than the quality of its educational offerings merited. It is past time to shine a bright light on this institution and raise its visibility locally and nationally.

A number of factors make this an urgent task for the next president. Sage is a tuition-dependent school and its health is dependent on a strong applicant base and dependable enrollments. More prospective students and parents need to know about the many advantages of a Sage education. Faculty is the bedrock of any school and spreading the word about the opportunities at Sage helps attract strong faculty. Alumni pride and donor participation is bolstered by visibility and reputation.

Moreover, Sage has a lot to offer the national conversation about effective models of education. The Sage community is eager to promote its educational advantages and to participate in the critical dialogue about the future of higher education.

Finances

Sage has gone through a financially stressful period and has emerged stronger in many regards, but the work of improving its financial well-being is not finished. There is no silver bullet solution for ensuring a secure future, but attending to vision and visibility is critical to sound financial stewardship as is fundraising, ongoing evaluation of academic and operational program efficiency, astute budget oversight and tying planning to budget.

The aspiration is to take Sage from stable to secure, thereby ensuring that Sage will continue to serve future generations of students. Achieving that will take time and will be the result of multi-pronged work. It will entail developing a reliable applicant pool and pursuing effective strategies for raising yield. It will mean continuing to cultivate alumni giving as well as securing significant gifts from foundations, community supporters and business allies. Growing the endowment is foundational to financial strength. Astute financial stewardship that results in improved bond ratings and prudent borrowing practices must continue to be critically aligned with effective fundraising.

Diversity

Sage is enriched by a diverse student body. The depth of its diversity, especially on the Albany campus, enhances learning both in and outside the classroom. This diversity can be further leveraged to heighten learning by careful attention to campus activities, to classroom offerings and to community opportunities in both geographic locations.

Faculty diversity proportionately lags behind the student body. The institution, which is currently seeking a Director of Diversity and Inclusion, has been working to address this imbalance and increasing faculty diversity is a high priority. A president can contribute to this ongoing effort by increasing the school's ability to offer attractive recruitment packages and by working with faculty to institute creative recruitment techniques for achieving greater diversity.

Unity

Sage is distinct and that is a distinction. It provides a myriad of opportunities that attract students at different stages of life and with differing needs and aspirations. But the geographic distance between campuses and differences in history and culture can leave some students, faculty and staff on either campus feeling isolated from the other pieces of the institution. At the same time, two Colleges, the Graduate Schools and two campuses create administrative challenges of coordination that can be costly and confusing. The next president will need to continue the efforts to unify administrative and pedagogical practices to make more effective and efficient use of resources so that the benefits of the two Colleges are leveraged and the costs minimized. The president will help each College keep its unique culture while fostering an institution-wide shared identity.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Sage seeks a creative, energetic leader with the intellect and experience to serve as a role model for the community and to guide the next phase of growth. The Search Committee understands that no single candidate will have all the ideal qualifications, but it seeks candidates with many of the following qualities and characteristics:

- A deep understanding of and commitment to serving students through a liberal arts curriculum as the core of a contemporary and career-oriented education;
- A demonstrated ability to create and communicate a strategic vision and the skill to execute that vision in a practical and inspiring way;
- A record of successful administrative leadership, including business acumen, oversight of senior leaders, and a record of effectively recruiting and retaining strong executives and staff;
- A belief in the value of an undergraduate women's college coupled with co-educational, graduate and professional schools;
- A history of recruiting, developing, and retaining a strong faculty;
- A commitment to diversity, empathy and sensitivity to the needs of diverse students, and a track record of individual action and institutional leadership to advance diversity;
- Recognized skill as a gifted communicator in diverse settings;

- A capacity to connect with and relate to members of the Sage community on a personal level; an excellent listener who can build strong relationships and maintain open, accessible lines of communication with students, faculty, staff members, alumni, and parents;
- Appreciation for the history and culture of Sage and the ability to lead the institution forward in a way that addresses challenges creatively while also respecting that history and culture;
- A talent to lead productive fundraising in an academic environment;
- A record of building and maintaining external relations and advancing an organization's profile and reputation regionally and nationally; the desire and ability to speak to the challenges facing higher education on a national and global platform;
- Proven efficacy in working with a governing board, as a group and as individuals; experience in building and maintaining an engaged and supportive board;
- A demonstrated respect for academic freedom and diverse opinions on key social and political questions of the day;
- Proven ability to build consensus and challenge the status quo to develop creative and innovative solutions;
- Commitment to the highest ethical and professional standards; personal and professional integrity above reproach;
- A courageous leader with a naturally respectful, collaborative and accessible leadership style, coupled with the willingness to lead decisively and to energize and inspire;
- Resilience and stamina for the task at hand, personal grace in dealing with a broad spectrum of personalities, and good humor in leading the day-to-day work of Sage.

TO APPLY

Sage has engaged Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this search. Inquiries, nominations and applications should be directed via our website in strict confidence to:

Jackie Mildner, Jane Gruenebaum or Gail Gregory

Isaacson, Miller

www.imsearch.com/5863

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