



Lutheran School of
Theology *at* Chicago

Vice President for Advancement *Opportunity Guide*

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About the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago



The mission of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is to form visionary leaders to bear witness to the good news of Jesus Christ.

Located in Chicago's historic Hyde Park neighborhood, the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) is a distinctive and leading urban Lutheran seminary training students to serve in the global community. LSTC seeks to become a trailblazer among seminaries, a place for dynamic innovation in theological formation while still grounded in its core values and commitments.

True to its Lutheran heritage and built on a foundation of intellectual rigor, LSTC's innovative, nationally recognized curriculum equips students for visionary ministry. The school's curriculum cultivates competencies for leadership in a public church that focuses on community engagement, public witness, and social transformation. Students receive a well-rounded education from an experienced and accomplished faculty, preparing them for purposeful vocations in a pluralistic world. LSTC's holistic approach to theological education opens a conversation across academic disciplines and allows creative collaboration to flourish.

As a Reconciling in Christ seminary, LSTC seeks to offer hospitality and welcome to all who enter LSTC's academic programs. Following Jesus Christ, whose reconciling love bridged barriers and made strangers friends, LSTC seeks to welcome and learn from one another's particularity—including but not limited to one another's race, national or ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical ability, social status, and theological diversity. LSTC actively seeks gender, racial-ethnic, and other key components of diversity inclusion and leadership within its faculty and staff.

The LSTC Advancement Department finds itself at the forefront of philanthropic engagement to support mission priorities for the next century. Through the department's recent reorganization, including the addition of several new staff positions, Advancement is poised to be an innovative hub for LSTC and a catalyst in moving LSTC toward a vibrant future. The Vice President for Advancement will report to the institution's President, [James Nieman, PhD](#), and will serve as a member of the President's Executive Cabinet.

The Opportunity: Vice President for Advancement

The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago seeks a senior level philanthropic professional to serve as the institution's next Vice President for Advancement. For this dually focused role, the new leader must be equally adept at (1) connecting donors to opportunities to fulfill both their philanthropic wishes and the seminary's funding priorities, while also (2) leading and inspiring a professional team of fundraising and communications professionals to achieve their best work. The Vice President must be dynamic, energetic and forward thinking, combining both an entrepreneurial spirit and knowledge of proven best practices to build on the initial success of a recently expanded and high performing team.

LSTC's next Advancement leader will drive and manage key relationships with the institution's most generous donors and prospects. The Vice President will provide leadership to the Advancement and Marketing team, with three direct reports: the Director of Advancement Operations, Director of Philanthropic Engagement and Director of Strategic Marketing and Communications. As the most senior Advancement officer for the seminary, the Vice President serves as strategic partner to the President and volunteer leadership, recommending overall Advancement-focused goals, policies, programs, and practices that will contribute to the long-term viability of the seminary and the success of its strategic plan.

The seminary is positioned for bold contributions to theological formation for the next century. The Vice President for Advancement will play a critical role in shaping the department's culture and leading a dynamic team to achieve ambitious philanthropy goals. This is an exciting opportunity both to enable LSTC's success and to contribute more broadly toward shaping the future of ministry and ministerial leadership. A willingness to engage in emerging challenges and changes in theological education, and the ability to embrace these challenges and develop new approaches will be key to success.



Performance Objectives

Strategic Leadership

- Provide collaborative leadership in maintaining a positive and productive working relationship with the President, Boards and committees, staff, donors and other key stakeholders. Serve as the primary staff liaison to all Board and Trustee philanthropy related committees.
- Lead by example and ensure excellent customer service is provided to donors through accessibility to staff and leadership (as granted and appropriate), responsiveness, and quality in all interactions and personalized communications.
- Support volunteer leadership and the President to exemplify the highest level of strategic donor interaction.
- Engage the Board, seeking to utilize its expertise and existing personal and professional relationships to further the mission and vision of LSTC.
- Serve on the Executive Cabinet, ensuring emerging philanthropic topics are shared with colleagues, while simultaneously learning from peers relative to emerging issues of faith, higher education, and the school.
- Track industry trends, strategies and best practices, including educating others and evaluating opportunities for continuous improvement. Act as a resource for Advancement topics to relevant stakeholders.

Administration and Management

- Lead, develop, motivate, supervise and retain a highly effective, productive and cohesive staff with both professional/technical expertise and operational talent. Implement measures for achievement monitoring and accountability.
- Plan and implement a comprehensive Advancement program incorporating multiple philanthropic revenue streams and strategies. Regularly analyze and report on program assets, gaps, and recommendations for how to optimize Advancement for the future.
- Work closely with direct reports to achieve program goals and objectives, oversee operations, monitor finances, and strategize performance.
- Manage all aspects of campaigns or strategic fundraising emphases, including regular reporting to the Board and a real-time strategy for reaching goals, from project planning through successful completion.
- Develop and implement measurable objectives, strategies, budgets, and timelines.
- Oversee and ensure integrity of regular reporting on team's goal achievements by demonstrating progress, identifying areas of concern, and revising strategies as needed.
- With leadership and direct reports, set team goals and budgets and ensure that direct and indirect reports perform within revenue and expense guidelines.
- Develop an annual operating budget and regularly monitor budgets and cash flow statements.
- Develop accurate and meaningful financial and progress reports that satisfy donor and institutional needs for accountability and fundraising progress.
- Demonstrate fiscal responsibility and efficient use of all organizational resources.
- Collaborate with the Vice President for Finance to ensure the seamless coordination of financial information between both offices.



Performance Objectives



Donor Relations and Portfolios

- Manage a personal portfolio of major and principal gift prospects with capacity to invest at the level of \$100,000 or higher, thereby opening up opportunities to invest in LSTC's chief philanthropic priorities while recognizing and ensuring donor intent is being met.
- Support the President and key leadership in the administration and follow up of their own portfolio of donors.
- Lead prospecting for major gift opportunities using internal resources, personal connections and recommendations from stakeholders to identify high level potential donors for cultivation and solicitation opportunities.
- Provide continuous, data-driven evaluation of short-term and long-term portfolio performance. Re-assign donors to other fundraisers if appropriate.
- Create and sustain an ethos of service excellence and integrity across the Advancement office that positively affects relevant stakeholders.

External Relations and Communications

- Serve as an articulate, passionate and visible champion for philanthropy throughout the school and in the greater community.
- Provide a best practice approach to LSTC's efforts to effectively communicate its mission, goals and accomplishments to donors, prospective donors and the broader community.
- Ensure that the Department's approach to identifying and building strong relationships with key donors, community leaders and other partners is coordinated, consistent, and integrated into larger seminary partnership planning.
- Ensure that communications accurately reflect LSTC's programs, policies, curricula and mission.
- Ensure that seminary and broader Church priorities are effectively and attractively communicated to current and new audiences.
- Collaborate with the Director of Strategic Marketing and Communications and other staff about effective messaging relevant to Advancement.

The Qualified Candidate

The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago seeks an innovative and collaborative Advancement leader with a decisive style that is grounded in an exemplary track record of leading a high functioning team to fundraising success. An understanding of faith-based organizations and educational institutions, and knowledge of the Lutheran philanthropic community, is highly desired. Taking an organized, thoughtful and reflective approach, the Vice President will approach any challenges with a constructive outlook and creatively work to address them. Candidates who are passionate about the opportunity to generate meaningful change in the world through the powerful blend of faith and action are encouraged to apply.

Specific Requirements Include:

- Passion for theological education, social justice and LSTC's mission.
- Evidence of a high degree of intercultural competency.
- A minimum of seven years of progressive experience in Advancement, with three or more years managing a multi-functional team.
- Demonstrated ability to secure six-figure gifts.
- Experience working closely with a President or CEO, Executive Team and Board Leadership in a complex agency, coaching and assisting leadership in managing major donor relationships.
- Strong analytic and strategic-thinking skills, with demonstrated ability to create, implement and monitor complex plans and translate those plans into goals and concrete strategies.
- Highly effective interpersonal, conversational and presentational skills, demonstrating an emotional intelligence and situational awareness in tandem with excellent writing abilities, strong case development and superior listening and communication skills.
- Proven ability to build strong external relationships with a variety of stakeholders including clergy, donors, volunteers, public leadership, partner organizations and other stakeholders.
- Prowess in problem-solving, strategic and creative thinking, and taking initiative with consistent and reliable follow-through.
- High proficiency with direct donor interaction is a must, including discussions of personal and family finances, faith, and asking for major financial commitments.
- Experience in working independently in a fast-paced environment and fluency in managing multiple projects and competing priorities with professionalism.
- Comfort with a robust travel schedule to meet with donors and prospects; ability to manage "in office" work from the road regularly.
- Track record in financial management, stewardship, and developing strategies to successfully increase revenue.
- Career track record that shows stability with an organization and capacity to develop and nurture relationships culminating in overall success.
- Knowledge of best fundraising practices as well as strengths in the distinctive needs for planning, finances, and supervision germane to Advancement work.
- Unwavering personal integrity, reliance on transparent processes, and consistently high ethical standards.
- Commitment to promoting institutional values of and aspirations for equity, diversity, and inclusivity.
- Bachelor's Degree; advanced degree and/or CFRE credential preferred.

How To Apply

LSTC is committed to diversity and seeks to foster gender and racial-ethnic equity and inclusion within its faculty and staff. Persons of all gender expressions and/or persons from historically underrepresented cultural groups are especially encouraged to apply.

This position offers a competitive salary with strong benefits. Relocation assistance may be offered. All inquiries will be held in strict confidence.

The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria.

APPLY NOW

To assure confidential tracking of all applicants, no applications will be accepted via email. **ALL INQUIRIES WILL BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.**

This search is being managed by Laura Weinman, Vice President, and Octavia Daniels, Project Manager of KEES. Questions may be addressed to odaniels@kees2success.com.

KEES is a retained executive search and consulting firm that builds transformative teams and leaders. Founded in 2013 as an expansion of Alford Executive Search, KEES partners specifically with nonprofit organizations to provide an array of search, leadership, interim staffing and human resources support. For more information, please visit www.kees2success.com.

