Keene
STATE COLLEGE



PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

LEADERSHIP PROFILE



Welcome

The University System of New Hampshire Board of Trustees and the Keene State College community invite nominations and applications for the 12th President of Keene State College. This is an exciting opportunity to lead a public institution with a proud history, a resilient community, and a deep commitment to student success and public service. To ensure a robust and highly qualified pool, this search is being conducted with a high level of confidentiality.

This presidency offers the opportunity to lead the next chapter of a transformation already underway. Building on the direction established in November 2025, the next president will bring the promise of a three-school structure to life, build on distinctive program strengths such as product design, architecture and safety and construction sciences, and deepen the College's role as a partner in the region's economic future.



The Opportunity

Keene State College is unique among premier liberal arts institutions with its mix of applied programs integrated with its strong arts and sciences and humanities curriculum. The College is poised for its next chapter and needs a leader who can build on this foundation by developing and communicating a compelling vision for it's future, while navigating the challenges ahead with resilience, integrity, and optimism.

The College has navigated significant challenges in recent years, including budget pressures, declining student demographics, and the broader disruptions reshaping higher education across the country. Administration has responded to these changes with integrity by clarifying its mission and cutting costs, while remaining true to its core values.

Keene State College now seeks a visionary leader who will champion its distinctive identity, guide the institution through a transformative period in higher education, and inspire its community toward a meaningful and sustainable future.



College Profile

Keene State College (the College) is a residential campus located in Keene, the heart of the Monadnock region in southwestern New Hampshire. Part of the University System of New Hampshire (USNH), the College carries its own mission, identity, and accreditation, and has served the state since 1909.

The College combines a foundational commitment to the liberal arts with a strong emphasis on career readiness. Academic programs include education, nursing, the sciences, business, and the arts and humanities. The College also offers a popular and distinctive set of applied professional programs, including construction safety sciences, architecture, product design, and human performance and movement science.

Known for its tight-knit community, Keene State's student experience is defined by a student-first approach. Over 60 student-run clubs and organizations are active on campus including the Equinox, an award-winning student newspaper, an award-winning dance team, a student a cappella group, and a popular outing club.

Students regularly cite the benefits of working closely with their faculty mentors as they navigate their academic pathways. Their experiences are defined by access to undergraduate research, internships, practicums, and hands-on learning opportunities.

Athletically, the College has a winning track record across its teams. The Owls have received the Little East Conference Commissioner's Cup 18 times, an award recognizing athletic success and academic achievement. Keene State's student athletes have among the highest GPAs and retention rates at the College.

The College is located in the center of a vibrant, walkable downtown, with strong arts and cultural institutions and exceptional access to outdoor recreation. Regional businesses are invested in the College's success. Keene is approximately 85 miles northwest of Boston and 60 miles from Manchester-Boston Regional Airport, making it accessible without being urban.



At a Glance

$90M FY2027 operating budget

2,615 enrolled undergraduate students, 123 graduate students

36% first generation students

89% employed or in graduate school within one year of graduation

22 DIII varsity sports teams, plus cheerleading and esports

University System of New Hampshire

The College is one of three institutions within USNH, alongside the University of New Hampshire and Plymouth State University. Together, the institutions serve more than 21,000 students and award more than half of the bachelor's degrees earned in New Hampshire.

The three campuses operate as independently accredited institutions while leveraging economies of scale through a centralized shared service model for back-office operations. Our system-ness and working together are key strengths of USNH. The model is designed to improve efficiency, leverage expertise, and maximize system-wide resources.

Additional information about USNH is available at www.usnh.edu



Historical Context

The College was founded in 1909 as Keene Normal School, renamed Keene Teachers College in 1939, and adopted its current identity when it joined USNH in 1963. The motto inscribed on the welcoming archway has persevered: “Enter to learn; Go forth to serve.”

Since its founding, the College’s academic and student experience has prepared graduates for lifelong learning and the needs of the workforce. The College's curricular offerings are robust for an institution of its size. The four most consistently enrolled majors are Education, Safety and Occupational Health Applied Sciences, Psychology, and Business Management, and are closely tied to the needs of the region and the state. Programs in the arts and humanities continue to thrive despite national trends.



Education

The Education program is one of the largest teacher pipelines in the state and is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the gold standard held by only one-third of teacher preparation programs nationally. The College also earned an "A" grade from the National Council on Teacher Quality.

Many NH educators pursue master’s, post-master's, and graduate licensure programs through the College’s graduate programs to become teacher leaders, special educators, and principals.



Positioned for the Future

In 2026, the College assembled its academic programs into a three-school structure (the School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Applied Sciences and Technology, and the School of Education, Health, and Behavioral Sciences) designed to promote the full range of programs and opportunities Keene State offers and to inspire collaboration across disciplines.

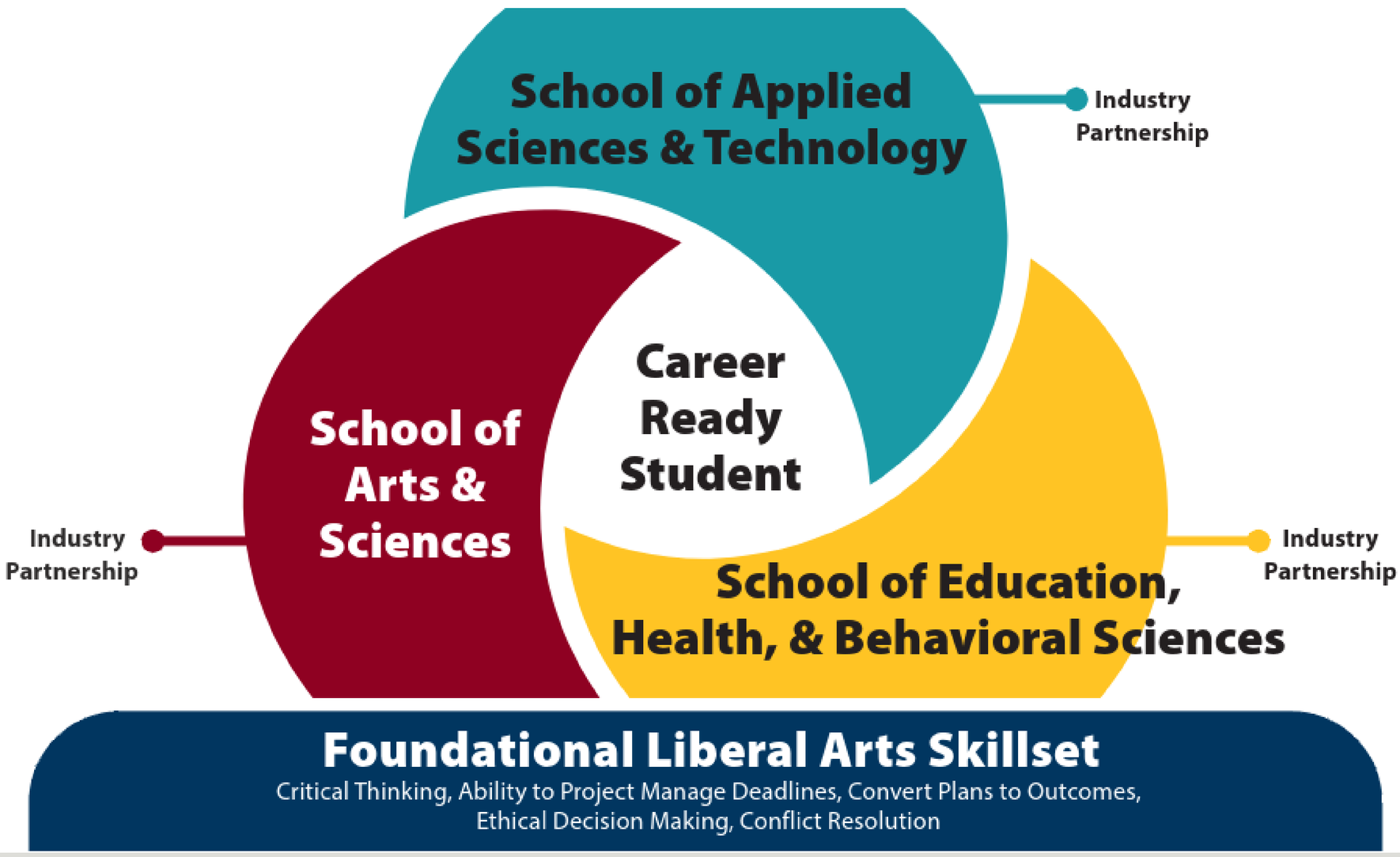
For the next president, this structure opens opportunities to connect disciplines, develop shared courses and create new pathways for students. Working with deans, faculty and staff, the president will carry the transition forward and connect the strengths of all three schools with employers and community partners.

107 tenure track faculty, supported by interdisciplinary adjunct faculty, contract lecturers, and staff, teach across the three schools, totaling 60+ fields of study. All programs speak to the impact of the liberal arts, and all programs demonstrate how major and minor coursework develops the skills students need for today's and tomorrow's workforce.

The School of Arts & Sciences
- 53 faculty
- 877 declared majors

The School of Applied Sciences & Technology
- 20 faculty
- 905 declared majors

The School of Education, Health & Behavioral Sciences
- 34 faculty
- 1,043 declared majors



This integration is reinforced by a recently revised general education program called Explorations, which offers students the ability to take courses in areas of genuine interest while building on their educational foundations. The program is based upon the College's distinctive College-Wide Learning Outcomes: intercultural perspectives, civic engagement, and sustainability.

Newer offerings in Accounting, Data Analytics, Optics, and Construction Management reflect the College's ongoing commitment to developing programs in response to student and employer demand. The three-school structure positions the College to move quickly on the opportunities ahead: high-demand programs, stackable credentials, shortened degree pathways, and hybrid delivery models that meet students where they are.



Distinctive Programs

The Safety and Construction Sciences department offers the first standalone construction safety sciences degree in the nation, placing 100 percent of its graduates at an average starting salary between $70,000 and $80,000. The program has grown steadily while regional enrollment has declined.



Unique Designation

Keene State College is the only institution, public or private, in New Hampshire to hold the All-Steinway School designation, one of fewer than 200 worldwide. Additionally, the music program is the only NASM-accredited program at a liberal arts institution in northern New England, offering five music degrees, 40+ faculty, and a 100% placement rate for music education graduates.



Signature Resource Center

Established in 1983, the Cohen Institute is one of the oldest Holocaust resource centers in the United States. The College was the first U.S. institution to offer an undergraduate major in Holocaust and Genocide Studies and remains one of a handful in the country today. The Institute's programs, events, and offerings are woven into the mission of the College and reflect Keene State's commitment to civic responsibility and human dignity.

About the Position

The President of Keene State College is the chief executive officer and administrative head of the College, reporting to the Chancellor of the University System of New Hampshire and serving as a member of the USNH Board of Trustees.

The president will assess and shape a senior leadership team and Cabinet structure to reflect the College's priorities and future direction. They will inherit experienced and dedicated colleagues across academic affairs, finance and administration, enrollment, student engagement, and advancement, and will have the flexibility to build on that foundation.

The president will be a visible and engaged leader on campus and in the region. The president will build relationships across campus, fostering a culture of transparency, trust, and shared purpose, and ultimately, hold the institution accountable for continuous improvement and innovation. Externally, the president will serve as an active and committed member of the City of Keene and the broader Monadnock region.

A historic President's House, located on the edge of campus along Main Street, is available for use as a residence. The location offers a natural presence in the heart of the community.







Leadership Agenda

This is a moment of significant possibility for the College. The Board of Trustees is engaged and supportive, community partnerships are strong, and the College has the character and momentum to compete and grow in the rapidly changing higher education landscape.

1. Advance the College's Distinctive Value

Articulate and advance a compelling vision that carries forward the direction established in November 2025 that speaks to prospective students, employers, donors, and policymakers. Bring that vision to life through investments, program decisions, and partnerships.



2. Grow Enrollment and Strengthen Retention

Drive enrollment growth by building on Keene State's distinctive strengths and developing innovative academic programs that respond to evolving student interests, demographic shifts, and workforce needs. Position Keene State as a relevant and compelling choice for prospective students regionally throughout New Hampshire, nationally, and internationally. Reinforce strong student retention through a comprehensive, data-informed approach that addresses barriers to retention and prioritizes student success, academic engagement, and a strong sense of belonging.

3. Secure Long-Term Financial Sustainability

Bring a strategic approach to budget planning with disciplined financial stewardship and timely, transparent decision-making. Explore innovative resource development opportunities to align academic offerings and investments with student demand and workforce needs.

4. Advance the Benefits of Shared Services

Work with system colleagues to advance service excellence, identify additional opportunities for collaboration, and optimize the scale of the system enterprise. The president will champion system-ness, embracing and leading through the benefits that come from working across institutions including academic partnerships and shared program development. The next president will make a compelling case for collaboration while ensuring Keene State's distinctive mission and identity remain clear.

5. Ensure Academic Excellence and Innovation

Ensure every student graduates with critical thinking, communication, and adaptability skills through innovative program design and delivery. Review opportunities for stackable credentials, shortened degree pathways, and hybrid and online options to expand access and create achievable pathways to completion. Intentionally incorporate artificial intelligence (AI) by establishing responsible policies and safeguards for its use.

6. Strengthen Partnerships, Career Pathways, and the Workforce Ecosystem

Expand internships, practicums, and applied research experiences across all programs to advance the College's workforce ecosystem. Build the relationships, infrastructure, and institutional commitment needed to make experiential learning a defining feature of every academic program. Continue the process of building the College into the regional workforce hub in partnership with business and government.

7. Leverage External Relationships and the College's Strategic Location

Cultivate relationships and opportunities associated with the College's unique location within the economic and cultural hub of the region.



8. Expand Philanthropic Support and Resource Development

Advocate and build meaningful relationships with alumni, donors, foundations, corporations and government partners to build on Keene State's solid philanthropic foundation. Total giving to the College's endowments reached $2,314,096 in FY26. This brings the total endowment value to approximately $78.56 million across multiple funds. Combined with $5 million in sponsored project awards and grants, these figures reflect the College's growing capacity to attract significant external investment. The College engages with nearly 40,000 alumni across the country.

9. Maintain Labor Relations and Collective Bargaining

Work constructively within a unionized environment, building productive, trust-based relationships with union leadership.

Required Qualifications, Experiences, and Attributes

Candidates should possess:

Institutional Leadership and Strategic Planning

- Senior-level leadership experience in higher education or another comparably complex organization, preferably not-for-profit.
- Experience working effectively within a complex governance environment.
- A record of developing and executing a compelling vision and strategy and achieving measurable results.
- Experience successfully leading organizations through significant change.
- A forward-thinking, innovative mindset and willingness to challenge traditional approaches when necessary.
- Resilience, adaptability, optimism, and effectiveness in times of change and uncertainty.

Academic Excellence, Student Success and Enrollment Management

- A strong commitment to academic excellence and student success with demonstrated leadership experience that reflects a commitment to excellence, learning, and the success of those served by the organization.
- Demonstrated experience with enrollment strategies, including identifying new student markets, strengthening recruitment, optimizing financial aid, and differentiating the institution in an increasingly competitive higher education landscape.
- Experience supporting academic program development, evaluating program viability, and aligning academic offerings with evolving student interests, employer needs, and regional economic priorities.

Financial Management and Budgeting

- Strong financial acumen and demonstrated success managing institutional budgets, aligning resources with strategic priorities, identifying operational efficiencies, and developing sustainable revenue streams.

Partnerships and Resource Development

- A track record of building partnerships with employers, government agencies, educational institutions, community organizations, and other external stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to cultivate philanthropic support, engage alumni and external partners, and secure resources to advance institutional priorities.

Organizational Culture and Communication

- Experience fostering a culture of accountability, innovation, and continuous improvement.
- Executive communications skills with the ability to communicate with clarity, authenticity, and impact.
- Understanding of shared governance and collective bargaining environments.
- The ability to build trust across diverse constituencies and perspectives.
- A collaborative and open leadership style that values engagement while maintaining accountability.
- The highest standards of integrity and ethics.

Campus and Community Engagement

- A visible and engaged presence, with a commitment to being actively involved in the life of the College, attending a variety of student and community engaged events.
- A genuine commitment to becoming an active member of the Keene and Monadnock Region communities.

Academic Credentials

- A terminal degree with the highest levels of distinction and leadership within their professions and who demonstrate a strong understanding of and appreciation for the academic enterprise will be given strong consideration.

Nominations and Applications

AGB Search is assisting Keene State College with this search. Application materials should be submitted through the AGB Search portal: https://bit.ly/4hdxlnH

Review of applications for the President position will begin immediately and continue until an appointment is made. The Search Committee and AGB Search will review all applications in strict confidence.

To assure full consideration, applications should be received by December 18, 2026.

Applicants are requested to submit the following materials:

1. A current curriculum vitae;
2. A letter of interest, which addresses how the candidate's experiences and qualifications align with the professional qualifications and attributes, outlined in the position profile; and
3. A list of five professional references with email addresses, telephone numbers and a brief explanation of your professional relationship. (References will not be contacted without prior authorization from the applicant.)

Confidential nominations, expressions of interest, or questions regarding the application process should be directed to: KeeneStatePresident@agbsearch.com or to one of the search consultants:

Kimberly Templeton, J.D., Principal, AGB Search
kimberly.templeton@agbsearch.com, (540) 761-9494

Concetta M. Stewart, Ph.D., Principal, AGB Search
concetta.stewart@agbsearch.com, (908) 341-2178

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