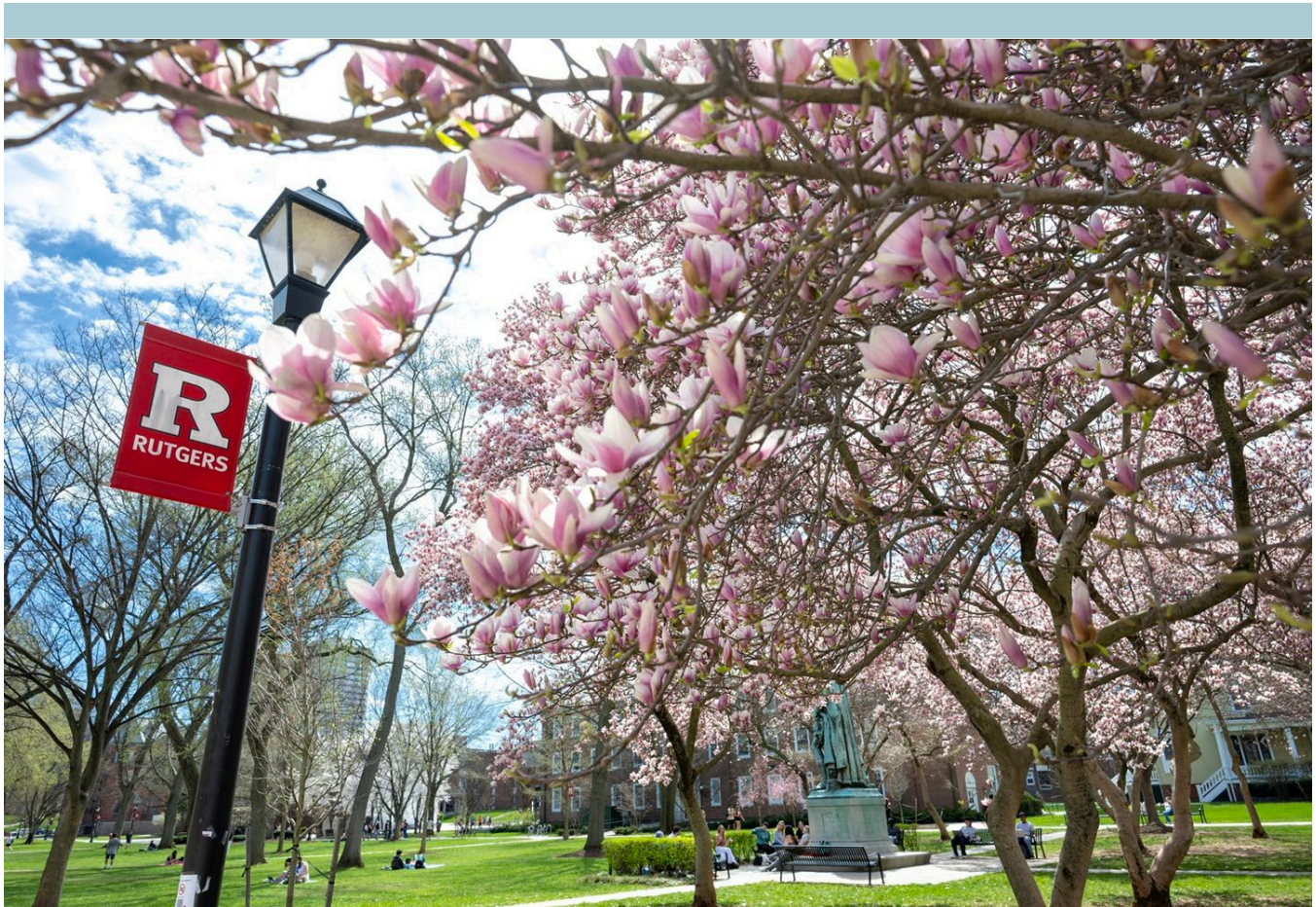




**Senior Vice President for University Communications
and Marketing**
Leadership Profile

Summer 2026



Executive Summary

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, seeks a dynamic and visionary leader to serve as its next Senior Vice President for University Communications and Marketing (SVP UCM). This is a pivotal moment for Rutgers, as new presidential leadership, strong momentum, and ambitious aspirations position the university to elevate its national standing and expand its impact.

Rutgers is one of the nation's most distinctive public research universities, combining the strengths of an AAU institution, a land-grant university, and a comprehensive academic health system, with campuses in New Brunswick, Newark, and Camden. As a leader in research, innovation, and public service, Rutgers stands at the forefront of higher education. The Rutgers Edge is defined by a relentless drive to push boundaries, solve real-world problems, and empower communities through knowledge and discovery. While its scale, academic excellence, and research enterprise position it among the nation's leading institutions, its story is not yet fully articulated or consistently conveyed. The SVP UCM will play a critical role in shaping and amplifying that narrative in ways that resonate across local, national, and global audiences and strengthen the university's overall reputation and impact.

The SVP UCM will serve as Rutgers' chief brand strategist and reputation architect, responsible for developing and executing a unified communications and marketing strategy across a highly decentralized university. Working closely with the president, cabinet, chancellors, and leaders across enrollment, advancement, research, and athletics, this individual will bring an enterprise-wide perspective to align messaging, elevate visibility, and strengthen institutional identity. In doing so, the SVP UCM will lead the evolution of a cohesive Rutgers identity while fostering alignment across campuses and honoring their distinct strengths and markets.

This role presents a rare opportunity to modernize and integrate communications at scale. The next SVP UCM will build a high-performing, coordinated communications ecosystem; advance the university's digital and media presence; and leverage data, technology, and emerging platforms to sharpen strategy and measure impact. Equally important, the SVP UCM will strengthen internal communications and cultivate a deeper sense of pride and connection among Rutgers' more than 600,000 alumni and its broader community, transforming awareness into affinity and engagement.

Operating in a highly visible and complex public environment, the SVP UCM will also lead proactive, sophisticated crisis communications and serve as a strategic advisor on issues related to brand strategy, reputation, constituent engagement, and public trust. This work takes place within a dynamic context shaped by faculty governance, political engagement, media scrutiny, and the realities of a large, unionized public institution.

The successful candidate will bring a combination of strategic vision, operational excellence, and personal leadership qualities suited to this scale and complexity. They will be an exceptional communicator and storyteller, capable of framing a compelling narrative for Rutgers and translating it across audiences. They will demonstrate strong political and organizational acumen, experience navigating complex stakeholder environments, and the ability to build trust and foster collaboration across a decentralized system. They will be data-informed, digitally fluent, and experienced in managing reputation in complex, fast-paced, and high-stakes settings.

Above all, Rutgers seeks a leader who combines confidence with humility, decisiveness with diplomacy, and boldness with discipline, who can lead through complexity, interrogate the status quo, and execute at a high level. This individual will embrace Rutgers' public mission, understand its unique culture and context, and bring the energy, creativity, and resolve required to position the university for its next chapter of national prominence and impact.

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 Senior Vice President for University Communications and Marketing

The Senior Vice President for University Communications and Marketing (SVP UCM) serves as Rutgers' chief reputation strategist and brand architect, responsible for shaping, advancing, and protecting the university's identity as a leading public research institution. Reporting to the president and serving as a key member of the senior leadership team, the SVP UCM will bring an enterprise-wide perspective to communications, marketing, and engagement across Rutgers' highly complex, multi-campus system.

This is a defining moment for Rutgers. With new leadership, upward national ambition, and strong institutional momentum, the SVP UCM will have the opportunity (and expectation) to build a modern, integrated communications and marketing function that operates at scale, aligns messaging across the university, and amplifies Rutgers' impact locally, nationally, and globally.

The SVP UCM will lead a newly evolving model that brings together central communications, Rutgers–New Brunswick, and Rutgers Health through a hub-and-spoke structure, while strengthening coordination and alignment with Rutgers-Camden and Rutgers-Newark as part of a broader university-wide communications and marketing strategy. This leader will partner closely with chancellors, enrollment management, advancement, athletics, research, and academic leadership to ensure that Rutgers speaks with clarity, consistency, and purpose while honoring the distinctiveness of its campuses and constituencies.

The role demands a leader who can operate simultaneously as strategist, operator, advisor, and communicator - someone who can align decentralized teams, navigate a highly visible and politically complex environment, and translate institutional priorities into compelling narratives that resonate with diverse audiences. At its core, this is a reputation management and storytelling role: one that requires bold vision, diplomatic dexterity, and disciplined execution.



Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The following interrelated leadership opportunities should feature prominently in the new senior vice president's first few years at Rutgers:

- **Establish a Cohesive, Enterprise-Wide Brand Strategy**
Rutgers presents a rare opportunity to unify a powerful but underleveraged brand. The SVP UCM will lead the development of a clear, compelling institutional narrative that defines what Rutgers stands for, differentiates it nationally, and aligns messaging across all Chancellor-Led Units, schools, and divisions. Success will be defined by moving from a decentralized, unit-driven approach to a coordinated, “One Rutgers” strategy, while ensuring that each campus retains its distinct voice and market position. The SVP UCM will clarify market boundaries, reduce internal competition, and create an integrated approach that optimizes reach, impact, and return on investment.
- **Elevate National Reputation and Visibility**
Rutgers has the scale, academic distinction, and research strength to rank among the nation's top public universities, but its reputation has yet to fully reflect that reality. The SVP UCM will lead a comprehensive, institution-wide strategy that leverages assets such as its Big Ten affiliation, AAU membership, major urban campuses, and integrated academic health system. The goal is to ensure that external perception more accurately mirrors institutional excellence. This includes strengthening media relationships, expanding digital and social reach, and deploying data-informed campaigns that enhance visibility, shape narrative, and deepen influence across key audiences.
- **Create a Culture of Coordination, Collaboration, and Trust**
The SVP UCM will build a high-functioning communications ecosystem that fosters collaboration across a decentralized organization, bringing stakeholders together, aligning competing priorities, and creating a culture in which collaboration replaces fragmentation. This includes:
 - Establishing clear roles, processes, and decision rights between central and campus-based teams
 - Improving transparency and information sharing
 - Streamlining approvals and reducing inefficiencies
 - Building trust through consistent communication and engagement
- **Unify and Lead a High-Performing, Integrated Communications Organization**
Rutgers is at an inflection point, bringing together two communications and marketing teams into a newly integrated enterprise function. The SVP UCM will have a distinctive opportunity to shape the structure, culture, and operating model of this combined organization—aligning talent, clarifying roles, and ensuring the division is positioned for maximum effectiveness and impact. This will require a thoughtful assessment of existing functions, capabilities, and redundancies (e.g., digital, social, and marketing operations), with a focus on creating a streamlined, cohesive structure that eliminates duplication and enables coordinated execution across the university.

Success in this area will be defined not simply by organizational design, but by the SVP UCM's ability to lead a highly capable, deeply experienced team through change—placing individuals in roles where they can have the greatest impact, fostering professional growth, and building a shared sense of purpose. Key priorities include:

- Designing an integrated organizational model that optimizes enterprise capabilities while supporting the needs of Chancellor-led units, schools, and campuses
- Evaluating the role of embedded communicators and defining the appropriate balance between centralized and distributed resources

- Establishing consistent tools, platforms, and processes to reduce fragmentation and improve efficiency (e.g., shared CRM, marketing infrastructure, and analytics systems)
- Eliminating internal competition and redundancy in messaging, campaigns, and resource allocation
- Leading thoughtful change management efforts that engage stakeholders, build buy-in, and sustain momentum over time

This effort will require a leader who combines strong organizational design instincts with exceptional interpersonal acumen—someone who can operate as both an enterprise strategist and a trusted, credible leader to the team. The SVP UCM must bring the judgment, authenticity, and political awareness to navigate a complex environment, unify diverse perspectives, and build a high-performing culture grounded in accountability, collaboration, and shared success.

- **Strengthen Issues Management and Crisis Preparedness**

Rutgers operates in a highly visible environment where emerging issues, reputational challenges, and stakeholder expectations require ongoing attention. The SVP UCM will design and lead a proactive, modern approach to issues management and crisis preparedness, ensuring the university is well-positioned to anticipate, assess, and respond to evolving challenges. This includes building strong internal protocols, monitoring emerging trends and risks, and positioning Rutgers to lead with clarity, credibility, and confidence in moments of heightened scrutiny.

- **Leverage Data, Technology, and Modern Media**

A key opportunity is to modernize Rutgers' communications infrastructure and capabilities. The SVP UCM will advance the use of analytics, digital platforms, CRM systems, social media, and emerging technologies (including AI) to drive more targeted, effective engagement. The goal is to build a data-informed function that measures impact, refines strategy, and positions Rutgers competitively in an increasingly digital landscape.

- **Strengthen Internal Engagement and Institutional Affinity**

A critical and underdeveloped opportunity is to build a stronger emotional connection to Rutgers among students, faculty, staff, and its more than 600,000 alumni. Success will be measured not only by external visibility, but by internal alignment and institutional affinity. The SVP UCM will lead efforts to:

- Reinforce shared identity and traditions
- Increase alumni engagement and philanthropic participation
- Create a sense of pride and belonging tied to the Rutgers brand

- **Serve as a Strategic Advisor in a Complex Environment**

The SVP UCM will act as a trusted advisor to the president and senior leadership on communications, reputation, constituent engagement, and brand strategy. This includes navigating relationships with government leaders, trustees, donors, community stakeholders, and internal constituencies. Given Rutgers' scale and public mission, the role requires strong political awareness and the ability to operate effectively in a fast-paced, high-stakes environment shaped by competing interests and public scrutiny.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Rutgers seeks a seasoned, strategic communications leader with the experience, judgment, and presence to operate at the highest levels of a complex public research university. The ideal candidate will bring the following qualifications and strengths:

- **Strategic and Visionary Leader:** Excels at shaping and expressing a distinctive value proposition, aligning stakeholders around a shared narrative that strengthens market positioning, clarifies identity, and advances institutional reputation.
- **Enterprise Mindset:** Thinks and operates beyond silos, demonstrating the capacity to unify a highly decentralized organization into a cohesive, high-functioning communications and marketing ecosystem that advances the interests of the entire university.
- **Executive Presence and Leadership Gravitas:** Possesses the experience, confidence, and judgment to engage effectively with senior leadership, board members, government officials, and external stakeholders, serving as a trusted advisor at the highest levels of the institution.
- **Reputation and Brand Strategist:** Demonstrates a proven ability to build, position, and protect a complex institutional brand, leveraging academic excellence, research strength, athletics, and public mission to elevate visibility, affinity, and national standing.
- **Exceptional Storyteller and Communicator:** Translates complex institutional priorities into clear, compelling narratives that resonate across multiple audiences, while equipping internal leaders, particularly faculty and academic units, to communicate their impact effectively.
- **Crisis Leadership and Resilience:** Brings deep experience managing communications in high-pressure, high-visibility environments, with the ability to anticipate, navigate, and respond to ongoing critical incidents with composure, speed, and strategic clarity.
- **Politically Astute and Contextually Intelligent:** Understands the nuances of operating within a public institution in a complex political environment, demonstrating keen awareness of state and local dynamics while maintaining institutional integrity and nonpartisan credibility.
- **Collaborative Coalition Builder:** Excels at building trust across diverse constituencies, including chancellors, deans, faculty, staff, and central administration, while aligning priorities, facilitating shared decision-making, and fostering a culture of transparency and partnership.
- **Data-Informed and Digitally Fluent:** Leverages analytics, digital platforms, and emerging technologies to inform strategy, measure outcomes, and continuously refine communications and marketing efforts in a rapidly evolving media landscape.
- **Operationally Strong and Results-Oriented:** Demonstrates the ability to lead large, complex teams, implement enterprise-wide strategies, and deliver measurable results, balancing visionary thinking with disciplined execution and accountability.

- **Courageous and Decisive (“Diplomatic Warrior”):** Comfortable making difficult decisions, setting direction, and challenging legacy practices when needed while balancing firmness with diplomacy and respect for institutional culture.
- **Adaptable and Agile:** Thrives in dynamic environments marked by change, ambiguity, and competing priorities, demonstrating flexibility, responsiveness, and the ability to lead effectively through transition.
- **Authentic and Trust-Building:** Leads with transparency, consistency, and genuine care for the institution and its people, fostering credibility and strengthening relationships across the Rutgers community.
- **Grounded in Public Mission:** Exhibits a deep appreciation and enthusiasm for the mission of a flagship public research university - including access, social mobility, and community impact - and is motivated by the opportunity to advance Rutgers’ role as a force for the public good.
- **Minimum Education and Experience:** Bachelor's degree in communications, marketing, public relations, journalism, business administration, public administration, or a related field; an advanced degree is preferred. A minimum of ten (10) years of progressively responsible senior leadership experience in communications, marketing, public affairs, brand management, reputation management, media relations, or a related field, including experience leading large, complex organizations and advising executive leadership.





About Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Overview

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is a nationally recognized public research university defined by scale, impact, and distinctiveness. Founded in 1766, Rutgers is one of the nation's oldest institutions and one of its most forward-looking, uniting the strengths of a colonial college, a land-grant university, and a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU).

With more than 70,000 students across campuses in New Brunswick, Newark, and Camden, and a statewide health enterprise, Rutgers is a powerful engine of opportunity, discovery, and public service. Positioned at the center of the Northeast corridor between New York and Philadelphia, the university plays a central role in one of the most dynamic economic and innovation regions in the world.

Rutgers is distinguished not only by its scale, but by its purpose: to expand access to world-class education, advance research that improves lives, and serve as a catalyst for economic growth and social mobility in New Jersey and beyond.

Facts and Figures

- 71,000+ students across undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs
- 29 schools and colleges spanning every major academic and professional discipline

- \$993M+ in annual research funding, placing Rutgers among the nation's leading research universities
- \$5.9B operating budget, reflecting broad impact across education, research, and health care
- 27,000+ faculty and staff, forming a highly skilled, mission-driven workforce
- 617,000+ alumni worldwide, shaping industries, communities, and public life
- Rutgers stands among America's highest-ranked, most diverse public research universities. It is the oldest, largest, and top-ranked public university in the New York/New Jersey Metropolitan Area.

Mission

As one of the leading comprehensive public research universities in the nation, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, has the threefold mission of:

- Providing for the educational needs of New Jersey through our undergraduate, graduate, professional, and continuing education programs;
- Conducting cutting-edge research that contributes to the health, environmental, social, and cultural well-being of the state, nation, and world, as well as strengthening the economy and supporting businesses and industries; and
- Performing public service in support of the needs of the people of the state and their local, county, and state governments.

Rutgers is a place that encourages free, open, and civil discussion, debate, and exploration of different ideas and viewpoints – a place where we strive to teach students how to think, not what to think. To excel in teaching, research, and service requires that we engage in genuine curiosity and commit ourselves to understanding one another—even around the most difficult and divisive topics. That is intrinsic to the university's mission.

Values

The Rutgers community embraces and upholds the fundamental values that define the university: academic excellence that's both accessible and affordable; building a community where every single member of the university has a voice; and serving the common good while making a meaningful difference in the world.

Structure

Reporting to the president are the chancellors of the four chancellor-led units (New Brunswick, Camden, Newark, and Rutgers Health) and the leaders of the universitywide administration that support academic, administrative, and organizational activities across Rutgers and keep the university running optimally. Rutgers employs 27,000 faculty and staff across their entire institutions.

Universitywide administration includes academic affairs, athletics, development and alumni engagement, finance and administration, government relations, institutional administration, legal affairs, university communications and marketing, and the office of the secretary.

Priorities

These priorities position Rutgers as a university that is both responsive to societal needs and proactive in shaping the future:

- Institutional Distinction and Strategic Positioning
- Rutgers occupies a uniquely differentiated position in American higher education:
- The only university that is simultaneously an AAU member, land-grant institution, and colonial college
- A comprehensive academic and health enterprise, integrating research, education, and clinical care
- A statewide presence with deep community engagement and measurable impact across all 21 counties
- Strategic institutional initiatives reinforce Rutgers' forward-looking brand
- Nationally visible civic engagement and democracy programs
- Deep investment in civil rights, equal opportunity, and community engagement
- Workforce innovation and future-of-work initiatives

Governance

Rutgers' governance structure reflects its complexity, public mission, private college origins, and commitment to shared oversight:

- **The Board of Governors** provides primary governance and strategic direction, overseeing operations, finance, and institutional priorities.
- **The Board of Trustees** offers fiduciary stewardship and advisory guidance, maintaining continuity with the university's historic roots.
- **The University Senate** represents faculty, students, staff, and alumni, reinforcing Rutgers' culture of shared governance and collaboration.

Together, these bodies ensure strong stewardship, accountability, and alignment with Rutgers' public mission.

Academics

- Rutgers delivers a breadth and depth of academic excellence that rivals the nation's leading public institutions:
- 150+ undergraduate majors and 400+ graduate programs across 29 schools and colleges
- Nationally ranked programs in fields spanning the sciences, humanities, engineering, business, and public affairs
- A strong global footprint through international partnerships and study abroad opportunities
- The university is a recognized leader in access and student success, with more than 75% of undergraduates receiving financial aid and exceptional outcomes for students from low-income backgrounds.
- Rutgers' academic structure - organized across four Chancellor-Led Units - enables both scale and distinctiveness, combining the strengths of a major university system with the identity of individual campuses.

Research

Research at Rutgers is both ambitious and impactful, driving innovation across disciplines and industries. Rutgers is consistently recognized among the world's most innovative universities, with research addressing critical challenges in health, climate, technology, and public policy. Its research enterprise not only advances knowledge but also fuels economic development and strengthens New Jersey's position as a hub of innovation.

- Nearly \$1 billion annually in research funding supporting discovery and innovation

- 300+ research centers and institutes advancing interdisciplinary collaboration
- A robust innovation ecosystem, including patents, startups, and industry partnerships

Athletics

Rutgers athletics is a visible and unifying element of institutional identity and national brand recognition. Competition at the highest level of collegiate athletics enhances national visibility, strengthens school spirit, and contributes to a vibrant campus experience. Rutgers' presence in the Big Ten also reinforces its stature among leading research universities.

- Big Ten Conference membership at the Division I level (Scarlet Knights)
- Division III programs at Newark (Scarlet Raiders) and Camden (Scarlet Raptors) campuses

Leadership

Rutgers is led by a president supported by a collaborative and experienced senior leadership team that reflects the institution's scale and complexity. The leadership structure includes a cabinet of chancellors and senior executives, along with an Administrative Council of academic and administrative leaders from across the university. This model enables strategic alignment across campuses while empowering local leadership, positioning Rutgers to operate with both cohesion and agility in a rapidly evolving higher education landscape.

William F. Tate IV

William F. Tate IV, an award-winning scholar and nationally respected higher education leader, assumed office as the 22nd president of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, on July 1, 2025. He also serves as a University Professor and Distinguished Professor.

Prior to joining Rutgers, Dr. Tate served as president of Louisiana State University (LSU), where he led both the LSU system and its flagship campus. In this role, he oversaw a comprehensive public research enterprise enrolling more than 60,000 students, employing 3,000 full-time faculty, and generating an estimated economic impact exceeding \$6 billion. His tenure at LSU was marked by significant institutional progress and national recognition, including a U.S. Congressional Commendation and formal resolutions of recognition from both the Louisiana Senate and House of Representatives. He held faculty appointments spanning sociology, psychiatry and behavioral medicine, epidemiology, and public health.

Earlier in his career, Dr. Tate served as executive vice president for academic affairs and provost at the University of South Carolina, where he also held the Education Foundation Distinguished University Professorship. Prior to that, he held multiple senior academic leadership roles at Washington University in St. Louis, including dean of the graduate school and vice provost for graduate education, and served as chair of the Department of Education. He also held the Edward Mallinckrodt Distinguished University Professorship in Arts & Sciences. His academic career includes faculty and endowed chair appointments at Texas Christian University and the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

A distinguished scholar, Dr. Tate is an elected member of both the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Education. His contributions to research and scholarship have been recognized with numerous honors, including election as a Fellow of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and several of the association's highest awards, including the Distinguished Scholar Award in Mathematics Education and the Distinguished Contributions to Education Research Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. Tate completed postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where he studied social and public policy as an Anna Julia Cooper Fellow, and at the Washington University School of Medicine, where he earned a Master’s degree in Psychiatric Epidemiology. He holds a Ph.D. in mathematics education with a cognate in human development from the University of Maryland, College Park; an M.A. in mathematical sciences education from the University of Texas at Dallas; and a B.S. in economics from Northern Illinois University.

He is married to Kim Cash Tate, an author and creative professional, and they have two children.

Rutgers' Prime Location

Situated at the midpoint of the nation's most vital northeast corridor, Rutgers' location is one of its greatest assets, with ready access to New York and Philadelphia and all that those great American cities have to offer. Home to 9 million residents, New Jersey itself is a small but powerful and influential state, with tremendous diversity of people, terrain, communities, art and culture, transportation, and businesses. New Jersey is America in microcosm, an ideal proving ground for new ideas. And Rutgers has always been its trusted partner in moving forward.





Procedure for Candidacy

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey has engaged WittKieffer to manage the search process. To be considered, candidates must complete the following two-step process to complete their application:

1. Apply to posting number 26ST1335 on the [Rutgers career site](#).
2. Send cover letter, reflecting the themes in this leadership profile, and resume to WittKieffer via their Candidate Portal by clicking [here](#). New users should select "Register Here" to create an account before proceeding. After logging in, navigate to "Open Positions," then locate the role by entering the institution's name and clicking the search wheel.

Review of candidates has begun and will continue until an appointment has been made.

Applications, nominations, and inquiries can also be directed to the WittKieffer consultants assisting Rutgers with this recruitment via e-mail to Zach Smith, Ph.D, Robin Mamlet, and Natalie Song through the desk of Natalie Song at nsong@wittkieffer.com.

The salary range for this position is \$360,000 to \$400,000, including benefits.

It is university policy to provide equal employment opportunity to all its employees and applicants for employment regardless of their race, creed, color, national origin, age, ancestry, nationality, marital or domestic partnership or civil union status, sex, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, disability status, liability for military service, protected veteran status, affectional or sexual orientation, atypical cellular or blood trait, genetic information (including the refusal to submit to genetic testing), or any other category protected by law. As an institution, we encourage all qualified applicants to apply. For additional information please see the Non-Discrimination Statement at the following web address: <http://uhr.rutgers.edu/non-discrimination-statement>.

Appendix: Organizational Chart

