



Ohio  
Wesleyan  
University

Vice President for  
Finance & Administration  
Position Profile | March 2026

BeecherHill



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## About Ohio Wesleyan University

Founded in 1842, Ohio Wesleyan University (OWU) is a private, residential liberal arts institution located in Delaware, Ohio, approximately 25 miles north of Columbus. Established by Methodist leaders and community members who believed deeply in the transformative power of education, the University was chartered by the Ohio Legislature with a mandate that it be conducted “on the most liberal principles” and accessible to individuals of all faiths and backgrounds. While OWU maintains historic ties to the Methodist tradition, it operates today as a fully inclusive, nonsectarian institution committed to intellectual freedom, ethical inquiry, and civic responsibility.

Ohio Wesleyan’s approximately 200-acre campus offers a classic residential college environment that blends historic architecture with modern academic, residential, and athletic facilities. Several campus buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, reflecting the University’s long-standing presence and stewardship of its physical assets.

Delaware’s location provides OWU with the benefits of a close-knit college-town setting while maintaining strong proximity to the Columbus metropolitan region, one of the fastest-growing and most economically diverse areas in the Midwest. This geographic advantage expands access to internships, experiential learning, alumni engagement, employer partnerships, and cultural institutions, while also positioning the University favorably for regional collaboration and enrollment reach.



Ohio Wesleyan continues to strengthen its national profile and external reputation across multiple respected ranking systems. According to *U.S. News & World Report*, OWU ranks among the 2026 Best National Liberal Arts Colleges, and is also recognized as a Top Performer on Social Mobility and one of the Most Innovative Schools in the nation.



*The Princeton Review* includes Ohio Wesleyan among its 2026 “Best 391 Colleges” in the United States, a distinction earned by only about 15% of four-year institutions and based on factors such as academics, financial aid, and student life. *Forbes* lists OWU among “America’s Top Colleges 2026” and ranks it among the Top 25 Private Schools with Generous Financial Aid. *Money Magazine* names OWU one of its “Best Colleges in America” for 2025, reflecting strong outcomes, value, and affordability. These rankings collectively underscore Ohio Wesleyan’s growing reputation for academic quality, student success, and institutional innovation.

# Academic Model and Educational Approach

## Mission, Values, and Educational Philosophy

Ohio Wesleyan defines itself as a community devoted to the free pursuit of truth, grounded in the liberal arts tradition. The University's educational philosophy centers on three core objectives:

- 1. Imparting Knowledge** – Providing students with a deep understanding of the humanities, sciences, and arts, as well as exposure to contemporary inquiry and discovery.
- 2. Developing Capabilities** – Building critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, communication skills, aesthetic awareness, and the ability to integrate theory with practice.
- 3. Educating for Values and Citizenship** – Fostering ethical reasoning, intellectual honesty, respect for diverse perspectives, and a sense of responsibility in a democratic and global society.

Teaching excellence is central to OWU's mission. All full-time tenure-track faculty hold a terminal degree or are completing one.



## Academic Model and Educational Approach

Ohio Wesleyan University is a nationally recognized liberal arts institution committed to preparing students to become engaged citizens and leaders. The University offers more than 70 undergraduate majors and interdisciplinary programs across the arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. OWU is a fully undergraduate institution composed primarily of traditionally aged students (18–22 years old). The student body includes approximately 32% first-generation students, 40% Pell-eligible students, and 29% students of color. The academic experience is defined by close faculty engagement and small classes, supported by an 11:1 student-to-faculty ratio and an average class size of 19 students, with more than half of courses enrolling fewer than 21 students. Faculty serve as teacher-scholars and mentors, creating a collaborative learning environment grounded in discussion and individualized academic support.

Through its signature experiential-learning initiative, The OWU Connection, every student completes at least one hands-on experience - including internships, mentored undergraduate research, travel-learning courses, or service engagement, connecting academic study with real-world application, often culminating in presentations at the annual OWU Connection Conference.

Ohio Wesleyan's liberal arts curriculum encourages interdisciplinary exploration and academic flexibility, with approximately one-third of students graduating with multiple majors. The strength of this model is reflected in outcomes: about 97% of graduates are employed, enrolled in graduate school, or serving in the military within six months of graduation.

# Academic Model and Educational Approach, *continued*



## Conrades School of Engineering

Ohio Wesleyan University recently launched the Conrades School of Engineering, a significant expansion of the University's academic offerings that integrates engineering education within OWU's liberal arts tradition. Powered by more than \$17 million in alumni philanthropy, the endowed school represents the most ambitious academic expansion in the University's history and provides long-term support for the program's launch and future growth.

Beginning in Fall 2027, the school will offer a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering (BSME) and plans to pursue accreditation through the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). The program emphasizes hands-on learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the development of strong analytical and communication skills.

## Higher Education Partnerships

Ohio Wesleyan University actively cultivates partnerships and innovative initiatives that strengthen the institution's academic mission, expand access to education, and advance long-term institutional sustainability. This includes the University's public-private partnership to implement one of the most ambitious solar energy initiatives in Ohio higher education. Through this initiative, Ohio Wesleyan is installing a large-scale solar energy system designed to generate significant long-term operational savings while addressing millions of dollars in deferred maintenance across the campus energy infrastructure. The project is expected to reduce the University's electricity costs by approximately \$1 million annually while advancing institutional sustainability goals and strengthening OWU's long-term financial model.

The University has also developed a distinctive sister institution partnership with Claflin University, one of the nation's leading Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). This collaboration expands opportunities for student exchange, shared programming, and institutional partnership while reinforcing Ohio Wesleyan's commitment to broadening educational access and cross-institutional engagement. In addition, Ohio Wesleyan participates in regional initiatives such as the Delaware County Promise, which provides eligible students from Delaware County with enhanced financial support and pathways to attend Ohio Wesleyan, strengthening the University's connection to the local community while improving access to a high-quality liberal arts education.

Together, these initiatives reflect Ohio Wesleyan's commitment to innovation, collaboration, and forward-looking partnerships that support both student success and institutional sustainability.

## Affiliations

Ohio Wesleyan University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), the regional accrediting body serving colleges and universities across the central United States. Several academic programs also maintain specialized accreditation or approval through organizations including the American Chemical Society, National Association of Schools of Music, Ohio Department of Education, and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The University is also a member of leading higher education organizations including the Great Lakes Colleges Association, the Annapolis Group of Liberal Arts Colleges, the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio (AICUO), and the Five Colleges of Ohio consortium, reflecting its longstanding collaboration with peer liberal arts institutions.

# Student Life and Campus Community



Ohio Wesleyan fosters a vibrant residential campus where academic learning and co-curricular experiences support students' intellectual, social, and personal development. With most students living on campus, the University's close-knit community encourages strong connections among students, faculty, and staff while supporting active participation in campus life.

## Campus Engagement and Student Organizations

Ohio Wesleyan offers a vibrant campus life with more than 90 student organizations representing academic, cultural, service, leadership, and recreational interests. These groups help students explore interests, develop leadership skills, and contribute to campus culture. Student-led organizations and governance groups provide opportunities to represent peers, advocate for initiatives, and collaborate with university leadership. Traditions, performances, lectures, athletic events, and campus gatherings further strengthen community and school spirit.

## Orientation and Student Development

New student programs ease the transition to college and introduce students to Ohio Wesleyan's academic expectations and community. Orientation, advising, and peer mentorship help students connect early with faculty, staff, and classmates while building the confidence and skills needed for success.

## Residential Life and Community Living

Ohio Wesleyan's residential campus integrates living and learning in a supportive environment. OWU has a four-year living requirement for students, and approximately 85% of

students currently live on campus. Residence halls and campus housing encourage collaboration and shared experiences among students from diverse backgrounds. Living on campus supports engagement in the intellectual and social life of the University while fostering independence, responsibility, and leadership development.

## Wellness, Belonging, and Student Support

The University prioritizes student well-being and a welcoming campus culture. Health and counseling services, wellness programming, and student support resources promote physical and mental health while helping students navigate academic and personal challenges. Programs focused on belonging and community engagement encourage respect for diverse perspectives.

## Athletics, Recreation, and Campus Traditions

Athletics and recreation are integral to campus life. Ohio Wesleyan sponsors 23 NCAA Division III varsity teams competing in the North Coast Athletic Conference, along with club and intramural sports. Traditions, performances, lectures, and student-led programming contribute to a dynamic campus culture that complements the academic experience.

# Introduction of Opportunity

Ohio Wesleyan University seeks a collaborative, strategic, and forward-thinking leader to serve as its next Vice President for Finance & Administration (Vice President). Reporting to the President and serving as a key member of the President's Cabinet, the Vice President will provide focused leadership in financial management, strategy, analysis, and long-term planning while helping guide the University through a period of significant institutional momentum.

Under President Matt vandenBerg's leadership, Ohio Wesleyan has achieved notable progress in strengthening enrollment, improving retention, reducing the institution's discount rate, and increasing net tuition revenue per student, positioning the University favorably among its peer institutions. President vandenBerg has engrained an entrepreneurial, high-velocity approach to institutional strategy and innovation, advancing multiple initiatives and partnerships in a fast-moving, boldly strategic environment designed to strengthen OWU's academic distinction and long-term financial sustainability. At the same time, OWU is preparing to launch an ambitious strategic plan centered on establishing its market position as "America's University for Ambitious Self-Discovery." The institution has also secured transformational philanthropic support for key initiatives and is preparing for a major fundraising campaign to advance its strategic priorities.

In this context, the Vice President will serve as a trusted advisor and thought partner to the President, providing disciplined financial leadership while helping translate institutional ambition into sustainable financial strategy. The role will maintain oversight of key administrative areas, including finance, budgeting, human resources, procurement, facilities and campus operations, while maintaining a clear focus on fiscal leadership and long-term financial planning. The successful candidate will be comfortable operating in a strategically ambitious environment, bringing a positive, solutions-oriented leadership style, strong communication skills, and the ability to operate effectively within a shared governance environment, building trust and alignment across faculty, staff, senior leadership, and the Board of Trustees.

*"We need a strategic, creative, entrepreneurially minded leader who executes with the same intensity she or he thinks — someone who will drive our innovative strategies to completion, build the operational infrastructure to sustain them, and bring fresh thinking of her or his own."  
- President Matt vandenBerg*

## Core Responsibilities

### Strategic Financial Leadership

- Serve as the University's chief financial strategist, partnering with the President and Cabinet to develop, refine, and monitor the University's long-term financial strategy while identifying innovative approaches to strengthening OWU's financial sustainability
- Lead the development of multi-year financial models and planning frameworks that align institutional priorities with sustainable fiscal pathways
- Provide rigorous analysis, creative financial thinking, and strategic insight to guide major institutional investments, initiatives, and long-term planning

### Budgeting and Financial Planning

- Oversees the University's comprehensive budgeting process, including management of the institution's operating and capital budgets
- Strengthen budgeting processes to ensure greater transparency, consistency, and collaboration across divisions
- Provide timely and clear financial reporting and forecasting to support informed decision-making by campus leadership

# Core Responsibilities (continued)

## Financial Analysis, Data, and Reporting

- Develop and implement robust financial analytics and reporting tools, including dashboards and scenario modeling, to enhance the University's ability to assess financial performance, evaluate strategic opportunities, and anticipate challenges
- Ensure financial data and reporting are accurate, accessible, and understandable for stakeholders across the institution

## Cabinet and Presidential Partnership

- Serve as a trusted advisor and strategic partner to the President, providing clear, candid financial counsel and proactive communication
- Work collaboratively with Cabinet colleagues to evaluate new initiatives, align resources with institutional priorities, and support cross-campus strategic efforts

## Board Leadership and Treasury

- Serve as Treasurer to the Board of Trustees and a key liaison to the Board's finance-related committees
- Work closely with the Board of Trustees' Investment Subcommittee in the oversight of the University's endowment, supporting the committee as it establishes investment policy, asset allocation ranges, and performance goals
- Partner with the committee and external investment management firms to monitor investment performance, provide financial analysis and reporting, and ensure strong stewardship of the University's endowed funds

## Administrative and Operational Leadership

- Provide leadership for a division of approximately 40 employees responsible for key administrative functions including accounting, student accounts, financial planning and budgeting, human resources, procurement, risk management, and campus services
- Build strong operational systems and empower senior staff leaders to ensure excellence across the division

## Campus and Capital Stewardship

- Oversee stewardship of the University's physical campus, including facilities operations, buildings and grounds, and capital planning
- Partner with institutional leaders to advance major capital initiatives, including significant current and future projects such as the library transformation and sustainability investments, and develop a systematic approach to addressing deferred maintenance

## Institutional Alignment and Shared Governance

- Operate effectively within Ohio Wesleyan's shared governance environment, engaging thoughtfully with faculty leadership, governance committees, and campus stakeholders
- Communicate complex financial matters clearly and transparently, fostering trust and shared understanding around financial strategy and institutional priorities

## Reporting Areas

The Vice President for Finance & Administration provides leadership and oversight for the following functional areas:

- Accounting Office
- Office of Student Accounts
- Office of Financial Planning and Budgeting
- Office of Human Resources
- Office of Procurement
- Campus Reservations
- Risk and Insurance
- Buildings and Grounds
- Custodial Services / Groundskeeping (contracted vendor)
- Mail Room, Central Receiving, and Print Services

# Experience and Key Characteristics

## Experience

- Minimum of 10 years of progressively responsible leadership experience in finance, administration, and related functions
- Significant experience in financial reporting, analysis, forecasting, and long-term financial planning, with a demonstrated ability to support strategic decision-making
- Proven leadership in developing and managing inclusive budgeting processes and strengthening financial transparency and reporting
- Demonstrated ability to analyze risk, evaluate financial scenarios, and guide organizations through complex financial challenges
- Experience overseeing or partnering on major capital initiatives, construction projects, and long-term facilities planning
- Experience managing complex administrative or finance organizations, including leading multi-layered teams and developing strong operational leadership within the division
- Track record of using data, analytics, and technology to improve financial insight, reporting, and operational effectiveness
- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree preferred

## Key Characteristics

- Positive, can-do leadership style that is cooperative, solutions-focused, and measured in responding to challenges
- High integrity and trustworthiness, operating with transparency and a “no surprises” approach with senior leadership
- Extraordinary communicator who can translate complex financial issues for diverse audiences, including faculty, trustees, donors, and external partners, and build trust through clarity, candor, and credibility
- Collaborative partner who works effectively within a shared governance environment and builds strong relationships across campus
- Execution-oriented leader who not only shapes direction but also builds, drives, and delivers on initiatives with discipline and follow-through
- Creative thinker who brings an entrepreneurial instinct to institutional strategy, capable of architecting innovative financial approaches and engaging confidently with public-private partnerships, revenue innovation, and nontraditional solutions to institutional challenges
- Mission-aligned, with enthusiasm for Ohio Wesleyan's liberal arts mission and commitment to an inclusive campus community





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# About the President

## *Matt vandenBerg*

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Ohio Wesleyan University's 17th president, Matt vandenBerg, Ed.D., assumed office on July 1, 2023, with a clear vision to build on OWU's strong foundation while pursuing new levels of excellence with confidence, innovation, and energy. Since then, he has led the university community in launching a bold "higher education rebellion."

"Together, we rebel against small thinking, against fear and divisiveness, and against higher education's traditional reluctance to change," President vandenBerg says. "And we rebel for students – for boldness, for kindness, and for innovation."

Before joining Ohio Wesleyan, President vandenBerg built a track record of innovative leadership across several institutions, serving as president of Presbyterian College in South Carolina, vice president for advancement and external relations at Alma College in Michigan, associate vice president for development at Albion College in Michigan, and assistant dean for development and alumni relations at the Indiana University School of Informatics and Computing (Bloomington and Indianapolis campuses).

Currently, President vandenBerg serves as the chair of the Five Colleges of Ohio, a board member with the Council of Independent Colleges, a member of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities' Committee on Student Aid, and an officer of the board of directors for the Annapolis Group of Liberal Arts Colleges.

He holds a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in higher education management from the University of Pennsylvania, a Master of Public Affairs with concentrations in nonprofit management and public policy analysis from the Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs, and a Bachelor of Arts with a political science major and Spanish minor from Alma College in Michigan, where he graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa. He also holds a Certificate in the Principles and Techniques of Fundraising from Indiana University's Lilly Family School of Philanthropy and is a Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE).

President vandenBerg and his wife, Melissa, have a son, Jackson, and a daughter, Sylvia.

To learn more about the Office of the President, click [here](#).

# Board of Trustees



The Ohio Wesleyan University Board of Trustees serves as the institution's governing body, providing strategic oversight and guidance to support the university's mission and long-term success. Comprised of dedicated alumni and community leaders, the Board is responsible for key areas such as financial stewardship, policy development, and leadership accountability. Through their commitment and expertise, trustees help ensure Ohio Wesleyan continues to deliver a strong academic experience, foster student growth, and advance the university's impact both locally and nationally.

**CHAIR, Kara Trott '83**

**VICE CHAIR, Michelle Kilkenney '99**

## TRUSTEES

Kate Raulin Carney<sup>1</sup>

Gargi Chaudhuri<sup>1</sup>

Faith Deschamps<sup>2</sup>

Rick Doody

Jason Downey

Gregory Dyson<sup>1</sup>

Peter Eastwood

Aaron Granger

Andrea Carr Hedrick

Robert C. Hickson

Bishop Hee-Soo Jung<sup>3</sup>

Michelle Kilkenney

Joseph Lash

Martha Nunn Lewis

Saharla Loyan<sup>1</sup>

Vikram Malhotra

Jerilyn Bushong Mapes<sup>1</sup>

Michael McCluggage

Myron McCoy<sup>1</sup>

Bridge Donnell Newton<sup>1</sup>

Cynthia O'Neill

C. Paul Palmer, IV

Thomas Palmer<sup>1</sup>

Deakins Rushton

Thomas Simons

Ellen Simpson

Kenneth B. Sternad

Clay Sturts<sup>2</sup>

Hamburg Tang

Deydre Teyhen<sup>1</sup>

Kara Trott

Matthew vandenBerg<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Alumni Representative

<sup>2</sup>Graduating Class Trustee

<sup>3</sup>Ex Officio Trustee

To learn more about the Ohio Wesleyan University Board of Trustees, [click here](#).

## Life in the Area



**Delaware, Ohio** is a picturesque and thriving community that blends historic charm with the energy of a dynamic college town. Home to Ohio Wesleyan University, the campus overlooks the heart of Delaware, offering a welcoming setting that reflects the city's strong sense of tradition, community pride, and growth. The city's downtown is rich with character, featuring locally owned shops, a diverse culinary scene, breweries and wineries, and family-friendly events that create a vibrant atmosphere for residents and visitors alike. Main Street Delaware hosts seasonal markets, themed First Friday celebrations, and cultural activities that cultivate connection and discovery in the heart of the city.

Delaware's historic roots are evident throughout the community, with beautifully preserved 19th-century architecture in its downtown historic district and engaging heritage tours offered by local organizations. The city is also surrounded by abundant natural beauty and outdoor recreation. Nearby parks, dozens of public trails, 140 miles of shoreline, and the scenic Olentangy River corridor provide opportunities for hiking, biking, kayaking, and exploring landscapes, making the area an ideal balance of academic life and natural surroundings.

The Delaware City School District serves a growing student population and is recognized for its strong commitment to educational excellence and community engagement.

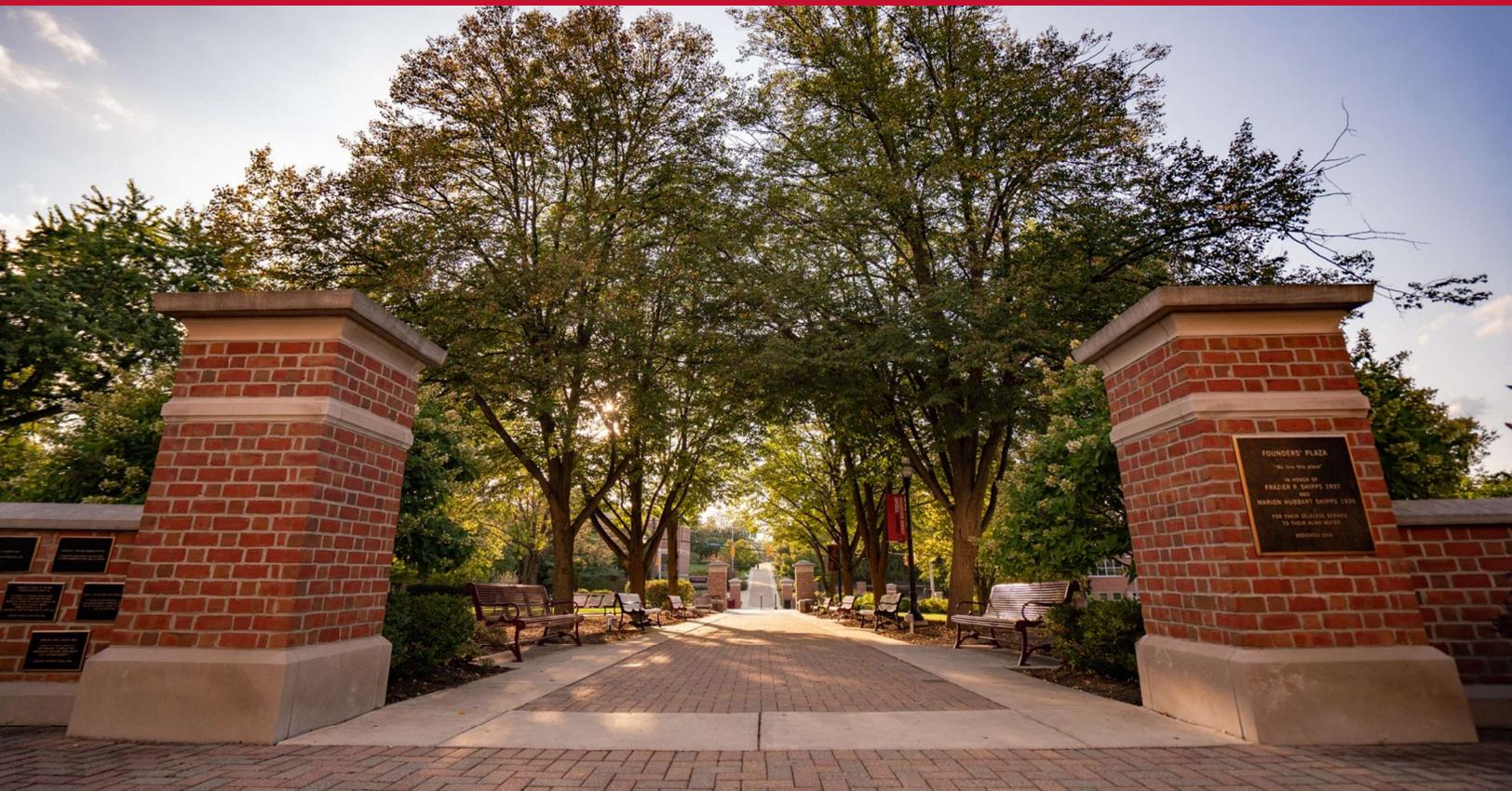
Convenience is another key advantage of Delaware's location. Just 30 minutes from downtown Columbus and less than an hour from John Glenn Columbus International Airport (CMH), Delaware offers easy access to major metropolitan amenities while maintaining the warmth and accessibility of a close-knit community. Destinations within a one-day drive include Chicago, Nashville, Washington D.C., New York City, and Toronto, positioning Delaware as both connected and distinctly charming. Looking ahead, a \$2B airport upgrade and new terminal addition at CMH will further enhance travel capacity and improve the overall commuter experience for residents and visitors alike.

[DELAWARE COMMUNITY INFORMATION](#)

[EXPLORE DELAWARE](#)

[EXPLORE DELAWARE COUNTY](#)

# Process of Candidacy



BeecherHill is retained by and pleased to partner with Ohio Wesleyan University, and the appointed search committee, in their search for the next Vice President for Finance and Administration. We welcome applications, recommendations of outstanding prospects, and confidential inquiries, with preferred contact details, to be directed to our firm at: [owuvp@beecherhillsearch.com](mailto:owuvp@beecherhillsearch.com)

Applications should include a cover letter with expression of interest and current resume/curriculum vitae (CV).

Follow-on conversations and inquiries will be responded to by:

**Cindy Hilsheimer**  
Managing Principal

**Wilson Browning**  
President

**Caroline Manahan**  
Director

250 Civic Center Center, Suite 100, Columbus, Ohio 43215  
614.939.4240

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