



Leadership Search Proposal

Northwest Florida State College
President

Since 1991 Spelman Johnson has identified and recruited talented leaders across education, advocacy associations, and social impact organizations through an inclusive and equitable search process.

Spelman Johnson Contact Information

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The below individuals are involved in the representation of this proposal.

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Since our founding in 1991 Spelman Johnson has recruited and placed over 2,000 outstanding leaders. With 33 years of spearheading executive level including presidential searches for higher education institutions, we have the experience, knowledge, policies, and practices that promise highly personalized service and satisfaction. Our ability to match outstanding leaders with outstanding institutions will be an asset to the presidential search at Northwest Florida State College.

There are no conflicts of interest or relationships between Spelman Johnson and any principal or employee of Northwest Florida State College, its trustees, president, or employees in the preceding 5 years.

Experience

Spelman Johnson specializes in identifying top-tier talent that aligns with the unique needs and requirements of our clients. With our comprehensive approach to recruitment, we are confident in our ability to find a president who will champion academic excellence, drive innovation, and lead Northwest Florida State College.

Our extensive network and industry expertise enable us to identify exceptional candidates who possess the capacity to succeed in complex roles. We specialize in recruiting executive level candidates from diverse backgrounds who possess collaborative leadership styles, proven track records of academic excellence, and strategic planning development and implementation experience.

The presidential role demands a comprehensive skill set, spanning administrative prowess, financial acumen, advocacy skills, effective communication abilities, fundraising expertise, and academic insight. Beyond fulfilling institutional missions, this multifaceted position requires building exemplary relationships with stakeholders ranging from board members and donors to lawmakers, community members, students, staff, and faculty.

Spelman Johnson is a premier leadership search firm with a reputation for meticulous selection of visionary and experienced candidates for leadership positions. Our track record speaks volumes, with numerous successful placements in presidential roles and senior leadership positions that serve as pivotal stepping stones to the college presidency.

Recent Chancellor and Presidential Searches

Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley President
Metropolitan Community College-Chancellor
Montserrat College of Art
Mount Marty University
Oklahoma City University
Prescott College
Central Oklahoma University
Vermont Law & Graduate School

Blue text indicates client for whom Spelman Johnson has conducted multiple searches.

Memberships

ACE Executive Roundtable

Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)

[Learn more at spelmanandjohnson.com](http://spelmanandjohnson.com)

2,100⁺

The number of successful searches Spelman Johnson has conducted for positions that provide a pipeline to presidential appointments, such as provosts, vice presidents, and deans.

12,000⁺

The number of senior and executive level administration professionals in our proprietary database.

Our placements are evidence of our success!

98% Retention rate for placements in the previous three years

Our Guarantees and Policies

○ Search Conclusion Guarantee

Spelman Johnson will work with the institution until a successful hire is made or the search concludes in another fashion as negotiated by the institution and Spelman Johnson.

○ Retention Guarantee

Should the successful candidate voluntarily withdraw or be terminated within 12 months from the date of the contract, Spelman Johnson will redo the search for a replacement. We will waive our fee and bill only for expenses and the one-time administrative charge associated with reopening the search.

This guarantee assumes certain conditions that are detailed in the Spelman Johnson contract. The client must notify Spelman Johnson within 60 days of the departure of the hired candidate should they wish to retain Spelman Johnson under the conditions of this guarantee.

○ Off Limits Policy

Spelman Johnson values and appreciates the relationship we have with our clients and will never jeopardize that relationship by recruiting our placements. In accordance with the ethics of the executive search industry, Spelman Johnson makes an agreement with each client that clearly states the period during which we will not recruit professionals from the institution or other internal areas as requested.

Spelman Johnson Pricing

Search Fees

Spelman Johnson's retainer fee is calculated as a one-third percentage of the estimated salary for the position. The final fee is adjusted to the first year's salary of the successful placement.

A one-time administrative charge of \$4,500 will be applied to the first invoice to cover indirect expenses such as communications and technology support.

There are **no** additional fees for:

- incentive arrangements
- signing bonuses
- other types of supplemental compensation
- non-cash compensation

Direct expenses related to the search are not included in the retainer fee or administrative charge. Direct expenses include items such as:

- advertising
- travel
- background investigations



Search Timeline

While we will create a customized timeline for the institution that is reflective of the agreed-upon deliverables and desired start date, the following sample timeline is intended to provide a general outline of the process for the purposes of this proposal. Should Spelman Johnson be selected as the preferred search firm, a more comprehensive and personalized timeline will be devised in conjunction with the specific needs of the institution and the search committee.

Month 1

Spelman Johnson reviews the search strategy, process, and timeline with the hiring authority, search committee, and other key individuals involved in the institution's search process.

In-person meetings are conducted with the search committee, key individuals, and groups to:

- Discuss the search strategy and process.
- Finalize the search timeline.
- Discuss the challenges, opportunities, and objectives for the role.
- Determine the background, attributes, and qualifications of the ideal candidate.

Spelman Johnson drafts search documents for review and approval by the institution, including the following:

- Summary Report of Constituent Meetings
- Marketing Plan
- Position Specification
- Search Timeline

The institution approves all documents listed above, including formal acceptance and sign-off on the marketing plan with associated expenses.

Month 2

With approved documents in hand, Spelman Johnson launches the search and begins actioning the marketing plan; direct outreach and cultivation of candidates continues for 30-40 days.

Search committee meets as necessary to conduct equity training and to devise rubric, survey, or other review methods by which candidates will be assessed.

Direct outreach and cultivation of candidates continues.

Initial review of application materials begins.

Month 3

Search consultant conducts introductory interviews with top candidates, collects supplemental questionnaires and additional information from candidates, and shares confidential candidate files with the search committee.

Search committee meets with the consultant to review the slate of candidates and decides on which candidates to advance to the semi-finalist stage.

Search committee conducts confidential virtual interviews, or in-person off-site interviews, with candidates and selects finalists.

The institution arranges on-site or virtual meetings for the finalists with appropriate constituencies and a second round of candidate interviews with the search committee; client collects constituent feedback via survey or other means.

Spelman Johnson facilitates scheduling of the finalists and assists, as needed, in coordinating travel logistics.

Spelman Johnson conducts extensive reference checks for finalists and reports findings to the hiring authority.

Hiring authority reviews all available information on the finalists and selects preferred candidate, extends employment offer, and negotiates start date and other details. Spelman Johnson conducts an extensive background check on the selected candidate and submits results to hiring authority.

Spelman Johnson consultants support transition, as appropriate.

Spelman Johnson's Search Process

We manage a comprehensive search that allows our clients to focus their efforts on the evaluation of the most qualified candidates.

We partner and consult closely with the search committee and hiring authority to identify, assess, select, and appoint the very best professional for the institution.

We cooperatively develop a customized search timeline that outlines every aspect of the search and the responsibilities of both Spelman Johnson and the client. The timeline is reflective of the agreed upon deliverables and deadlines.

We complete assignments expeditiously while not sacrificing details, the quality of the candidate pool, or the integrity of the search process.

We develop a search strategy that addresses our client's specific needs and we serve as advisers during all phases of the process, which typically includes five phases: laying the groundwork, building the candidate pool, assessing candidates, selecting and vetting finalists, and appointing the new leader.

Lay the Groundwork

- We learn about the institution and priorities for the role and develop a collaborative relationship with stakeholders.
- We meet with stakeholders and conduct a thorough analysis of the institution and position to promote a shared understanding of the role.
- We gather information to craft informative and compelling documents, including a comprehensive detailed search timeline, marketing plan, and comprehensive position specification.

Build a Deep and Diverse Candidate Pool

- We implement a customized marketing plan with passive and active recruitment strategies.
- We advertise the position widely.
- We access our professional networks.
- We contact prospects identified through extensive research.
- We personally respond to all inquiries, nominations, and referrals.

Assess Candidates

- We assess candidates beyond the screening application materials.
- We conduct in-depth conversations with qualified applicants.
- We advance only the most promising candidates.
- We gather significant information through vetting and a supplemental questionnaire developed for each search.
- We create a password protected, secure online portal for search committee members to access candidate materials.

Select and Vet Candidates

- We meet with the search committee to review and identify a short-list of semifinalists.
- We assist clients in structuring the review of candidates and first-round interviews.
- We aid in planning second round interviews, in-person, and virtual visits.
- We conduct due diligence on behalf of clients.
 - *Social media and internet investigations*
 - *Extensive on- and off-list reference checks*
 - *An optional leadership assessment*
 - *A comprehensive background check conducted under the Fair Credit Reporting Act*

Appoint the New Leader

- We provide decision support in the final selection phase.
- We share any voluntarily disclosed salary or compensation concerns with clients.
- We provide information on competitive market salaries and compensation packages.
- We close out the search after the offer is made and accepted.
- We notify unsuccessful candidates and other parties of the outcome.
- We assist with a public announcement of the appointment.
- We offer support for a well planned and executed transition and onboarding process upon request.

Your Search Team

Spelman Johnson prioritizes ensuring that our clients receive high-touch, exceptional service throughout every stage of the process. Your Spelman Johnson consultant will oversee each aspect of the search from beginning to end — conducting role analysis, preparing recruiting materials, devising the outreach and recruitment plan, identifying and engaging talent, vetting applicants, and assisting with administrative tasks related to the search. Every search is backed by a dedicated team of research, marketing, and technology specialists based at the firm's headquarters in Easthampton, Massachusetts. Our president, Mark Hall, acts as an advisor on all searches and is available to your search chair and hiring authority at any stage of the process.

Ellen Heffernan

CEO



Ellen Heffernan is chief executive officer of Spelman Johnson, a premier executive search firm committed to serving education, advocacy associations, and social impact organizations. Ellen provides strategic and operational leadership of the firm and oversees its presidential/CEO search practice. Under her direction, Spelman Johnson has emerged as one of the nation's most respected executive search firms. Over the course of its 32-year history, Spelman Johnson has conducted more than 2,000 searches in partnership with institutions of higher education, independent schools, professional associations, and non-profit agencies across the country. All of the firm's consultants have significant experience in education and non-profit administration and executive search, which enables them to understand the strategic challenges and cultures of their client organizations, deliver robust and diverse candidate pools, and provide an unrivaled level of client engagement.

In addition to leading Spelman Johnson and working directly with clients on search assignments, Ellen serves on the faculty of several leadership development programs, including the American Association of Blacks in Higher Education (AABHE) Leadership and Mentoring Institute, NASPA — Senior Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, and College Board Middle State's Mid-Level Institute professional development institutes. Ellen has published numerous articles and is valued for her thought leadership on talent acquisition, building organizational capacity, and issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. She serves as an adviser to governing boards, presidents and chancellors, and other campus and system leaders and policymakers.

Ellen joined Spelman Johnson in 1996, after a 10-year career in higher education that included positions at Smith College and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. A recipient of NASPA's Pillar of the Profession Award, given for sustained professional distinction in higher education, Ellen has received many honors and awards, including the AABHE's President's Award and the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International's Parthenon Award and S. Earl Thompson Award, to name a few. She currently serves on the board of the National Association of Executive Recruiters and is a member of the American Council on Education

Sharon Meagher

Consultant



Sharon Meagher is dedicated to promoting diversity and attracting highly skilled professionals to the leadership teams of institutions and nonprofit organizations. She possesses outstanding mentoring abilities, guiding candidates as they prepare for their next career steps and provides advisory support to institutions aiming to establish effective leadership teams.

Before joining Spelman Johnson, Sharon served as interim provost and senior vice president at Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana. She previously served as the vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty at Marymount Manhattan College (MMC). Prior to her employment at Marymount Manhattan College, her roles included dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at Widener University; director of social responsibility at the Union Institute and University; and founding chair of the department of Latin American studies and women's studies at the University of Scranton. She also served as a trustee at Keystone College.

Sharon's international education experience extends from her graduate study in Berlin to her work as a founding faculty member and consultant in Sub-Saharan Africa's first graduate program on gender and development outside of South Africa, and the establishment of an international research and teaching consortium on sustainable agriculture and development based in Costa Rica. Sharon has consulted at both public and private universities in the U.S. and abroad on publicly engaged scholarship, sustainability education, curriculum development, and place-based learning in diverse communities.

Executive Support

Mark Hall
President

Administrative Support

Erica Jarmen
Director of Administration

Stephanie Lawrence
Director of Search Administration

Jocelyn Provo
Chief of Staff

Marketing and Advertising Support

Patrice Robinson
Assistant Director, Marketing and Brand Management

Kyle Robinson
Marketing Assistant

Technology Support

Margaret Holes
Director, Research and Database Administration

References

Prescott College President

Search Reference

Name: Lynne Nemeth

Title: Executive Director, Boyce Thompson Arboretum/Chair, Board of Trustees, Prescott College

Search Role: Co-chair of the Prescott College presidential search

Phone: 928-255-2541

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University of Central Oklahoma President

Search Reference

Name: Patti Neuhold-Ravikumar

Title: Former President, University of Central Oklahoma

Search Role: Spelman Johnson placement

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Metropolitan Community College Chancellor

Search Reference

Name: Kimberly Beatty

Title: Chancellor, Metropolitan Community College

Search Role: Spelman Johnson placement

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Clients Call Us

- collaborative partners
- expert practitioners
- proven advocates
- ethically driven
- honest and thorough analysts
- industry influencers
- innovative firm
- measured risk-takers
- thought leaders
- trusted advisers

Our Three Guiding Principles

- ethics
- communication
- service

We strive for clear and direct communication with clients and candidates. We endeavor to make the best use of available resources in facilitating the smooth and efficient delivery of services, operations, and processes. We believe that every client and every candidate should expect nothing less than honest and ethical efforts on their behalf, at every juncture of the search process.

Learn More About Spelman Johnson

Fast Facts

Spelman Johnson has over 33 years of experience spearheading executive leadership searches.

We have the singular focus of identifying and recruiting talent for organizations and institutions that impact the social fabric and change lives.

We are connected to a pipeline of talent that allows us to build broad, deep, and diverse pools on behalf of our clients.

We have recruited over 2,100 outstanding leaders.

Spelman Johnson is committed to supporting the access of diverse professionals at all levels of leadership and respected for our ability to match outstanding leaders with outstanding organizations.

Mission Statement

Spelman Johnson, founded in 1991, provides search and consulting services in partnership with education, advocacy associations, and social impact organizations. Our mission is to provide exceptional, ethical service to our clients in the search and consulting processes — identifying and recruiting talented leaders for our client organizations.

Highlights of Our Practice

Policies to Ensure Personalized, Professional Service

With an administrative team that includes marketing, logistics, technical support, and research, a Spelman Johnson search consultant with relevant leadership experience will lead your search. We limit the number of active searches handled by each consultant to ensure that they are available to the client and the candidates from start to finish throughout the search process. We provide advice as needed on search committee composition, interview questions and structure, salary, and onboarding.

The Spelman Johnson search consultant provides equity training and works with the search committee to develop appropriate candidate evaluation rubrics. Through regular communication and personal contact, the consultant listens to client needs and learns the organizational culture, enabling Spelman Johnson to develop a tailored recruitment plan. Our search consultants build relationships with candidates, working hard to understand their motivations, strengths, challenges, and goals while also providing detailed information about the needs and challenges of the position. Spelman Johnson's consultants serve as a bridge between our clients and candidates, enabling us to ensure the alignment of the successful candidate with our clients' needs and culture. These policies and practices promise a high degree of personal service and satisfaction for both clients and candidates.

Ethics

In accordance with the ethics of the executive search industry, Spelman Johnson makes an agreement with each client that clearly states the period during which we will not recruit professionals from the client institution or other internal areas as requested. Spelman Johnson is a member of the National Association of Executive Recruiters (NAER) and follows its Code of Ethics (naer.org). Our firm is also a member of the American Council on Education (ACE) Executive Search Roundtable (acenet.edu) and the Network of Nonprofit Search Consultants (npsc.org).

Our Focus on Excellence

At Spelman Johnson, our dedication to excellence in executive search is inseparable from our commitment to identifying and recruiting outstanding leaders for our clients.

We work with our clients to ensure equity in the search process, to anticipate, identify, and combat explicit and unconscious bias, and ensure that no individual or group is discriminated against based on a protected status, such as race, color, religion, national origin, citizenship, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, and qualified veteran status.

We devote considerable time and resources in partnering with professional groups, associations, and leadership development institutes to expand the pipeline of leaders in education, social-impact nonprofits, and advocacy associations.

Since its founding Spelman Johnson has been committed to supporting the development of professionals of under-represented groups. Spelman Johnson is deeply involved nationally and regionally with organizations and institutes that support and advocate for historically marginalized communities. Our long-standing engagement with these organizations uniquely positions Spelman Johnson with the reputation and network to identify and recruit outstanding talent.



Trust Spelman Johnson with your leadership search needs.

