

CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

LEADERSHIP PROFILE



EASTERN
CONNECTICUT
STATE UNIVERSITY

ABOUT EASTERN

Serving a diverse community of nearly 4,500 students and home to more than 150 full-time faculty, Eastern is Connecticut's designated public liberal arts university. Its 184-acre campus is nestled in New England's picturesque "Quiet Corner" and offers a vibrant teaching, learning, and living experience midway between Boston and New York City.

A newly revitalized [liberal arts core curriculum](#) (implemented in Fall 2024) lies at the heart of an Eastern education. This foundation, focused on five key learning outcomes (critical thinking, ethical reasoning, communication, creativity, and quantitative literacy) and emphasizing the importance of the first-year experience and high-impact practices, integrates with a wide range of professional learning opportunities intended to prepare students for meaningful career development and advancement.

With over 40 undergraduate majors and a growing selection of graduate programs in high-demand fields such as health sciences, data analytics, and environmental sustainability, Eastern is well-positioned to meet the workforce needs of both today and tomorrow. Moreover, robust strategic partnerships with local businesses, nonprofits, and government agencies enhance the University's role in bolstering the economic, social, and cultural vitality of the region.

Eastern is an inclusive campus where all voices and perspectives are respected. The University prides itself in offering a comprehensive range of services for students with diverse needs and experiences.

Consistently recognized as a leading regional public university, Eastern was ranked as a 2024 Top 25 College (North Region) by *U.S. News and World Report*, and is the recipient of numerous national accolades for its sustainability efforts and enduring commitment to student success. The University features small class sizes, a highly engaged faculty, a low student-faculty ratio (currently 15:1), a vibrant residential experience (over 88% of first-year students live on campus), and comparatively strong graduation and retention rates.



CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

ABOUT THE POSITION

Reporting directly to the President and serving on the President's Cabinet, the Chief Development Officer/ Executive Director (CDO/ED) serves as Eastern's chief advancement strategist — leading all development and alumni engagement efforts and acting as the principal liaison to the ECSU Foundation. We seek a passionate advocate for Eastern's mission as Connecticut's public liberal arts university - someone who brings vision, and a collaborative spirit to the role. The CDO/ED will inspire, elevate, and guide a maturing culture of philanthropy and alumni involvement primed for expansion.

This is a pivotal moment in Eastern's evolution. Under the leadership of newly appointed President Karim Ismaili, the University has embarked on a bold and inclusive path for strategic growth, academic innovation, and institutional distinction. Philanthropy and alumni engagement will be instrumental to fulfilling that vision.

The CDO/ED will lead a team of six professionals and work collaboratively across campus and with external stakeholders to drive innovation, foster a culture of continuous improvement, and implement a modern, outcomes-based advancement strategy. As a senior member of the University's leadership team, the CDO/ED will play a key role in shaping Eastern's future as a regional and national leader in public liberal arts education.

This is a full-time, in-person appointment, with the possibility of partial remote work during the summer months.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP OF ADVANCEMENT AND FOUNDATION OPERATIONS

- Lead the newly formed Office of Development and Alumni Engagement following a campus-wide restructuring. Guide strategic planning, program development, and resource alignment to advance a reimagined model for impact and growth.
- Leverage data from a comprehensive constituent analysis to shift from a reactive, event-based approach to one centered on long-term, mission-driven philanthropic partnerships.
- As Executive Director of the ECSU Foundation and in collaboration with the Foundation Board, oversee operations – including the Foundation Business Manager, compliance, and fiscal accountability in gift administration, donor stewardship, and investment management.
- Partner with the Foundation Board to support its ongoing transition toward best practices in governance, strategic alignment, and university engagement.
- Assess and strengthen team structure, roles, and responsibilities with sensitivity to collective bargaining constraints. Invest in staff development through intentional mentoring and mission-aligned change management.
- In collaboration with the Vice President for Finance and Administration and in consultation with the President, prepare and manage operating budgets for Development and Alumni Engagement.
- Serve as the President's primary advisor on advancement matters and ensure proactive, transparent communication regarding Foundation and fundraising initiatives.

INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT & SYSTEMWIDE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Represent the University in official capacities as requested by the President, including advocacy with civic organizations, elected officials, and governmental agencies.
- Collaborate with leadership across the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) system on shared goals and initiatives.
- Support positive employee and labor relations.
- Promote a safe, inclusive, and respectful campus environment through policy adherence and staff training.
- Uphold a personal standard of excellence and service, engaging in professional development and fulfilling additional duties as needed.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The Chief Development Officer is compensated at the Executive 2 salary level in accordance with CSCU Human Resources Policies for Management and Confidential Professional Personnel. The salary range for this position is \$165,000 to \$185,000, commensurate with experience. For more information, please visit [Bargaining Agreements/Pay Plans - Eastern](#).

The State of Connecticut and Eastern Connecticut State University are proud to offer employees competitive wages and a wide range of fringe benefits including voluntary and supplemental benefits.

Fringe benefits include: paid personal, vacation, and sick leave accruals; medical, dental, and prescription plans; group life insurance; retirement; retiree health care; and tuition waiver for employees and eligible dependents at any of the Connecticut State Universities (Central, Eastern, Southern, or Western).

Additional voluntary and supplemental benefits include deferred retirement contribution plans, dependent care assistance and medical flexible spending accounts, and long- and short-term disability insurance plans. For more detailed information, please visit [Human Resources - Eastern](#).



QUALIFICATIONS

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree
- At least seven years of progressive leadership experience in development and alumni engagement
- Proven success in leading collaborative, high-performing teams to grow philanthropic and stakeholder support

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS AND ATTRIBUTES

- Master's degree
- Passion for public higher education and an appreciation for Eastern's designation as the public liberal arts university of Connecticut
- Deep expertise in higher education fundraising practices, including working with volunteers and navigating unionized environments
- Demonstrated success leading institutional change, mentoring staff, and partnering across diverse constituencies, including faculty, coaches, students, and student affairs, administration, etc.
- Ability to cultivate alumni relationships that enhance student success and institutional advancement
- Authentic commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusive excellence
- Strong financial acumen and ability to foster a culture of timely data-driven decision-making, accountability, and entrepreneurialism.
- Exceptional communication and policy development skills paired with a consultative and accessible leadership style
- Diplomatic, ethical, and resourceful decision-making with a high degree of organizational and interpersonal savvy
- A catalyst for continuous improvement, innovation, and institutional momentum



APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

APPLICATION MATERIALS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- A cover letter addressing how your experience aligns with the position profile
- A current resume
- A list of three references with contact information and a brief description of your professional relationship to each. (*References will not be contacted without the candidate's prior consent, and all applications will be held confidentially through the finalist stage.*)

For full consideration, applications should be received by September 30, 2025. The search will continue until the position is filled. Submit application materials electronically to easterncdo@easternct.edu.

Eastern Connecticut State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information or criminal record. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the [non-discrimination policies](#): LaMar Coleman, Ed.D., vice president for Equity and Diversity and may be reached at (860) 465-5112 or via email at colemanla@easternct.edu.