

Sterling College

Working Hands. Working Minds.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Director of Finance and Operations

The Director of Finance and Operations reports to the Vice President and Chief Operating Officer and is responsible for direct oversight of the major operational areas of the College. Direct reporting lines include finance and budgeting, technology, institutional research, buildings & grounds, campus sustainability, auxiliary services, human resources, and legal relations. As a very small institution, the Director of Finance and Operations must be able to move seamlessly between management and hands-on engagement in the work of the College.

Professional Qualifications

Desired qualifications include demonstrated experience in each of the areas of responsibility, including finance, facilities management and operations and human resources whether achieved in higher education or through work in non-profit or for-profit organizations; an ability to develop strong, effective working relationships with faculty, staff and students; a desire to engage deeply in the community life of students, faculty, and staff; and an appreciation for and interest in life and the outdoors in spectacular rural northeastern Vermont.

Competitive candidates will have a Bachelor's degree in finance, accounting or equivalent and five or more years of related work experience. Experience in a private higher education setting is strongly preferred.

The successful candidate will have:

- A commitment to the environmental stewardship mission and the liberal arts values of the College;
- Exceptional financial, operational and administrative management skills;
- A “can do” attitude, strong work ethic and a desire to “roll up one’s sleeves” when necessary and to lead by example;
- Curiosity, and a willingness to stay current, on the issues confronting higher education and the ability to brainstorm innovative alternatives;
- Strong leadership and human relations abilities including the capacity for effective communication with all the College’s stakeholders;
- Ability to organize, coordinate and direct multiple projects and a desire to roll up one’s sleeves;
- Advanced analytical and systems thinking skills;
- Thorough knowledge of financial, operational and administrative practices and procedures;
- Understanding of federal and state laws that govern higher education and reporting requirements; and
- Integrity and a commitment to service leadership by example.

Specific Duties include:

- Working closely with the Vice President and Chief Operating Officer to design, implement and monitor annual budgets and multi-year forecasting models

- Designing, documenting and implementing policies and procedures which result in timely and accurate financial reporting and budgeting information;
- Overseeing all aspects of human resources including employee policies and procedures, benefits and handling of personnel matters;
- Ensuring that the information technology needs of the College are met and monitored and that system and software safeguards and user support services are in place;
- Conducting institutional research including the collection and analysis of peer-college data and information;
- Managing facilities use and their construction and development including master and sustainability planning, public safety, transportation and parking;
- Performing other related duties as requested by the Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

The College & President

Founded in 1958, Sterling College is the leading voice in higher education for environmental stewardship and rural place-based education. The College was among the first liberal arts colleges in the United States to focus on sustainability through academic majors in Ecology, Environmental Humanities, Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems, and Outdoor Education. Sterling is among the smallest colleges in the United States with 18 full time faculty, 38 staff, approximately 142 undergraduate and 136 continuing education students. Sterling is home to the innovative School of the New American Farmstead and the Wendell Berry Farming Program, is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, and is one of only nine federally recognized Work Colleges in the nation.

The College has received national attention for becoming one of the first institutions in the U.S. to divest from fossil fuels. Sterling has been recognized for its sustainability initiatives by Sierra Magazine and earned a STARS Gold Rating from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. The Real Food Challenge ranked Sterling the number one college in the U.S. for two consecutive years, 2015 and 2016, for its commitment to serving locally sourced sustainably produced food.

Matthew Derr was appointed the 11th President of Sterling College in 2012 and has recently committed to lead the College through 2023. In December 2010, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education awarded Derr with the organization's Chief Executive Leadership Award and the Great Lakes Colleges Association recognized his efforts on behalf of liberal education with a visiting fellowship. Under his leadership, Sterling has experienced a period of rapid growth in student enrollment and philanthropic support, with the largest successful fundraising campaign in institutional history. Sterling expanded its emphasis on field studies in 2016 with support from the Endeavor Foundation and also launched the Rian Fried Center for Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems.

Prior to Sterling, President Derr served as an alumni leader and Interim President of his alma mater, Antioch College, where he is credited with successfully leading the effort to revive the institution. Derr was born in Flint, Michigan. His grandparents and parents were autoworkers. He attended public schools before earning a Bachelor of Arts in History from Antioch and MSW in Community and Organizing and Social Systems from the University of Michigan. He has also studied at the George Heyman Center for Philanthropy at New York University. President Derr is one of a handful of openly gay college presidents in the United States. He lives on campus with his partner Julian Sharp who serves as the Director of Community Outreach.

Application Instructions

Position remains open until an appointment has been made. Candidates should send the following materials electronically: cover letter, curriculum vitae/resume, and contact information for three references. References will not be contacted without candidate permission.

Application letters should be addressed to Peter Merrill, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, and submitted to Joyce Morrissey, Executive Assistant to the President, at jmorrissey@sterlingcollege.edu Phone: (802) 586-7711 x 111

Sterling College is an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, religion, national origin or sex in violation of Title VII. Sterling College prohibits discrimination against employees, applicants for employment and students on the basis of age, color, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or veteran status.