

SEARCH PROSPECTUS:

PRESIDENT



MARIA

COLLEGE

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THE OPPORTUNITY

The Maria College Board of Trustees invites applications and nominations for the President of Maria College. The Board seeks an entrepreneurial leader who will be mission-focused, results oriented, innovative, and collaborative in advancing the mission

and vision of Maria College while strengthening the College's ability to serve its students and meet the changes occurring over higher education in the next 10 years. The new president is expected to assume office in July, 2022.

OVERVIEW & HISTORY OF MARIA COLLEGE

Maria is a private Catholic college, sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, founded in 1958 on the principle of service to others. To this day, that principle drives everything the institution does, but most importantly through the way students are supported in the pursuit of their degree. That principle also is the hallmark of the Maria graduate, the guiding force behind an enduring commitment to improving the lives of others.

Maria College is one of 17 colleges and universities in the United States sponsored by the Conference for Mercy Higher Education. The institution traces its heritage to 1831, when Catherine McAuley founded the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin, Ireland. A woman of means who was raised in both Catholic and Protestant households, Catherine McAuley was an innovative, modern-day thinker who felt that not enough was being done for women and children in need. McAuley believed education was a key to one's ultimate success, and she used her inheritance to purchase a building in downtown Dublin where women and children could find both refuge and education. Her ideas and dedication to the cause attracted other local women and soon evolved into a new order of Sisters – the Sisters of Mercy. The Sisters of Mercy quickly grew and became international in scope. In 1863, four Sisters of Mercy took a boat up the Hudson River and settled in Albany, New York. True to their focus on caring and service to others, the order founded St. Peter's Hospital, the McAuley Residence, Circles of Mercy, and Maria College.

Still located in a quiet, residential section of Albany, New York, Maria College serves approximately 850 students and boasts a charming and intimate campus that embraces an academic atmosphere both timeless and contemporary. Maria College offers four- and two-year degrees and a certificate program providing new opportunities with flexible scheduling and highly affordable education for residents of the Capital Region. In 2020, Maria College was granted by the NYS Board of Regents to launch the College's first Master's degree in Occupational Therapy.

MISSION

Maria is a Catholic college sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy and animated by the Mercy charism. It provides career-relevant, opportunity education in the context of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition to all who can benefit from it. Maria is committed to outstanding and holistic student support services, financial sustainability, and the purposive use of evidence to drive institutional renewal and student success. Maria seeks to foster graduates who recognize and respect the dignity of every human person and who will transform their knowledge and skill into caring and compassionate service to others.

VALUES

- **SERVICE** - Caring and compassionate service to others, in the Mercy Tradition, is offered to all, especially to those in need, both on campus and in the wider community.
- **SCHOLARSHIP** - Scholarship is nurtured in the relationships that arouse and nourish the spiritual gift of justice and belief in integrity, not primarily for one's own sake, but for the service of others.
- **JUSTICE** - Maria College is committed to opportunity education; a belief in fair and transparent practices; and a respect of the rights and duties of each individual. We educate and advocate for social justice, focusing on the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy.
- **DIVERSITY** - Diversity aims to create and support an intercultural environment that is strengthened by the development of each individual, the recognition of unique backgrounds, and respect for diverging perspectives.
- **HOSPITALITY** - Maria College is marked by a dedication to diversity and inclusion and a warm and generous welcome to all, as well as compassionate outreach to both campus and community members and groups.

VISION

Our aspiration is that a student who graduates from Maria will be able to find a job that pays a living wage, will be free of excessive debt, will understand how their profession is part of the broader story of human intellectual and technical advancement, and will be taught about respect for the dignity of every human person, the importance of service to others and the goodness of physical creation as the revelation of God's love.



STRATEGIC PLAN – COMPASS PRIORITIES

Following the successful completion of *Mission-Oriented Student Success 2016-2020*, the college embarked on an ambitious strategic planning process. To respond to the current and coming challenges in higher education, the board and the leadership decided to embrace a strategic compass rather than a rigid plan. The strategic compass gathers the mission, values, vision, and core compass points to be the guiding principles of decisions and strategic projects. A strategic compass makes Maria College nimble to respond to the ever-changing landscape in higher education, healthcare, and the myriad of partnership opportunities in the Capital Region. With mission at the heart of the strategic compass, Maria College has strongly claimed its brand and identity as rooted in the tradition and values of the Sisters of Mercy, leading the college into a strong and bright future.

COMPASS POINT #1: MISSION & INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

Maria College's mission has undergone a revitalization in the past four years, focusing more intently on the college's heritage, values, and identity as a Mercy, Catholic institution of higher education. This renewal of mission integration more firmly integrates the college's core identity and infuses it in all aspects of the college's operations. The mission office is planning to launch the Maria Institute in 2021 to provide a comprehensive mission program to the Maria College community and beyond. The Mission Office will be focused on the animation of the Mercy mission as guided by the new CMHE Covenant model of sponsorship. A focus on partnerships, both new and expanded, and external relations is an important element of the advancement work over the next seven years. This will include a re-branding initiative to advance the community perception of Maria, a major gifts effort to focus on the resources needed for the next phase of Maria's growth, and internal governance and culture.

Strategic projects:

- Creation of the Maria Institute to organize and facilitate mission formation, development, and integration.
- Re-branding initiative based on the Strategic Compass and to integrate the recent Charter change
- Major gifts plan

COMPASS POINT #2: MISSION-RELEVANT ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The addition of new programs over the next five years will be crucial for Maria College to provide opportunities for students and working professionals in our area. 2020 saw the amendment of the College's charter and the addition of our first Master's degree program, an MS in Occupational Therapy. Led by the strategic compass, Maria is examining program additions in our niche of healthcare fields for intentional vertical growth that will serve students and the Capital District with high-quality programs and education, and exploring hybrid and online program delivery methods. By adding these programs Maria further increases our students' ability to contribute to the local economy and earn qualifications necessary to pursue in-demand careers. Ongoing integration of the College's mission into the curriculum will be an important facet of this initiative.

Strategic projects:

- Create an online/hybrid Baccalaureate completion program in nursing.
- Create and market Applied Health & Wellness Improvement minors or concentrations within HOS.
- Re-model and promote Psychology program to enhance wellness focus and certificates/ concentrations e.g. substance abuse treatment services.
- Establish an accelerated Baccalaureate program in nursing.

STRATEGIC PLAN – COMPASS PRIORITIES (CONT.)

- Develop Maria College Center of Excellence for Simulation in Nursing Education.
- Assess the feasibility of a combined technology-rich and humanistic Associate degree in Administrative Support using the current Paralegal registered program.
- Develop a Master's Degree in Nursing Education informed by the use of simulation.

COMPASS POINT #3: STUDENT SUCCESS & EXPERIENCE

Launched in 2016, the Frank E. O'Brien, Jr. Student Support Center brought together under one roof the support services that are available to Maria students. This center houses tutoring (professional, peer, and embedded), counseling, accessibility services, opportunity programs, ESL assistance, STAR (the Students At Risk initiative), the food pantry, and the Troy Savings Bank Writing Center. Academic support services are heavily utilized by adult students returning to school after time away from the classroom, those with learning differences, and students who are adjusting to the collegiate environment. Continued investment and growth in integrated and holistic support services is vital for Maria to deliver on our mission of opportunity education for people of all backgrounds. A focus on retention and enhancing the student experience will be a key area for this compass point.

Strategic projects:

- Assess the feasibility of an integrated advising model.
- Develop a campus-wide retention initiative and plan.
- Develop specific support services and student experience program for graduate students.
- Develop and open the Troy Savings Bank Writing Center.

COMPASS POINT #4: SUSTAINABILITY

Maria's focus on sustainability will ensure a solid foundation for the future of the college and financial sustainability to move confidently into the future. Defining the Maria value proposition, strengthening financial processes and reporting, and using data to inform decisions will contribute to this solid foundation. A strategic recruitment plan will sharpen the focus for future student recruitment and expanded partnership offerings. The campus is in the middle of a multi-year master plan to update facilities, beautify the campus grounds, increase safety and access, and provide for a better student experience. Maria's campus plan is an investment in the college that will affect the student experience for decades to come. Along with this an investment in technological and facilities infrastructure will support opportunity education in teaching and learning spaces throughout the campus.

Strategic projects:

- Design and implement a Strategic Recruitment Plan.
- Integrate Pine Tree Lane into the Campus Plan (see also mission integration in campus plan). Pay attention to the resolution of the long-term property issues for the College.
- Assure personnel, technological and facility infrastructure to accommodate education and support services as informed by the mission to provide a personalized Maria experience for students.



ACADEMICS

Maria College serves a commuter population of 219 fulltime students and 564 parttime students. The gender breakdown is 83% female and 17% male, with 70% of students non traditional age (25-65 yrs) and 30% are traditional age (18-24 yrs).

NURSING

Maria College is one of the Capital Region's strongest, most respected nursing programs. We have been preparing students for 50 years—and have graduated more than 7,655 nurses with degrees in the field. In virtually every healthcare setting in the Capital Region, and in facilities across the nation, our graduates use the skills they learned at Maria to enhance healthcare systems and change lives. They are leading the way in our region by improving patient care and building healthier communities.

Nursing Programs:

- RN-BS Degree in Nursing Completion Program
- Nursing, AAS (RN)
- Practical Nurse Certificate (LPN)

ARTS & SCIENCES

When you study liberal arts, you learn to think critically and creatively, to communicate, solve problems, and take action. At Maria, you also learn how to put those skills to work to serve others. That's an ideal foundation for success in any field—and in life.

Programs:

- Healthcare Management, BS
- Psychology, BS

- Liberal Arts, BA (Communication Studies)
- Liberal Arts, BA (Government Studies)
- Liberal Arts, AA
- General Studies, AS

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Maria's degrees in the Occupational Therapy pathway give students a quality academic and clinical education in preparation for work with individuals of all abilities, ages, and from various cultural and socioeconomic groups. Based on the altruistic and compassionate values shared by the occupational therapy profession and the College's founders, the Sisters of Mercy—both acknowledging the value of human differences and individuality.

Programs:

- Occupational Therapy, MS
- Health & Occupational Sciences, BS
- Occupational Therapy Assistant, AAS



FACULTY

Maria College offers rigorous career-relevant educational programs within a curriculum based in the liberal arts and Catholic Intellectual Tradition. Maria is fully accredited by Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and its specialized programs are accredited by ACEN, ACOTE, and registered with NYSED Office of Professions. Maria has provided innovative high-quality educational experiences focused largely on healthcare professions for over 60 years, offering undergraduate, degree completion and graduate programs taught by more than 35 dedicated full-time faculty, with an average of 15 years teaching experience distributed across four academic units:

Arts and Sciences, Nursing, Occupational Therapy and Master of Science in Occupational Therapy. Of the full-time faculty, 43% possess doctoral and terminal degrees, and 63% maintain professional licensure or certification in their field of experience. Members of Maria's faculty use their expertise to make positive contributions to the field of health care in the community, participate in Maria's shared governance system, as well as in opportunities for professional development. Maria faculty work to instill in graduates respect for dignity of each person and the ability to transform learned skills into caring service.



STUDENT LIFE & SUPPORT SERVICES

Maria College offers a range of support services and events which enhance and enliven the student experience. As a fully commuter college, many of the students are working adults and most of our services are supportive in nature and tailored to their successful completion. In 2016, the College invested in a state of the art, integrated student support center where students can find the right support as well as connections to friends and special interest groups. The state-of-the-art facility is devoted to meeting students' academic, personal, and spiritual needs. It combines comprehensive, centralized services with a warm, welcoming environment that helps students gain confidence while developing life and study skills.

Our opportunity program students engage in a vast array of extra-curricular activities which build community and serve those in need in the area and beyond.

Student Support Center resources include: Opportunity Programs (The Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), HOPE, and The Renaissance Scholars Program); free Professional Tutoring Services; Peer Tutoring Program; Accessibility Services; STAR Initiative; Health and Wellness; Counseling Services; Pastoral Care; Maria Cares Fund; and Food Pantry.

JUSTICE, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING

Maria College is inspired by its Catholic, Mercy foundation in providing a hospitable, open and diverse community for all. The foundational principle of dignity and respect for all persons provides the context out of which justice, diversity, equity and inclusion is integrated in the work of the institution.

Through valuing diversity, Maria strives to create a climate that maximizes each individual's capacity to learn and, in turn, create an institution in which diversity is embraced, valued, celebrated, and welcomed.

As student needs have shifted, Maria has adapted. Across the community, efforts are made to ensure there is support to advance the creation, influence, and sustainability of a community in which the dignity of all people is respected and affirmed through the promotion of dialogue and interaction between cultures and faith traditions. The College promotes diversity as animating the Mercy charism and the fulfillment of our mission, rooted in the values and Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy.

CAMPUS MASTER PLAN AND CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Stemming from a charge in the Mission-Oriented Student Success 2016-2020 strategic plan, Maria College developed a campus master plan with the goal of improving the appearance, safety and efficiency of the campus and learning spaces, to help position the college for a strong future. The plan is also highlighted in the Strategic Compass 2020-2027 with the goal of fostering a teaching, learning, and educational environment consistent with our Catholic identity and Mercy heritage.

THE HEALTHCARE PROGRAM PHASE (MCAULEY/NURSING/OTA): COMPLETED DECEMBER 2018

- Renovation to the McAuley Building to create state-of-the-art learning spaces for the Occupational Therapy program. Officially opened in January of 2018.
- Construction of technologically advanced skills and simulation labs for the nursing program.

THE ENTRANCE PHASE: COMPLETED MAY 2020

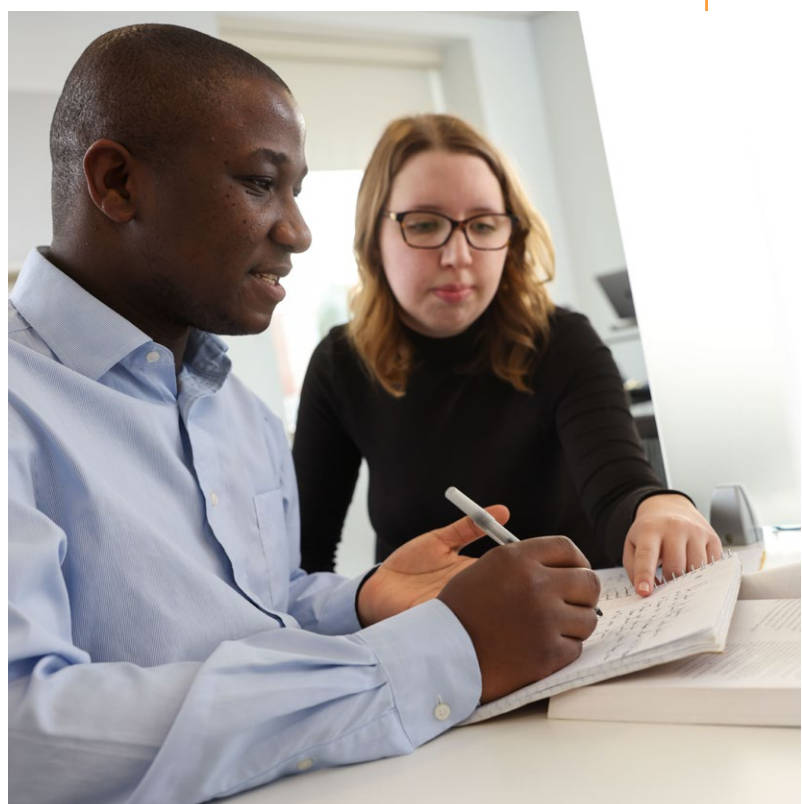
- Beginning in August 2019 to make the campus more attractive, increase pedestrian safety, enhance lighting, and update the grounds and facilities.
- Campus entrance relocated to the western side of Marian Hall.
- Campus green space later moved to the center of campus, now known as the Great Lawn.

THE BUILDING UPGRADE PHASE: MAY 2020 – AUGUST 2021

- Reconstruction of several wings of the Main Building, construction of a 3-stop elevator, a handicapped accessible entrance to the back of the building and renovation and equipment of the OTR laboratory.
- Return of campus food service, operated by Honest Weight Food Co-op.

THE EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PHASE: JANUARY 2021 – AUGUST 2021

- Improved learning technology in all classrooms to deliver a 21st century career-relevant education.



THE GREEN PHASE: MARCH 2021 – DECEMBER 2021

- Beginning in March 2021, the focus adds green space and integrates natural landscaping.
- Purchase of a 5.5-acre property to the south of Marian Hall, the largest one-time expansion of the campus in the history of Maria College.

FINANCES, FUNDRAISING, AND AFFORDABILITY

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, Maria's annual operating budget was approximately \$16 million with assets totaling \$32 million and liabilities of \$3 million. The endowment under management by the College was valued at \$15 million as of June 30, 2021.

The most recent mini-capital campaign, *Frank E. O'Brien Jnr. Student Support Center*, successfully concluded in 2018 with \$350,000 raised to launch the vision for an integrated student support service. It emphasized support for quality student support and prioritized the creation of a mission-centered, holistic team, housed in a state-of-the-art center. As of June 30, 2021, the college closed its highest fundraising year of over \$500,000 by successfully engaging with foundations aligned with our mission.

Maria is committed to providing a high-quality, affordable and career-relevant education for all those who can benefit from the Maria experience. Nearly 61% of the students receive some form of financial aid. The College awards approximately \$1.5 million in scholarships and grants.

ALUMNI

Maria College's 11, 245 alumni are spread throughout the Capital Region and beyond working in a variety of professions. We have graduated more nurses than any other institution in the area who are serving our local communities and health care institutions. We are strengthening our alumni program and developing ways in which they can support and animate the mission of Maria.

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Maria's active and engaged Board of Trustees is comprised of a distinguished group of 24 alumni and friends of the College. The Board meets four times annually and its six committees offer direction, oversight, and have fiduciary responsibility for the College: Academic and Student Affairs, Advancement, Audit, Facilities, Finance, and Trusteeship and Governance. The board recently created an ad hoc Joint Enrollment Committee.

The President is supported by an experienced and talented leadership team: The Senior Vice President for Mission, Strategic Planning, and Advancement, the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Dean of the College, the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Finance, the Vice President for Administration and Grants Management, and, the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students.

The Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and Student Council all provide elected representation of their constituent groups who advise the Senior Team and President on all aspects of college business. The College Council brings together the Chairs of each of these groups to facilitate campus-wide communication and decision-making.





LEADERSHIP AGENDA

The new president will have the opportunity to build on the strong institutional reputation of being a leading educator in the health professions, especially nursing and occupational therapy. Maria's mission is the foundation of the institution which emphasizes the Mercy charism, opportunity education, a commitment to the liberal arts, and the pursuit of social justice rooted in the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy. Maria boasts a dedicated faculty and staff, a supportive alumni base, and an appreciative student body.

The incoming president will be privileged to pursue the following leadership agenda priorities:

Nurture and build upon Maria's strong Mercy mission by embracing and animating the Covenant between the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas and Maria College. The Covenant is a mutual recognition of the value and ownership of mission and a shared commitment to service in Mercy higher education.

Build upon and implement Maria's Strategic Plan priorities to further the mission and advancement of the institution through innovation, partnership expansion and community needs. Understanding the demographic challenges facing higher education particularly in the northeast, will expand partnership opportunities to achieve priorities.

Build a sustainable financial model that assures a successful current plan and future for Maria. This includes an affordable and high-quality, career-relevant education. The president should be data-driven but also willing to take calculated risks in concert with the Board of Trustees and be open to pursuing new opportunities, innovative partnerships, and collaborations to secure a bright future for Maria.

Grow fundraising and the endowment by strengthening Maria's advancement operation and through successful outreach to alumni, friends, foundations and community partners

Foster a campus environment that is collaborative and committed to the principles of shared governance and transparency. Collaboration with the Board of Trustees and the broader capital state region community will be important in realizing the attainment of the College's strategic goals

Embrace and promote justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion for all campus personnel and students. Serve as a leader who inspires faculty, staff, and students to appreciate human differences and respect for one another and continue efforts to make Maria an increasingly inclusive and hospitable campus.

Build on and expand the strengths of the reputation of the health science programs at Maria through strategic enrollment growth and expansion of accessible forms of teaching and learning.

Appreciate the importance of a vibrant campus life, with diverse student programming, in creating an engaging student experience and in reaching and sustaining enrollment goals. Be savvy in defining opportunities and strengths of a small, opportunity, non-residential setting and leveraging the resources of Maria's newly renovated campus.

Demonstrate a commitment to student and employee success and well-being, including mental health and wellness, changing socio-economic dynamics both locally and nationally, and the residual impacts of COVID-19.

PREFERRED CHARACTERISTICS, ATTRIBUTES, AND EXPERIENCE

The ideal appointment of the next President of Maria College will bring a combination of emotional intelligence, business acumen, communication skills, and success in achieving institutional outcomes. The preferred characteristics, attributes and experiences include:

- An appreciation and understanding of the unique character of the College as expressed in the Mercy mission and values of the institution
- A person of integrity with high emotional intelligence who builds strong relationships with all key stakeholders and with exceptional skill in leading, mentoring, and empowering the Senior Leadership Team and faculty, staff, and student leaders
- A person who is student-centered in building connections with students through engagement in campus events and personal interactions with a diverse student body
- An inspiring and skilled communicator who will foster a strong sense of community and connectedness at Maria with the ability to navigate change while honoring and preserving the distinctive heritage of Maria
- A future-oriented, strategic, visionary thinker committed to an exceptional implementation of the Strategic Compass Plan and find ways to strengthen this distinctive educational innovation by extension of the original vision
- Understanding, experience, and acumen in budgeting and financial operations, and demonstrated fundraising acumen and communication skills for working with diverse groups of individuals and communities to garner resources for Maria College
- Demonstrates a commitment to justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion
- A nimble and flexible leader who moves with urgency and efficiency, and is able to pivot to respond to changing circumstances, particularly in the face of the headwinds of higher education, mission-relevant opportunities, and post-pandemic realities; and
- A visible, engaged, personable, collaborative leader who will move Maria forward with determination and resilience
- A master's degree is required, with a terminal degree strongly preferred





APPLICATION AND NOMINATION PROCESS

The college is being assisted by Academic Search. Applications should consist of a substantive cover letter addressing the qualifications and expectations listed above, curriculum vitae, and a list of five professional references with full contact information and a note indicating the nature of your working relationship with each. References will not be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest can be submitted electronically, and in confidence, to: MariaPresident@academicsearch.org.

Confidential discussions about this opportunity may be arranged by contacting one of the senior consultants for this search, either Jerry Israel (jerry.israel@academicsearch.org) or Suzanne Mellon (suzanne.mellon@academicsearch.org). The position is open until filled, but only applications received by **February 28, 2022**, can be assured full consideration.

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Maria College in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience. Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute. For more information, visit www.academicsearch.org.



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