



## Executive Director of Scholarships and Financial Aid

Leadership Profile

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**WittKieffer**

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## The Opportunity

The Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech), in Atlanta, one of the nation's top public research universities, seeks a dynamic, strategic, and collaborative leader to serve as its inaugural Executive Director for Scholarships and Financial Aid.

For 137 years, Georgia Tech's mission has been to develop leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition. Currently, the university enrolls over 18,400 undergraduate students and more than 26,800 graduate



students. Offering the unparalleled quality of an Ivy League education within a public university, Georgia Tech's technologically focused curriculum earns consistent top national rankings. With 6 colleges and 39 majors, a 98% first-year student retention rate and more than 20 graduate programs ranked in the top 10 nationally, it attracts the best and brightest students, faculty, and staff from all over the globe.

Reporting to the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, Dr. Paul Kohn, and serving as a member of the enrollment management executive team, the Executive Director for Scholarships and Financial Aid (Executive Director) will lead a team of 34 staff members charged with administering a financial aid and scholarships program consisting of federal, state and institutional funds that exceed \$350M annually. As the chief financial aid compliance officer, the executive director will ensure regulatory compliance with all institutional, state, and federal financial aid programs. In addition to serving undergraduate students, the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid also serves all graduate and professional students at Georgia Tech.

As a leader at one of the top public institutions in the country, the executive director will navigate a large, complex, and service-oriented operation. A deep understanding of the financial aid landscape and its ongoing changes and an ability to adapt a strategy to accommodate those developments will be fundamental to success and will be foundational qualities for the next leader. Georgia Tech is a highly collaborative environment, and the successful candidate will be a generous and joyous communicator who excels at bringing stakeholders together and fosters innovation and student-centered strategies. The executive director will be a strategic thinker and a skilled relationship manager who develops connections with faculty, deans, administrative staff, university leadership, and current students. The successful candidate will possess a strategic understanding of the integral role of student financial aid in supporting student enrollment, student success, and student services; and will have knowledge of financial aid trends as they relate to the use and delivery of student financial aid.

Competitive candidates will hold a master's degree in Higher Education Administration, public policy or a related field. Candidates should also have at least ten years of experience in the field of scholarships and financial aid. As an experienced leader of people and programs, the new executive director of scholarships and financial aid will have the ability to operate in a complex environment; demonstrated skills in leading and developing a large professional staff; excellent communication skills; a thorough knowledge of financial aid policies, processes, and regulations; an uncompromising commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, quality service, and student advocacy; and experience with the application of current and emerging technologies to the financial aid process.

The national executive search firm WittKieffer has been retained to assist Georgia Tech with this recruitment. All inquiries, nominations and applications should be directed to the search firm as indicated in the "Procedure for Candidacy" section at the end of this document.

## Organization Overview

### Overview

The Georgia Institute of Technology is one of the nation's top public research universities with more than 45,000 students who study in person at the main campus in Atlanta, at Georgia Tech-Europe in France, at Georgia Tech-Shenzhen in China, as well as through distance and online learning. With students representing 50 states and 149 countries, Tech has always focused on preparing students to use their innovative skills and strong work ethic to solve real-world problems and improve the lives of people around the globe.

### Georgia Tech's History

Founded on Oct. 13, 1885, the Georgia School of Technology opened its doors in October 1888 to 84 students. The School's creation signaled the beginning of the transformation of the agrarian South to an industrial economy. During its first 50 years, Tech grew from a narrowly focused trade school to a regionally recognized technological university. In 1948, the School's name was changed to the Georgia Institute of Technology to reflect a growing focus on advanced technological and scientific research. Women students were admitted in 1952, and in 1961 Georgia Tech became the first university in the Deep South to admit African-American students without a court order. In recent years, Georgia Tech has been a national leader in managing the global transition from an industrial economy to an information economy. Throughout its long history, Georgia Tech has always focused its efforts on preparing students to use their innovative skills and strong work ethic to solve real-world problems and improve the lives of people around the globe.

### Georgia Tech's Mission

The Georgia Institute of Technology is a public research university established by the state of Georgia in Atlanta in 1885 and committed to developing leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition.

### Georgia Tech's Values

#### **Students are our top priority.**

We are educators first and foremost, committed to developing leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition. We measure our success by the achievements of our students and the impact of our graduates in improving the lives of others.

#### **We strive for excellence.**

We strive to be among the best at what we do and to set high expectations for each of us individually and for our community as a whole. The expectation of excellence, which is instrumental to our ability to have a meaningful impact in the world, extends to our teaching, our research and creative endeavors, our athletic programs, and our operations.

#### **We thrive on diversity.**

We see diversity of backgrounds and perspectives as essential to learning, discovery, and creation. We strive to remove barriers to access and success, and to build an inclusive community where people of all backgrounds have the opportunity to learn and contribute to our mission.

#### **We celebrate collaboration.**

We enable and celebrate collaboration across disciplines and perspectives, between units and departments, and with other organizations at home and around the world. We value the contributions of all members of our community, promote civil and respectful discourse, and help one another succeed.

**We champion innovation.**

We inspire, empower, and provide the resources and environment for innovative ideas and solutions to flourish. We welcome new concepts and approaches that lead to creative ideas and solutions.

**We safeguard freedom of inquiry and expression.**

We protect the freedom of all members of our community to ask questions, seek truth, and express their views. We cherish diversity of ideas as necessary for learning, discovery, scholarship, and creativity.

**We nurture the well-being of our community.**

We strive to build a healthy and vibrant environment that helps our students and every member of our community grow holistically and develop the self-awareness, knowledge, and practices necessary to pursue healthy, purposeful, fulfilling lives.

**We act ethically.**

We hold one another to the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct. We are transparent and accountable and strive to earn and maintain the public trust.

**We are responsible stewards.**

We are careful stewards of the resources we are entrusted with and strive to be an example of sustainability, efficiency, respect, and responsibility.



## University Leadership

### Ángel Cabrera, President



Ángel Cabrera is the 12th president of the Georgia Institute of Technology. One of America's leading research universities, Georgia Tech serves more than 45,000 students through top-ranked graduate and undergraduate programs ranging from engineering and science to business, computing, design, and liberal arts, and receives nearly \$1.3 billion in annual research awards.

Under Cabrera's leadership, more than 5,700 members of the Georgia Tech community contributed to a new 10-year strategic plan that launched in November 2020. The plan is grounded on a new mission statement that reaffirms Tech's commitment to "developing leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition."

As president during the Covid-19 pandemic, Cabrera led the Institute through one of the most critical times in its history to break records in student applications and enrollment, graduation rates, and research awards. Today, Georgia Tech is one of the fastest-growing and most research-intensive universities in the nation.

Cabrera came to Georgia Tech on Sept. 1, 2019, after serving for seven years as president of George Mason University (GMU) in Virginia. During his presidency, GMU joined the top tier of research universities in the Carnegie Classification and was the fastest growing institution in the state. Before leading GMU, Cabrera was president of the Thunderbird School of Global Management, now part of Arizona State University, and dean of IE Business School in Madrid.

As a business educator, Cabrera has played a key role in advancing professional ethics, internationalization, and corporate social responsibility. In 2007, while serving as a senior advisor to the United Nations Global Compact, he was the lead author of the "Principles for Responsible Management Education" (PRME). A United Nations-supported initiative that advances sustainable development through management education, PRME has been adopted by more than 800 schools around the world. He is also a co-founder of the University Global Coalition, a global network of universities working in partnership with the United Nations in support of its Sustainable Development Goals.

Cabrera has been named a "Young Global Leader" by the World Economic Forum, a "Star of Europe" by *Bloomberg Businessweek*, a "Henry Crown Fellow" by the Aspen Institute, and a "Great Immigrant" by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. He has received honorary degrees from Miami Dade College and Universidad Politécnica de Madrid.

Cabrera serves on the boards of the National Geographic Society, Harvard College Visiting Committee, Atlanta Committee for Progress, Metro Atlanta Chamber, and Bankinter Innovation Foundation in Spain. He has served on the board of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, the advisory boards of Georgia Tech and Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey, and the corporate boards of three public companies.

Cabrera earned his M.S. and Ph.D. in psychology and cognitive science from Georgia Tech, which he attended as a Fulbright Scholar. He also holds a B.S. and an M.S. in computer and electrical engineering from Universidad Politécnica de Madrid. His academic publications have been cited thousands of times, and he has been featured or quoted in leading media around the world.

He is married to management scholar and Georgia Tech classmate, Elizabeth. Their son, Alex, is a Georgia Tech graduate and currently a Ph.D. student at Carnegie Mellon University. Their daughter, Emilia, is a graduate of Harvard University. Cabrera is the first native of Spain to serve as president of an American university.

## Paul Kohn, Vice Provost for Enrollment Management



Dr. Paul Kohn joined the Georgia Institute of Technology in August 2010, coming from the University of Arizona, where he was Dean of Admissions and Vice President for Enrollment Management. Under his leadership, Arizona set records for five consecutive years for the number of new freshmen, as well as the most ethnically and geographically diverse freshmen classes. After earning his bachelor's degree in Animal Sciences at Cornell University, Dr. Kohn taught biology at Sarah Hale High School in Brooklyn, New York. After returning to Cornell for his Master's degree, Dr. Kohn began a career in academic and student affairs at Arizona. Dr. Kohn implemented a wide range of student advising, recruitment and retention initiatives, helping countless students reach their educational and professional goals.

While at Arizona, Dr. Kohn earned his doctorate in educational psychology, specializing in testing, measurement and statistics. His research focused on vocation and college choice among high school students. His teaching experience spanned agricultural and biosystems engineering, higher education policy, and survey research methods. He has been honored by numerous groups and organizations during his career. Some of the highlights include the Vision Award, the Outstanding Faculty Service Award, and the IDEA award. He has served as the state representative to the National Board of the ACT Corporation, as national representative on the College Board's Academic Assembly Council and he is a graduate of the leadership development programs of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges as well as Pennsylvania State University.

As Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, Dr. Kohn oversees Undergraduate Admission, Financial Aid, Scholarships, Registrar, and Enrollment Communications. Dr. Kohn serves as Chair of the Student Information System (SIS) Governance Committee, served on the Strategic Technology Initiatives Committee and sits on the SIS-Planning Committee and Technology Governance Steering Committee. Dr. Kohn also serves as the Institute's representative on the University System of Georgia's Enrollment Management Administrative Committee. He has undertaken efforts in the pursuit of risk mitigation, inclusive excellence, access and campus community engagement in student recruitment and success. Applications to Georgia Tech have more than doubled during his tenure and the Institute's retention and graduation rates have reached new heights. During his time at Georgia Tech, undergraduate enrollment has grown, with increases in student body ethnic and gender diversity, geographic diversity, and the new student academic profile is stronger than ever.

## Position Summary

### The Overview

The Executive Director of Scholarships and Financial Aid is responsible for all aspects of the financial aid programs for Georgia Tech undergraduate, graduate and professional students. This individual will be a thought leader for scholarships and financial aid, focusing on creating high-quality and inclusive programs that support students from all backgrounds. The Executive Director will also represent the office across the Institute, and with peer institutions, and sponsoring employers and partners.

### Reporting Relationships

Reporting to the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, the Executive Director manages a combined office staff of 34, with direct reports of three associate directors and an operating budget of approximately \$2.5M. An organization chart for the enrollment management division is included at the end of this leadership profile.

### Responsibilities

**The successful Executive Director for Scholarships and Financial Aid candidate will:**

- Plan, implement and evaluate all financial aid awarding, disbursement, and compliance for complex financial aid operations. Oversee the creation, implementation, and execution of strategic financial aid programs.
- Organize regular meetings to share resources, policies, best practices, and training; and to receive feedback on improvements for the processes and advocacy.
- Create and maintain resources for faculty, staff, and students on the policies, program, and resources pertaining to financial aid.
- Create innovative and solutions-oriented strategies for current and future financial aid technology systems, including coordinating system upgrades with partners including the Office of Information Technology, Bursar, Registrar, University System of Georgia, Georgia Futures, and the US Department of Education.
- Serve as a compliant and conscientious steward of confidential data, maintaining responsibility for the management and security of student financial aid and other personally identifiable information.
- Be an integral part of the enrollment management leadership team in the creation, implementation, and execution of a strategic financial aid plan using data-informed decisions to maximize financial resources for the recruitment and retention of students.
- Analyze, prioritize, and optimize financial aid dollars; engage in sophisticated data reporting and analyses for projections trends and modeling.
- Oversee office management including organizational structure, budget planning, training, and professional development, performance management, compensation, and classification and compliance/grievance issues.
- Allocate and monitor operating budgets for the Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid.

- Foster a collaborative and positive environment that promotes access and openness among team members and responsiveness to internal and external constituents.
- Possess the maturity and the executive presence to present on financial aid and enrollment management to the university's executive cabinet and the board.
- Have current working knowledge of policy and regulatory requirements and ensure compliance with university policies and guidelines, as well as NCAA and federal Title IV regulations.
- Empower staff to continually assess and refine strategies, tactics, and processes to provide the highest levels of service to students and ensure the accurate and timely completion of federal and state reporting requirements.
- Communicate financial aid vision and strategy to the university community, ensuring that campus stakeholders have an understanding and appreciation of the work of the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, state and national funding changes, creative and emerging practices, and challenges to access that students face.
- Work collaboratively with internal and external partners, serving on internal and external committees to ensure the success of the university and its students.
- Promote a service mindset to support the needs of Georgia Tech students through effective outreach and communication of eligibility and aid options, timely and effective awarding and quality customer service in all aspects of the administration of financial aid and student employment services.
- Closely collaborate and partner with admissions offices and others across campus to ensure consistent, current, compliant and correct information is provided promptly.
- Collaborate with schools, university enrollment managers and financial officers on the evaluation of needs. Provide direction, advice and resolution of problems to maximize the efficient distribution of available resources in a timely manner.
- Empower staff to continually assess, refine, and support strategies, tactics and processes to provide the highest levels of service to students and ensure the accurate and timely completion of federal and state reporting requirements.
- Develop staff through training and professional development opportunities to ensure the office has a deep bench of professionals.
- Attend conferences and seminars to keep apprised of federal and state legislative and regulatory developments and of changes in lenders' policies.

## Candidate Qualifications

### Education/Certification

- Master's degree in higher education administration, public policy, or a related field.

### Knowledge and Work Experience

- Ten or more years of experience in the field of scholarships and financial aid.

## Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives have been identified as priorities for this position:

- Navigate a complex and dynamic institution

The executive director will be expected to communicate frequently and effectively with multiple constituencies to advocate for positive student experiences within the necessary parameters of compliance and policy. The executive director will help to develop strategies and policies and communicate them to staff and other leaders across campus. The person in this role will need to possess exceptional drive, energy, and intellectual curiosity to lead financial aid efforts in a dynamic and constantly changing environment.

- Lead and exemplify a strong commitment to diversity

The executive director will support initiatives to work effectively with diverse populations and to develop staff from diverse backgrounds. Expectations include working with students in planning and developing student experience improvements for multiple populations, as well as working with professional staff.

- Leverage technology and staff development to better serve the community

The new leader will evaluate processes and develop the right analytics and metrics to measure success. In addition to using technology to promote excellence, the executive director is expected to lead staff in efforts and initiatives that support this goal. Support of the Scholarships and Financial Aid team through open communication, trust and empowerment is imperative. The new leader must be skilled at building a team, investing in their professional development, and engaging them in succession planning. A culture of access to leadership is important, as is an openness to input and suggestions, in order to foster innovation and exploration. The further cultivation of a high-functioning team will ensure that the office can be effective in responding to student needs, institutional goals, as well as the compliance requirements of federal, state, and accreditation agencies.



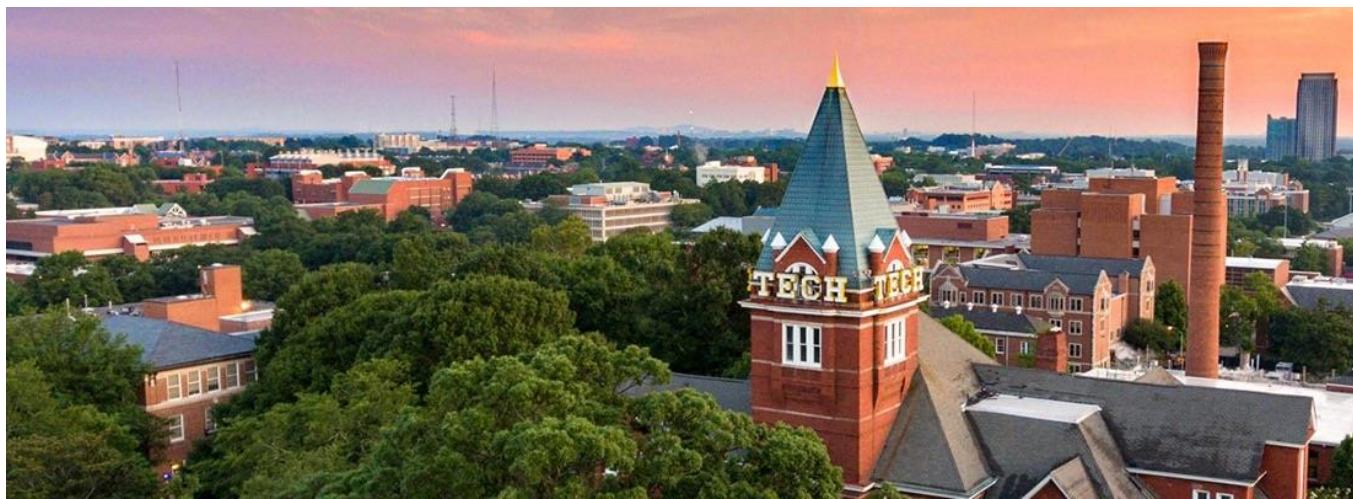
- Develop collaborative relationships across the University

The executive director will be engaged across the university. It will be important to continue to elevate the visibility of the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid and the scope of its work, building and maintaining strong and collaborative relationships across the campus. An ability to communicate up, down, and across the office and University organizational structure will be a considerable strength. It will also be essential for the executive director to create an open, transparent, and ongoing dialogue with faculty and senior administrators that will engender cooperation, trust, and confidence.

- Inspire the team and align resources for growth

The new executive director will play a critical role in assuring a capable and effective financial aid team. The executive director will conduct a review of organizational needs in order to align people and resources for maximum efficiency, and to enable the University to meet its enrollment goals. The continued professional development of staff is essential and requires high standards with an eye toward maintaining healthy working relationships, open channels of communication and high morale.





## The Community

### Atlanta, Georgia

Atlanta, Georgia, located in the geographic center of the Southeast, is the nation's 8th largest metropolitan area and has the world's most-traveled airport. The city of Atlanta is home to more than 490,000 people and over 6.1 million reside in the Atlanta metro area.

Metro Atlanta is a regional, national and global center for business operations and is home to more than 137,000 businesses. With a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$406 billion, Atlanta has the tenth-largest economy of cities in the U.S. and the 20th-largest in the world. Its economy is considered diverse, with dominant sectors in industries including transportation, aerospace, logistics, healthcare, news and media operations, film and television production, information technology, finance, and biomedical research and public policy.

Atlanta is truly a world-class city with living options that include the bustling downtown to the more rural areas a short distance away. There is something for everyone: Dining, culture, the arts, and professional, collegiate and amateur sports. With its delightfully mild, four-season climate and forested topography, it's no wonder that people continue to move there. A short drive from Atlanta includes natural wonders like Stone Mountain Park, Providence Canyon State Park and Lake Lanier. Atlanta is the gateway of the New South, offering a unique blend of big-city entertainment and Southern hospitality.

For those hoping for a more relaxed lifestyle, outside of Atlanta proper, there are many communities to fit one's particular lifestyle like Alpharetta, Marietta, Buford and Sandy Springs that provide easy access to Atlanta without the bustle of the city and beautiful scenery aplenty. The area surrounding Atlanta includes everything from national parks (Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, Amicalola Falls), to beautiful lakes (Allatoona Lake, Lake Sidney Lanier), art museums, fine dining and world-class barbecue.



Atlanta's vibrant economic growth attracts hundreds of companies and thousands of well-educated job seekers annually. The area's low cost of living, high employment and strong, diverse industry base will ensure its continued record-setting growth. Metro Atlanta's openness has proven to be an alluring magnet for the world's foremost companies. Metro Atlanta ranks among the top five in the nation in net new job growth for the last decade, adding nearly 460,000 new

jobs. Metro Atlanta is forecasted to be the third-largest job generator over the next decade.

One of Atlanta's oldest and most well-known companies, The Coca-Cola Company, made its start in Atlanta when Dr. John Pemberton, an Atlanta pharmacist concocted the Coca-Cola soft drink formula in a brass kettle in his backyard, trying to discover a headache tonic. The Coca-Cola Company was incorporated in Atlanta in 1888 and is now one of the top 100 companies in revenue in the United States. Turner Broadcasting and Cox Communications call Atlanta their corporate headquarters. In the 1970s and 80's, companies and organizations such as Home Depot, Georgia-Pacific and the American Cancer Society moved their headquarters to Atlanta – and the trend has continued with UPS, the world's largest shipper, ING Americas, Holiday Inn and InterContinental Hotels, CARE International, Philips Consumer Electronics, GE Energy, Porsche Cars North America, Novelis and Spectrum Brands (Rayovac Batteries) – all moving their headquarters to Atlanta in the last ten years.

Metro Atlanta is also home to the world-renowned U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Arthritis Foundation, as well as several distinguished universities along with Georgia Tech including Emory University, and Morehouse School of Medicine.

<https://discoveratlanta.com/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlanta>

<https://www.exploregeorgia.org/city/atlanta>



## Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a cover letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile and a resume. WittKieffer is assisting the Georgia Institute of Technology in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by December 15, 2023. Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#).

Nominations and inquiries may be sent via email to Christy Pratt and Kati Sweeney at:  
**GATECH\_EDSFA@wittkieffer.com**

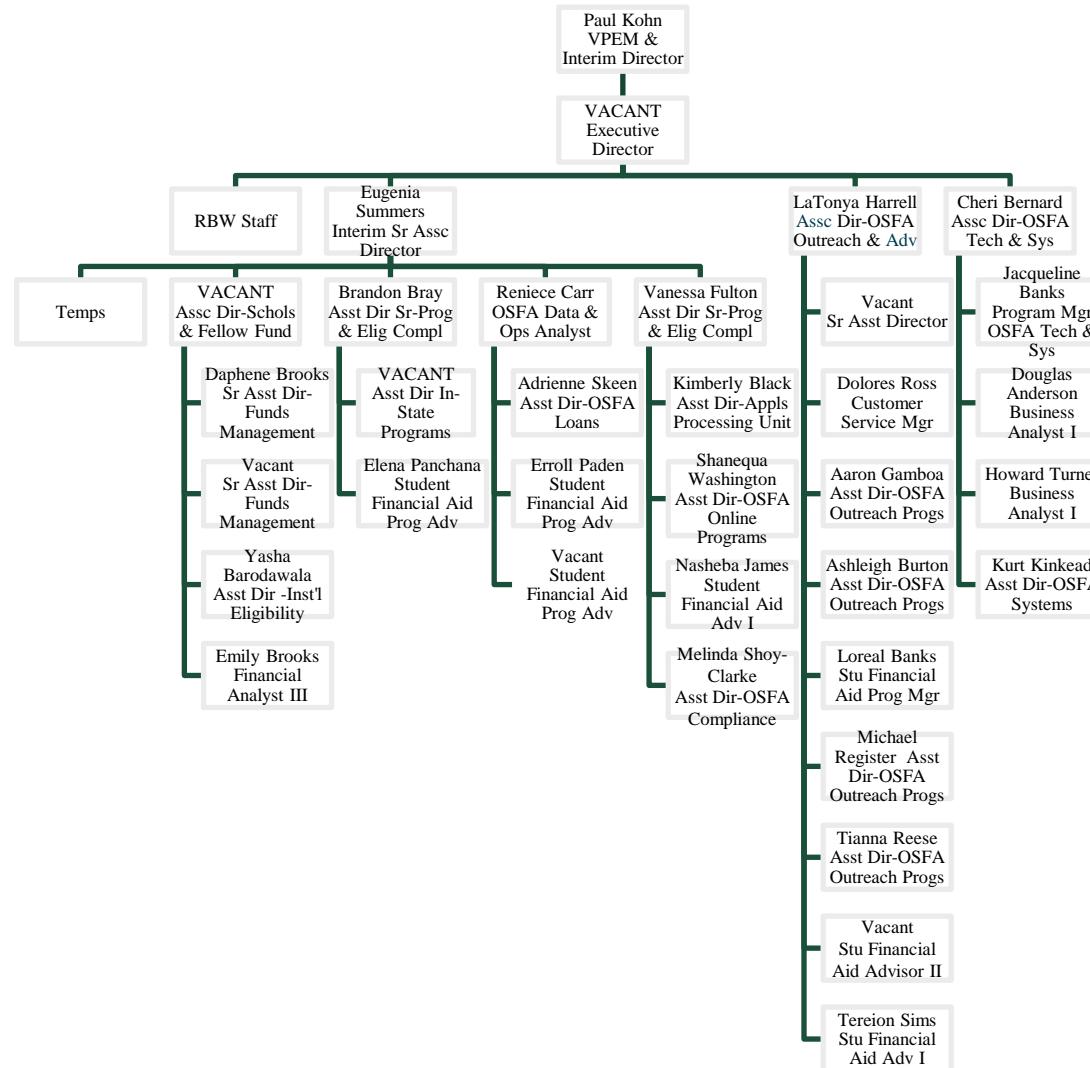
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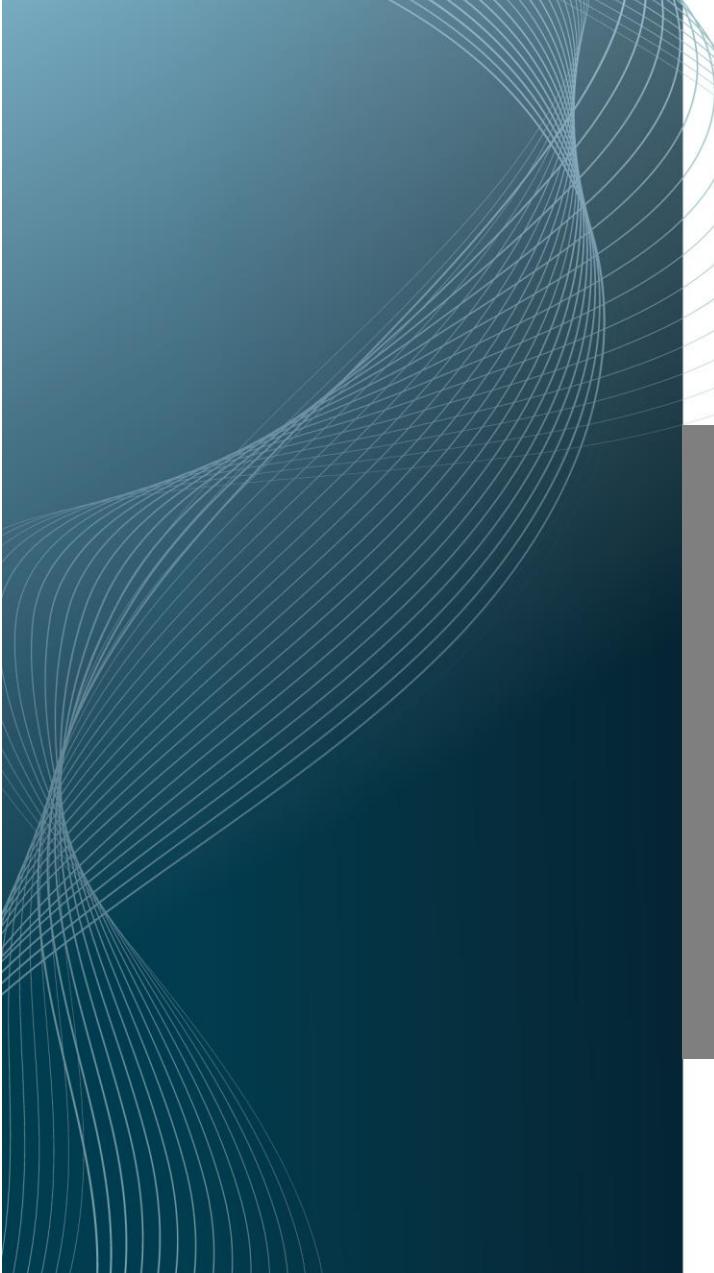
*Georgia Tech prohibits discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, on the basis of race, ethnicity, ancestry, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, age, disability, genetics, or veteran status in its programs, activities, employment, and admissions. This prohibition applies to faculty, staff, students, and all other members of the Georgia Tech community, including affiliates, invitees, and guests. Further, Georgia Tech prohibits citizenship status, immigration status, and national origin discrimination in hiring, firing, and recruitment, except where such restrictions are required in order to comply with law, regulation, executive order, or Attorney General directive, or where they are required by Federal, State, or local government contract.*

*All members of the USG community must adhere to the USG Statement of Core Values, which consists of Integrity, Excellence, Accountability, and Respect. These values shape and fundamentally support our University's work. Additionally, all faculty, staff, and administrators must also be aware of and comply with the Board of Regents and Georgia Institute of Technology's policies on Freedom of Expression and Academic Freedom. More information on these policies can be found here: [Board of Regents Policy Manual](#) | [University System of Georgia \(usg.edu\)](#).*

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