CSU GLOBAL

President

Leadership Profile

October 2026



WittKieffer

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Executive Summary

The Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System is seeking an experienced leader with a track record of innovation and success in online education, with the vision, entrepreneurial spirit, and drive needed to serve as the President of Colorado State University Global and further expand the mission and success of the institution.

CSU Global is the premier provider of online education for today's modern, post-traditional learners, with a global reputation for high-quality, personalized, career-relevant, and affordable education and student support services that lead to workplace success and a strong return on investment. As the first 100% online, non-profit, fully accredited public university in the United States, and with its clearly defined mission, CSU Global is focused on student success as its number one priority.

Ranked No. 17 in the nation and the highest-ranking institution in Colorado for Best Online Bachelor's Programs in 2026 by *U.S. News & World Report*, CSU Global is a leader in prioritizing a return on investment for program completers, who, in 2025, reported a 50% increase in median annual income for undergraduate students and a 40% increase in median annual income for graduate students.

Today, CSU Global enrolls nearly 14,000 students, including adults, active-duty military, and business professionals seeking flexible educational options. The university offers 100% online bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, undergraduate and graduate certificates, and individual courses. Students learn in eight-week courses with monthly start dates in an asynchronous learning environment.

The President is appointed by the Board of Governors and reports to the CSU System Chancellor. The President of CSU Global provides visionary strategic leadership for the institution and performs the duties and responsibilities customarily performed by university presidents, as may be required or assigned by the Chancellor. The President is responsible for an $84 million budget; the overall management and supervision of 200 staff and over 500 faculty members at CSU Global; and the preparation and implementation of effective budget and fiscal management for the University and its operations. Direct reports to the President include the Provost, Chief Business Officer, Vice President of Strategy and Risk Management, Vice President of Student Achievement and Academic Operations, Vice President of Marketing, and Director of Communications and External Relations. The President also complies with all Bylaws and policies of the Board of Governors, as well as CSU Global policies and applicable law.

The President is charged with achieving the Strategic Goals for CSU Global and developing those goals and strategic plans in consultation with the campus, Board, and Chancellor. The President is also responsible for communicating the institution's vision to all constituencies—including corporate partners and industry stakeholders—and ensuring that vision is reflected in CSU Global's long-range strategic and budgetary plans. The President serves as the public spokesperson for CSU Global and participates in oversight of governmental relations for the institution.

CSU Global is committed to advancing student success and expanding the state economy by enhancing the quality of life for citizens in the State of Colorado and beyond. CSU Global provides access to dynamic and industry-leading online degree programs uniquely characterized by academic excellence, market relevance, innovative delivery technologies, and strong stakeholder engagement.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see the Procedure for Candidacy section at the end of this document.

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Role of the President

As an officer of the Colorado State University System, the President is appointed by the Board of Governors and reports to the CSU System Chancellor.

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Direct reports to the president include:

- Provost
- Chief Business Officer
- Vice President of Strategy and Risk Management Operations
- Vice President of Student Achievement and Academic Operations
- Vice President of Marketing
- Director of Communications and External Relations

The President is charged with achieving CSU Global's strategic goals and developing those goals and strategic plans in consultation with the campus, Board, and Chancellor. The President is responsible for communicating the institution’s vision to all constituencies and ensuring that it is reflected in the long-range strategic and budgetary plans of CSU Global. The President serves as the public spokesperson for CSU Global and participates in oversight of governmental relations for the institution.

The primary responsibilities of this position require leadership in all aspects of CSU Global. This includes the ability to develop and foster teamwork, strong academic excellence, efficiency and effectiveness, board relations, engagement with corporate and industry partners, financial reporting, and business results, which include the management and growth of CSU Global.



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Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The next President of CSU Global will have a unique and exciting opportunity to lead the nation's first fully online, public, nonprofit state university and to provide visionary leadership to establish CSU Global as the leading provider of online education.

The President will advance the university's long-term growth, strengthen institutional capacity, and enhance its impact across the nation and around the world.

Specifically, the next President will be expected to:

Lead the University's Next Strategic Plan

Provide visionary leadership that advances CSU Global's long-term growth strategy by developing a robust strategic plan in partnership with the Board and all key CSU Global stakeholders. The plan will consider how best to position the university for strategic growth and an innovative market position, while reflecting the realities of contemporary higher education and the opportunities within a crowded market.

Enhance Financial Diversification and Sustainability

Build upon CSU Global's strong foundation through strategic resource stewardship, creative and novel revenue growth, and innovative approaches that support continued investment in academic quality, student success, and organizational excellence.

Elevate Student Success Outcomes

Champion a student-centered agenda that advances enrollment, retention, persistence, and completion, ensuring CSU Global continues to deliver accessible, high-quality educational opportunities that transform lives and careers.

Serve as a National Ambassador for CSU Global

Strengthen and elevate CSU Global's brand as the nation's first fully online public university by serving as its chief advocate, articulating its distinctive value proposition, and broadening its visibility among prospective students, employers, policymakers, grantmakers, and strategic partners in Colorado and nationally, cementing CSU Global's status as the preferred online education provider across private, public, and nonprofit sectors.

Elevate CSU Global's Core Strengths and Strategic Differentiation

Guide the university in pursuing bold and thoughtful innovation, embracing calculated risks that enhance CSU Global's distinctiveness, market position, and responsiveness to emerging opportunities, while accelerating existing strengths in speed to market and the cultural commitment to cross-functional collaboration and student-centered decision-making.

Strengthen Workforce and Economic Impact

Ensure CSU Global remains closely aligned with the evolving needs of employers and industries, advancing academic programs and partnerships that support workforce development, economic mobility, and regional and national prosperity.

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Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

CSU Global seeks in its next President a visionary and entrepreneurial leader with a commitment to academic excellence and collaboration who inspires innovation and drives business performance and results.

Candidates are required to carry an earned graduate degree from an accredited institution. A minimum of five years of professional experience as a senior administrator with significant experience in online education and online education delivery systems is also required. A terminal degree is preferred.

1. **Deep Understanding of Higher Education and Adult Learners:** The ideal candidate will possess a strong understanding of higher education, particularly the unique needs, expectations, and challenges facing adult and nontraditional learners. They will demonstrate commitment to student success through flexible, innovative, and learner-centered approaches that advance access, persistence, and completion.

2. **Visionary and Future-Oriented Leadership:** The next President will be a forward-thinking leader who understands the transformative impact of emerging technologies (including Artificial Intelligence), workforce evolution, and changing learner demographics. They will anticipate future trends, including the opportunities and implications of artificial intelligence, and position the university to thrive in an evolving educational landscape.

3. **Strategic Growth and Partnership Experience:** Candidates should bring a demonstrated record of organizational growth and market expansion. Experience building strong employer and industry partnerships that create educational pathways, workforce alignment, and tuition support opportunities will be highly valued.

4. **Innovative and Entrepreneurial Mindset:** The successful candidate will be an innovative, opportunity-focused leader who embraces creativity and calculated risk-taking. Rather than simply responding to change, they will proactively identify new opportunities, drive institutional innovation, and advance strategic initiatives that strengthen the university's competitive position.

5. **Proven Leadership and Results:** The President will bring a record of achievement, innovation, and executive leadership. While experience in higher education is important, consideration will also be given to candidates whose accomplishments in other sectors demonstrate the vision, adaptability, and leadership capabilities necessary to guide a dynamic and growing institution.

6. **Commitment to Institutional Culture and Mission:** Candidates must appreciate and build upon the culture, values, and accomplishments that have contributed to the university's success. The ideal leader will honor institutional strengths while inspiring continued growth, ensuring that innovation complements and enhances the university's mission and identity.

7. **Understanding of Contemporary Academic Models:** The successful candidate will recognize the strategic importance of a part-time and practitioner-focused faculty model and understand how to effectively engage, support, and leverage faculty talent in service of academic excellence, student success, and organizational agility.

8. **Integrity, Self-Awareness, and Authenticity:** The President will lead with integrity, transparency, and sound judgment. They will possess a high degree of self-awareness, humility, and emotional intelligence, building trust and credibility with students, faculty, staff, trustees, and external partners through authentic and ethical leadership.

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About Colorado State University Global

CSU Global is the premier provider of online education for today's modern, post-traditional learners, with a global reputation for high-quality, personalized, career-relevant, affordable education and student support services that lead to workplace success and a strong return on investment. As the first 100% online, fully accredited public university in the United States, and with its clearly defined mission, CSU Global is focused on student success as its number one priority.

Ranked No. 17 in the nation and the highest-ranking Colorado institution for Best Online Bachelor's Programs in 2026 by *U.S. News & World Report,* CSU Global is a leader in prioritizing a return on investment for program completers, who, in 2025, reported a 50% increase in median annual income for undergraduate students and a 40% increase in median annual income for graduate students.

Embracing the land-grant heritage as part of the Colorado State University System, CSU Global sets the standard for quality and innovation in higher education through its expert faculty, who are recognized as industry leaders and are trained in working with post-traditional learners in an online learning environment, as well as its *anytime, anywhere* accessible student support services that include vast library resources, live tutoring, a writing center with writing coaches, and a career center with career counselors.

While CSU Global does not receive state funds for educational or operating expenses, it spends over $90 million each year in its mission-achievement work to provide the education, skills, knowledge, expertise, and support services its learners need for professional and personal success, as well as to meet industry needs, which has a significant economic impact through employment, payroll, and local sales tax revenues, according to the CSU System 2021 Economic Impact Study.

History

In 2007, CSU Global received a $12 million loan from the CSU System to become the first statutorily defined, non-profit, online state university in the United States that does not receive state funding. The University opened its virtual doors in 2008, welcomed its first class of 200 students, and paid back the loan with interest in 2012, years ahead of schedule.

In 2009, Colorado Governor Bill Ritter declared CSU Global an independent online university within the CSU System. In 2010, Dr. Becky Takeda-Tinker was appointed CSU Global's inaugural president and CEO. One year later, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) granted CSU Global full accreditation.

Since then, CSU Global has continually innovated career-specific degree and certificate programs—with industry-aligned education and professional examination preparation embedded in relevant courses—to help working adults keep pace with rapidly changing industry trends. By partnering with business and thought leaders, as well as hiring faculty and academic leaders with industry work expertise and experience, CSU Global continually strives to stay ahead of business trends and practices and to align its curricula with industry certifications and licensure.

Today, CSU Global enrolls nearly 14,000 students, including adults, active-duty military, and business professionals seeking flexible educational options. The university offers 100% online bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, undergraduate and graduate certificates, and individual courses. Students learn in eight-week courses with monthly start dates and in an asynchronous learning environment.

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CSU Global remains committed to its mission of advancing professionals in the workplace and will continue to lead the way in delivering high-quality online programs into the future.

In 2026, following a comprehensive decennial reaccreditation process, the HLC Institutional Actions Council reaffirmed CSU Global's eligibility to select the Open Pathway for the university's next 10-year accreditation cycle. CSU Global met all criteria with no areas for improvement or focus visits.

Mission and Vision

Colorado State University Global is committed to advancing student academic and professional success in a global society by providing access to dynamic education characterized by excellence, innovative delivery technologies, industry relevance, and strong stakeholder engagement. CSU Global envisions being the premier provider of innovative, higher learning opportunities for modern learners around the world.

Values

The people of CSU Global are:

- **Growth-Minded.** They continually learn, seek opportunities for growth, and believe they can do better with effort and persistence.
- **Dedicated.** They provide exceptional service and support to stakeholders to drive the mission of the university.
- **Tenacious.** They are accountable for getting the job done right, acting thoughtfully and taking responsibility for commitments and actions, and they thrive on achieving results.
- **Agile.** They are flexible in their thinking, focus on solutions, innovative problem-solving, and overcoming obstacles.
- **Engaged.** They collaborate, communicate, and motivate one another to achieve excellence.
- **Champions of Integrity.** They act ethically, honestly, and respectfully to be trustworthy and reliable towards all stakeholders.

Strategic Priorities

Building on current momentum, CSU Global is preparing for its next phase of institutional development under the framework of CSU Global 3.0. The vision for academics supports the land-grant mission of the Colorado State University System and is built around a commitment to preparing learners for a rapidly evolving workforce through programs that are:

- Relevant to emerging labor market needs
- Workplace-ready and career-focused
- Continuously stackable and adaptable
- Enhanced through responsible integration of artificial intelligence and evolving technologies
- Designed to support lifelong learning and professional advancement

The 3.0 vision for growth is built on leadership of the enrollment and marketing funnel to pursue mission fulfillment in reaching Colorado's students.

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Academics

CSU Global has served students in all 50 states and 161 countries and has conferred 40,000 degrees and certificates since its founding in 2007. The University currently enrolls nearly 14,000 students across a broad array of academic programs, including Business, Technology, Accounting and Finance, Human Resources, Health Care Administration, and many other fields. The Board of Governors has recently approved the following upcoming academic programs:

- B.S. in Data Management and Analytics
- B.S. in Education Studies
- B.S. in Integrated Technology and Business
- B.S. in Finance and Applied Artificial Intelligence
- Undergraduate Certificate in Medical Billing and Coding

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Faculty

The CSU Global faculty comprises subject matter experts and industry leaders who are trained to understand and meet the needs of online students. With CSU Global's ongoing research into optimized online learning, faculty members are also lifelong learners.

CSU Global is committed to exceptional student outcomes. Due to its student-first format, affordable fixed tuition, and industry-aligned programs, the university has received a number of rankings and acknowledgements, including:

- Best Online Degree Program 2025, ColoradoBiz
- Best Online College in the Denver Metro Area, The Colorado Sun
- #3 – 2026 Best Online Colleges in Colorado, OnlineU
- #1 – Best Online Colleges & Schools in Colorado in 2023, Best Accredited Colleges
- #2 – Fastest Online Degree Programs in 2023, Best Accredited Colleges
- #3 – The Best Colleges in Colorado in 2025, Best Value Schools
- #3 – Best Online Colleges of 2024, Good Financial Cents
- #3 – 100 Best Colleges and Universities Online 2026, College Values Online
- #9 – Top 10 Online Universities You Can Start Anytime , Best Choice Schools
- Top Online Colleges and Best Value Schools (ROI) in Colorado, Online Schools Center
- The 100 Best Online Colleges of 2024, Abound

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Student Life

CSU Global students come from different places and different stages of life, but most are earning a degree while balancing work, family, military service, and other responsibilities:

- 76% Aged 25-50, average age 35
- 42% Underrepresented minority
- 54% Female
- 38% Colorado residents
- 7% International
- 22% First-generation (self-reported)
- 11% Active-duty or retired military

CSU Global has a particular impact in Colorado, having awarded over 16,000 degrees and certificates in the state, and serving students in all 64 counties. Through their Commitment to Colorado, the university partners with the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) to provide streamlined pathways for all students to continue from their associate's degree to an online bachelor's degree tailored to their career goals.

Students at CSU Global benefit from having a dedicated student success counselor for degree planning, goal setting, and regular performance check-ins. In addition, student support includes tutoring, a writing center, career development services, on-demand technical support, and disability and accessibility services to support their academic success.

CSU Global also supports students outside the classroom through a number of student organizations, including a chapter of the Student Veterans of America and honors societies such as Golden Key, Kappa Delta Pi, Sigma Beta Delta, Delta Mu Delta, and the National Society of Leadership and Success.



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About the Colorado State University System

Overview

The CSU System Office is located in Denver, Colorado. The System has three campuses, each with separate accreditation and distinct roles and missions. Together, the three CSU campuses (Colorado State University in Fort Collins, CSU Pueblo, and the fully online CSU Global) serve the state, region, country, and world, educating nearly 60,000 students annually, and contributing to the world through research, thought-leadership, and the economic and civic impacts of highly skilled graduates.

Nine members are appointed by the Governor of Colorado to serve four-year terms as voting members of the Board of Governors. The six non-voting members represent CSU Fort Collins, CSU Pueblo, and CSU Global, with one faculty member and one student leader from each university. The System Board appoints the Chancellor and Presidents and acts as the ultimate governing and final authority for each institution

The CSU System has permanent employees living and working throughout Colorado, providing direct services to every county. With seven Agricultural Experiment Stations, 19 Colorado State Forest Service district and field offices, two engagement centers, and extension offices in almost every county, the CSU System provides services to 64 counties — every corner of Colorado.

The Chancellor is the CEO of the CSU System. The Chancellor works closely with the Board on overall leadership and management of the CSU System, based in Denver, while also spearheading government relations on behalf of the System and its campuses. The Chancellor of the Colorado State University System is Tony Frank, who serves in the role through June 30, 2027. Rico Munn, currently serving as Executive Vice Chancellor, has been appointed by the Board to step into the role on June 30.



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Leadership

Rico Munn, Chancellor-Designate of the CSU System



The Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System confirmed the appointment of Rico Munn as the next chancellor of the CSU System. Munn will serve as Executive Vice Chancellor until June 30, 2027, when the current Chancellor retires.

A longtime Colorado education leader, Munn most recently served as CSU's Vice President for Metro Denver Engagement and Strategy, having recently concluded a nearly yearlong tenure as interim President of the CSU Pueblo campus. Previously, he served as Superintendent of Aurora Public Schools from 2013 to 2023. In 2019, he was named Colorado's "Superintendent of the Year" and Aurora's "Man of the Year."

Earlier, he was the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education from 2009-2011 and Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies from 2007-2009, where he oversaw the Colorado divisions of Civil Rights, Banking, Real Estate, Insurance, Financial Services, Securities, Professional Licensure, Public Utilities, and Consumer Counsel. He also spent more than a decade as a litigator and trial attorney with a national law firm and served for a time as Chief of Staff to CSU President Parsons.

He is a graduate of Midland Lutheran College (now Midland University) in Fremont, Nebraska, where he received his B.A. in secondary education and was named Student Teacher of the Year in 1993. He received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Denver, Sturm College of Law, where he had the honor of being named a Chancellor's Scholar for his commitment to public interest service.

He was also formerly Chair of the CSU System Board of Governors, on which he served for six years after being appointed by Governor John Hickenlooper in 2013.



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Denver



The next CSU Global President is expected to reside in the Denver, Colorado metro region, where the university is headquartered.

Set at the front range of the Rocky Mountains and known as the Mile High City, Denver, Colorado, is geographically stunning. It is known for being extremely dynamic for business and livable for individuals and families. Many consider the Denver Metro area to have the perfect blend of outdoor adventure and metropolitan sophistication. It is one of the nation's fastest-growing cities and has been named the best place to live in the USA by *U.S. News & World Report*.

While the city itself has fewer than 700,000 residents, the six-county metro area has a population approaching three million. The state of Colorado is ranked annually among the best states in which to do business, and Denver is known for its blend of large corporations and manufacturers, as well as a vibrant small-business environment.

Denver has a mild, dry, mostly sunny climate (whereas the mountains receive the majority of the snow). The Denver metro area receives 8 to 15 inches of precipitation a year. Outdoor activities are abundant in Denver, which is home to more than 200 parks. Denver is near many prominent ski, golf, and recreation resorts.

Learn more about Denver.

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Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited.

WittKieffer is assisting the Colorado State University System in this search, led by Melody Rose, Ph.D., Philip Tang, and Maya Holt-Brockenbrough, Ph.D.

Confidential nominations and inquiries can be directed to **CSUGlobalPresident@wittkieffer.com.**

For fullest consideration, applicants should provide a CV and letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile via WittKieffer's **candidate portal** by December 18, 2026.

The salary range for this position is roughly $400,000 to $600,000, with bonus opportunities. The president is expected to reside in the Denver metropolitan area.

Colorado State University Global is committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment based on race, age, creed, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, gender, disability, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or pregnancy and will not discharge or in any other manner discriminate against employees or applicants because they have inquired about, discussed, or disclosed their own pay or the pay of another employee or applicant. Colorado State University Global is an equal opportunity/equal access employer fully committed to achieving a diverse workforce and complies with all federal and Colorado state laws, regulations, and executive orders regarding non-discrimination.



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