

SEARCH PROFILE:

PRESIDENT



TENNESSEE
STATE UNIVERSITY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE OPPORTUNITY	3
OUR HISTORY: FROM NORMAL SCHOOL TO RESEARCH POWERHOUSE	4
STRATEGIC PLAN: THE PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE 2025	5
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	5
RESEARCH	6
TSU ATHLETICS	6
STUDENT LIFE	7
LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	8
FINANCIAL MATTERS	9
TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY NATIONAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION	9
LEADERSHIP AGENDA	10
DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALIFICATIONS	10
PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY	11



THE OPPORTUNITY

The Tennessee State University (TSU) Board of Trustees is seeking an exceptional leader to serve as president to lead TSU during a time of extraordinary momentum and opportunity. The next president will marshal the talents of faculty and staff to continue the institution's upward trajectory resulting from the leadership of the retiring president, Dr. Glenda Glover. The new president is expected to assume office in June 2024.

TSU is a pioneer in creating a student-centered research enterprise, a superior academic and intellectual culture where students from all backgrounds are immersed in an inclusive teaching/learning environment that engages them in world class research and service learning experiences. TSU is uniquely positioned for further growth as one of only a few institutions with a designation as a land grant, HBCU, and R2 research institution located in an urban environment. As a land grant institution that operates cooperative extension offices in 60 counties in Tennessee, TSU occupies a statewide presence and footprint within the entire state of Tennessee.

TSU's visionary leaders and talented faculty and staff have demonstrated a keen focus on excellence in teaching and excellence in research as well as service learning experiences that prepares students for today's global marketplace. This innovative model positions TSU as a leader in the higher education industry as student demographics shift and the marketplace demand increases for student acquired research and practical internship skills experiences to solve complex problems. The product of this model is a distinctive graduate who is prepared to succeed in an ever-changing world and create their own futures.

Setting the stage for the next president's success is TSU's status as one of eleven HBCUs designated by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education

as R2: Doctoral Institution – High Research Activity. With over \$100M in research and sponsored programs awards received in FY2023, and a growing number of doctoral programs the institution is poised to ascend to R1 classification. The university's faculty, staff, and students engage in cutting-edge research to address the world's challenges in areas such as agricultural sciences, engineering, biotechnology, nanomaterials, health sciences, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, technology, astrophysics, business, and the social sciences.

TSU is in the state's capital of Nashville - a city with an urban environment and a vibrant arts and culture scene that is experiencing explosive growth and attracting the world's leading companies, including now being home to over 300 healthcare companies, as well as strong financial, automotive and music industries, among other dynamic companies. Among the newest business additions to the city are Oracle, investing \$1.2 B in a facility with 1.2 million square feet of office space, and Amazon, whose two corporate towers are mere steps away from the TSU Downtown Location. In addition to business development, Music City lives up to its name by being home to some of the world's top artists and newcomers in all musical genres, making it possible to experience live music 24/7. There are 20 museums in Nashville, including the Frist Art Museum, the County Music Hall of Fame and Museum, and the National Museum of African American Music, the only museum dedicated to preserving and celebrating the contributions of African Americans to music in the United States. The confluence of Nashville's thriving arts and culture scene and its skyrocketing economic development make it the nation's 21st Century "It City", a dynamic setting to live, work, and play. More information on the City of Nashville is available at [Visit Nashville](#) and the [Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce](#).



OUR HISTORY: FROM NORMAL SCHOOL TO RESEARCH POWERHOUSE

Founded in 1912, TSU is an urban, research, land grant institution with two locations in Nashville—the 500-acre main campus nestled in a beautiful residential neighborhood along the Cumberland River, and the downtown Avon Williams location, which sits adjacent to the center of [Nashville's business and government district, and extension offices and research centers located in 60 counties throughout the state](#). Below is a summary table of highlights of our 111-year journey from normal school to research powerhouse. Read details of our illustrious history at [About TSU \(tnstate.edu\)](#).

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY TIMELINE HIGHLIGHTS

- 1912 Founded as the Agricultural and Industrial Normal School, one of three normal schools created by 1909 Tennessee State General Assembly.
- 1922 The school gained the capacity to grant bachelor's degrees in 1922, reflecting its new status as a four-year teachers' college.
- 1924 The first degrees were awarded.
- 1944 The first master's degrees were awarded.
- 1946 The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools granted accreditation.
- 1951 The Tennessee State Board of Education approved university status.
- 1958 The institution achieved full land-grant university status under the name of Tennessee Agricultural & Industrial State University.
- 1968 The state legislature dropped "Agricultural & Industrial" and officially changed the name to Tennessee State University.
- 1968 TSU faculty member Rita Sanders filed a lawsuit, which became known as Geier v. Tennessee, alleging a dual system of higher education in Tennessee based on race, as evidenced by the establishment of the Knoxville-based University of Tennessee offering extension credits in 1947 and ultimately expanding offering and creating a physical location in downtown Nashville.

- 1979 Geier v. Tennessee was settled by a court order merging the former University of Tennessee at Nashville with TSU.
- 1990 The first doctoral degrees were awarded.
- 1999 Researchers at the TSU Center for Automated Space Science were the first to discover a planet outside our solar system.
- 2012 TSU Centennial Celebration
- 2018 TSU achieved R2 status.
- 2023 TSU's Aristocrat of Bands made history as the first collegiate marching band to win the music industry's highest honor for Best Roots Gospel Album, *The Urban Hymnal*, at the 65th annual ceremony.
- 2023 TSU received over \$100 M in research and sponsored program funding.

VISION STATEMENT

Tennessee State University aspires to be the premier public urban comprehensive institution achieving prominence through innovation and instruction, research, creativity, and service with the dissemination of knowledge and information.

MISSION STATEMENT

Tennessee State University, through its legacy as an HBCU and land grant institution, transforms lives, prepares a diverse population of leaders, and contributes to economic and community development by providing affordable and accessible educational programs at various degree levels promoting academic excellence through scholarly inquiry, teaching, research, lifelong learning, and public service.

CORE VALUES

Tennessee State University maintains the following core values:

- Learning everyday
- Making excellence a habit
- Thinking beyond the obvious
- Working relentlessly
- Serving everyone, we encounter

STRATEGIC PLAN: THE PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE 2025

Between November 2019 to July 2020, committees conducted institution analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) using supporting data to frame priorities. The entire campus community was engaged in providing feedback at several stages. Based on this effort, the mission, vision, and core values were revised, and five strategic goals were identified. This bold and transformative plan, [The Pathway to Excellence 2025](#), defines and addresses the challenges and opportunities facing higher education. Through its focus on student success, academic excellence, and world-changing impact, the Strategic Plan has the potential to position TSU for decades. The Strategic Plan consists of the following goals.

- **GOAL 1.** ATTRACT, PREPARE, AND GRADUATE SCHOLARS TO CHANGE THE WORLD
- **GOAL 2.** CULTIVATE AN ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE THAT PROMOTES COLLABORATION, CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT, HIGH-PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES, AND FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- **GOAL 3.** CREATE A TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT THAT IMPACTS MIDDLE TENNESSEE AND BEYOND
- **GOAL 4.** GENERATE REVENUE AND CAPACITY TO REINVEST IN STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
- **GOAL 5.** PROMOTE, STRENGTHEN AND SUSTAIN ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

TSU BY THE NUMBERS

Fall 2023 Enrollment: 8,198 undergraduate students; representing thirty-nine countries.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Tennessee State University is accredited by the [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges](#) to award Associate, Baccalaureate, Master's, Specialist in Education, and Doctoral degrees. The University has 390 full-time and 180 instructional faculty, with a fall 2023 student-to-faculty ration of 13:1. The University offers 41 undergraduate programs, 40 graduate programs and programs of study, one educational specialist program, and 8 doctoral programs.

The Division of Academic Affairs consists of eight discipline-based colleges, the School of Graduate and Professional Studies, University Honors College, University Libraries, Air Force ROTC, and TSU Global Online.

TSU Colleges/Academic Units

- College of Agriculture
- College of Business
- College of Education
- College of Engineering
- School of Graduate and Professional Studies
- College of Health Sciences
- College of Liberal Arts
- College of Life and Physical Sciences
- College of Public Service
- TSU Global Online



- Libraries and Media Centers
- University Honors College
- Air Force ROTC
- SMART Technology Innovations Center
- Academic Achievement Center

RESEARCH

Tennessee State University is designated by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education as a R2: Doctoral Institution – High Research Activity. With over \$100M in research and sponsored programs awards received in FY2023, the institution is poised to ascend to R1 classification. The university engages in cutting-edge research to address significant challenges in our society in critical areas such as agricultural sciences, engineering, biotechnology, nanomaterials, health sciences, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, astrophysics, business and the social sciences. The [Office of Research and Sponsored Programs](#) works to enable the TSU research community, through support and development, to achieve research goals through external funding. TSU's Centers of Excellence encourage collaborative and experimental learning opportunities and help expand the boundaries of science, education, and technology.

Tennessee State University Centers of Excellence and Research:

- [Center of Excellence in Information Systems and Engineering Management](#)
- [Center for Prevention Research](#)
- [Center of Excellence in Battlefield Sensor Fusion](#)
- [The Office of Business and Economic Research](#)
- [Center for Micro Nano and Biotechnology](#)



TSU ATHLETICS

[Tennessee State University Athletics](#) (TSUA) is a member of the Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) NCAA Division I and offers football, men's basketball, women's basketball, track and field, golf, tennis, softball and volleyball. TSU Athletics provides student athletes with a positive academic and social environment to excel on and off the field. Our mission is to blend physical, emotional, and

intellectual development into one experience. The athletic program not only builds winning teams, but leaders in the classroom and in chosen professions. TSU Athletics' strategic plan can be found at the following link: https://tsutigers.com/documents/2023/8/28/OCT-31-2023_Strategic_Plan_Final.pdf



STUDENT LIFE

Tennessee State University students embrace the motto: “Think. Work. Serve.” But also realize a little fun should be part of the collegiate experience to create a holistic approach to learning. With a variety of social, professional, and civic clubs for students to participate in, there are many opportunities for the student to share time and talents and enjoy connecting with fellow students to create the work-life balance needed for success in college and beyond.

The Office of Student Activities and Leadership at Tennessee State University seeks to provide unique and innovative programming that increases retention, enriches students’ intellectual, ethical and social development, provides outreach to the local community, and presents opportunities to enhance leadership skills and learning opportunities in the following areas: Registered Student Clubs & Organizations, Student Government & Leadership, Fraternity & Sorority Life, Late Night & Weekend Programming, Intercultural Affairs, Student Activism & Service, and Homecoming & Special Events. The diverse offering of engagement empowers students to transform the world.

THE ARISTOCRAT OF BANDS

In the fall of 1946, after six weeks of practice, a 100-piece marching band took to the field at Tennessee State University and a tradition of excellence was born. Known as the [Aristocrat of Bands](#) (AOB) over the decades the band has earned numerous invitations to special events and has repeatedly made history. AOB was the first HBCU band to appear on national television and in 1961 became the first HBCU band to march in

a U.S. president’s inaugural parade for President John F. Kennedy. In 2023, AOB made history as the first collegiate marching band to win the music industry’s highest honor for Best Roots Gospel Album, The Urban Hymnal, at the 65th Annual Grammy Awards Ceremony. Over the course of the last three years, the AOB has also performed at the White House and in the Rose Bowl Parade.

GREEK LIFE

The National Pan Hellenic Council (NPHC) aids and fosters the welfare of the Divine 9 Greek letter organizations. The primary purpose and focus of NPHC member organizations remains community awareness and action through educational, economic, and cultural service activities. All NPHC organizations were founded on the principles of service, sisterhood/brotherhood and scholarship. Each fraternity or sorority is required to adhere to those principles and to promote academic excellence. All nine Greek letter organizations have chapters at TSU.

- [Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.](#) – Alpha Psi Chapter
- [Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.](#) – Beta Omicron Chapter
- [Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.](#) – Alpha Chi Chapter
- [Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc.](#) – Delta Beta Chapter
- [Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.](#) – Alpha Theta Chapter
- [Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.](#) – Rho Psi Chapter
- [Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.](#) – Zeta Alpha Chapter
- [Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.](#) – Alpha Beta Chapter
- [Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.](#) – Epsilon Alpha Chapter



LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Reporting directly to the President are members of the President's Cabinet, including Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Business and Finance, Vice President for Student Affairs, Vice President for Administration/Chief of Staff, Associate Vice President for Public Relations and Communications, Associate Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Advancement, General Counsel and Board Secretary, Chief Operating Officer, and Director of Athletics. The Chief of Police is also a member of the President's cabinet.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Pursuant to the Focus on College and University Success (FOCUS) Act, Tennessee State University is governed by a Board of Trustees comprised of ten (10) members, of which nine (9) are voting members. The Board of Trustees appoints one student, non-voting member. A list of members, committees, policies, and documents are available [online](#).

FACULTY SENATE

The Tennessee State University [Faculty Senate](#) is the faculty representative body elected by the faculty in each unit. The Senate enables effective participation of the faculty in the governance and development of the University, and it serves as a path of communication between the University's various constituencies. The Senate initiates, formulates, discusses, and recommends academic and other related policies that affect the faculty. The Senate also issues reports to the President of the University, and, through him or her, to the Board of Trustees.

STAFF SENATE

The [Staff Senate](#) is an organization which serves as a representative body of the staff employees of Tennessee State University and for the exchange of information between the University and its staff employees.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

The [Student Government Association](#), the key student organization, works with the administration in planning and regulating student life and affairs. It appoints student representatives to university committees, stimulates student participation in campus life, and recommends students organizations to the administration for official recognition. Profiles of current SGA leaders and the Constitution are available [online](#).

FINANCIAL MATTERS

TSU's operating budget for FY2023 was over \$200 million, of which \$51 million comes from state appropriations. External funding from research and

sponsored programs totaled over \$100 million in FY 2023. The endowment is valued at over \$100 million.

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY NATIONAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Alumni are the cornerstone of Tennessee State University, and TSU graduates stay connected to their alma mater through 54 chapters around the nation. The [TSU National Alumni Association website](#) is the digital alumni experience where Alumni reach out

to their classmates around the globe, share information, and make donations. An upcoming new feature of the site is The Blue Book: TSUNAA's Guide to Tiger Owned Businesses.





LEADERSHIP AGENDA

Tennessee State University has a distinguished history of educating and graduating students who excel to national and international prominence in their fields. This success is a direct result of gifted leadership that has strategically steered the university to accomplish new heights. In light of the University's Strategic Plan, [The Pathway to Excellence 2025](#), Tennessee State University's next president should be prepared to address and implement the following initiatives:

Aggressively implement processes to move from R2 Carnegie Classification to R1 by increasing graduate enrollment and doctoral programs.

Address the recent *Federal* analysis of 1890 Land Grant Universities Funding that found the State of Tennessee underfunded TSU by \$2.1B.

Address the similar State analysis that found TSU was underfunded by the State in the amount of \$544M.

Continue to improve student outcomes in retention and graduation.

Support the fact that TSU has experienced significant enrollment growth, necessitating the upgrade of facilities, construction of new student housing, renovating existing residence halls, addressing deferred maintenance issues, and meeting TSU's capital construction priorities.

Improve the human resource infrastructure to support accountability, administrative functions, and customer service.

Deepen TSU's ties with the Nashville community, state and federal legislators, and philanthropic donors.

Update and implement the plan to address issues presented by the Office of the Tennessee Comptroller.

Enhance the short-term and long-term goals that will continue the financial success of the University.

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Tennessee State University seeks an exceptional leader who unapologetically pursues ambitious goals to advance the University. The ideal candidate is someone who possesses a combination of experience, knowledge, skills, and integrity embodied in the following description.

- Successful experience in senior leadership and management at a university or a similarly complex organization.
- Possess the leadership ability to advance the University from a R2 to a R1 institution.
- Demonstrated knowledge and success in fiscal and financial management.
- Terminal degree from an accredited university is required
- An excellent communicator with success in elevating the profile of the institution.
- A proven track record of dedication to shared governance
- Demonstrated ability to be a visionary thought leader.
- Ability to conduct and execute a multi-million-dollar comprehensive institutional advancement campaign
- Experience in establishing international partnerships and collaborations.

- Demonstrated bi-partisan experience and success in actively engaging and building strong working relationships with city, state and national government leaders.
- Evidence of relational experience to advance the institutional agenda by building relationships and partnerships at Local, State and National levels with corporations and key higher education or other organizations.
- Experience in strategic planning.
- Experience with and understanding of the HBCU mission and students
- A highly relational, visible and approachable person who will actively listen to the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, senior team, donors, alumni and community members.
- Thorough understanding of faculty and student support needs both inside and outside of the classroom including first generation students.
- Forward- thinking, innovative, and visionary who can effectively tell the TSU Story.
- A data-informed and transparent decision-maker.



PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY

Academic Search has been retained to assist Tennessee State University with this search. Prospective applicants and nominators may arrange a confidential discussion with one of the Senior Consultants assisting with the search: Maria Thompson, maria.thompson@academicsearch.org, or John W. Garland, john.garland@academicsearch.org.

A completed application must consist of:

- a cover letter addressing experiences in achieving the leadership agenda and the desired qualities and characteristics
- a current curriculum vitae
- a list of three professional references, including names, email addresses, and phone numbers. References will not be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate.

All documents should be submitted in PDF format. The position will remain open until filled, but only applications received by **March 4, 2024**, can be assured full consideration.

Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest should be sent to TSUpresident@academicsearch.org

More information about Tennessee State University is available at <http://www.tnstate.edu>

ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting Tennessee State University in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience. Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.



Committed to IDENTIFYING
AND DEVELOPING LEADERS
by providing the highest
level of EXECUTIVE
SEARCH to our
higher education
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