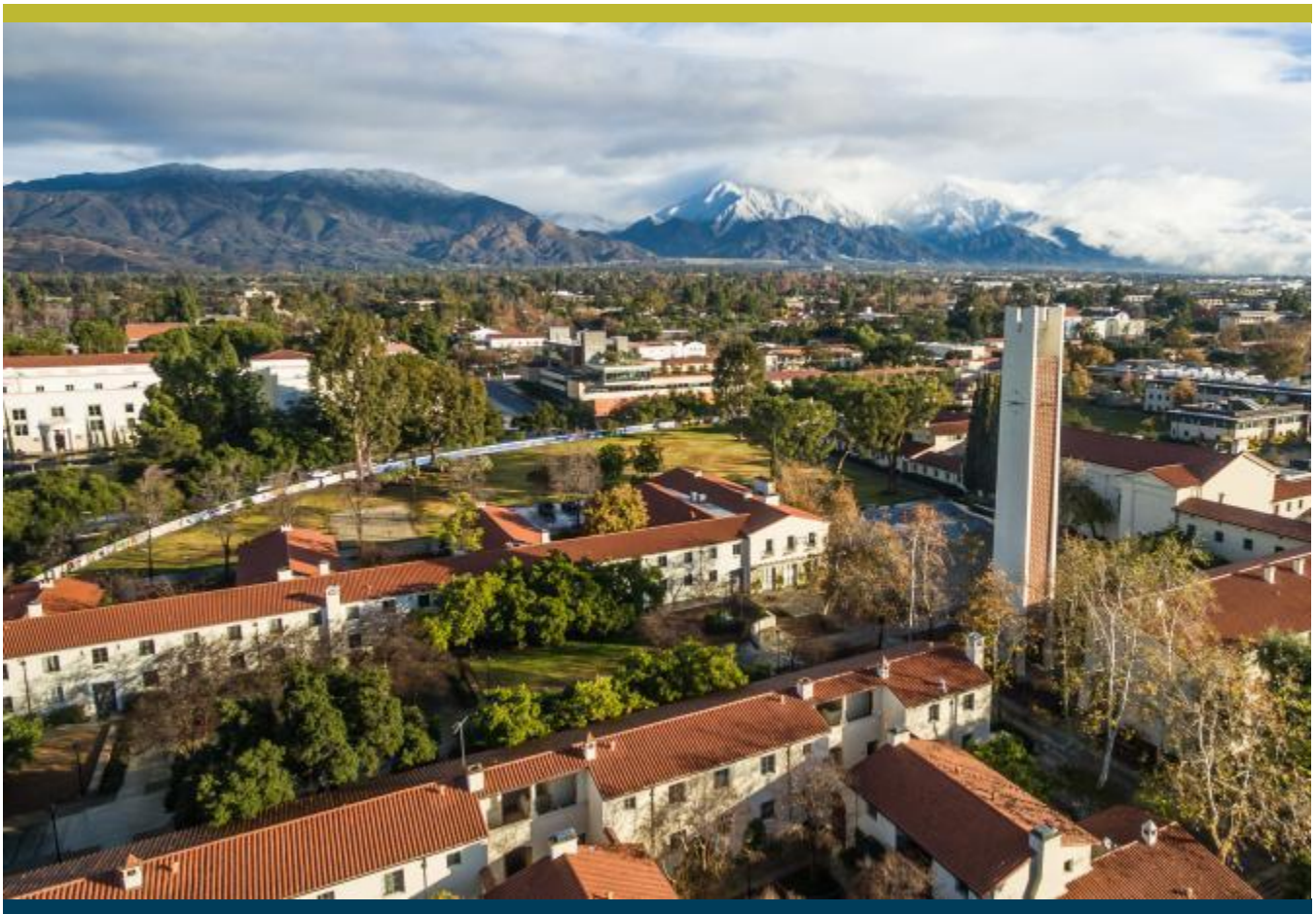




## **Assistant Vice President, Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer**

Leadership Profile

January 2024



*WittKieffer*

## Executive Summary

Pomona College seeks an accomplished, visionary, and collaborative leader to serve in the critically important role of Assistant Vice President, Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO). This is an exceptional opportunity for a people-centered, highly visible, and service-oriented executive to lead Pomona College in its desire to elevate the role of human resources and enhance the workplace experience for all employees.

Located in Claremont, California, about 35 miles east of Los Angeles, Pomona College is widely regarded as one of the nation's premier liberal arts colleges. Established in 1887, Pomona College is known for small classes, a challenging curriculum, close relationships between students and faculty, and a range of student research and leadership opportunities. Pomona is a member of The Claremont Colleges. Pomona College has approximately 1,700 students; 1,000 faculty and staff; an endowment of \$3 billion; and an annual operating budget of \$300 million.

Pomona holds a unique role in creating opportunity in American higher education and is committed to enrolling the best students regardless of financial circumstances. The founding member of [The Claremont Colleges](#), Pomona is one of five undergraduate colleges (known as the 5Cs) and two graduate institutions that make up this unique consortium. Located within one square mile, the seven adjoining campuses are only a short walk from one another. Pomona students may supplement the College's already comprehensive curriculum by taking classes at any of the undergraduate Claremont Colleges.

The CHRO will join Pomona at a pivotal moment in its history, as the campus aspires to achieve the goals identified in the comprehensive [Strategic Vision](#) for Pomona College. Reporting directly to the Vice President, Chief Operating Officer and Treasurer, the CHRO serves as the principal steward for Pomona's community of employees and leads Pomona College's human resources program that supports the College's mission, vision, values, and strategic direction with emphasis on maintaining a highly skilled, culturally diverse workforce and continuing to enjoy Pomona College's reputation as a preferred employer. The CHRO will lead, develop, and mentor a team of eight skilled staff members enabling each to grow personally and professionally in rewarding careers.

While the CHRO is responsible for ensuring that Pomona College is in compliance with labor laws, human resources-related contractual requirements, and other governmental regulations and guidelines, this position is also responsible for setting the talent agenda for the College and working within the institution's resources to make that vision a reality. The CHRO will foster an environment of strategic thinking around organizational development, talent acquisition, professional and management development, and deepening the partnership between human resources and the broad diverse array of constituents it serves. The leader will work collaboratively across the college to integrate high-quality services throughout all facets of the organization, will facilitate change, and will ensure that the college's workforce is engaged, flexible, and resilient. These efforts will differentiate the College as a workplace-of-choice in a highly competitive higher education market. This is an exciting opportunity for an innovative and engaged leader to embrace the strengths of a great organization.



Candidates who find joy in creating forward-thinking strategies to address the institution’s needs in an environment of change, including its workforce, will find this the ideal opportunity in which to thrive. The successful candidate will have experience as an influencer within the senior-most level of their organization with proven success in advancing workforce culture, professional development, and employee engagement. This role requires a thoughtful, practical, experienced executive who is by nature a relationship builder and who will lead with integrity, competence, and a commitment to accessible leadership.

The successful candidate will be an advocate for the liberal arts, with deep appreciation for the history, achievements, and aspirations of Pomona, and the ability to effectively articulate its vision to a diverse audience. Candidates must possess a bachelor's degree in human resources, business administration, or a related field as well as 10 years of progressive human resources leadership experience, and five years of management experience. A master's degree, professional HR certification, awareness of a multi-campus environment or multi-institution consortium, and prior experience in a higher education environment are preferred. In accordance with its core values and mission, Pomona is especially interested in recruiting members from diverse and underrepresented communities and individuals with a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see Procedure for Candidacy on page 12.



## Role of the Chief Human Resources Officer

Reporting directly to the Vice President, Chief Operating Officer and Treasurer, the Assistant Vice President, Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer serves as the principal steward for Pomona's community of employees and leads Pomona College's human resources program that supports the College's mission, vision, values, and strategic direction with emphasis on maintaining a talented, culturally diverse workforce, and keeping Pomona College a preferred employer. Pomona College seeks to engage and reward its employees, who are professionals of the highest caliber and quality. Pomona employees value the College's intimate community and historic roots and enjoy the opportunity for personal growth, self-discovery, and intellectual development at one of the world's leading liberal arts colleges.

Key responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Develop and implement HR strategies and initiatives aligned with Pomona's mission, vision, and values.
- Oversee all aspects of the HR function, including talent acquisition, employee training and development, performance management, compensation and benefits, employee relations, and HR compliance. This includes oversight in support of these people-related activities within all institutional departments.
- Provide strategic guidance, advice, leadership, and partnership to senior leadership and college departments on HR-related matters, including workforce planning, organizational design, and change management.
- Advance and champion diversity and inclusion efforts at the college through thoughtful programming and learning and development initiatives while staying abreast of best practices.
- Drive the development and implementation of HR policies, procedures, and programs to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Foster a positive and inclusive work environment within the HR function and for over 500 staff at the College that promotes trust, employee engagement, productivity, and well-being.
- Lead and manage a team of HR professionals, providing coaching, guidance, and development opportunities while maintaining a highly collaborative, professional, and trusting work environment.
- Serve as the human resources liaison for Claremont Colleges intercollegiate groups (e.g., Human Resources Committee, All-Colleges Safety Committee).
- Collaborate with cross-functional teams to address organizational challenges and drive continuous improvement in HR processes, tools, and practices. This includes staying abreast of industry trends and best practices in HR and AI, and proactively identifying opportunities for innovation and improvement.

- Serve as a trusted advisor to senior leadership, providing insights and recommendations on HR-related matters.

## Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The role of the CHRO has both significant scope and complexity in providing the best level of service for the campus while also being able to deliver on the need for transformation. With the acquired trust of the campus, the CHRO will ensure Pomona's human capital programs accelerate changes on campus to be successful, effective, sustainable, and well received. Beyond the day-to-day leadership of the human resources organization, the CHRO will address the following priorities:

- **Establish a People-Centered Human Resources Strategy**

The CHRO will be charged with creating a forward-thinking, strategic, and innovative organizational culture for human resources to chart a path for the future and to establish the function as a proactive, thriving, people-centered organization critical to shaping the employee journey in an ever-changing environment. Now more than ever, investing in the care of Pomona's people must be integrated into the fabric of a strategic human capital vision and clearly defined human resources philosophy.

- **Enhance HR's Infrastructure**

In order to support effectively the needs of an evolving and complex organization, the CHRO will quickly assess the existing human resources policies, systems, and structure and evaluate relative strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for realignment in order to function as efficiently and effectively as possible. The CHRO will bring strengths in organizational change in order to establish structural models needed to sustain future workforce needs. Priorities include, among others, establishing new capabilities, optimizing technology, and facilitating process improvements. The CHRO and its team must keenly and continually scan for ways to enhance current programs and practices and present and evaluate potential alternatives.

- **HR Team Leadership & Development**

The current human resources staff members are deeply committed to the organization's mission and seek a leader who will empower, develop, and inspire the team to elevate their strengths with the newly defined strategic direction. The CHRO will have the opportunity to inspire, delegate as appropriate, and bring a strong commitment to providing mentoring and professional development for staff. The CHRO will foster a culture of engagement, accountability, and excellence and a commitment to developing and nurturing a climate of inclusion.



- **Deepen Partnership with the Academic Enterprise**

The CHRO has the opportunity to enhance and elevate the role that human resources plays in supporting the academic enterprise. The leader will work to foster a consultative relationship with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College to understand how to best support the workforce needs of the academic staff and faculty. The CHRO will support the academic enterprise by maintaining a pipeline of talent for open positions, supporting faculty in their training and development, and providing accessible, consultative, and value-added service to enable academic faculty and staff to do their best work.

- **Establish Trust & Credibility Across the College**

The successful candidate will be an individual who will inspire, influence, and motivate others and will be viewed as a highly collaborative partner across the College. The CHRO will effectively integrate into the Pomona community, learn the organization, and become a well-known, respected, and visible leader at all levels of the organization. Additionally, this new leader will participate actively as a strategic partner with senior leadership and establish themselves as a leader, advisor, coach and confidante to managers and employees. Critical to their success will be establishing a reputation as a collaborative partner with integrity and a people-centered service orientation, and for prioritizing transparency through frequent and authentic communication with all stakeholders.

## Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Pomona College seeks in its CHRO a strategic, transformational leader with a record of successfully managing change, strengthening institutional culture, and improving operational effectiveness. The ideal candidate will have the knowledge, skills, and experience to align the College's human resources processes, policies, and programs with Pomona's strategic goals and priorities.

- **Education.** A bachelor's degree in human resources, business administration, or a related field. Master's degree preferred. Professional HR certification (e.g., SHRM-SCP, SPHR) is highly desirable.
- **Experience.** Minimum of 10 years of progressive human resources leadership experience, with at least five years in a manager-level role, and a proven track record of developing and implementing successful HR strategies and initiatives in an academic setting. Prior experience in higher education preferred as is awareness of a multi-campus environment or multi-institution consortium.
- **Strategic and innovative orientation.** Ability to consider the implications of institutional decisions and to develop strategies to continually improve and ensure the long-term success of the College. A willingness and inclination to develop creative solutions or adapt prior solutions in new and promising ways. Strategic and analytical mindset with the ability to think critically and solve complex problems in an academic environment.
- **Change management.** Ability to energize stakeholders and sustain their commitment to changes in approaches, processes, and strategies. A record of designing, leading, implementing, and communicating large-scale change management initiatives. Demonstrated ability to influence others and drive organizational change and manage multiple priorities.



- **Collaboration.** Ability to work cooperatively and inclusively with others, including those not formally under one's chain of command. The inclination to work together versus working separately or competitively. Demonstrable experience advising and collaborating with institutional leadership and engendering trust.
- **Team leadership and management.** Ability to lead groups toward shared visions and goals, from forming a team that possesses balanced capabilities to setting its mission, values, and norms by holding colleagues accountable individually and as a group for results.
- **Communication, relationship management, and community building.** Ability to communicate effectively and compellingly to convey meaning, build shared understanding, and advance agendas productively. Ability to establish and sustain relationships effectively with faculty, staff, and academic leaders across campuses and universities. Commitment to and demonstrable success building community.
- **Learning orientation and subject matter expertise.** An underlying curiosity and desire to learn. The inclination to ask questions and seek precise information, to identify opportunities or information that may have future value, and to stay abreast of relevant issues, trends, and best practices for adoption.
- **Organizational awareness and sophistication.** Ability to understand and learn the formal and informal institutional decision-making structures and power dynamics within an organization, to identify decision-makers and those who can influence them, and to predict how situations will affect various individuals and groups. Ability to inspire and motivate a diverse workforce and maintain the vision and values of the College.

## About Pomona College

### Overview

Located in Claremont, California, Pomona College is widely regarded as one of the nation's premier liberal arts colleges. Established in 1887, Pomona College is known for small classes, a challenging curriculum, close relationships between students and faculty, and a range of student research and leadership opportunities. Pomona is a member of The Claremont Colleges. Pomona College has approximately 1,700 students; 1,000 faculty and staff; an endowment of \$3 billion; and an annual operating budget of \$300 million.

Pomona College was incorporated in October 1887, by a group of Congregationalists who wanted to recreate “a college of the New England type” on the West Coast. Instruction began the next year in a small, rented house in the city of Pomona. By the 1920s, Pomona President James A. Blaisdell faced a difficult choice—to limit expansion to retain the College’s unique character or allow growth and expand into a university. Under Blaisdell’s guidance, the College chose a third path. Using Oxford and Cambridge as models, Pomona founded a consortium unlike any other in America.

Over the next 75 years, two graduate schools and four other undergraduate colleges joined Pomona as members of The Claremont Colleges, located on neighboring campuses, allowing cross-registration in the nearly 2,700 courses taught across the consortium, and sharing important facilities such as libraries. As such, Pomona offers both the advantages of a small liberal arts college and the resources of a university.

Today, Pomona enjoys a reputation as one of the most highly regarded and selective liberal arts colleges in the world. It also stands with a small number of institutions willing and able to admit students based entirely on academic achievement and promise without regard to ability to pay, and then to meet all demonstrated financial need of domestic students with no loans. Sixty-seven percent of students receive financial aid. Because of this institutional commitment, Pomona attracts some of the most highly qualified students in the country. Through an academically challenging curriculum, outstanding faculty, extraordinary students, and intimate size, Pomona provides an unparalleled environment for intellectual development and personal growth.

Pomona is a close-knit and diverse community of accomplished scholars, scientists, entrepreneurs, and artists who are passionate about making a difference in the world. Pomona provides excellence in undergraduate instruction across 48 majors in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. There are approximately 1,700 students from 55 nations and 49 U.S. states, as well as the District of Columbia, Guam, and Puerto Rico. Over 50 percent of Pomona students self-identify as members of BIPOC communities, and 23% of the class of 2026 are first-generation students. Almost all students live in one of 14 residence halls on the 140-acre campus.





With a student-faculty ratio of 8 to 1 and an average class size of 13, students work closely with their professors in the classroom, in the lab, and in the field. Pomona offers about 650 courses taught by 217 full time professors, all with terminal degrees. Its location—within an hour of Los Angeles and the mountains, desert, and beaches—provides countless opportunities for field study, research, and internships. About 62 percent of students participate in research with faculty, including more than 200 students who enroll in summer research programs.

Pomona has one of the biggest networks in liberal arts education with alumni working in a wide variety of career fields, from business, law, and medicine to non-profit, education, and science to politics, art, and entertainment. Pomona's 25,000 living alumni are dispersed across all 50 U.S. states and 74 countries.

## Mission

Throughout its history, Pomona College has educated students of exceptional promise. We gather individuals, regardless of financial circumstances, into a small residential community that is strongly rooted in Southern California yet global in its orientation.

Through close ties among a diverse group of faculty, staff and classmates, Pomona students are inspired to engage in the probing inquiry and creative learning that enable them to identify and address their intellectual passions. This experience will continue to guide their contributions as the next generation of leaders, scholars, artists and engaged members of society to fulfill the vision of the College's founders: to bear their added riches in trust for all.

## Strategic Vision

Pomona's [Strategic Vision](#) recommits to Pomona's foundational values while looking to the future, and we have identified specific projects we believe best reflect those values today. At this moment, when the world is ever more interconnected in confronting vast problems and pursuing the search for solutions, the liberal arts education Pomona College offers is more essential than ever. Our focus on creative, holistic, and rigorous education equips our students to lead the way in an ever-changing world. Our emphasis on building relationships and learning in a diverse community prepares our students to engage both locally and globally.

- **The Grand Challenges:** Pomona students, faculty, staff, and alumni have long distinguished themselves as leaders who know how to ask big questions, confront big challenges and solve big problems. Fulfilling our promise will require brilliant and committed faculty, as well as ideas that speak to the urgency of the present, the obligation to deepen knowledge of the past and the ability to seize new opportunities for the future.
- **Flourishing and Inclusion:** We aspire for all members of our community to flourish and develop lives of meaning. We will work to create more equitable experiences for our diverse community members. We will refine our mental health and wellness services for students and renovate our athletics center to support wellbeing for all. New career programs will further assist students and young alumni in finding their paths.
- **Transformative Knowledge and Creativity:** We will connect our students to the world through a newly imagined immersive language residential center and encourage curricular experimentation to

enable students to engage the breadth of the liberal arts. We will seek to advance new understandings of the uses of technology across disciplines. The performing arts are a vital part of a Pomona education, and we will continue to revitalize our campus infrastructure in this area.

- **Equity and Access:** In an era of rising economic inequality and financial distress for many, access to a Pomona education regardless of family income remains a bedrock value of the College. We will fortify our commitment to need-blind financial aid and seek to fully endow financial aid. We also seek to increase affordability for families across the income distribution to bring to campus a student body that better represents the U.S.

## The Arts

Pomona enjoys particular strength in the arts, offering students boundless opportunities ranging from eight musical ensembles to glee club and orchestra, theatre and dance productions, art exhibitions, and access to the College's vibrant art museum.

The Benton Museum of Art at Pomona College, a 33,000-square-foot, \$44 million museum opened in Fall 2020 and provides space for some of Southern California's most compelling and experimental exhibitions. Building on a long tradition of excellence at the alma mater of such artistic pioneers as James Turrell, Helen Pashgian, and Chris Burden, The Benton will host the next wave of groundbreaking artists and offer a state-of-the-art site for a growing permanent collection ranging from Native American art to Renaissance panel paintings to works by such artists as Karl Benjamin, Rico Lebrun, and Jose Clemente Orozco. The new museum was made possible through a generous \$15 million gift from long-time supporter Janet Inskeep Benton, Pomona College trustee and member of the Class of 1979.

## Athletics

Twenty percent of Pomona students play on 21 varsity teams; hundreds more participate in club and intramural sports. The College is a member of the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SCIAC) and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III.

In the fall of 2022, Pomona opened a new state-of-the-art athletics, recreation, and wellness center, which is home to the Pomona-Pitzer athletics program. This 94,000 square foot facility also promotes health and wellness for all members of the community.

## The Claremont Colleges

The founding member of The Claremont Colleges, Pomona is one of five undergraduate colleges (known as the 5Cs) and two graduate institutions that make up this unique consortium. Located within one square mile, the seven adjoining campuses are only a short walk from one another. More information about the Claremont Colleges can be found [here](#).

## Leadership

### Board of Trustees

The [Board of Trustees](#) oversees the College's leadership, planning, and resources, working to ensure the continuing vitality of the institution and its ability to fulfill its mission now and for future generations. At present, there are 36 voting and two ex-officio members of the board. The current chair of the board is Samuel D. Glick '04, a partner in Oliver Wyman's Health and Life Sciences practice and the San Francisco office leader.

### G. Gabrielle Starr President



[G. Gabrielle Starr](#), a highly regarded scholar of English literature whose work reaches into neuroscience and the arts, took office as the 10th president of Pomona College in 2017.

Starr is a national voice on college access for students of all backgrounds, the future of higher education, women in leadership, and the importance of the arts. Recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship and author of two books, Starr offers a compelling case for working across academic disciplines to spark intellectual discovery. Her research looks closely at the brain, through the use of fMRI, to help get to the heart of how people respond to paintings, music, and other forms of art.

Starr is an experienced academic leader. As dean of New York University's College of Arts and Science, she oversaw the undergraduate experience for more than 7,000 students across 55 departments and programs, and she led the development of new cohort and first-year programs. She served as chair of the English department and director of undergraduate studies during her more than 15 years at NYU. Starr also launched a partnership with New York City's largest community college to create a pipeline in STEM, and she co-founded a cross-university prison education program, offering associate of arts degrees in the liberal arts to students in a medium-security prison. Since her move to Southern California, Starr has made it a priority to connect with community organizations, and she recently joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic Board of Directors. On the national level, she serves on the board of directors for the Consortium on Financing Higher Education (COFHE).

Her book, *Feeling Beauty: The Neuroscience of Aesthetic Experience*, (MIT Press, 2013) was a finalist for the Phi Beta Kappa Society's 2014 Christian Gauss Award, and her work has been supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's New Directions Fellowship and a National Science Foundation ADVANCE grant.

Starr earned her bachelor and master of arts degrees from Emory University, and a Ph.D. in English and American literature from Harvard University.



**Jeff Roth, Vice President, Chief Operating Officer and Treasurer**

Jeff Roth, an innovative finance leader with experience at top higher education institutions and the nation's largest public library system, became Pomona College's vice president, chief operating officer and treasurer, on September 6th, 2022. Roth previously was associate vice president for academic planning and budgeting at UCLA, where he worked to increase transparency in allocation decisions for the \$10 billion annual operating budget and developed a multi-year budget approach to strengthen the university's finances for the future.

Before joining UCLA in 2016, Roth served in a series of key leadership roles over 15 years at the New York Public Library, directing finance and strategic planning for the 92-location system, largest in the U.S., and known for its significant research resources. Roth has a strong commitment to using analytics and data science to improve financial management and provide resources to serve people and the organizational mission.

"This role is ultimately about people," said Roth. "And I'm excited to join a community so dedicated to human development, academic excellence and increasing access to higher education."

Pomona College President G. Gabrielle Starr noted that Jeff's record of collaboration and experience in multiple areas is particularly fitting for this role overseeing a division that includes most of the College's staff members, covering finance, investments, human resources, real estate, and conference and event planning as well as campus services such as grounds, dining, housekeeping and maintenance. He will play a key role, Starr added, in implementing Pomona's Strategic Vision in the years ahead. "Jeff recognizes the human aspirations and the critical academic mission that drive how we deploy our resources, as well as the need for thoughtful stewardship in sustaining our commitments," said Starr. "Jeff will help Pomona build on our unique role in promoting opportunity in American higher education."

Roth's interest in managing finance systems to benefit people and communities is longstanding, and his work has extended into other areas of public benefit as well. At the New York Public Library, for example, he launched a partnership with the New York City Department of Education to bring public library books and materials directly into schools to help students learn. Roth also served in financial management roles at New York Institute of Technology, Teacher's College at Columbia University and Stevens Institute of technology. His finance career started with a role as a staff accountant for the New Jersey Devils National Hockey League team.

He earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and his M.B.A. from Rutgers Graduate School of Management.

## Claremont California

Pomona College is located in the city of Claremont, CA, 35 miles east of Los Angeles. The city, with a population of more than 36,000, features sidewalk cafes, specialty shops, tree-lined streets, and bungalow homes. Claremont was recently ranked the 5th most-desirable town in the US, and housing prices are more affordable than many areas in Southern California. With stunning views of the San Gabriel Mountains, Claremont is less than an hour away from downtown Los Angeles and from mountains, desert, and beaches. More information about Claremont California can be found [here](#).

## Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting Pomona College in this search which will remain open until an appointment is made. Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#).

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Melissa Fincher and Sarah Palmer  
[PomonaCHRO@wittkieffer.com](mailto:PomonaCHRO@wittkieffer.com)

*Pomona College prides itself in being an open, competitive, and equal opportunity employer.*

## Compensation and Benefit Information

Compensation range: \$235,660 to \$250,544

Benefits: Pomona College provides a wide range of benefits for its employees. Information on college benefits programs, including eligibility, is available at <https://www.pomona.edu/administration/human-resources/resources>