



LEADERSHIP PROFILE

**Vice President
for Marketing &
Communications**



THE OPPORTUNITY

Bowie State University (BSU), Maryland's first Historically Black College/University (HBCU), is a rapidly growing member institution of the University System of Maryland (USM). The university is seeking a strategic, transformational, and inspiring leader to serve as Vice President for Marketing & Communications (VPMC). The VPMC will provide vision and oversight of enhancing the university's reputation and achieving a higher level of distinction commensurate with the unprecedented growth of the institution and its rising profile.

The VPMC will develop and implement an innovative, dynamic, and comprehensive marketing and communications strategy to elevate the University's existing brand identity, leveraging and maximizing internal and external resources. The VPMC will also serve as the University's primary leader with respect to public and media relations, social media, proactive corporate communications, reputational management, and crisis response. The incumbent will report directly to the university President, providing

institutional leadership as a member of the President's cabinet. These responsibilities require a strategic and visionary thinker able to advise the President and campus constituents as the University continues to establish itself on a national stage and expand its network of relationships.

The ideal candidate is an experienced and savvy branding expert with an extensive communications and social media background, preferably in higher education or an applicable industry. They are knowledgeable of trends, emerging technology, and marketing best practices in traditional media, social media, and public relations. Their career path demonstrates successful implementation of integrated marketing and communications strategies and the deployment of systems and talent to scale upwards. It is paramount that the VPMC holds a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and can showcase institutional strengths through the lens of HBCU culture.

ABOUT BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Bowie State University (BSU) is building a bold future on a proud heritage. Founded in 1865, BSU is Maryland's oldest Historically Black College or University (HBCU) and is one of 12 constituent institutions of the University System of Maryland (USM). Ranked by U.S. News & World Report as one of the nation's top 20 HBCUs, BSU provides high-quality and affordable educational opportunities for students with ambitions to achieve and succeed.

BSU offers 29 undergraduate majors and 39 master's, doctoral, and advanced certification programs with special focus on science, technology, business, education, and related disciplines. A supportive environment empowers students to think critically, make new discoveries, value differences, and emerge as leaders in a rapidly changing global society.

Contrary to national trends, Bowie State's first year student applications have exploded in recent years, including applicants from beyond the local region. Thirty-two states and 29 foreign countries are represented in the over 6,400 students enrolled in the fall of 2023. Approximately 1,900 students reside in campus housing. Two-thirds of BSU's students commute from within the Washington, DC- Baltimore metropolitan region. BSU is a diverse university whose students, faculty, and staff represent many ethnic and cultural backgrounds. As an HBCU, the majority of BSU's students are African American (82%), but the campus is becoming increasingly diverse as more students see the value of the Bowie State University experience. BSU is recognized





as a Military Friendly School® and a leader in LGBTQ+ support.

Bowie State is centrally located in one of the nation's most exciting and influential metropolitan areas. The campus is a short commute to Annapolis, Washington, DC, and Baltimore, affording access to unique opportunities to engage with state and federal government agencies and elected officials, and industry. The university also boasts a serene, 337-acre suburban campus. Bowie State's commitment to sustainability is reflected in the extensive network of solar panels across the campus, LEED Gold or Platinum certification on all recent construction, and designation as a Tree Campus USA.



MISSION STATEMENT

As Maryland's first historically black public university, Bowie State University empowers a diverse population of students to reach their potential by providing innovative academic programs and transformational experiences as they prepare for careers, lifelong learning, and civic responsibility. Bowie State University supports Maryland's workforce and economy by engaging in strategic partnerships, research, and public service to benefit our local, state, national, and global communities.

CORE VALUES

Excellence

Bowie State University expects students, faculty, staff, and administrators to demonstrate outstanding levels of performance by fostering a stimulating learning and work environment.

Inclusivity

Bowie State University is intentional about creating a community that encourages involvement, respect, and connection among students, faculty, staff, and administrators regardless of differences of race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, culture, sexual orientation, religion, age, and disability.

Integrity

Bowie State University students, faculty, staff, and administrators demonstrate high ethical standards in their interactions with one another and the larger community.

Accountability

Bowie State University expects each member of the University community to be responsible and accountable for the outcomes of their efforts and actions.

Innovation

Bowie State University aspires to infuse innovative practices into academic and administrative functions by encouraging students, faculty, staff, and administrators to utilize best practices and pursue new opportunities.

BOWIE STATE BY THE NUMBERS

6,408

TOTAL ENROLLMENT
(FALL 2023)

5,288

UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS

965

FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN
(FULL TIME
AND PART TIME)

1,120

GRADUATE
STUDENTS

18:1

STUDENT-
FACULTY RATIO

221

FULL-TIME
FACULTY

424

FULL-TIME
STAFF

**\$204
MILLION**

OPERATING BUDGET

**\$40
MILLION**

ENDOWMENT



About the President

BSU is led by Dr. Aminta H. Breaux, its 10th president and first female president in the university's 158-year history. Dr. Breaux brings more than 30 years of diverse higher education leadership experience to her position. Throughout her career, she has demonstrated a passion for ensuring student development and success. She is dedicated to building on the legacy and rich history of Maryland's oldest historically black university with a focus on three priorities: academic excellence, student success and long-term viability of the university.

OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

As a passionate, inspiring, and creative leader, the VPMC will be a transformational thinker who drives comprehensive, strategic marketing and communications initiatives that deliver a strengthened position in the marketplace. This person will lead creative ideation to support enrollment growth, retention, and increased brand recognition of the University. The VPMC will lead a team of communications and marketing professionals to develop and execute innovative and creative public and media relations strategies in, brand and enrollment marketing, content development, social media, creative design, web content management and photography and video production.

The VPMC will cultivate and manage relationships with external consultants and agencies, as needed, to scale up and support strategic needs, as well as individuals across and beyond the University, including students, alumni, faculty, staff, the media, and the public. They will apply internal and external marketing and communications techniques that showcase the distinctive strengths of the University and align with its strategic enrollment and national positioning strategies. The VPMC will also serve as the University's primary spokesperson for public and media relations, including proactive communications, reputational management, and crisis response.

- **Build a Team Around a New Vision**

This position offers an opportunity to re- envision and augment the communications team as BSU positions itself to capitalize on new opportunities and face growing challenges in higher education and the HBCU landscape. They will devise ways to improve internal communications to students, faculty, staff, alumni, and families and offer leadership and mentorship to fellow communicators throughout the University whose work focuses primarily on these internal audiences. The VPMC oversees functions within the communications unit including marketing, digital communications; public and media relations; content writing; graphic design, web content and photo/

video production. BSU is a welcoming environment, which will enable the new VPMC to renew and expand on its deeply rooted traditions of community.

- **Leveraging New Technologies, Platforms, and Communications**

The VPMC will not only manage existing communication platforms and processes, but they will keep abreast of technology advancements to anticipate and embrace innovations in digital and multimedia tools to optimize communication with global audiences. They will develop a robust digital and social media strategy that deepens the University's engagement with priority constituents. The incumbent will evaluate and then enhance our existing

digital and web presence, providing central leadership for a revamped website, digital and social media technologies with a focus on customized digital marketing campaigns and ensuring a seamless user experience and accessibility.

- **Elevating BSU's Brand and Visibility**

The VPMC will expand the awareness of the University locally, regionally, and nationally, and establish narratives to instill pride among BSU's diverse constituencies about its achievements, events, programs and milestones. The incumbent will be an inspirational leader who will tailor strategies that will enhance BSU's already prominent standing and visibility and drive support to the University. The role is best suited for a leader who is passionate about the mission and value of HBCUs and the impactful work of the University. The VPMC will be a stalwart promoter of the vision of excellence in BSU's outreach and will continue to elevate the University's brand as a preferred educational, philanthropic and employment destination.

- **Optimize BSU's Social Media Strategy**

The ideal candidate understands the value and leveraging of social media to transform the image and brand of a university. They currently work with state-of-the-art digital applications and will use those skills and experience to establish a strategy that ensures social media is a core service and engagement opportunity for the broad range of Bowie's programs and communication campaigns. They will creatively and thoughtfully recognize opportunities to integrate new media technologies across the University's marketing and communications activities as well as to integrate online tools and interactive platforms to advance Bowie's reach to a broader range of constituencies.

- **Cultivating Various Constituencies**

The VPMC will direct the strategic planning, execution, and maintenance of effective communication efforts for BSU throughout its various constituencies. Serving as advisor, enabler, and relationship-builder, the VPMC will lead efforts to promote the brand and sub-brands of the University and all its entities. They will identify opportunities for storytelling, collaboration, and proactive communication with faculty, staff, and stakeholders and implement new delivery methods and communications strategies to represent and champion their work. The VPMC will actively partner with the vice president for enrollment management and student affairs on recruitment marketing tactics, campaigns, and materials in support of enrollment and retention objectives. The VPMC will also collaborate with the division of philanthropic engagement to support fundraising efforts and to position the university as a compelling target for philanthropic investments.

- **Advance Data-driven Effectiveness**

The VPMC will build a data-driven strategic plan with measurable objectives and outcomes that articulate return on investment. They will devise and evaluate metrics to determine the effectiveness of all marketing and communication strategies and tactics. The VPMC will identify key marketing opportunities for the University, make informed recommendations, based on research and data, and implement strategies accordingly.



THE POSITION

The VPMC reports to the President of the University and serves as part of the President’s cabinet. The VPMC provides visionary leadership in the development and integration of a proactive, innovative, and comprehensive technology-enhanced and data-driven strategy for marketing and communications that ensures cohesive messaging and brand identity across media platforms and audiences in support of institutional goals. The VPMC leads public relations, communications, and marketing activities to advance the strategic direction, positioning, and image of the University, integrating key messaging into the fabric of the community.

They will lead the communications team and collaborate with university departments and external collaborators to provide strategic communications and persuasive branding.

Essential Responsibilities/Duties

- Develop and implement a proactive communications plan, with defined measures of success, that ensures all university communications align with the institution’s strategic plan, brand identity and strategic messaging.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive data-driven marketing plan that achieves strategic expansion of brand visibility to support enrollment growth, expanded partnerships, legislative support, and engagement of key audiences.
- Strategize content and implement systems, including outsourced talent and resources, to scale operations in concert with the growth of the institution.
- Assess media perceptions and public relations issues and advise cabinet regarding reputation enhancement opportunities, and risk minimization and mitigation strategies.
- Serve as an ambassador for the University, cultivate and maintain relationships with media, key partners, social media influencers, and external constituents.

- Lead, manage and support the Marketing and Communications team, ensuring quality output with accountability to timelines to advance the institution's brand and its mission through the development, coordination, and implementation of the communication strategy.
- Inspire and empower the communications staff, encouraging open communications, collaboration, and staff development.
- Focus on enhancing the culture of excellence and improving the student experience, as well as faculty and staff experience across the institution.
- Develop and manage annual Communications budget.
- Foster and maintain strong partnerships with key stakeholders across the University and with external partners, as applicable, to develop messaging regarding university initiatives and successes.
- Lead strategy and provide oversight for internal communications to ensure that faculty, staff, alumni, students, and their families are kept informed of the University's goals, objectives, and progress.
- Support executive communications, government relations, student affairs and institutional development initiatives including media events, speaking engagements, awards, grants, events, and publishing.
- Employ best practices and innovations from other industries and the best of higher education to enhance BSU's narrative and brand positioning (internally and externally).
- Assess current communications model and employ data, analytics, new technologies and best practices to improve communication engagement and efficacy across the institution.
- Lead crisis management and communications and inform and advise the President and key University officials of response plan. Serve as the University's primary spokesperson for public and media relations, including proactive communications, reputational management, and crisis response.
- Support the President's networking, editorial positioning, and social media activities to cultivate new relationships and enhance the University's positioning.
- Understand pertinent higher education and HBCU issues with the ability to articulate and champion the University's mission across the institution, the region and beyond.



Qualifications

This challenging and rewarding position requires a visionary leader who possesses exceptional judgment, strong management skills, and a deep understanding of and commitment to the mission, vision, and values of BSU. The most qualified candidates will have a track record of senior executive communications experience with demonstrated creative, proactive, energetic, and inspired communications leadership with experience managing productive teams. Candidates should be knowledgeable about emerging digital and traditional communications tools and technologies.

The following qualities and competencies are required:

- Master's degree or higher is required from an accredited institution of higher education.
- Minimum seven years' experience managing communications in a complex organization.
- High degree of personal and professional ethics and integrity with strong resilience in the face of criticism.
- Deep knowledge and understanding of BSU's academic mission and community standing.
- A strong commitment to the mission of HBCUs.
- Strong executive presence and ability to represent the President with stakeholders, as necessary.
- Excellent written, oral, interpersonal, and presentation skills.
- Experience leading and developing creative professionals.
- Demonstrated acquisition and constituent engagement experience with an exceptional understanding of how to build relationships between an organization and targeted constituents.
- Successful track record of leading a collaborative process to develop a strategic brand platform.
- Considerable experience developing and deploying strategic marketing, branding, and communications efforts in a complex, rapidly changing environment.
- A strong background utilizing technology and market analysis, including quantitative and qualitative research, to inform the development of successful integrated marketing strategies.
- Knowledge of trends and best practices in marketing and communications, and demonstrated experience evaluating existing efforts, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing creative strategies to achieve results.
- Other duties as assigned by the President.

Preferred Qualifications

- Advanced degree preferred
- Extensive experience with higher education

Procedure for Candidacy:

The Search Committee will begin a review of applications in November and continue work until an appointment is made. To assure full consideration, application materials should be received by January 8, 2024, and must include:

- A letter of interest stating how the candidate's experiences and qualifications connect with the required/preferred characteristics and priorities expressed in the position profile.
- Curriculum vitae/resume.
- Statement of contribution to diversity, equity, and inclusion; and
- Five professional references with emails, telephone numbers, and a description of the candidate's professional relationship with each reference listed. References will not be contacted without prior authorization from the applicant.

Please click **here** [bit.ly/48zHx4J] to apply. Should you have any questions or encounter any difficulties with the application process, please contact **BSU-VPMC@agbsearch.com**.

Candidates are encouraged to review their search profile. Additional information about BSU can be found here: **www.bowiestate.edu**.

Please direct nominations and inquiries to:

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EEO Statement

Bowie State University does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, or veteran status. The University provides equal access for employees and applicants for employment to all programs and services provided by the University both on and off campus, including reasonable accommodations to promote the employment of qualified individuals with disabilities and disabled veterans, unless such accommodations would impose an undue hardship on the University's business. In addition, employees and applicants will not be subjected to harassment, intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination because they have engaged in, or may have engaged in, activities such as filing a complaint, assisting, or participating in an investigation, compliance review or hearing, or opposing any act or practice made unlawful. For the University's full EEO statement, please visit <https://www.bowiestate.edu/about/administration-and-governance/division-of-administration-and-finance/human-resources/eo-non-discrimination-statement.php>.