



# Widener University

## PRESIDENTIAL PROSPECTUS

*The Search for our 11<sup>th</sup> President*

The Presidential Search Committee of Widener University invites applications, expressions of interest, and nominations of candidates in its search for the university's 11th president. The search was launched in response to President Julie E. Wollman's announcement that she will retire from the presidency at the end of the 2021–2022 academic year. Dr. Wollman is a transformative leader who has had a tremendous impact on Widener and our mission.

*With its urban location, thoughtful blend of in-demand academic programs, and fast-moving yet collegial culture, Widener is well-positioned for the future. Our next president will build upon our proud legacy of success—for the benefit of our curious and ambitious students and for the betterment of the world they will go on to lead.*





You can feel the momentum. At Widener, a rising swell of excitement and pride fuels our students and propels our university forward.

As the university celebrates its 200th year, we're making history—reflecting on our storied past and looking toward an even brighter future. Since our founding, Widener has evolved into a nationally ranked university, persevering and steadily improving through generations of change.

We respond with agility and resolve to the challenges of our time, ensuring our students' success with timely guidance and innovative solutions. Armed with a bold vision, inspired leadership, and a motivated community, we're building on historic strengths while setting our sights ever higher.

#### Our Mission

Empowering our community of learners to discover and create better futures.

#### Our Values

Widener University is committed to the core values of respect, integrity, and excellence. They are the guiding principles to which we hold ourselves accountable. They grow stronger when combined through our thinking and actions.

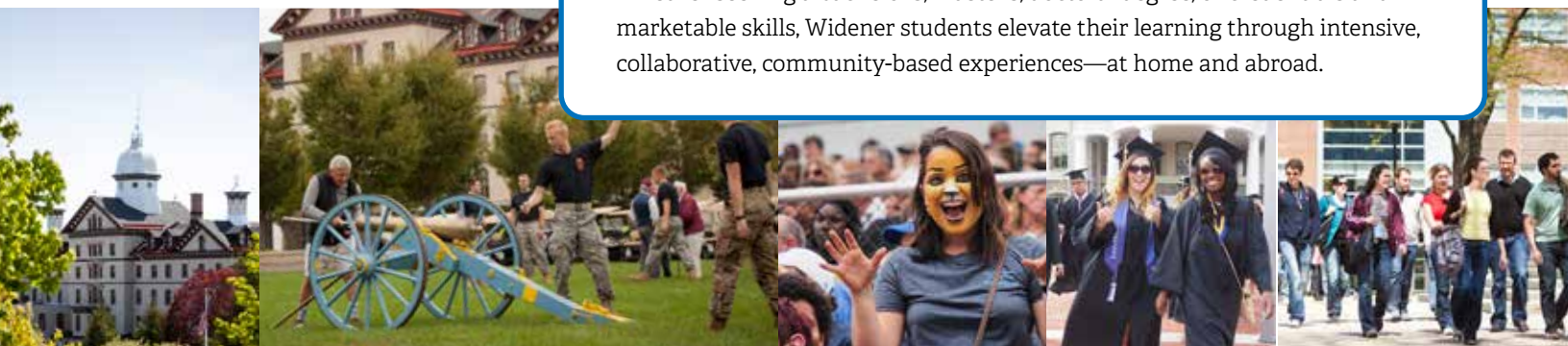
- **Respect** – We care for and honor the dignity of everyone in our community.
- **Integrity** – We stand courageously, in thought and action, for what is ethical.
- **Excellence** – We hold ourselves to the highest standards and support others in our community to achieve excellence in all they do.

#### Our Guiding Principles

**We're all Widener.** In the core of our culture lies a powerful commitment to respect, mutual understanding, and unity. We take great pride in being a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive community. One that celebrates the value and dignity of each individual. One that weaves together a rich diversity of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

The Widener experience is distinguished by dynamic teaching, active scholarship, personal attention, experiential learning, and industry-specific leadership development. We are dedicated to engaging our students in transformational opportunities that broaden their worldview and get them ready to enter or advance in their chosen fields. It is our goal that every Widener student graduates as a curious, engaged learner, ready to make a difference in their workplace, community, and the world.

These values are reflected in rigorous academic expectations and high-impact educational practices that promote student engagement and learning. Whether seeking a bachelor's, master's, doctoral degree, or credentials and marketable skills, Widener students elevate their learning through intensive, collaborative, community-based experiences—at home and abroad.





# HISTORY

Founded in 1821 as a preparatory school for boys in **Wilmington, Delaware**, the institution now known as Widener University moved to **Pennsylvania** in 1862. It was known from 1892 to 1972 as Pennsylvania Military College, though it officially became PMC Colleges in 1966 when a nonmilitary, coeducational component was added. Graduate programs were introduced in 1966.



**NEW YORK CITY, NY** 111 mi.



**PHILADELPHIA, PA** 12 mi.



**CHESTER, PA**  
**WIDENER UNIVERSITY**



Widener ranked as a top national university

~WALL STREET JOURNAL

**BALTIMORE, MD** 88 mi.

In 1972, the name Widener College was adopted following the disbandment of the Corps of Cadets (though an exceptional Army ROTC program still thrives). Widener acquired the **School of Law in Delaware** in 1975 and opened a **second law campus in Harrisburg** in 1989. They became two separately accredited law schools in 2015: Widener University Delaware Law School and Widener University Commonwealth Law School.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** 120 mi.

In recognition of its comprehensive offerings, Widener College became Widener University in 1979. Today, Widener is a three-campus university offering a wide array of degree paths from associate's to doctorate and more than 80 programs of study.





# STRATEGY AND BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Building on a bold vision and significant institutional momentum, Widener launched a transformative strategic initiative in 2019—to think about the future of everything we do and to reimagine student support services to meet the demands of a radically shifting world. Using innovative scenario planning, the university's most creative and open-minded thinkers developed a suite of forward-thinking strategic narratives to ensure the university remains both proactive and poised to respond with agility to emerging changes.

A clear strategy emerged from this work: a focus on institutional nimbleness and the enhancement of the student experience we call “Agility Experienced.” Like its development, the implementation of our strategy is dynamic and bold, with a focus on leveraging the tenets of design thinking and user experience. Implementation teams of students, faculty, and staff from across the university are now using this strategy, as well as market research to put our vision in motion. A metaphor that illustrates their work is that the people of Widener build with “LEGO blocks” rather than “poured concrete.”

In short, through clear-eyed assessment and flexible thinking, we will maximize agility and continuous improvement.

Our work did not result in a published plan. Rather, as intended, it resulted in a strategy that is constantly enlarged and reinforced as we enact it everywhere and invite ideas and input from across the university. As the people and departments of Widener embody the power, reach, and extendibility of Agility Experienced, we'll increase our capacity to adapt to rapid change and best position the university for continued success.



To assist the newest members of the Pride, Widener's Personal Student Success Teams leverage existing networks to offer individualized support and connections for incoming and transfer students to help them navigate their first years at Widener. This campus-wide collaboration highlights how Widener's institutional agility benefits students and provides them with an exceptional experience.



# LEADERSHIP

In June 2021, Dr. Wollman announced her decision to leave Widener University at the conclusion of the 2021–2022 academic year. As we prepare for the 2022–2023 academic year to be under new leadership, Widener is positioned as a thriving university well situated to build on its strengths.



**THRICE** named a “**BEST COLLEGE TO WORK FOR**” by the Chronicle of Higher Education. In 2021, Widener was one of only 12 universities in the nation recognized in four categories of excellence—confidence in senior leadership; diversity, inclusion, and belonging; faculty experience; and shared governance.

## OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE:

- The establishment of **integrated health sciences programs** in key growth areas, including new and upcoming programs in occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, physician assistant, and nutrition.
- The addition of new and high-demand academic programs, including **robotics engineering, international engineering, green chemistry, and environmental health and sustainability management**.
- **Major facility renovations in academic spaces**, including Kapelski Learning Center and Academic Center North, which house a hub of health sciences programs and offices, as well as University Center, a key Widener gathering place.
- The launch of the nationally recognized **Common Ground Initiative**.

- A **redoubled, university-wide commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion**, including exponential growth in faculty diversity and the appointment of Widener's first full-time chief diversity officer.
- **Growth of student diversity and strengthened incoming academic credentials**, including a significantly reduced achievement gap for BIPOC students.
- The continuous improvement of **student retention and graduation rates** throughout Dr. Wollman's tenure.
- **Increased enrollment at our law schools** of more than 25% in the last five years.
- **The development of a Staff Council** that enhances employee communication and for the first time gives Widener staff a formal voice in the university's planning processes.
- **Recognition as a model institution** for the implementation of innovative technology client-success teams that have replaced traditional, transactional customer support with team-based solutions focused on long-term outcomes.

Widener's nationally recognized Board of Trustees is a true thought partner with the president, providing reasoned advice and deep contemplation and engagement. The board meets four times a year, including a summer retreat, and conducts its business through five committees. The board has received national attention from the Association of Governing Boards, the Chronicle of Higher Education, and InsideHigherEd.com for its first-in-the-nation “flipped orientation” model that speeds engagement and involvement of new trustees.



# FUNDRAISING

Energized by strong leadership and a new strategy, Widener is building upon the success of its \$51 million *Taking the Lead* campaign. Now in the quiet phase of a new \$75 million campaign, the university has already raised more than \$15 million toward that goal.

In the last year, Widener has achieved significant growth and success in grants funding, including:

**A \$1.65 million grant for the School of Nursing from the Health Resources and Services Administration's Nursing Workforce Diversity program** to help create a more diverse nursing workforce that better reflects the patients and communities in which nurses serve.

**A \$500,000 grant from the National Science Foundation** to lead and expand a national network that increases access to undergraduate research opportunities in ecology and evolution.

**A grant of \$360,000 from a private trust to fund strategic capital investments and technological improvements** to support students in both physical and virtual spaces that foster integrated and holistic student success.

**A grant of \$150,000 for space improvements in the Wolfgram Memorial Library** that promote learning, research, and collaboration and enhance the student experience on our Chester Campus.



**25.5% increase**  
in gift income in  
2020-2021

**Enhanced alumni  
communication  
and engagement**  
with the launch of the  
Build the Pride Campaign



**More than 24,000**  
alumni email addresses  
added to our database



# STUDENTS

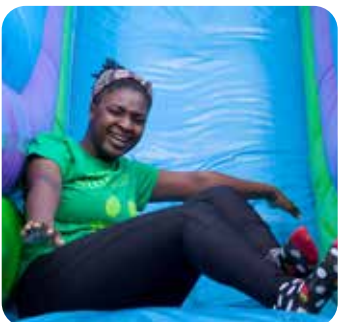
Widener's lifelong value is rooted in its deep commitment to the personal and professional success of each individual student. Our faculty and staff take the time to know students on a personal level. By listening carefully and working collaboratively, the people of Widener help students leverage their personal strengths, access meaningful opportunities, and meet their specific goals. For example, several services co-located on campus at "Student Success Row" create synergies that lead to cross-departmental referrals and offer our students a depth and breadth of support.

This type of attention and guidance has transformative results. It's why Widener is known for preparing the next generation of professionals while informing the future of the professions they go on to lead.



**2021 Enrollment:** 5,875  
(2,766 undergraduate, 2,027 graduate, and 1,082 law students)

**Diversity:** Traditionally, our students come from 49 states and 36 countries, and 29% of the current student body are BIPOC.



# FACULTY AND ACADEMICS

We owe every accolade to the strength of our people. As scholars, scientists, nurses, engineers, and business leaders, our exemplary faculty are uncommonly devoted to helping their students succeed. Their mentorship transforms lives, and their leadership opens doors—yielding insights and networks that connect students to internships, co-ops, and clinical placements that accelerate careers.



The university's seven schools and colleges offer associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, as well as professional certificate programs.

- **College of Arts and Sciences**
- **College of Health and Human Services**
- **School of Nursing**
- **School of Business Administration**
- **School of Engineering**
- **Commonwealth Law School**
- **Delaware Law School**



## ACADEMICS AT A GLANCE

- Widener offers **40+ undergraduate majors** and **50+ minors**.
- **Numerous 4+1 and 3+3 programs** provide students with well-defined accelerated pathways from undergraduate to graduate Widener degrees.
- Students can choose from **a variety of dual degrees and joint majors** in top-choice fields, such as environmental science/biology and psychology/social science.
- Widener offers **50+ graduate and professional programs**, with **several degree options available online**.
- **Nationally recognized leadership, civic engagement opportunities, and paid co-op programs** prepare students for successful lives and careers





# RESEARCH

What does innovation look like? At Widener, it's biomedical engineering and nursing students collaborating in hospital operating rooms to develop medical equipment that could transform the future of health care. It's faculty and students walking the aisles of a neighborhood grocery store conducting groundbreaking field research on the impact of hunger pangs on buying behavior. It's an undergraduate student analyzing compounds found in red wine to discover treatments for diseases such as Alzheimer's.

Widener students can get involved with research as early as their freshman year. Our Summer Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (SURCA) program gives students the opportunity to pursue research alongside our top-notch faculty, hone their skills, and present their findings to the university community. Whether they collaborate on faculty projects or follow an independent path, students discover new passions, make important contributions in their research arenas, and build skills and connections that accelerate their careers.

We are proud to prepare the next generation of professionals through these transformative opportunities. It's why Widener students don't just start their careers when they graduate. They continue the work that they've been doing all along.

In collaboration with  
**Associate Professor Xiaomu Song,**

electrical and biomedical engineering students are advancing neuroscience research that impacts the way we live. Envision a disabled war veteran powering a wheelchair just by *thinking* about moving it. Imagine studying brain activity patterns to develop early indicators of neurodegenerative diseases like Parkinson's.

Likewise, in collaboration with

**Professor Frances Weaver,**

biology and biochemistry students are using the genome editing tool CRISPR to impact the future of our food supply. By studying the metabolism of chickens, their research is advancing the alteration of genes that make commercial poultry more tolerant to heat in the face of climate change.



# THE INSIDE TRACK

A Widener education is special—and, for the students we serve, indispensable. But the competitive landscape is crowded, especially within our region.

To be heard above the fray, the university launched a bold new way to tell our story. “The Inside Track,” is an expression of our distinct and proven approach. It is an articulation of our commitment to providing powerhouse programs and experiences that are anchored by faculty mentorship and industry connections and that accelerate careers with a focus on professional leadership. All within a welcoming community that feels like a second family.



## THE INSIDE TRACK MEANS:

### THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM PROFESSORS

whose leadership, thinking, and research are shaping the fields our students are preparing to enter.

Dedicated faculty helping students unlock their futures with close mentoring and continual feedback.

### CAREER COUNSELORS

who help students design customized pathways to pursue their dreams.

PROGRAMS THAT ARE LASER-FOCUSED ON SERVING as exemplars and centers of excellence in their fields.

A UNIVERSITY WHERE TECHNOLOGY, FACILITIES, AND FIELD EXPERIENCES MIRROR OUR STUDENTS' FUTURE WORKPLACES.





# LOCATION AND COMMUNITY



Widener's Main Campus is in Chester, Pennsylvania, **just 20 minutes from downtown Philadelphia on a beautiful 110-acre campus**. Its location creates easy access to internships, co-ops, field placements, and research opportunities. The Chester community has a rich history as the oldest city in Pennsylvania—once home to shipyards where the Navy's first steel ships were built, and the Crozer Theological Seminary where Martin Luther King Jr. studied during his formative years.



State-of-the-art facilities on our Main Campus include an **on-campus television production studio, nursing simulation labs, a finance lab, and modern robotics engineering and computer science facilities**. Our **law schools** are situated on beautiful suburban campuses in Wilmington, Delaware, and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where students connect with local government and communities to gain valuable hands-on experiences.



Widener operates **numerous clinics** that serve the residents of our surrounding communities in a variety of fields including **nursing, physical therapy, behavioral health, child therapy, and law**.

The **Widener Partnership Charter School in Chester** provides educational opportunities for local K–8 students, as well as the promise of a Widener scholarship when they graduate from high school and meet our academic requirements.





# STUDENT LIFE AND ATHLETICS

Widener University offers the excitement of life in a warm and tightly connected community in which students share a passion for learning, serving others, and exploring their interests and their world.

**The Widener Pride** compete across 24 Division III varsity sports, including co-ed Esports. Our students also compete against other schools in club sports, such as ice hockey and rugby, and participate in a variety of intramural leagues and tournaments.

Students  
can grow and explore  
their interests in

**80+**

student clubs and  
organizations.

Student  
life is active  
and vibrant featuring  
**300+ campus  
events annually.**

**79%**

**of Widener  
undergraduate students  
engage in service or  
civic engagement,  
which is 27% higher than  
the national average.**



# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

**Advancing a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion is a major priority at Widener University.**

Under the ethos We're All Widener, the university community unites to engage in difficult conversations, rethink curriculum and policy, and take action to deepen understanding and respect within our community. In the wake of recent nationwide discussions centered on diversity, equity, and inclusion, Widener has:

- Leveraged campus-wide dialogues and hosted programming focused on such topics as systemic racism, LGBTQ allyship, and interfaith dialogue.
- Engaged faculty and staff in a 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge.
- Introduced new and revitalized committees to promote DE&I efforts, including the reorganized Diversity Leadership and Inclusion Council (DLIC); the new DLIC Student Advocates Task Force; and new DE&I Committee of Faculty Council.
- Evolved the university's approach to student recruitment and hiring practices to attract a more diverse community.
- Revitalized the university's African & African American Studies minor.
- Appointed an assistant dean of diversity, equity, and inclusion at Delaware Law School.

**We have made significant and measurable progress through changes in leadership, processes and procedures, professional development, curriculum, and student outcomes. While we are proud of this momentum, our work continues.**



**WE'RE. ALL.  
WIDENER.**

# POINTS OF PRIDE

as of September 2021

## RANKED TOP 10 IN THE COUNTRY

### SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

~TheKnowledgeReview.com

## NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED FOR NURSING EXCELLENCE

1 of 6

Centers of Excellence in  
the nation for Advancing  
the Science of Nursing  
Education

1 of 11 schools  
recognized for enhancing  
student learning and  
professional development

~National League for  
Nursing (NLN)

School of Nursing  
was again recognized as  
**one of the country's top  
100 nursing schools out  
of 3,000 institutions  
reviewed.**

~The Nursing Schools Almanac

The Delaware Law and  
Commonwealth Law Schools  
**both ranked among the best  
law schools nationally in 2021**

~The Princeton Review

## CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM (PSYD) RANKED #2 IN THE NATION

on the Intelligent.com list of the  
"Top 50 Doctorate in Psychology Programs."

**DURING THE PAST DECADE,  
OUR REPUTATION HAS SURGED—  
ALONG WITH OUR REACH.**



**\$100,100 MID-CAREER SALARY** for alumni  
with a bachelor's degree. That ranks in  
**THE TOP 18% NATIONWIDE.**

~Payscale College Salary Report

**\$62,500**

Average starting salary for 2020 Widener graduates—  
**11% HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.**

~NACE 2020 Salary Survey

**NAMED ONE OF THE 2020 BEST MID-ATLANTIC  
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

~The Edvocate

**RECOGNIZED ON BESTVALUESCHOOLS.ORG'S  
LIST OF BEST 20 MASTER'S IN SOCIAL WORK  
DEGREE PROGRAMS IN 2021.**

The ranking notes that Widener offers a  
flexible online format and enables students to gain  
hands-on training before they graduate.

**ONLINE MBA IN HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT  
RANKED IN THE TOP 10 IN THE NATION**

~The BestSchools.org



Widener University



# FINANCE

Widener ended four consecutive fiscal years with an operating gain in revenue and in a position better than was budgeted. The 2019 fiscal year ended as the university's best ever year-end result. These gains were then invested into capital projects.

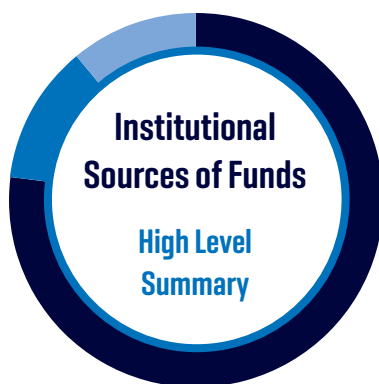
Despite the challenges of the pandemic, Widener continues to maintain a strong financial position, as evidenced by the recent affirmation of an A- with Stable Outlook rating from Fitch and the re-affirmation of our BBB rating with Stable Outlook from Standard and Poor's.

The operating budget for 2021–22 is \$159 million net of financial aid.

Widener's endowment has reached an all-time high of \$110 million.

For the 2021–22 academic year, undergraduate tuition is \$48,724; average first year room and board is \$14,750; and standard fees total \$982 annually.

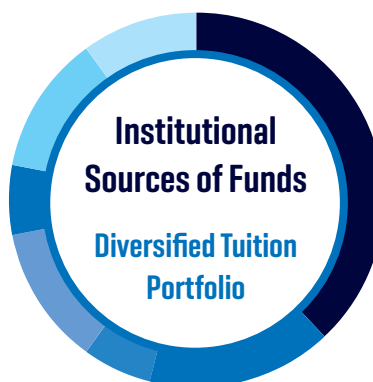
- 98% of new undergraduate students receive financial aid (FY20)
- \$89.9 million in institutional aid awarded (FY20)
- \$28,605 average institutional aid for new undergraduates (FY20)



Net Tuition Revenue	77%
Auxiliary Enterprises	2%
Gifts, Endowment, & Other	11%

\* All Tuition Shown Net of Aid

Undergraduate	38%
Graduate	16%
Online & Extended Learning	6%
Delaware Law	12%
Commonwealth Law	6%
Auxiliary Enterprises	11%
Gifts, Endowment, & Other	11%



# ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT

The president reports to the Board of Trustees and is a member of the board. The president's core leadership team — an exceptionally flexible and high-performing group — consists of the following:

- Provost
- Vice President, Administration and Finance
- Vice President, Enrollment
- Vice President, Library and Information Services
- Vice President, Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff
- Vice President, University Advancement

The president also works closely with the leaders of Staff Council and Faculty Council as important representative bodies for their constituents and participants in shared governance. The new president will be pleased to discover that Widener's culture places a high value on civility and collegiality in all directions. Working relationships across all parts of the university tend to be healthy and productive, enabling the university to move quickly and decisively toward its goals. The president embodies this spirit of connectedness and agility in their readiness to connect with students, faculty, and staff, as well as by serving as a highly visible presence on campus, in the local community, and on a regional and national level.

## Opportunities and Challenges

The next president of Widener will have the opportunity to collaborate with the university community in accomplishing the following objectives:

• **Lead the way in addressing emerging issues and seizing potential opportunities through the lens of the university's strategic stance.**

The Widener community recently engaged in an innovative form of strategic planning that included extensive scenario testing and intentionally did not result in a formal, codified plan. Instead, the president, the President's Leadership Team, and all those involved in the process agreed that the university should prioritize two critical qualities—agility and exceptional student experience—in its approach to every issue. Core questions for the future, such as the optimal mix of academic programs, the balance between undergraduate and graduate enrollment, and the appropriate blend of in-person and online programs, are currently under examination by multiple groups using this approach. The new president will engage in this complex decision-making process by embodying a flexible and entrepreneurial mindset and demonstrating nimble, student-centered leadership.

• **Actively foster through words and action a diverse, welcoming, and inclusive environment in which all can thrive.** Widener has significantly diversified its student body in recent years by attracting students from a wider variety of backgrounds. As on many campuses, work remains to ensure that all students regularly encounter faculty, staff, and administrators who share common experiences and identities. While much progress has been made in terms of building equity and inclusion into staff and faculty hiring processes and other initiatives, more work remains to be done. The president plays a critical role in leading the community toward an even more inclusive and equitable climate, in keeping with Widener's culture of warmth, care, and collegiality.

• **Attract additional resources to facilitate Widener's investment in current and future strategic priorities.** As Widener celebrates its 200th anniversary, opportunities to grow the endowment, support new academic programs, maintain and expand the physical plant, and support the overall operating budget abound. The president will work closely with the board and University Advancement staff to build relationships and create partnerships that will better enable the university to fulfill its mission. The president will play an active role in soliciting support for Widener, spending time with constituents, and communicating the strategic priorities of the university.



## ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT *(cont'd)*

- **Partner with local community leaders in ways that mutually benefit both Widener University and the City of Chester.** Widener currently operates a K–12 charter school adjoining campus and operates multiple community health clinics in Chester, which are managed by Widener faculty, staff, and students. Widener would welcome a president committed to exploring with the people and leaders of Chester new ways in which they might work together for the benefit of all.

- **Continue to clarify and elevate Widener's unique brand locally, regionally, and nationally.** Widener's combination of moderate size with a surprisingly wide array of in-demand academic programs grounded in the liberal arts is both rare and powerful. Widener's national visibility has never been higher than in recent years, and the new president will continue this positive momentum by championing Widener's mission, values, and unique mix of programs to prospective students and families, to peer institutions, to regional bodies, and across the national higher education landscape.



### Desired Qualities and Qualifications

Widener seeks in its new president an agile, collaborative, and inclusive leader who will:

- Have a sophisticated understanding of the challenges facing higher education in the post-pandemic world and the ways in which an institution such as Widener can excel and thrive.
- A passion for excellence and innovation in higher education, and an understanding of emerging programs, trends, and possibilities at which Widener might appropriately capitalize.
- Bring an entrepreneurial yet collaborative mindset to the role, including the ability to build coalitions around bold and creative ideas.
- Be deeply committed both personally and professionally to ensuring an inclusive campus climate in which all are welcome and all can thrive.
- Be comfortable and experienced with leading difficult conversations with clarity, empathy, and emotional intelligence.
- Be an engaged and effective fundraiser, with the ability to clearly and effectively communicate the university's case for support to a wide variety of audiences.
- Be able to communicate effectively and transparently to all of the university's constituencies, and be as inclusive as possible in making and sharing the results of university decisions, including appropriate participation in shared governance.
- Be eager to collaborate with the surrounding community of Chester, and, ideally, be experienced with similar university/community partnerships.
- Embrace Widener's core values of respect, integrity, and excellence with open-hearted enthusiasm and a readiness to lead.

## CONTACT

**Please send nominations, applications, and queries in confidence and electronically to:**

Sue May, Managing Director  
Matthew Marsallo, Managing Associate  
Storbeck Search

**[WidenerPresident@StorbeckSearch.com](mailto:WidenerPresident@StorbeckSearch.com)**

**StorbeckSearch**  
**▲ DIVERSIFIEDSEARCHGROUP**