



**VICE PRESIDENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT**

**COTTEY COLLEGE**

**NEVADA, MISSOURI**



Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Cottey College in the search for a Vice President for Institutional Advancement.

The Vice President for Institutional Advancement will perform a wide range of complex administrative activities related to philanthropic funding and public relations, communication, and promotion of Cottey College to its constituents. Working closely with the President and the President's Council, the Vice President will facilitate the achievement of organizational goals, including the establishment and successful attainment of annual fundraising targets. The Vice President will develop and implement strategies that engage key donors, will advise on major gift solicitation, and direct staff and volunteers involved in fundraising efforts. The Vice President will oversee the identification, cultivation, and stewardship of major gift prospects, dedicating a significant portion of their time to this work. The Vice President will oversee any future comprehensive campaigns or targeted fundraising initiatives, ensuring robust participation from staff and volunteers to carry out institutional objectives.

Cottey College educates women to be contributing members of a global society through a challenging curriculum and a dynamic campus experience. In the College's diverse and supportive environment, women develop their potential for personal and professional lives of intellectual engagement and thoughtful action as learners, leaders, and citizens.

Cottey College is an independent, liberal arts and sciences women's college in Nevada, Missouri. Since 1884, the College has offered young women the opportunity to learn and grow into leaders, role models, and confident individuals. Today, Cottey's unique combination of women's-only education, high academic standards, focus on leadership development, commitment to an international experience for every student, and a motivated, high-energy community is at the heart of its success. Cottey's residential student capacity of 350 women typically represents 40 states, Canada, and 15 other countries. Located approximately 90 miles south of Kansas City, the campus occupies 14 buildings on 11 city blocks and includes a 33-acre wooded recreational area with a lodge. Cottey offers 24 bachelor's degree programs in close-knit learning environments focused on helping personalize learning and development for students. Degree programs integrate leadership development into the curriculum, preparing students for successful careers. Students can also be leaders in more than 25 organizations on campus representing academic areas, cultural and recreational interests, and social, religious, and volunteer activities. Cottey emphasizes high academic standards with unique opportunities for personal growth through residential, cultural, and intellectual experiences. More than 8,900 alumnae live throughout the world.

Cotley's academic program is supported by excellent faculty in keeping with Cotley's founding mission. Of the 33 full-time faculty in fall 2024, 63 percent were tenured. 100 percent of the full-time faculty had terminal degrees; 79 percent had doctorates; 76 percent of the College's faculty were women; and 33 percent were ethnic minorities. The average class size is ten students, and the student to faculty ratio is 81, allowing professors the opportunity to engage with students in meaningful and substantive exchanges. A strong sense of camaraderie exists between students and faculty. Faculty members are active in their disciplines; some are active scholars, and many are involved in associations connected to their fields.

Cotley College is pleased to be recognized among the best colleges and universities in the country. It is proof of the College's commitment to providing students a challenging curriculum at an affordable price. *U.S. News & World Report* ranks Cotley fifth on the "Best Regional Colleges-Midwest" list and a top ten performer on Social Mobility.

Unlike most small private colleges, Cotley College is in excellent financial health. It has no long-term debt, no short-term debt, and its payables are current. The College's endowment as of September 2024 was \$108 million from which the Board authorizes an annual draw of six percent. The current year's operating budget is \$17.2 million.

#### **REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS**

The Vice President for Institutional Advancement will report to the President, Dr. Stefanie Niles, and serve on the President's Council. The Vice President is responsible for seven employees in the Office of Institutional Advancement.

#### **FROM THE PRESIDENT**

*Thank you for considering the Vice President for Institutional Advancement position at Cotley College. Cotley is truly a distinctive place — the only college that is for women and owned by women. Our founder, Virginia Alice Cotley, dedicated her life to providing women and girls with an education — an experience out of reach for many at that time. Seeing the mission of the P.E.O. Sisterhood so closely aligned with that of her college, and recognizing the need to ensure Cotley's long-term future, she gifted her college to the P.E.O. Sisterhood in 1927. This 98-year relationship has endeared generations of P.E.O. members to the College, who have supported it personally and financially — sending their daughters and granddaughters to Cotley, and providing financial support for scholarships, facilities, equipment, and the academic program.*

*Many of Cotley's most loyal donors are members of the P.E.O. Sisterhood — some of whom have never been to the campus but take immense pride in their College and the thousands of women who have graduated from Cotley. Cotley alumnae, like the graduates of other women's colleges, are passionately devoted to the institution where they cultivated the foundational experiences that have informed their professional and personal lives.*

*Cotley was founded as a two-year institution, and in 2011 made the decision to offer bachelor's degrees, with our first baccalaureate students graduating in 2013. As of Fall 2024, Cotley has completely transitioned away from the two-year college experience and only offers four-year degrees, providing students with a growing number of major options to pursue.*

*The core tenets of a Cottey education are women's leadership, global awareness, and social responsibility — these values are reflected comprehensively in our academic and cocurricular programs. One of the most distinctive features of Cottey's offerings is the International Experience. Juniors are eligible for this educational week-long trip, with almost all expenses paid for by the College. Recent destinations have included Vienna, Austria; Dublin, Ireland; and Athens, Greece. In 2024, we launched an international experience opportunity for Cottey alumnae, P.E.O. members, and friends of the College; in 2025, we are expanding these offerings to include a domestic location.*

*The next Vice President for Institutional Advancement will join a strong team of President's Council leaders, who collectively provide strategic direction to the College. I look forward to partnering with this individual to cultivate relationships with our alumnae and P.E.O. members, strengthening our donor base, and fostering robust connections to the College and its students. The next Vice President should be confident, warm, ambitious, thoughtful, a good listener, and a careful steward of both people and resources. This individual will inherit a young but capable team of staff members eager for and responsive to guidance and direction. While the position is not without challenges, there are significant opportunities for a strong advancement professional to build on a solid foundation and engage a dynamic donor base through on and off campus interactions and experiences.*

*Thank you again for considering this critical role at Cottey College!*

— Dr. Stefanie Niles, President

## **LEADERSHIP**

### **Dr. Stefanie Niles**

#### **President**

Dr. Stefanie Niles began her tenure as the 13<sup>th</sup> President of Cottey College on July 1, 2022. She is a national leader in her field and a compelling spokesperson for the liberal arts. Dr. Niles has been a successful, strategic, and innovative leader at multiple outstanding liberal arts institutions.

Dr. Niles comes to Cottey from Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, Ohio, where she served as the Vice President for Enrollment and Communications since 2018, overseeing the offices of admission, financial aid, and university communications. Prior to her tenure at Ohio Wesleyan, she was the Chief Enrollment Officer at Dickinson College, Hollins University, Bryn Athyn College, and DePauw University where she oversaw admission and financial aid and, in some instances, marketing and communications, athletics, and institutional research.

In 2018-19, Dr. Niles served as the President of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), the leading national organization for college admission professionals with more than 23,000 members, completing a three-year term on the Board of Directors in 2020. In this role, she addressed national and international audiences on a variety of issues related to college admissions, financial aid, and marketing. She has been an active member of several state and regional associations for college admission counseling, including serving in the presidential cycle for Indiana ACAC.

In 2017, Dr. Niles was the recipient of a Fulbright International Education Administrators (IEA) award and participated in a cross-cultural exchange examining the higher education systems in France and Belgium. She has completed the Harvard Institute for Educational Management and the Educational Leadership Academy co-sponsored by the CIC and the AACU. Dr. Niles has also been an active peer reviewer for the MSCHE and the Higher Learning Commission. She currently serves on the board of the Women's College Coalition and is the vice chair of the Council of Presidents for Cottey's athletic conference, the American Midwest Conference.

Dr. Niles holds a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Virginia, a Master of Science degree in education from Indiana University-Bloomington, and a Doctor of Education degree in higher education management from the University of Pennsylvania.

### **P.E.O. SISTERHOOD**

Cottey College is owned and supported by the P.E.O. Sisterhood, a non-sectarian, philanthropic educational organization that features almost 190,000 members and 5,500 chapters in the United States and Canada. P.E.O. supports educational opportunities for women and sponsors five projects and Cottey College. P.E.O. has assisted more than 125,000 students through these projects, specifically through scholarships and loans totaling more than \$432 million, and generally through its support of the thousands of students who have graduated from Cottey College.

P.E.O.'s commitment is unwavering and remarkable. A significant number of students attend Cottey due to the Sisterhood's encouragement and referrals. For example, P.E.O.s attend college fairs, hold gatherings for prospective students, and provide Cottey College materials to high school counselors. Cottey thrives because of the dedicated efforts of an excellent enrollment management staff and the support of P.E.O.s.

A distinctive aspect of Institutional Advancement's ongoing responsibilities is the engagement of the P.E.O. Sisterhood. By virtue of the P.E.O.'s ownership of Cottey College, members of the Sisterhood participate in the life of the College as volunteer leaders, event attendees, and donors. Accordingly, P.E.O.'s involvement with Cottey College provides unique opportunities for constituent communication, engagement, solicitation, and stewardship.

The Vice President will be responsible for ensuring close coordination of P.E.O. member communication, outreach, engagement, and solicitation. In addition, the Vice President, in coordination with the President and other Institutional Advancement staff, will attend P.E.O. annual state, province, and district conventions and the biennial Convention of the International Chapter. The Vice President will ensure successful signature on-campus events that engage P.E.O. members annually and bi-annually in the life of the College.

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Vice President for Institutional Advancement will

- work in collaboration with the President and the President's Council to facilitate the educational and institutional mission and goals of the College;
- develop and achieve established annual fundraising goals;
- work with Institutional Advancement staff to develop and implement plans that achieve organizational and departmental goals;
- allocate significant time to the identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of highly capable prospects and donors;
- advise and support the President in the outreach, cultivation, and solicitation of major gift donors and prospects;
- advise, direct, and support staff and volunteers engaged in annual, major gift, and planned gift cultivation and solicitation;

- when a formal comprehensive campaign or significant fundraising initiative has been approved, lead the campaign and ensure the participation of Institutional Advancement staff and volunteers across donor identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship;
- oversee alumnae and P.E.O. member relations and ensure successful and comprehensive constituent engagement and solicitation strategies;
- develop a strategy to enhance and cultivate members of the Stockard Society, the College's planned giving program;
- ensure annual and bi-annual signature events are successfully promoted and executed;
- participate in campus-wide strategic planning efforts;
- prepare and deliver formal presentations before various public and private audiences;
- attend pertinent meetings, conferences, and seminars requiring periodic to frequent travel;
- ensure alumnae, constituent, and donor records are updated and properly maintained;
- develop and manage an annual departmental budget; and
- oversee all donor communication, including gift acknowledgements, tributes, recognition, annual fund reporting, and responses to donor concerns.

### **PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Cottey College seeks a Vice President for Institutional Advancement with

- a commitment to the mission of Cottey College — to educate women to be contributing members of a global society through a challenging curriculum and a dynamic campus experience;
- an ability to collaborate and partner with senior leadership to advance the mission and goals of the institution;
- strong strategic thinking skills and an ability to align departmental and organizational objectives;
- experience developing and achieving annual fundraising goals, and a history of success in the design and execution of comprehensive fundraising strategies, including annual, major gift, and planned giving campaigns;
- expertise in donor identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship, including a history of building and maintaining relationships with high capacity donors;
- an ability to lead and manage a comprehensive campaign, ensuring active participation from staff, volunteers, and key stakeholders in donor identification, cultivation, and stewardship;
- experience working closely with volunteers, including governing and fundraising boards, advisory boards, and campaign steering committees, to execute fundraising campaigns and achieve institutional advancement goals;
- strong project management skills, including an ability to oversee and successfully execute annual and bi-annual signature events that engage key constituencies such as alumnae and P.E.O. members;
- an ability to prepare and deliver highly effective formal presentations to a variety of public and private audiences, as well as oversee donor communications, including gift acknowledgements, recognition, and accurate fundraising reporting; and
- experience managing departmental budgets and ensuring the accurate maintenance of constituent and donor records and an ability to oversee the allocation of resources to achieve organizational goals efficiently.

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is at least five years of relevant and increasingly responsible experience in institutional advancement, including experience working directly with a constituent relationship management system to carry out the objectives of a comprehensive advancement program. Cottey College will consider candidates with a broad range of backgrounds. If you are excited about this role and feel that you can contribute to the College, but your experience does not exactly align with every qualification listed above, we encourage you to apply.

### LOCATION

Cottey College is in Nevada, Missouri, a county seat of approximately 8,200 residents located 90 minutes south of Kansas City, Missouri, in the hills of southwestern Missouri's prairie lands. Faculty and staff report that the quality of life is high, and the cost of living is low. The community enjoys multiple civic, cultural, and social opportunities. Nevada has an active arts community with a theater, community band, and outstanding parks and golf courses. These activities are enhanced by Cottey College's Performing Arts Series, which brings well-known speakers, entertainers, and performances to the College and the community. This position may be performed as a hybrid position, with the specific schedule to be arranged by the President and the successful candidate.

### SALARY AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is \$130,000 and \$140,000 annually. Cottey College offers a [comprehensive benefits package](#).

### APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Cottey College as well as the responsibilities and qualifications presented in the prospectus.***

To apply for this position, visit: [Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Cottey College](#).

To nominate a candidate, please contact [Clare McCully](#).

*All inquiries will be held in confidence.*