OUR CAMPUS

The University of South Dakota (USD) is located on an attractive 274-acre campus in Vermillion, a small community nestled along the bluffs above the Missouri River in the southeast corner of South Dakota. USD was founded in 1862. It is the flagship institution in the state and region, and it is the only designated public liberal arts university in South Dakota. Named one of America’s most affordable and beautiful campuses, USD is home of the state’s only School of Medicine and School of Law, as well as an internationally accredited School of Business. USD continuously ranks among the nation’s top research universities and counts many of the state’s political leaders among its graduates. In addition to medicine, law and business, the university offers the College of Arts & Sciences, the School of Education, the state’s only College of Fine Arts, the College of Health Sciences and the Graduate School. As one of the nation’s most affordable universities, USD offers various tuition options designed to fit student needs. With an approximate enrollment of 10,000 students, USD is a Division I university with the friendliness and academic excellence of a small private college.

STRATEGIC REALIGNMENT

Effective July 01, 2021, USD’s Offices for Diversity, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will complete the first steps of an important strategic realignment of campus DEI initiatives. In this first phase, vital campus offices and staff positions will join the Office for Diversity: the Native American Cultural Center and Native Student Services; the Center for Diversity and Community; the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Inclusive Science Initiative program coordinator; and the Director of Tribal Outreach. The Sanford School of Medicine Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion will continue to report to the Vice President for Health Affairs and Dean of the Sanford School of Medicine, but they will have expanded communication and cooperation with the Chief Diversity Officer to coordinate DEI efforts at the university level. This realignment is an important step in the evolution and maturation of diversity and inclusion efforts across campus. In order to be efficient, strategic and holistic, the Chief Diversity Officer and the Office for Diversity will have significant and broad impact, scope and reach.

Diversity at USD: Over 50 Years of Progress and Growth for South Dakota

Position Description for Chief Diversity Officer, Office for Diversity
OPPORTUNITIES

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts at the University of South Dakota (USD) are supported across the university’s campus; from its executive leadership team, to its faculty and staff, to its engaged student body.

There are several points of pride that set USD apart in its diversity efforts. These include: (1) a high level of diversity for a small, rural town; (2) the capacity of the university to impact DEI activities locally and regionally; (3) the collaborative and team-based nature of the university’s administration and senior leadership; and (4) ease of access to City officials and leadership, which helps solidify a vibrant culture of cooperation between USD, the City of Vermillion and the greater community.

Significant opportunities for success and impact await the next Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) at USD. Demographic changes in South Dakota’s larger school districts indicate growth opportunities in enrollment that will increase institutional diversity. USD continues to develop its relationships with these school districts, including strong pathway programs.

The State of South Dakota recognizes its shifting demographics and understands the importance of building and supporting a diverse workforce. USD’s locations in Vermillion, Sioux Falls, and Rapid City—together with statewide affiliations and partnerships—will enable the CDO to help assure the success of South Dakota’s diverse workforce efforts.

Vermillion, the community in which USD’s main campus resides, is a small, surprisingly diverse community. It is a town that prides itself on the accessibility of its elected officials and community leaders. Furthermore, the City has dedicated attention to addressing community-wide diversity, equity and inclusion issues. The City of Vermillion and USD work closely together, recognizing a need for mutual assistance and support to advance the work of diversity.

The potential to address issues of diversity, equity and inclusion is larger than the campus and the community of Vermillion. Relationships with Tribal communities is an important dimension of the university’s development of DEI initiatives and achieving strategic success and collaboration. While the university is known for its strong Native American Cultural Center, the next CDO will be expected to establish meaningful relationships with Tribal communities and continue the revitalization of some of the important programs focused on Indigenous students. The larger Tribal communities in South Dakota are the area’s most under-represented population and hold the most promise for new opportunities and increased collaboration. The next CDO will work with USD’s Director of Tribal Outreach to develop relationships and learn the history of the region and the nine sovereign Tribes located within South Dakota’s geography.

USD’s Chief Diversity Officer will have the support needed to serve as one of the leading voices for change in the region and state. This person has the potential to be a role model for a variety of campus constituents. Because USD’s Office for Diversity is well-known as a leader for diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in the state, the Chief Diversity Officer will be highly visible and can potentially have a broad impact well beyond the campus grounds.

CHALLENGES

The same factors that enable the possibility of broad impact are the same factors that constitute the greatest challenges.

The need to address and work with those who experience overt discrimination due to race, sex, and sexual orientation and gender identity should be expected. Developing a collaborative diversity strategic plan will be critical to accomplishing quality outcomes.

Diversity and inclusion have a long history at USD, but efforts to advance DEI have evolved organically and sometimes independently of each other. Further, each diverse group in the university community has different needs and desires. The CDO will need to ensure quality communication among groups across campus and achieve a strategic balance in spending time with each group and addressing their individual needs.

Diversity, equity and inclusion efforts have developed differently across campus, and sometimes the programs diverge between faculty, staff and student populations. Champions and leaders of diversity initiatives across these populations often operate independently, meeting the needs and goals of their specific departments and students. The next CDO will help to orchestrate and implement a broad level of coordination among these sectors to achieve more efficient and strategic use of resources, both human and fiscal.
VISIONARY LEADER

The University of South Dakota (USD) is seeking a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) who is a capable and well-informed leader prepared to work effectively with the university President and serve as a senior leader of the university; who understands the importance of an equitable and inclusive campus culture and climate; and who recognizes the distinct interests of multiple constituencies. This professional is a liaison between university Administration and both campus and community stakeholders. Relevant groups include student groups, faculty and staff committees, as well as external stakeholders such as alumni, City, and state agencies. Such a visionary leader will need to strategically align current diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives for maximum impact and continuity.

EXPERIENCED DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION PRACTITIONER

The next CDO should demonstrate a successful record of advancing DEI best practices in a higher education setting. The successful candidate, through their experience, understands the changing environment and evolving expectations that impact faculty, staff and students across the campus. The CDO must be a tactical thinker, data-driven, and able to lead the university in visualizing and implementing dynamic priorities aimed at measurable outcomes.

EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNICATOR

USD’s next Chief Diversity Officer will be an engaged, approachable communicator, committed to open, transparent leadership. The ideal leader will be eager to tackle challenges and will have the ability to communicate effectively across multiple constituencies. Their leadership style will be creative and entrepreneurial. It is essential that the CDO is capable of communicating effectively in a way that elevates USD as a statewide and regional leader in advancing DEI initiatives. The CDO should possess superior and persuasive written and verbal communication skills, be an active listener, and possess the skills to work one-on-one and in groups. The ideal candidate should have the ability to influence others, successfully navigate challenging conversations, and serve as a powerful and effective spokesperson for the USD community.

STRATEGIC COLLABORATOR AND COMMUNITY-BUILDER

The ideal CDO will be an experienced agent of change, able to navigate internal and external stakeholders and advance a unified DEI vision that moves the university and the community forward. The CDO should have the ability to assess opportunities; to promote and lead innovative and entrepreneurial planning and problem-solving; and to leverage university, community and state resources. The next CDO must possess a collaborative, consensus-building leadership style and be open to thoughtful and appropriate innovation. The ideal candidate will demonstrate experience in managing the complexities of institutional change together with having the interpersonal skills to make decisions and attain consensus thoughtfully and purposefully. Because of the strong community and civic opportunities for this role, the successful candidate should be willing to relocate and reside in the Vermillion, South Dakota, area.

RESOURCE TO FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS

The Chief Diversity Officer will serve as a resource who brings to light best practices for creating more inclusive faculty, staff and student recruitment processes. Beyond recruitment, the CDO works with departments across campus to implement actions that increase retention. This individual will help guide USD in formalizing institutional practices around intercultural competency, policy development and performance measurement.

STUDENT-CENTERED LEADER

USD’s students are the heart of everything the university does. The CDO will lead by example to guide policies and practices that enhance the quality of student life, while also connecting academic learning to the student experience. The ideal CDO will be a community-builder who sees the education, safety, growth and well-being of students as the utmost priority; and who has an understanding of the application of research in the development and advancement of a positive and inclusive campus climate for diversity, equity, inclusion and a sense of belonging.
LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES OF THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

ASTUTE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The CDO should be capable of careful financial planning, building budgets and allocating limited resources in ways that are fair and transparent, and that reflect clear priorities.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH TRIBAL NATIONS

The Chief Diversity Officer should demonstrate an understanding of the vastness and complexities of Indigenous cultures, especially those cultures which have a home at USD. South Dakota’s geography is home to nine federally recognized Tribes. Each Tribe is vital to the State of South Dakota: politically, culturally, economically and historically. The ideal candidate will work with campus departments such as Native Student Services, the Institute of American Indian Studies, the Native American Cultural Center, and USD’s Director of Tribal Outreach to identify innovative strategies that aim to close the achievement gap between Native and non-Native students; to promote educational models that are culturally relevant; and where appropriate, create partnerships with the Tribal Nations and the university to increase an authentic sense of belonging and achievement for Indigenous students and employees at USD.

DESIRE FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

USD seeks a Chief Diversity Officer who brings an understanding of the region and an ability to lead conversations with diplomacy and civility. The ability to apply critical thinking and emotional intelligence in the public arena is vitally important. Moreover, they should envision and anticipate potential synergies between local DEI initiatives and South Dakota priorities. While serving as a visible and collaborative leader on diversity initiatives, the successful candidate should also demonstrate the ability to look at issues from the perspective of others outside of the institution and use effective communication when discussing DEI priorities.

OTHER QUALITIES

- Master’s degree required; earned doctorate or terminal degree preferred
- Progressively responsible executive-level experience and demonstrated record of success
### LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES OF THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

**DEI MILESTONES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Institute of American Indian Studies established by South Dakota legislature</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Campus Diversity Officer position expands to Associate Vice President for Diversity</td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td>Tiospaye Student Council</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>CDEG evolves into the President’s Council for Diversity and Inclusiveness</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>USD’s 1st Annual Statewide Wacipi</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>USD adopts the strategic organizing principle of Inclusive Excellence</td>
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<td>1986</td>
<td>Native American Cultural Center</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Center for Diversity &amp; Community opens to students, faculty, and staff</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>Building Bridges Conference</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Student Veterans Resource Center</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>Native American Studies Program</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>City of Vermillion establishes the Vermillion Human Relations Commission</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>Native American Law Student Association</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>City of Vermillion establishes LGBTQ+ Liaison in Mayor’s Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Campus Diversity Enhancement Group (CDEG) established</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Vermillion Police Department establishes LGBTQ+ Liaison</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>Office for Diversity &amp; Campus Diversity Officer</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>City of Vermillion hosts 1st Annual Juneteenth Freedom Day</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>Native Student Services Director</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Revitalization of Institute of American Indian Studies</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>USD Partnership with Indian University of North America at Crazy Horse Memorial</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Associate Vice President for Diversity position expands to Chief Diversity Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Native American Academic Advisor</td>
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DEI INITIATIVES

As the flagship institution in the state and region, USD has made great strides toward diversity, equity and inclusion. This is the result of listening and responding to the needs of university members, giving them tools and an environment in which to be successful and to collectively pursue excellence in higher education.

USD has been addressing critical issues related to diversity and inclusion for over 50 years, with the past 20 years seeing sustained, focused attention on doing the work of diversity. During this time, USD has worked to advance a clear definition of diversity and strives to create an environment that embraces all students, faculty and staff. USD has completed numerous strategic steps to intentionally address both the challenges and the opportunities discussed above. These steps have been taken while recognizing the state and regional context of USD: our location in the upper Midwest; our demography as a predominantly white institution in a predominantly white state; our state’s significant population of Indigenous peoples; and our rural setting. We also recognize that USD exists on the ancestral lands of Indigenous Tribes whose heritage and culture continue to enrich our community to this day. It is with profound respect that we acknowledge the Indigenous peoples on whose land we live and study.

Since 2012, USD’s Associate Vice President for Diversity, leading the Office for Diversity and serving as a senior advisor to the President, has been a champion for the strategic organizing principle of inclusive excellence, a national model produced by the American Association of Colleges & Universities. Inclusive excellence at USD means:

- Diversity is broadly defined to include, but not limited to, race / ethnicity, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, first-generation status, veteran’s status, disability status, socio-economic status, class, rural status, urban status, and many other identities.

- A commitment to embedding equity and inclusion into all aspects of the university.

- Making the pursuit of diversity, equity, and inclusion everyone’s responsibility.

USD is an institutional member of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE). We have diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence committees functioning in each college, school, and major division of the university; these committees focus on the challenges and opportunities in their respective areas. Additionally, there is an ever-expanding list of resources for students, staff and faculty. Some of the most prominent are the Center for Diversity & Community, the Native American Cultural Center / Native Student Services, the Faculty and Staff of Color Association, the President’s Council for Diversity and Inclusiveness, the International Office, and the Student Veterans Resource Center, just to name a few.

Additionally, USD continues to ensure that its academic and support programs which serve Indigenous peoples are of the highest quality and provide for their unique culturally related academic needs. Whenever possible, this is done in collaboration with Tribal experts and elders.

Relevant links that further expand on USD’s DEI efforts can be found at:

https://www.usd.edu/diversity-and-inclusiveness
https://www.usd.edu/diversity-and-inclusiveness/diversity-and-inclusiveness-statement
https://www.usd.edu/student-life/diversity-and-community
LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES OF THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

DEI HIGHLIGHTS

As a testament to USD’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, some of our achievements include:

- Supporting a full-time Native American Academic Advisor position
- Establishing the Multicultural Recruitment Coordinator
- Providing faculty training and developing department-appropriate DEI program goals
- Conducting process audit and mapping through the Student Success Team to identify gaps that have previously contributed to students of marginalized groups “slipping through” the cracks
- Adding the Associate Vice President for Diversity position to Executive Committee (the President’s Cabinet), Provost’s Executive Staff, Deans’ Council, and Student Success Team to allow for greater coordination of efforts across the university
- Serving as an institutional member of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education
- Supporting Native Student Services as an invaluable resource for USD’s Indigenous student population
- Focusing attention on improving representation and retention of underrepresented faculty, staff and students: from 2000 to 2019, female faculty representation increased from 39.6% to 49.2%; BIPOC faculty representation increased from 9.9% to 17.2%; and there was an increase in retention of Indigenous, Asian, and international students
- Creating inclusive excellence committees in nearly every department and division on campus to work on initiatives, speakers, and programs that directly relate to their disciplines and the topics needed by their students
- Encouraging the campus community to participate in a thorough and informative SafeZone online training program designed to increase awareness and understanding of LGBTQ+ issues as well as creating safer spaces for members of the LGBTQ+ community
- Implementing a Land Acknowledgement Statement for the university
- Providing substantial financial and academic resources to revitalize and reinvigorate the Institute of American Indian Studies, including hiring the Institute’s first post-doctoral Scholar
LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES OF THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

2020-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

https://www.usd.edu/about-usd/fy26-strategic-plan

The six strategic themes represent areas to which the university will devote particular effort in the coming years. They do not—and cannot—encompass every aspect of USD’s efforts in educating students, advancing knowledge, and serving the public. The Strategic Plan presents a refinement of direction toward a future for which USD has already prepared conscientiously.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion take a central role in USD’s recently-approved Strategic Plan. This elevates USD’s DEI efforts, giving them publicity, recognition and broad financial and institutional support across the campus. We embrace diversity as one of our strengths and strive to make inclusive excellence a reality. We are proud of the inclusive, equitable and caring culture we continue to create. Under the Diversity Theme, USD is pursuing two overarching goals:

GOAL 1: DEVELOP AND REFINE NEW CORE COMPETENCIES FOR DIVERSITY

This goal is marked by the following Big Steps: (1) review and revise diversity statements for the university and all units on campus, to include defining core competencies for diversity across discipline/units and reviewing inclusive excellence statements for core competencies and consistency; (2) review current training efforts, pursue continuous improvement, and extend trainings as needed; and (3) develop, publish and make progress on a strategic plan for diversity.

GOAL 2: RECRUIT AND RETAIN DIVERSE FACULTY AND STAFF

This goal is marked by the following Big Steps: (1) review baseline on diverse faculty and staff at all administrative levels; (2) explore tools to measure job satisfaction and engagement; (3) analyze faculty and staff turnover; (4) administrator evaluations, to include improved efforts for evaluations of administrators as well as a common diversity expectation for university leadership performance evaluations; and (5) create a comprehensive plan for recruitment of diverse faculty, to include a plan for placing and supporting students into Ph.D. programs and creating dissertation fellowships in targeted areas for students from other programs to come to USD.

NOMINATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

For full consideration, applications should be received by March 15, 2021. Application must include a cover letter, current resume, and contact information for three (3) current professional references. All materials must be sent to: SouthDakotaCDO@agbsearch.com

For further information and instructions, please review the prospectus above.

All inquiries, nominations, and applications will be held in strictest confidence; references will not be contacted without the applicant’s express permission. Inquiries and nominations should be sent to SouthDakotaCDO@agbsearch.com or directed to:

Kim R. Bobby, Ed.D.  Carlton E. Brown, Ed.D.
Executive Search Consultant  Executive Search Consultant
kim.bobby@agbsearch.com  carlton.brown@agbsearch.com
253-861-7738    912-247-8661

The University of South Dakota is an Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity Employer committed to increasing the diversity of its faculty, staff and students.

Diversity and inclusiveness are values that are embraced and practiced at the University of South Dakota. Candidates who support these values are encouraged to apply.
WE ARE
SOUTH DAKOTA