



Secretary to the Board of Trustees Leadership Profile, Spring 2024

Overview:

Pomona College, a nationally acclaimed institution of higher learning, invites applications and nominations for its Secretary to the Board of Trustees and Director of Board Engagement post, a dynamic and exciting professional opportunity.

The Pomona College Board of Trustees (“Board”) has both governance and stewardship responsibilities that are critical to the long-term success of the College. The Secretary to the Board of Trustees and Director of Board Engagement (“Secretary”), in collaboration with other College leaders, is responsible for maximizing the effectiveness of the Board by ensuring best-practice governance and fiduciary oversight, administrative efficiency, strategic alignment with the President and Executive Staff, and meaningful trustee engagement with Pomona College.

The Secretary is a member of Executive Staff, with solid-line reporting to the President of the College (“President”) and dotted-line reporting to the Vice President for Advancement. The Secretary is an officer of the College.

Expectations for Leadership

Support for new Board Chair

This individual will be joining the Pomona leadership team while a new Board Chair steps into their role. With continuity from the ongoing leadership of President Starr, and the former Board Chair stepping into the role of Campaign Chair, institutional knowledge will still be available, but the opportunity for an evolving leadership approach will also be important for the Secretary to support.

Ability to move between contrasting responsibilities

As a one-person team working in support of the Board, the Secretary operates at a strategic level and serves as a full contributor to the leadership team, but also needs to attend to the administrative needs of the Board, Board meetings and materials, travel planning, etc. Establishing strong relationships across the College, with faculty and administrative leadership, as well as with all Board members, will be critical to success.

Enhanced Trustee Education and Engagement

The Pomona Board of Trustees takes seriously its responsibility to be identifying and moving forward with new members, people with dedication to the College and the ability to serve in a

fiduciary leadership role. The Secretary will be key to supporting the design and implementation of educational opportunities for new and continuing Board members, with a focus on areas of importance for private liberal arts colleges in general, and Pomona in particular.

Primary Responsibilities:

Board governance support: The Secretary provides support and advice to the Board in exercising their governance and oversight responsibilities. The Secretary works with the President and Board leadership to develop the annual work plan for the Board. The Secretary serves as an expert on the College's Bylaws and other governing documents. The Secretary works closely with College legal counsel to identify, manage, and mitigate risks to the College and to the Board; to ensure that the College abides by all relevant legal, regulatory, and accreditation requirements, and to identify areas of potential improvement in the College's governance policies and practices. In collaboration with other members of Executive Staff, the Secretary provides research, data, and analysis to support the work of the Board.

Trustee engagement: The Secretary ensures a high-quality, engaging experience for trustees from recruitment through retirement from the Board and service as trustees emeriti. This includes building individual trustee relationships; fielding and ensuring the College responds to trustee concerns; maximizing trustee engagement through meetings, events, and communications, and facilitating meaningful connections between trustees and the College. Working with Advancement staff, the Secretary supports the stewardship of all trustees, as well as ensuring the quality and consistency of their overall experience as key College stakeholders. The Secretary supports productive relationships between trustees and other College leaders, including serving as a liaison between the Board and the Office of the President.

Trustee recruitment and development support: Working closely with the Trusteeship Committee, the President, and the Vice President for Advancement, the Secretary supports the identification, cultivation, and recruitment of potential new trustees. The Secretary supports the Trusteeship Committee in identifying committee members, chairs, and vice chairs, and in ensuring a robust leadership pipeline for the Board. The Secretary supports the Board's annual self-evaluation process for trustees. The Secretary stays abreast of governance best practices across higher education and the broader not-for-profit sector through building relationships with peers at other institutions and participating in associations that support higher education governance, and recommends education and other development activities to the Board.

Board administrative support: The Secretary is responsible for coordinating and supporting meetings and other activities of the Board of Trustees of Pomona College, including agenda planning, Board communications, meeting preparation, materials development, meeting staffing, minute-taking, and recordkeeping. The Secretary attends all meetings of the Board, makes available appropriate administrative support for all committee meetings, and ensures coherence across the work of the committees. The Secretary makes and retains custody of the records of the proceedings of the Board and its committees. The Secretary is

the custodian of the minutes and other records of the Board, including College policies enacted by the Board or the President of the College.

Qualifications:

- Advanced Degree preferred.
- At least 10 years of relevant experience with board management, or a similar role in higher education or other non-profit organizations
- A deep understanding of and experience working with institutional governance in higher education
- Knowledge of and experience working with senior leadership administrative operations at a college, university, or university system
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, exceptional networking and relationship-building skills, diplomacy and business acumen, and the confidence to effectively interact with and influence various levels of leadership
- Strategic and creative thinker with an instinctive ability to gauge and synthesize institutional needs and priorities, as well as the priorities of colleagues and staff
- Proven ability to understand, simplify, and effectively communicate complex information clearly and concisely for varied and diverse audiences
- Demonstrated ability to work both collaboratively and independently and show the initiative to act without instruction or guidance
- Strong attention to detail and the ability to identify nuanced needs
- Demonstrate the values and ethos of the organization in everyday operations
- Proficient with Microsoft Office
- Ability to exercise discretion and handle confidential information discreetly

Required Knowledge and Critical Skills:

- Must interact professionally and tactfully with a diverse community and work with time-sensitive and confidential information and materials.
- Demonstrate effectiveness and clarity of verbal and written communication with excellent interpersonal communication and leadership skills to supervise, facilitate, motivate, and inspire a diverse group of employees, volunteers, and stakeholders from a wide variety of backgrounds. Must handle all activities and highly confidential information with patience, discretion, tact, and a keen eye for detail.
- Demonstrated understanding of the use of technology in assessing and improving College systems and processes to achieve annual goals and maintain confidentiality.
- Able to handle multiple tasks, meet deadlines, and work both independently and as a collaborative member of the College in support of the College's strategic vision and the division's annual goals with a high standard of integrity and ethics.
- Must understand and communicate the mission and history of the College's liberal arts environment.
- Must have exceptional organizational, analytical, time management, and problem-solving skills to complete work with accuracy and attention to detail.
- Holiday, weekend, and evening work hours will be required. Travel may be required.

About Pomona College

Overview

Located in Claremont, California, Pomona College is widely regarded as one of the nation's premier liberal arts colleges. Established in 1887, Pomona College is known for small classes, a challenging curriculum, close relationships between students and faculty, and a range of student research and leadership opportunities. Pomona is a member of The Claremont Colleges. Pomona College has approximately 1,700 students; 1,000 faculty and staff; an endowment of \$3 billion; and an annual operating budget of \$300 million.

Pomona College was incorporated in October 1887, by a group of Congregationalists who wanted to recreate “a college of the New England type” on the West Coast. Instruction began the next year in a small, rented house in the city of Pomona. By the 1920s, Pomona President James A. Blaisdell faced a difficult choice—to limit expansion to retain the College’s unique character or allow growth and expand into a university. Under Blaisdell’s guidance, the College chose a third path. Using Oxford and Cambridge as models, Pomona founded a consortium unlike any other in America.

Over the next 75 years, two graduate schools and four other undergraduate colleges joined Pomona as members of The Claremont Colleges, located on neighboring campuses, allowing cross-registration in the nearly 2,700 courses taught across the consortium, and sharing important facilities such as libraries. As such, Pomona offers both the advantages of a small liberal arts college and the resources of a university.

The College has a highly interactive culture that magnifies the connections typically associated with a smaller institution that is part of a consortium. Moreover, Pomona’s Congregationalist roots are manifest in an environment that is extraordinarily participative, where everyone’s voice will be heard and matter. The institution is unusually collaborative and deeply committed to equity and diversity in all forms. It is a model worthy of emulation.

Today, Pomona enjoys a reputation as one of the most highly regarded and selective liberal arts colleges in the world. It also stands with a small number of institutions willing and able to admit students based entirely on academic achievement and promise without regard to ability to pay, and then to meet all demonstrated financial need of domestic students with no loans. Sixty-seven percent of students receive financial aid. Because of this institutional commitment, Pomona attracts some of the most highly qualified students in the country. Through an academically challenging curriculum, outstanding faculty, extraordinary students, and intimate size, Pomona provides an unparalleled environment for intellectual development and personal growth. More information about Pomona College can be found [here](#).

The Claremont Colleges

The founding member of The Claremont Colleges, Pomona is one of five undergraduate colleges (known as the 5Cs) and two graduate institutions that make up this unique consortium. Located within one square mile, the seven adjoining campuses are only a short walk from one another. More information about the Claremont Colleges can be found [here](#).

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees oversees the College's leadership, planning, and resources, working to ensure the continuing vitality of the institution and its ability to fulfill its mission now and for future generations. At present, there are 36 voting and two ex-officio members of the board. The current chair of the board is Samuel D. Glick '04, a partner in Oliver Wyman's Health and Life Sciences practice and the San Francisco office leader.

G. Gabrielle Starr President

G. Gabrielle Starr, a highly regarded scholar of English literature whose work reaches into neuroscience and the arts, took office as the 10th president of Pomona College in 2017. Starr is a national voice on college access for students of all backgrounds, the future of higher education, women in leadership, and the importance of the arts. Recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship and author of two books, Starr offers a compelling case for working across academic disciplines to spark intellectual discovery. Her research looks closely at the brain, through the use of fMRI, to help get to the heart of how people respond to paintings, music, and other forms of art.

Starr is an experienced academic leader. As dean of New York University's College of Arts and Science, she oversaw the undergraduate experience for more than 7,000 students across 55 departments and programs, and she led the development of new cohort and first-year programs. She served as chair of the English department and director of undergraduate studies during her more than 15 years at NYU. Starr also launched a partnership with New York City's largest community college to create a pipeline in STEM, and she co-founded a cross-university prison education program, offering associate of arts degrees in the liberal arts to students in a medium-security prison. Since her move to Southern California, Starr has made it a priority to connect with community organizations, and she recently joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic Board of Directors. On the national level, she serves on the board of directors for the Consortium on Financing Higher Education (COFHE).

Starr earned her bachelor and master of arts degrees from Emory University, and a Ph.D. in English and American literature from Harvard University. More information on President Starr can be found [here](#).

Claremont California

Pomona College is located in the city of Claremont, CA, 35 miles east of Los Angeles. The city, with a population of more than 36,000, features sidewalk cafes, specialty shops, tree-lined streets, and bungalow homes. Claremont was recently ranked the 5th most-desirable town in the US, and housing prices are more affordable than many areas in Southern California. With stunning views of the San Gabriel Mountains, Claremont is less than an hour away from downtown Los Angeles and from mountains, desert, and beaches. More information about Claremont California can be found [here](#).

The Application and Nomination Process

The Secretary to the Board Search Committee will begin reviewing applications in early April, with the deadline for full consideration on **April 15, 2024**. Applications must include a letter of interest, a CV, a statement of commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and five professional references with email addresses, telephone numbers, and an explanation of your

professional relationship. (References will not be contacted without prior authorization from the applicant.) The annual salary for this role is between \$160,000 and \$170,000 with a competitive benefits package. The specific factors that the College will consider when offering a salary to an individual will include, but not be limited to: education, training, relevant prior experience, and performance in prior roles.

Application materials should be submitted through AGB Search's application portal: [Secretary to the Board of Trustees at Pomona College](#)

Nominations and expressions of interest can be sent to: PomonaBoardSecretary@agbsearch.com

The search is being assisted by:

Margaret Plympton, Ed.D., Principal
AGB Search
Margaret.Plympton@agbsearch.com
484-554-4542

Fred Moore, J. D., Senior Executive Search Consultant
AGB Search
Fred.Moore@agbsearch.com
[712-299-2544](tel:712-299-2544)

Equal Opportunity Employer

Pomona College prides itself in being an open, competitive, and equal opportunity employer. The College is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunities for all applicants and employees and complies with all applicable state and federal laws on the matter. The College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition, family care leave status, veteran's status, or any other category described in Pomona College's Nondiscrimination Policy or protected by law.