

Quinnipiac

UNIVERSITY

Vice President of Human Resources

Leadership Profile

Spring 2026



Executive Summary

[Quinnipiac University](#) (QU) seeks an accomplished, ambitious, and collaborative leader to serve as its Vice President of Human Resources (VPHR) to shape a strategic vision that elevates the University's capacity to attract, support, and retain an outstanding workforce. This is an exceptional opportunity for a seasoned human resources executive to modernize HR operations, strengthen organizational culture, and lead a forward-looking people strategy aligned with QU's next era of growth.

Originally founded in 1929 as a small business college, Quinnipiac University is a private, coeducational university offering more than 120 undergraduate majors and 50 graduate programs, complemented by extensive dual-degree options that allow students to tailor their academic paths. The University emphasizes experiential and applied learning, service learning, volunteer engagement opportunities, cocurricular connections, and multidisciplinary approaches. In Fall 2025, QU enrolled more than 9,700 students through its Schools of Business, Communications, Education, Computing & Engineering, Health Sciences, Law, Medicine, Nursing, and the College of Arts & Sciences. Its three campuses, located in Hamden and North Haven, Connecticut, offer scenic and seasonal landscapes; and a network of more than 70,000 alumni span the world.

The Quinnipiac University Poll is nationally recognized as a leader in public opinion research, and the University is consistently recognized by U.S. News & World Report and Princeton Review. The Wall Street Journal ranked Quinnipiac #51 among the best colleges in the nation, and second in Connecticut, for its exceptional graduation rate, salary impact, learning facilities, career preparation, and learning opportunities. The University is in the midst of program expansion and renewal for both traditional and adult learners, the development of innovative strategic partnerships, and has just opened a South Quad with three new buildings.

The Vice President of Human Resources will join Quinnipiac at a time of significant momentum, with the arrival of [President Marie Hardin, Ph.D.](#) in July 2025, and an inclusive [Strategic Visioning process](#) underway since the fall of 2025 to chart the path for the institution's next era of growth and impact. Reporting to Mark Varholak, the Chief Financial Officer, and serving as a key member of the University Leadership Council, the VPHR is responsible for providing executive-level leadership and guidance in all areas of human resources, including payroll. The VPHR will work collaboratively across QU to continuously integrate high-quality services across all facets of the organization, facilitate change, and ensure that Quinnipiac's workforce is engaged, flexible, and resilient, enabling the University to continue differentiating itself in a competitive market. The VPHR serves as a trusted partner with organizational constituents, providing innovative and creative solutions and continuously building and maintaining relationships across the organization, emphasizing dynamic communication and collaboration.

The incoming leader will have the opportunity to build upon the strengths of a dedicated human resources and payroll team of 16 professionals and pursue initiatives supporting an employee base of approximately 1,300 faculty and staff, including approximately 150 unionized employees, making a lasting impact on the University. The successful candidate will be an innovative, highly driven executive and will possess broad human resources knowledge; expertise in strategic, collaborative, and consultative services; a sophisticated approach to organizational leadership; and demonstrated experience in workforce planning, market-driven compensation practices, succession planning, and advancing organizational and cultural change. This leader will also bring experience leading human resources staff and programs in complex unionized environments and will demonstrate the core competencies and personal traits necessary for success, including emotional intelligence, sound judgment, strong problem-solving skills, diplomacy, personal confidence, and humility. A bachelor's degree and at least ten years of progressive human resources leadership experience are required. An advanced degree, human resources certification, and prior experience working in higher education are preferred.

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

Role of the Vice President of Human Resources

Reporting to the Chief Financial Officer and serving as a key member of the University Leadership Council, the Vice President of Human Resources is responsible for the strategic delivery of human capital programming, services, and support across the University. The VPHR will oversee the development and implementation of comprehensive HR strategies aligned with the University's mission, vision, and goals, with a strong emphasis on HR transformation, organizational effectiveness, and best practices. This position will work closely with senior leadership to foster a positive and inclusive organizational culture while advancing human resources practices that attract, develop, and retain a high-performing workforce.

The VPHR will lead, develop, and mentor a dedicated staff of 16 professionals and pursue initiatives supporting an employee base of approximately 1,300 faculty and staff, including approximately 150 unionized employees, through every stage of their employment at the University. Presently, the direct reports to the VPHR include the following roles: Director of Benefits, Director of Talent Acquisition, Director of HR Operations and Analytics, Director of Payroll, Director of Human Resources Business Partners, and Administrative Assistant. This role requires a visionary leader who can foster a culture of excellence, inclusivity, and innovation within the human resources department and across the Institution.

The role ensures compliance with employment laws, promotes an inclusive and engaged campus culture, and supports faculty and staff excellence across academic and administrative units. Key areas of accountability include, but are not limited to, the following:

Strategic Leadership

- Serve as a strategic partner to the President and executive leadership in shaping the University's human capital strategy and aligning HR practices with institutional goals.
- Lead the development, communication, and execution of HR strategies that advance the University's mission, improve employee engagement, and foster a culture of excellence.
- Develop, implement, and maintain a strategic vision and plan for human resources, building upon existing strengths and further establishing an organization of proactive, consultative, and value-added support to stakeholders.

HR Transformation and Innovation

- Spearhead HR transformation initiatives that modernize and streamline HR systems, processes, and optimize technologies, ensuring the University's HR function is agile, data-driven, and future-focused.
- Lead efforts to enhance HR service delivery through the adoption of best practices, automation, and digital solutions, improving efficiency, transparency, and accessibility for all university employees.
- Promote continuous improvement, leveraging appropriate technology to reduce administrative burden and enhance decision-making.
- Work in close partnership with IT to ensure HR systems, data management, and reporting capabilities effectively support HR programs.

Talent Acquisition, Talent Management & Workforce Planning

- Advance and implement best practices in recruitment, hiring, onboarding, retention, and succession planning for faculty, staff, and student employment.

- Oversee the design and implementation of professional development and training programs that support continuous learning, leadership development, and succession planning across all employee levels.
- Through strategic consultation with leadership, support the design and implementation of organizational structures that effectively support the University's current goals and objectives and position the institution to be agile and prepared to meet future strategic objectives.

Employee and Labor Relations

- Serve as a trusted advisor to University leaders and employees on HR-related issues, providing counsel on employee relations, conflict resolution, and workplace policies.
- Empower HR Business Partners to provide strategic support to academic and administrative leaders, aligning workforce strategies with University priorities and advising on organizational effectiveness.
- Provide leadership for employee relations and labor relations, including collective bargaining with each of the University's three unions, in close collaboration with the Office of General Counsel.
- Foster positive labor-management relationships and a culture of trust and accountability; ensure fair, consistent, and legally compliant resolution of employee concerns and grievances; ensure policies and practices comply with federal, state, and higher education regulations.

HR Operations

- Oversee HR policies, procedures, and documentation standards, ensuring alignment with legal requirements, institutional practices, and operational needs; oversee data integrity, reporting, and audit readiness; defines key HR metrics and dashboards to inform decision-making.
- Drive continuous improvement initiatives to streamline processes, reduce risk, enhance employee experience, and improve responsiveness and accountability.

Payroll

- Provide executive oversight of payroll operations to ensure accurate, timely, and compliant processing for all employee populations, including faculty, staff, and student employees.
- Ensure compliance with federal and state wage and hour laws, tax reporting requirements, and benefit-related deductions; oversees reconciliation, audits, and issue resolution.
- Partner with the Controller, Finance leadership and others to maintain effective controls, improve payroll-related processes, and ensure accurate employee data interfaces

Compensation and Benefits

- Develop comprehensive compensation and benefits strategies and programs, grounded in market data, internal equity, and mission stewardship.
- Advance a robust job architecture, inclusive of transparent career ladders supporting internal mobility and equity, and enhance the institution's ability to attract, retain, and develop top talent.
- Develop and oversee strategic benefits administration, ensuring that programs are competitive, compliant, and competitive.

Organizational Development

- Plan and administer employee recognition programs to promote an engaged and productive organizational culture.
- Promote the growth and professional development of staff through partnership with Lifelong Learning and other available resources.
- Evaluate and develop training opportunities for future leaders to support employee growth.



Collaboration & Campus Engagement

- Proactively seek opportunities to partner with academic leadership, faculty governance, and staff council to support evolving needs of the academic enterprise and to position HR to be responsive to workforce needs.
- Cultivate and support a culture of care, trust, and transparency that reflects Quinnipiac University's values and mission. Advance initiatives that strengthen engagement, community, recognition, and belonging.
- Promote transparent communication and engagement across the campus community.

HR Team Management & Development

- Lead, mentor, and develop HR divisional staff and establish a culture of agility, service, and accountability with the HR team to ensure it can proactively anticipate and support future workforce needs and services.
- Establish and maintain a high-performance, highly engaged culture reinforced by HR practices and programs aligned to the University's mission.
- Foster collaborative teamwork and empower subject matter experts while providing oversight and strategic direction.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The Vice President of Human Resources will play a critical role in advancing the University's mission through its human capital. This requires the next VPHR to bring vision, strategic thinking, and a solution-driven approach to achieve the highest possible outcomes for Quinnipiac and its employees.

Beyond the day-to-day leadership of the human resources organization, the VPHR will address the following priorities:

Establish a Future Focused Strategy and Reimagined Role for Human Resources

As the University navigates a rapidly shifting higher education landscape and competes for talent in an evolving and increasingly competitive and dynamic labor market, the VPHR will design, champion, and advance a forward-looking strategic vision and plan for Quinnipiac human resources that ensures the institution's ability to attract, develop, and retain a diverse workforce of mission-driven employees. Grounded in QU's core values, this progressive strategy will expand the functional capabilities of the HR organization to include comprehensive workforce planning and succession planning consultative services, and a lens toward partnership, collaboration,

transparency, and proactive support in facilitating institutional change and continuous improvement. As a result, the reimagined role of human resources within the organization will be one defined as modern, agile, and strategically aligned, serving as a catalyst for innovation and organizational growth. The HR division will not only provide foundational services but also act as a trusted advisor and partner to campus leadership, empowering employees, cultivating a culture of engagement and accountability, and driving initiatives that support the University's long-term mission and success.

Assess and Advance HR Model, Infrastructure, and Systems

The Vice President of Human Resources will be charged with leading a comprehensive evaluation of the University's current HR model, organizational structure, infrastructure, and systems. This entails identifying and building upon the department's foundational strengths while advancing a modern, efficient, service-driven organization that applies best and emerging practices to support Quinnipiac's employees. Through this assessment, the VPHR will align the HR division with the University's strategic objectives, ensuring efficiency, accessibility, responsiveness, and excellent customer service. The role involves implementing best practices, preparing the HR team for modernization, and fostering a proactive, solution-oriented, and data-driven culture that supports institutional priorities across QU's three campuses.

A key focus will be optimizing existing technology and streamlining business processes across human resources and payroll to eliminate redundancies, manual tracking, shadow systems, and burdensome approvals. This includes maximizing the underutilized functionality of the institutions' current ERP system, Colleague, which is currently in the process of migrating to the cloud. This also represents an opportunity for the executive to recommend an investment in a robust and integrated human capital management system, appropriate for Quinnipiac's institutional needs, in an effort to sophisticate and modernize transactional activity, to manage and maintain accurate employee data to inform strategic decision making, and to eliminate the current complexity of managing nine different systems currently leveraged to support the organization.

Ultimately, the VPHR will shape an organization with a proactive, service-focused culture within HR, one that embraces modernization, fosters continuous improvement, and establishes human resources as a strategic force supporting Quinnipiac University's mission and long-term success.

Introduce a Comprehensive Compensation Program as a Strategic Lever for Institutional Success

A central priority for this role will be the design and implementation of a cohesive compensation strategy that enhances the institution's ability to attract, retain, and develop top talent while reinforcing a strong culture of performance, equity, and transparency. This represents a unique opportunity to turn compensation into a strategic lever for institutional success, creating a cohesive, market-driven, and transparent framework that supports talent outcomes, strengthens organizational effectiveness, and enhances the University's long-term competitiveness.

The leader will bring prior compensation experience working in close partnership with institutional leadership, external consultants to drive a multi-year compensation initiative inclusive of operationalizing a clear compensation philosophy which defines the University's competitive positioning within its peer and aspirant markets; the design and implementation of market based salary structures, including job families, salary grade, and pay bands; introducing a comprehensive job architecture that defines career levels and progress across roles, creates clarity and consistency in how positions are structured and compensation. Particular attention will be given to building transparent career ladders that support internal mobility and talent development. This includes leading pay equity analyses, addressing compression and structural inconsistencies, and partnering with institutional stakeholders to ensure alignment and trust in compensation decisions.

Partnering closely with Finance and institutional leadership, this role will ensure that compensation programs are fiscally responsible, data-informed, and scalable. As a visible and trusted leader, the Vice President will guide the institution through the evolution of its compensation practices, driving adoption through clear communication,

leadership engagement, and manager enablement. This work will position the University to compete effectively for talent in an increasingly complex labor market while reinforcing a compelling employee value proposition.

Administer Clearly Defined Position Management Practices

The incoming leader will also have the opportunity to establish clearly defined position management practices, closely integrated with divisional budgeting processes in partnership with finance. By implementing robust controls and clear protocols for position management, the University can ensure that all new and existing roles are strategically aligned with organizational needs and financial resources. This partnership will include regular reviews of position inventory, approval workflows for new positions or changes, and transparent tracking of vacancies and filled roles. Leveraging data-driven insights and collaborative planning, HR and finance will jointly monitor and reconcile position allocations against budget forecasts, enhancing accountability, supporting workforce planning, and enabling agile responses to evolving institutional priorities. Through these practices, Quinnipiac will foster responsible stewardship of resources, reinforce operational efficiency, and maintain a sustainable and flexible staffing model that advances the university's mission.

Empower, Develop, and Elevate HR Staff

The current human resources staff members are deeply committed to Quinnipiac and seek an accomplished, approachable leader who will honor and recognize the significant contributions and areas of strength the team has developed over the years. In addition, there is a desire for a leader who will trust and empower their team as experts, who will delegate appropriately, and who will have the humility to get into the operations with the staff when needed. The successful leader will serve as an advocate for the team while continuously exploring opportunities to elevate their strengths in delivering exceptional service, programming, and support to the Quinnipiac Community.



The HR team seeks a leader who emphasizes respect and compassion among colleagues, fostering a unified, cooperative spirit to deliver outstanding service, support, and partnership throughout the community. This new leader will draw upon their experience in building high-performing teams and will prioritize mentoring and ongoing professional growth for team members. Alongside this, the VPHR will establish clear expectations and ensure staff are accountable for their results. By encouraging collaboration, engagement, and excellence, the leader will exemplify the highest standards of professionalism and productivity.

Establish Credibility and Trust and Build Community Across All Three Campuses

The successful candidate will be an individual who inspires, influences, and motivates others and is viewed as a highly visible, engaged, and collaborative partner across the University. They will effectively integrate into the Quinnipiac community, learn the organization, and become well-known, respected, and visible at all levels.

Additionally, this leader will partner closely with senior leadership to strengthen a sense of connection and community across a dynamic, multi-campus environment and evolving hybrid workplace. The VPHR will establish themselves as a leader, advisor, coach, and confidante to managers and employees, establishing a reputation for listening, seeking to understand diverse perspectives and the nuanced experiences of different employee groups, from full-time faculty to student employees and unionized staff. The VPHR will prioritize transparency through frequent, authentic communication with all constituents and by communicating timely, important updates to all employees. At the same time, being mindful of the many different audiences and the effective communication methods for different groups will be paramount.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Quinnipiac University seeks a forward-thinking, solution-oriented, and collaborative leader whose style builds trust within the campus community and across all constituencies. The successful candidate will be a skilled and deeply experienced professional who is adept at change management; exhibits an exceptional blend of technical HR expertise, strategic insight, and cultural diplomacy and integrity. The following qualifications and attributes are highly desired:

Education/Certification

- A bachelor's degree is required, and an advanced degree or equivalent experience is preferred.
- Senior-level human resources professional certification preferred.

Knowledge and Experience

- Minimum of ten (10) years of progressively responsible senior-level human resources leadership experience, including supervisory experience, preferably in higher education or a similarly complex mission-driven unionized organization.
- Knowledge of applicable federal, state, and local employment laws, rules, and regulations and experience with advancing HR strategy and understanding of broad functional areas of human resources inclusive of but not limited to talent acquisition, performance management, onboarding and retention, learning and development, labor relations, leave administration, policy governance, compensation and benefits, workforce planning, succession planning, HR technology and analytics, compliance, and risk management.
- Proven success spearheading HR-transformation initiatives, optimizing technology, streamlining business processes, and metrics-driven service enhancements that improve efficiency and user experience.
- Demonstrated experience in developing and implementing compensation strategies; proven ability to design and manage market-based pay structures, job architecture, and career frameworks that support internal mobility and talent development; ability to build and enhance compensation infrastructure, including policies, tools, and scalable processes aligned with fiscal responsibility and data-informed practices.
- Evidence leading and developing high-performing HR teams within complex organizational structures while fostering cross-functional collaboration.
- Knowledge of payroll operations, compliance with relevant tax legislation, experience overseeing accurate and timely payroll processing for a large and diverse workforce and understanding of the practical application of tax regulations affecting employee compensation within the higher education environment are preferred.

Leadership Skills and Competencies

- **Strategic Vision and Alignment:** Ability to develop and implement HR strategies that align with QU's mission and strategic goals, ensuring that HR initiatives support the Institution's objectives and enhance its impact.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Proven ability to build strong relationships across the University, working effectively with faculty, students, and staff to foster collaboration and shared understanding. Reputation of leading with transparency, consistency, and integrity, and the ability to build trust and unify departments around shared policies, procedures, and goals.

- **Change Management Expertise:** Experience leading organizational change initiatives, particularly in transforming HR processes, implementing new technologies, and enhancing workforce planning to meet future needs.
- **Effective Communication:** Exceptional communication skills to address varying perceptions of HR, promote transparency, and ensure consistent understanding of HR policies and initiatives among all employees.
- **Innovative Problem Solving:** Ability to diagnose needs and develop practical, creative, and innovative solutions to complex HR challenges, leveraging data-driven approaches to inform decision-making.
- **Policy Compliance and Risk Management:** Strong understanding of employment laws and regulations, with the ability to ensure compliance, mitigate risks, and address inconsistencies in policy application across the Institution.
- **Technological Proficiency:** Familiarity with HR systems and technology transformations, with the ability to leverage technology to improve HR processes and employee experiences.
- **Leadership by Example:** Demonstration of integrity, professionalism, and ethical conduct, serving as a role model for others, and building trust throughout the organization.
- **Results Orientation:** The ability to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of HR initiatives, using data-driven insights to optimize policies, procedures, and operational outcomes.
- **Innovation and Adaptability:** A proclivity for embracing change, employing creative approaches to HR challenges, and remaining flexible in a fast-evolving organizational environment.



About Quinnipiac University

Overview

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Marie Hardin, Ph.D., a distinguished professor, academic leader, and the former dean of the Donald P. Bellisario School of Communications at Penn State, became Quinnipiac University's 10th president on July 1, 2025, succeeding former president Judy Olian, Ph.D. Under President Hardin's leadership, QU launched an inclusive [Strategic Visioning](#) process in Fall 2025 to chart the institution's next era of growth and impact. The effort engages faculty, staff, students, alumni, and trustees in shaping a renewed mission-anchored vision and a three-year strategic plan to be completed in Summer 2026.

This community-driven process defines Quinnipiac's enduring mission, core values, and shared aspirations, while identifying the institutional strengths and market opportunities that will guide priorities for the next several years. The resulting strategic plan will provide clear direction for academic innovation, student success, institutional investment, partnerships, and operational excellence. Together, these elements—mission, values, vision, and strategy—form a holistic framework that honors Quinnipiac's heritage and positions the university for a vibrant and competitive future.

Mission

Building the University of the Future

The mission at Quinnipiac is drawn from the previous strategic plan: Building the University of the Future. [Download the university's 2019-2025 Strategic Plan \(PDF\)](#) :

- QU's mission is to prepare graduates as enlightened global citizens equipped for the challenges and opportunities of current and future careers.

- The mission is long-term and enduring. It defines QU's fundamental purpose — why it exists and whom it serves. It remains stable over time, anchoring our work even as QU pursues new aspirations.
- The mission propels QU from our storied past toward an ambitious, inclusive, and innovative future.

Core Values

Values are the enduring principles that define who QU is and guides everything it does. They are timeless commitments that remain constant even as QU's strategies evolve. QU's values unite its community and inspire its work, informs its choices, and defines the Quinnipiac spirit.

- QU is fiercely committed to ensuring every Bobcat thrives. It is a lifelong partner for every learner.
- It passionately cares about its community. Everyone should feel welcome and valued.
- It boldly shapes its university's future. The QU community will forge a path of impact together.



Academics

Career readiness and real-world experience are at the core of Quinnipiac's curriculum. The numbers speak to its success: a strong majority of its graduates are either employed or in advanced education six months after graduation, demonstrating its commitment to transforming its students into well-prepared professionals.

Colleges

College of Arts & Sciences: The College of Arts & Sciences is a national leader in providing transformative educational experiences that prepare students for success in their careers and in life. Its innovative approach to education emphasizes the integration of academic and career advising, high-impact and immersive experiences, internships, study abroad, and professional mentoring. Through hands-on activities and real-world connections, we help its students develop the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

School of Business: The world of business is complex, ever-changing, and rewarding for those who are well-prepared. Its business education provides you with the critical foundations to enjoy long-term career success. Its programs are designed to connect you with the most promising careers of the future as its faculty create engaging and impactful learning experiences. Student clubs, organizations, and extracurricular activities provide many opportunities to apply what you have learned in the classroom to real-world environments and challenges.

School of Communication: The world of communications is complex, ever-changing, and demanding, but also rewarding for those who are well prepared. In just the past decade, mobile computing and social media have revolutionized communications, interactions, and relationships. Everyone is a publisher. Access is constant. Real-time data and analytics provide audience insight, enabling communications optimization.

School of Education: Great educators have the ability—and the privilege—to change lives. At Quinnipiac, we equip the next generation of educators with the knowledge and skills that advance the teaching careers of tomorrow. By fostering personal and intellectual transformation, we strive to empower its graduates to affect change within themselves and others to move toward a more just and equitable society.

School of Computing and Engineering: Its School of Computing & Engineering prepares you to take on the technological, scientific, and logistical obstacles of the 21st century. With an interdisciplinary approach that

combines heavy collaboration, hands-on learning, and cutting-edge facilities, we'll help you become an expert and innovator, a builder and technician, and, of course, a creative thinker and problem-solver.

[School of Health Sciences](#): The School of Health Sciences prepares students to tackle major challenges inherent in 21st-century patient care and medical research. Its innovative and highly ranked programs — offered at the bachelor's, master's, and clinical doctorate levels — develop forward-thinking clinicians, imaging professionals, rehabilitation specialists, and scientists.

[Quinnipiac Law](#): At Quinnipiac Law, being a great lawyer means more than mastering legal doctrine. A whole lawyer combines strong legal skills with professional judgment, ethical leadership, and the ability to thrive in real-world practice. Through experiential learning, close faculty mentorship, and a supportive community, its students graduate prepared to succeed in practice and to lead with purpose.

[Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine](#): At the Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine, its commitment to teaching patient-centered medicine underpins all that we do, and it begins with its name. Frank H. Netter, MD, was a physician and famed medical illustrator whose anatomy drawings became a staple of medical education because of their detail and sense of humanity.

[School of Nursing](#): Its bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs will prepare you for a successful career in hospitals, clinics, schools, and many other settings. Its graduates become leaders at every level of their careers and facilitate positive changes to healthcare as it relates to government, law, and patient care. They are true advocates for their profession in the level of care they provide and in how they continually strive to improve the safety and well-being of their patients.



Leadership

Marie Hardin, Ph.D., President



Marie Hardin, PhD, assumed the role of president of Quinnipiac beginning on July 1, 2025. As the 10th president, Hardin oversees all aspects of Quinnipiac, an institution with approximately 9,400 undergraduate and graduate students, eight professional schools, a College of Arts and Sciences, and 21 Division I athletic teams.

Hardin has deep and broad management and administrative expertise. She served as dean of the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications at Penn State from 2014 to 2025. Under her leadership, the Bellisario College bolstered its reputation for high-quality undergraduate and graduate education, broadened its impact in interdisciplinary research, and expanded its outreach.

Highlights of her career as dean include rebranding Bellisario College in 2017 after attracting a \$30 million naming gift from alumnus Donald P. Bellisario; opening a new media center in 2020; tripling the college's endowment and increasing total gifts to the college by more than 50% in the past three years; boasting one of the highest four-year graduation rates at Penn State for her college; tripling revenues generated through online degree programs; and expanding annual research expenditures more than four-fold.

She is an award-winning teacher and scholar with more than 60 publications in sports media, gender studies, and communication. She is co-editor of two books and a book series, and co-edits the Sage journal, "Communication

& Sport,” a leading title in the field. In 2013, the University of Georgia Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication named her a distinguished alumni scholar. Hardin served as president of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications in 2019. She chairs the national committee for the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication and the Hearst Foundations Journalism Awards Steering Committee.

Hardin has taught and advised students throughout her career, including as Dean. In 2009, she was one of four Penn State faculty recipients of the university-wide George W. Atherton Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Hardin is an avid runner who has completed more than 30 marathons. She is married to Jerry Kammer, a retired Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter and Nieman Fellow at Harvard University.

Hardin earned her PhD in mass communication from the University of Georgia, an MA in communication from Georgia State University, and a BA in theology from Ambassador University in Pasadena, California.

Mark Varholak, Chief Financial Officer



Mark Varholak was appointed Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer in July 2015, after serving as Associate Vice President for Budget and Financial Planning since July 2013. Prior to that, he was the University's Associate Controller for 10 years. Mark's portfolio includes Finance, Facilities, Human Resources, Capital Planning, Public Safety and Information Security.

Varholak earned his MBA with concentrations in finance and international business from New York University. He also has a bachelor's degree in accounting and international business from Pennsylvania State University.

Procedure for Candidacy

WittKieffer is supporting Quinnipiac University in this search. For greatest consideration, applicants should submit a resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile to WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#) by May 6, 2026. You may also submit inquiries and nominations (handed confidentially) to the same portal.

Nominations, inquiries, and application materials can be directed to:

Sandra Chu and Sarah Palmer

Quinnipiac-VPHR@Wittkieffer.com

Quinnipiac University has a strong commitment to the principles and practices of diversity throughout the university community. Women, members of minority groups, and individuals with disabilities are encouraged to consider and apply for admission. Quinnipiac does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, gender identity or expression, age, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin, or disability status in the administration of its educational and admissions policies, employment policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic programs, or other university-administered programs.

Appendix:

Hamden, CT

Hamden has the perfect blend of urban and suburban lifestyles. Known as "The Land of the Sleeping Giant," Hamden offers a wide variety of attractions, from state parks to museums. Sleeping Giant State Park, with its landscape rich in hills and walking trails, leads visitors on a 1.5-mile hike to the stone observation tower, which overlooks Long Island Sound and the New Haven area.

Hamden is also proximate to New York City, Boston, MA, and Philadelphia, PA. The campus offers a student shuttle to New Haven's Union Station and downtown New Haven, facilitating easy travel by rail and bus. The Bradley Airport is approximately 50 minutes away.



Hamden offers excellent restaurants, outdoor activities, farmer's markets, nearby ski resorts, and shopping. Below is a list of things Hamden is known for. More information about Hamden, CT, and the surrounding area can be found [here](#).

- **Sleeping Giant State Park:** The Mount Carmel Campus is nestled just across the street. The park offers more than 30 miles of maintained trails and a 4-story lookout tower. It's not just a favorite of students, alumni, parents, faculty, and staff, but also one of the most visited state parks in the state.
- **Farmington Canal Heritage Trail:** Conveniently located just across the street from its York Hill Campus is a 58-mile paved path, stretching from New Haven to the Massachusetts border. Along the route, enjoy historic structures, canal locks, and other interesting sights. There are also numerous opportunities to stop for a bite to eat, connect with other trail systems, or check out livestock.
- **East Rock Park:** Situated near the Hamden and New Haven border, this 425-acre park is the perfect place for a hike, bike ride, or kayaking adventure on the Mill River — and with four different peaks, there's always something new to see.
- **Miles of shopping:** From unique small shops to leading brands and outlets, there are countless opportunities to spend afternoons window shopping and picking up unique and special items to showcase your personality.
- **Best pizza in the world:** Some of the best pizza on the planet is located just a few miles down the road in New Haven. Whether you prefer Pepe's, Sally's, Modern, or Bar, the area has you covered.
- **Farmers markets:** The region offers a wide variety of locally grown produce and specially designed arts and crafts to fill your belly and give your residence hall or apartment some unique flair.
- **Ice cream:** From Wentworth's and Kelly's to Sweet Claude's and Ashley's, there are numerous opportunities to stay cool on hot afternoons.
- **Hit the slopes:** There are numerous areas in the region for skiing, snowboarding, and snow tubing — or just relaxing by the fire as the snow falls.
- **Celebrate the region's sea-going heritage:** The Mystic Seaport offers a unique hands-on experience of the area's maritime history. Learn about the region's significance at the world-renowned museum while exploring historic ships in the harbor.
- **Visit a zoo or aquarium:** Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo offers numerous opportunities to learn more about a variety of wildlife, as well as ways of preserving habitats around the world. The Maritime Aquarium and Mystic Aquarium are nationally renowned research facilities with interactive exhibits for all ages.

- **Celebrate culture under the stars:** Many of the state's town greens and open spaces offer live music and theater performances throughout spring, summer, and fall. From Shakespeare to the Beatles, there's something for everybody.
- **Pick apples, peaches, pumpkins, or berries:** Visit one of the numerous orchards and farms in the area. The most difficult decision may be about what to pick.