



# Cal Poly Pomona

## President Search Leadership Profile

The California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees invites nominations and applications for the position of President of California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona). The University's next President will be an ambitious and innovative leader who welcomes the challenge and opportunity present in assuming the presidency of a storied institution that is well positioned to leverage its support from the campus, the legislature, and the surrounding community as it continues on its path to its brightest future.

### **Cal Poly Pomona**

Cal Poly Pomona has a rich history unlike that of any other institution in Southern California.

The University first opened in September 1938 in San Dimas, California as a satellite campus of California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. In 1949, W. K. Kellogg, the entrepreneur who founded the Kellogg Company, deeded 813 acres of land to the state of California, which is today's Cal Poly Pomona Campus. In 1961, 329 women joined the student



body of Cal Poly SLO for the first time, and five years later, the Pomona campus separated from the SLO campus. In 1972, the university was granted university status and renamed California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. Today, Cal Poly Pomona is part of the 22-campus CSU system and stands as an influential and impactful regional comprehensive state university, recently designated as an R2 institution by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, home to approximately 27,000 students, 2,250 faculty and staff, and that benefits from a network of more than 170,000 alumni.

Cal Poly Pomona offers a transformative, world-class education – known as the [CPP Polytechnic Experience \(PolyX\)](#) – rooted in experiential learning, discovery and innovation. As one of three polytechnic universities in the CSU, Cal Poly Pomona prides itself on cultivating student practitioners, integrative thinkers and model leaders through a “[Become by Doing](#)” approach that prepares students for civic engagement and fulfilling professional and personal lives. The university is ranked the #1 polytechnic university in the nation for social mobility, and its caring and inclusive campus community is committed to honoring and supporting varied paths to success for its diverse student body. The multi-disciplinary nature

of Cal Poly Pomona's PolyX approach develops graduates who are not only ready to succeed in the professional world on day one but are also resilient, agile, and adaptable for the workforce of tomorrow. Nowhere else can students ride an [Arabian horse](#), practice on a Steinway piano, bring a new product to market, and build a liquid-fueled rocket.



The University includes eight academic colleges ([Don B. Huntley College of Agriculture](#), [College of Business Administration](#), [College of Education and Integrative Studies](#), [College of Engineering](#), [College of Environmental Design](#), [Collins College of Hospitality Management](#), [College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences](#), and [College of Science](#)) that together offer 54 bachelor's degrees, 37 master's degrees, and a doctorate in education. Beyond the campus, Cal Poly Pomona provides a strategic selection of academic programs across eight locations in southern California, including an agricultural training

program in Escondido, an evening-hours K-12 administrative service credential at various high schools throughout greater Los Angeles, and a Master of Interior Architecture program within the UCLA Extension space.

Cal Poly Pomona is located in an idyllic foothill location in the San Gabriel Valley at the nexus of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties, less than 30 miles east of Los Angeles and within an hour's drive of beaches, mountains, and deserts. The University is accredited by the WSCUC and many of its programs are also individually accredited by specialized boards and associations. For more information about Cal Poly Pomona, please visit <https://www.cpp.edu/>.

### **Principles of Community**

We value academic excellence, experiential learning, diversity and inclusivity, student learning and success, community engagement, and social and environmental responsibility. In line with these values, we are committed to the following Principles of Community that shape our individual and collective character and guide our interactions with each other.

- **Practice Mutual Respect:** We recognize the inherent dignity and worth of every individual, treating them with courtesy and kindness, actively listening to their perspectives, and maintaining a respectful and open dialogue.
- **Foster Growth:** We support the holistic development of each community member, promoting and encouraging opportunities for intellectual, professional, and emotional growth.

- **Cultivate Belonging:** We actively create an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued, welcomed, and empowered to contribute.
- **Act with Integrity:** We commit to the highest standards of ethical behavior, transparency, and fairness in all aspects of academic, professional, and personal life.

Through our Principles of Community, we reaffirm our individual and collective responsibility for creating a supportive, inclusive, and intellectually vibrant environment where all can flourish.

### **Points of Pride**

Cal Poly Pomona is a university of significance, ranked among the top institutions in the nation in social mobility and recognized as a leader within the CSU. As an institution defined by its multi-disciplinary PolyX approach to education, Cal Poly Pomona is committed to graduating students who are confident, well prepared, culturally competent, and uniquely positioned to excel in their future careers and beyond. The University is exceptionally proud of its achievements, including:



- #1 Polytechnic University for Diversity & Economic Mobility (*The Wall Street Journal*, 2025; CollegeNET, 2024; *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, 2024)
- #2 Top Public University West (*U.S. News & World Report*, 2026)
- #2 Most Innovative Schools West (*U.S. News & World Report*, 2026)
- #3 Best Value School West (*U.S. News & World Report*, 2026)
- #2 Best Colleges for Veterans Regional Universities West (*U.S. News & World Report*, 2026)
- #10 Top on Social Mobility (*U.S. News & World Report*, 2026)
- #21 Best Colleges in America (*Wall Street Journal*, 2025)
- #1 Best Bang for the Buck Polytechnic: West (*Washington Monthly*, 2024)
- 5 of 5 stars: Best Colleges in America (*Money*, 2024)
- #11 Bachelor's Degrees Earned by Hispanic Students (*Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, 2024)
- #17 Bachelor's Degrees Earned by Asian American Students (*Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, 2024)

To learn more about the University and its programs' recognitions and accolades, please visit <https://www.cpp.edu/aboutcpp/rankings.shtml>.



## **Position Summary**

Appointed by the CSU Board of Trustees and reporting directly to the CSU Chancellor, the President will serve as the University's chief executive officer responsible for setting the vision, strategy, and related institutional goals and objectives. The President will oversee the University's administration and operations and implement the priorities, policies and procedures adopted by the CSU system. The President will focus on achieving the University's core mission to nurture and support students' unique talents, diverse life experiences, and intellect through engaged teaching, learning, scholarship, applied research, and public service that support their overall success, well-being, and the greater good. The President will serve as an executive leader of the CSU system, working collaboratively with the Chancellor and her Executive Leadership Team to advance the mission of the CSU system.

The President must be a visionary, vibrant, and inclusive leader dedicated to advancing Cal Poly Pomona and enhancing the experience of all who consider the University their home. To do so, the President will serve as a strong advocate for Cal Poly Pomona



and actively engage with campus colleagues and the community to support the University's educational mission. The President will work closely with administrators, faculty, staff, students, and community leaders to foster an environment committed to teaching and research excellence while showcasing the campus' polytechnic identity and passion for serving its community. As the campus' most visible champion, the President will serve at the forefront in enhancing existing and creating new relationships with alumni, community leaders, donors, and friends of the University in the local and regional community.

In serving as one of the leading spokespersons and advocates for higher education in the region and the state, the President will be an influential leader who must possess excellent interpersonal skills, judgment, diplomacy, personal and professional integrity, and an earned reputation for working collegially and collaboratively with internal and external constituencies. The President will act as a catalyst for creativity and innovation, and will work with the Chancellor, the CSU Board of Trustees, the state of California legislature, and other CSU system leaders to further enhance higher education in California.

## **Opportunities and Challenges**

The Cal Poly Pomona Presidency represents a tremendous opportunity to elevate the University and its polytechnic identity on the local and national stage. The next President will be charged with capitalizing on the University's foundational strengths to accelerate its upward trajectory, increase its positive impact on the communities it serves, and advance the "Become by Doing" ethos, focused on rising above the University's "hidden gem" status in the higher education landscape. In addition, the next President will provide bold leadership in several critical areas, including, but not limited to:

- **Championing Cal Poly Pomona's Polytechnic Identity** – Cal Poly Pomona's next President will lead a university that is only one of three polytechnic institutions within the 22-university California State University System. Given the University's mission to cultivate success through a diverse culture of experiential learning, discovery, and innovation, the next President must be prepared to work with campus communities to explore strategies that showcase Cal Poly Pomona's strengths and identify new opportunities to amplify the University's virtues, contributions, and offerings.
- **Creating a New, Shared Vision for Cal Poly Pomona** — With the University's current strategic plan, [\*Our Journey to the Future\*](#), coming to a close, Cal Poly Pomona finds itself at an exciting juncture as it prepares to embark on the development of its next strategic plan. Upon their arrival, the next President will be presented with the opportunity to collaborate with the University's myriad stakeholders to develop a new vision for the future. This compelling new vision must build upon existing strengths that place Cal Poly Pomona's unique polytechnic identity front and center. It must also inspire campus constituencies and communities to greater heights and align well with the ideals set forth within CSU's new systemwide strategic plan, [\*CSU Forward\*](#).
- **Supporting Cal Poly Pomona's Educational Enterprise** – Cal Poly Pomona's next President will lead an educational enterprise that consists of numerous academic and administrative units whose success relies heavily on the University's dedicated and talented faculty and staff. For the University to maintain its commitment to academic excellence and creating an exceptional student learning environment, the next President will need to have demonstrable experience working collaboratively with faculty and staff through shared governance processes and have the ability to proactively address issues that impact the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and students to the University, its community, and the region.



- **Enhancing Cal Poly Pomona's Position in the Community** – Cal Poly Pomona is located in a highly advantageous location providing easy access to four of Southern California's most populous counties (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino). With this in mind, the next President must be prepared to play a significant role within the University and the broader Southern California community, serving as both an educational and regional leader. The President must be an



effective advocate and spokesperson for high-quality education and for the University, further strengthening its role as an academic, social, and economic driver while fostering a shared sense of mission, culture, and spirit among all internal and external constituents.

- **Responding to Enrollment Trends in Higher Education** – While Cal Poly Pomona has maintained steady enrollment over the preceding five years, the University must prepare for future demographic shifts and potential volatility in enrollment trends. The University's

next President must be a forward-thinking leader with a comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting higher education, increased competition from within and outside institutional service areas, and an eye for future trends and developments. The President must utilize this knowledge and expertise to shape Cal Poly Pomona's strategic initiatives and resource allocation in the areas of enrollment management, academic programming, research and creative activity, and student success-related supports and programming, ensuring that the University achieves its goals and advances its priorities.

- **Leading Cal Poly Pomona Through Social and Higher Educational Change** – Like universities across the nation, Cal Poly Pomona is navigating the current national landscape marked by change, challenge and, often, division. The next President must continue to guide the University toward meeting the needs and expectations of its stakeholders while also preparing students for success beyond graduation in a world that is undergoing rapid change. Cal Poly Pomona's President must serve as a unifying force among its constituencies and foster an environment that builds and strengthens institutional collegiality and *esprit de corps*, while promoting a campus culture that embraces and respects the diversity of viewpoints across its myriad stakeholder groups.
- **Identifying and Developing New Revenue Streams** – Cal Poly Pomona's next President will play a pivotal and high-profile role in securing resources that will support the University's mission and vision for the future. The President must possess the ability to develop new and strengthen existing revenue streams, e.g., by enhancing enrollment strategies, advocating for resources, driving philanthropic giving, and



soliciting grants and contracts, among other strategies. To adapt, stay competitive, and ultimately lead in the evolving higher education landscape, the next President must be an energetic, strategic, and enthusiastic advocate as well as an effective manager who leverages both internal and external resources to advance the University's mission. The President will have the opportunity to engage and inspire others about Cal Poly Pomona's polytechnic identity, mission, and trajectory, while stimulating enthusiasm among stakeholders in the collective effort to achieve new heights.

## **Essential Qualities and Characteristics**

### ***Leadership***

- A visible, transparent, and accessible leader with a proven track record of establishing and nurturing strong relationships with key internal and external stakeholders.
- A collaborative leader who will unify and partner with campus constituencies to advance Cal Poly Pomona's strategic priorities and serve as a persuasive advocate among stakeholders both within and external to the CSU system.
- An entrepreneurial leader with a forward-thinking mindset for innovation who will serve as a guiding force as the campus develops a vision for the future that leverages Cal Poly Pomona's strengths as a polytechnic university.
- A leadership style that engages and inspires faculty, staff, students, and members of the broader community.
- The ability to catalyze the development of innovative solutions to challenging situations.
- The ability to lead with courage and make difficult budgetary and personnel decisions in a timely manner and effectively articulate the rationale for these decisions to university stakeholders.
- Demonstrated experience serving as a thoughtful, strategic, and fierce advocate for students, faculty, staff, and the values of their institution.
- A regional international leader who stresses the importance of global learning and opportunities.



### ***Management***

- Experience fostering an environment that encourages and supports interdisciplinary programs, collaborations, and scholarly excellence.
- The ability to earn the respect and trust of all campus constituents and deeply value the contributions of all faculty, staff, and students and their feedback.
- Experience fostering and guiding innovative programs that support faculty and staff in their professional growth and career development.



- A commitment to and demonstrated evidence of making a difference in providing quality education for students from all backgrounds.
- Knowledge and experience in managing budgets and the ability to strengthen, solicit, and secure financial resources.
- A proven track record in building, maintaining, and motivating a strong and effective leadership team with a collaborative and inclusive leadership style.
- An understanding of and commitment to transparent, collaborative communication with all campus stakeholders, ensuring timely information sharing that leads to effective and

inclusive decision-making.

- A track record of effective delegation coupled with a personal commitment to and experience setting clear, achievable goals and meaningful metrics for assessing progress and maintaining accountability.
- An active and courageous management style coupled with conflict resolution skills; the ability to engage key stakeholders in honest and potentially difficult discussions to develop positive solutions to critical issues.
- Experience developing, articulating, and implementing organizational strategic goals, establishing assessment mechanisms and re-aligning resources, as necessary.
- Experience valuing unionized employees and the relationships delineated in collective bargaining agreements.
- Ability to work collaboratively with presidents and other system leaders to create shared resources and programs across the CSU system.

### ***Personal***

- An earned doctorate or other terminal degree from an accredited university and a distinguished research record in their academic discipline.
- A sincere appreciation for Cal Poly Pomona's unique identity, history, traditions, and role within the local community and Southern California.
- A deep commitment to building and sustaining respectful, collaborative relationships with Tribal Nations, honoring tribal sovereignty, indigenous protocols, and the historical and contemporary significance of these partnerships.



- A genuine excitement and enthusiasm for interacting with students and faculty and taking a personal interest in their success; someone who will make the University a place where people feel valued, inspired, and motivated to stay and thrive.



- The willingness to be transparent; to work with and empower faculty, staff, and students to collectively develop a path into the future in an environment of shared governance.
- An “optimistic realist” with the ability to rally University constituents and instill confidence in their leadership and the University during periods of change and ambiguity.
- A dedication to creating an inclusive environment that embraces and promotes belonging and enhances Cal Poly Pomona’s relationships with the communities it serves.
- Superior diplomatic and interpersonal skills, characterized by an active listening style, the ability to manage differing perspectives positively, and experience in making and explaining difficult decisions.
- An appreciation for the role that scholarship, research, and creative activity play in enhancing the quality of a university, creating educational opportunities for students, and as an economic driver in the region.
- The ability to provide guidance and support for existing areas of achieved excellence as well as emerging or lesser-known academic opportunities and initiatives.

### **Community**

- Experience in cultivating donor relationships and developing a culture of philanthropy within and outside of the traditional alumni base.
- An appreciation for the university community’s role in creating and fostering a campus environment that advances academic excellence, student success, and community partnership.
- A demonstrated appreciation for the University’s comprehensive nature, the numerous academic disciplines and fields that comprise the university, and respect for the teaching and scholarship they practice.
- The ability to integrate various university strengths and resources (e.g., faculty, staff, alumni, and students) to determine creative strategies for increasing Cal Poly Pomona’s impact, profile, and academic standing within the CSU, the region, statewide, and nationally.
- A commitment to the health and wellness of faculty, staff, and students.
- Demonstrated service as a champion of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

### **Application / Nomination Process**

The Search Committee will begin reviewing applications immediately. Applicants must submit a current curriculum vitae and a letter of interest that describes their relevant experience. Submission of materials via email is strongly encouraged. Nomination letters should include the name and contact information of the nominee. All nominations, applications and related materials will be handled with strict confidence.

Applications and letters of nomination should be submitted by email to:



**Alberto Pimentel, Managing Partner**

**Sal Venegas Jr., Partner**

Email: [apsearch@spaexec.com](mailto:apsearch@spaexec.com)

Refer to code "CPP-President" in the subject line

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*Cal Poly Pomona considers qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, medical condition, disability, marital status, or protected veteran status.*