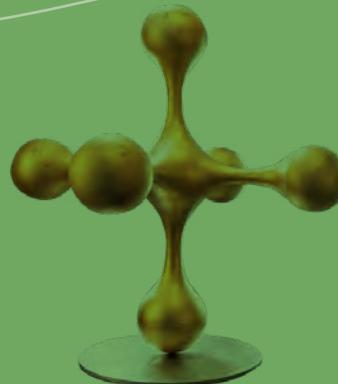


You're Invited
to Apply
to the
Position
of
President



BENNINGTON COLLEGE

One College Drive, Bennington, VT 05201 | bennington.edu

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“This is a ‘yes’ campus.

If there is something you

want to do,

the answer is always ‘yes.’”

—Brennan Eberwine ’28, who studies Journalism



Welcome

Bennington College students and alumni express a consistent theme: Bennington is a place of expansive possibility.

In this community, individuals discover their voice, articulate their purpose, and learn to pursue not only a livelihood, but a meaningful and imaginative way of life.

Since the College's founding in 1932, the principles underlying its distinctive model of education have remained consistent. Our students navigate personalized courses of study according to their intellectual and creative interests. Our faculty are active practitioners in the fields they teach; they serve as mentors and exemplars. During the summers and for six weeks each winter, our students partake in the Field Work Term, during which they embrace experiential learning opportunities around the world, followed by a return to campus for continued inquiry. This experience is unique to Bennington.

Bennington continues to evolve. Amid a challenging economic and political climate, Bennington remains nimble and resilient. The College continues to evolve while maintaining its core commitment to leadership in developing new forms of student-centered higher education.

We hope to find a thoughtful and passionate leader. We seek an individual who champions our unique pedagogical approach through on-campus collaboration and enthusiastic stewardship. We need a patient listener who builds trust across diverse constituencies, who invests time and resources to promote transformative change, who directs our community towards bold ideas, and who steers that collective vision into reality. As much as our next president will transform Bennington, we expect they will also be transformed by it.

We want Bennington's next president to lead the College to the successful culmination of its first 100 years and shape its legacy for decades to come.

Bennington College's History

Bennington is a vibrant hub for artists, writers, scientists, scholars—innovators in every field—who want to apply their individual talents to address global issues of urgent concern while pushing the boundaries of their individual disciplines. Through persistent reinvention, Bennington has remained true to its founding virtues: to place students at the helm of their own education, to guide them in the direction of their greatest potential, and to enable them to enlarge, deepen, and transform themselves and the world around them.

1924

1924

1928

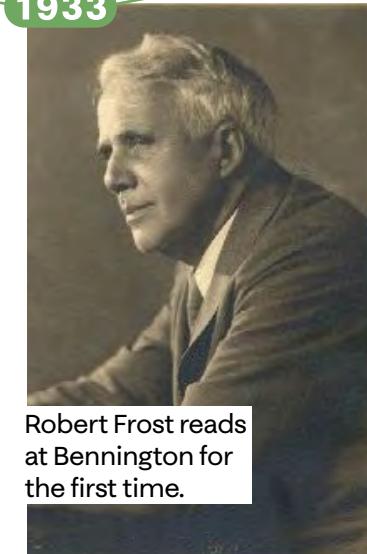
Inspired by philosopher John Dewey, the idea of Bennington College emerges from a group of forward-thinking educators and civic leaders. They believe America needs a progressive new college to react to and build upon changes in society, technology, and culture.

Robert Devore Leigh is recruited to serve as the College's first president.

1932



1933



Bennington College welcomes its first class of 87 women. It launches a required annual work experience for all students as part of their educational plan. More than 90 years later, it remains the only college to do so.

The Bennington School of Dance summer program is founded by Martha Hill. Dancers Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Hanya Holm, and Charles Weidman flock to the College to chart the course of modern dance. Future first Lady Betty Ford enrolls as a student. Bennington becomes the first college to include the visual and performing arts as an equal part of the liberal arts curriculum.

1934



1940



Karl Polanyi, fleeing Nazi persecution, arrives at Bennington as a visiting scholar. While here, he wrote his magnum opus, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, which remains strikingly relevant today.

1942



Similarly, Peter Drucker, the father of modern management, also a refugee, teaches politics and philosophy until 1949 while also formulating his seminal work *The Concept of the Corporation*.

1945



Bennington hosts Ralph Ellison for a talk on Black American literature.

1951



The U.S. State Department issues a documentary on Bennington, highlighting its unique educational approach as a model for the Allied rebuilding of German society after World War II.

1952



Organized by influential critic Clement Greenberg, Bennington hosts Jackson Pollock's first retrospective in the Deane Carriage Barn. The exhibition is credited with solidifying his place in modern art.

1959



Edward Clark Crossett Library opens. It will go on to win the 1963 Honor Award for library design.

1961



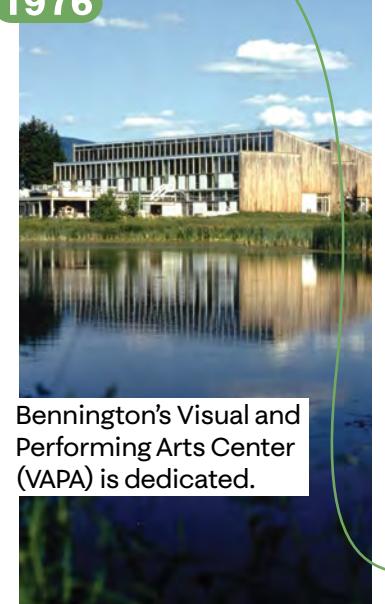
Bob Dylan plays Commons.

1969



Bennington College goes co-ed. Ralph Ellison joins the Board of Trustees.

1976



Bennington's Visual and Performing Arts Center (VAPA) is dedicated.

1980s



An influx of young writing talent, including Jill Eisenstadt '86, Bret Easton Ellis '86, Jonathan Lethem '86, Reginald Shepherd '88, and Donna Tartt '86, push the boundaries of contemporary literature.

1994



The Symposium: Ostensibly for financial reasons, the contracts of one third of the faculty are not renewed. Many alumni from the 1990s still object to this decision.

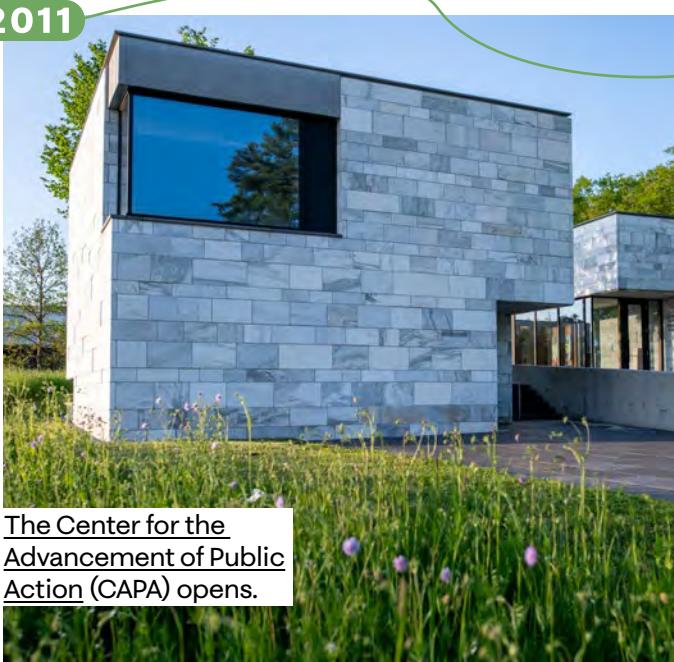
[The Bennington Writing Seminars](#), the College's MFA in Writing, begin.

2001



The Woo houses, designed by Kyu Sung Woo Architects Inc., are built.

2011



[The Center for the Advancement of Public Action \(CAPA\)](#) opens.

2019



[Beyond Plastics](#) is founded at Bennington.

A fire destroys the southeastern wing of the Barn, the main administrative building.

2020



The COVID pandemic shuts down in-person instruction.

2022



The reconstructed southeastern wing of the Barn opens. Historic elements of the campus are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

2024



2025

Bennington launches the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, an MFA in Screenwriting, and a new BFA in Creative Writing. With the MFA in Writing, the MFAs in Dance, and these new programs, Bennington has more graduate students than at any time in its history.



2032



Bennington's Centennial

2036



Bennington graduates its 100th class.

“Bennington is an encouraging place for rebel types.”

-Joan Tower '61, Grammy-winning contemporary American composer, concert pianist, and conductor lauded by *The New Yorker* as one of the most successful composers of all time.

Students

The core academic program at Bennington is the undergraduate Bachelor of Arts, where each student is required to develop, implement, revise, and evaluate an individual academic plan that frames their undergraduate trajectory. This process goes beyond the bounds of a traditional major. Students identify one or more areas of interest that spark their intellectual curiosity and provide a foundation for their academic and field work. They pursue that work with ongoing guidance from faculty. We call it the Plan.

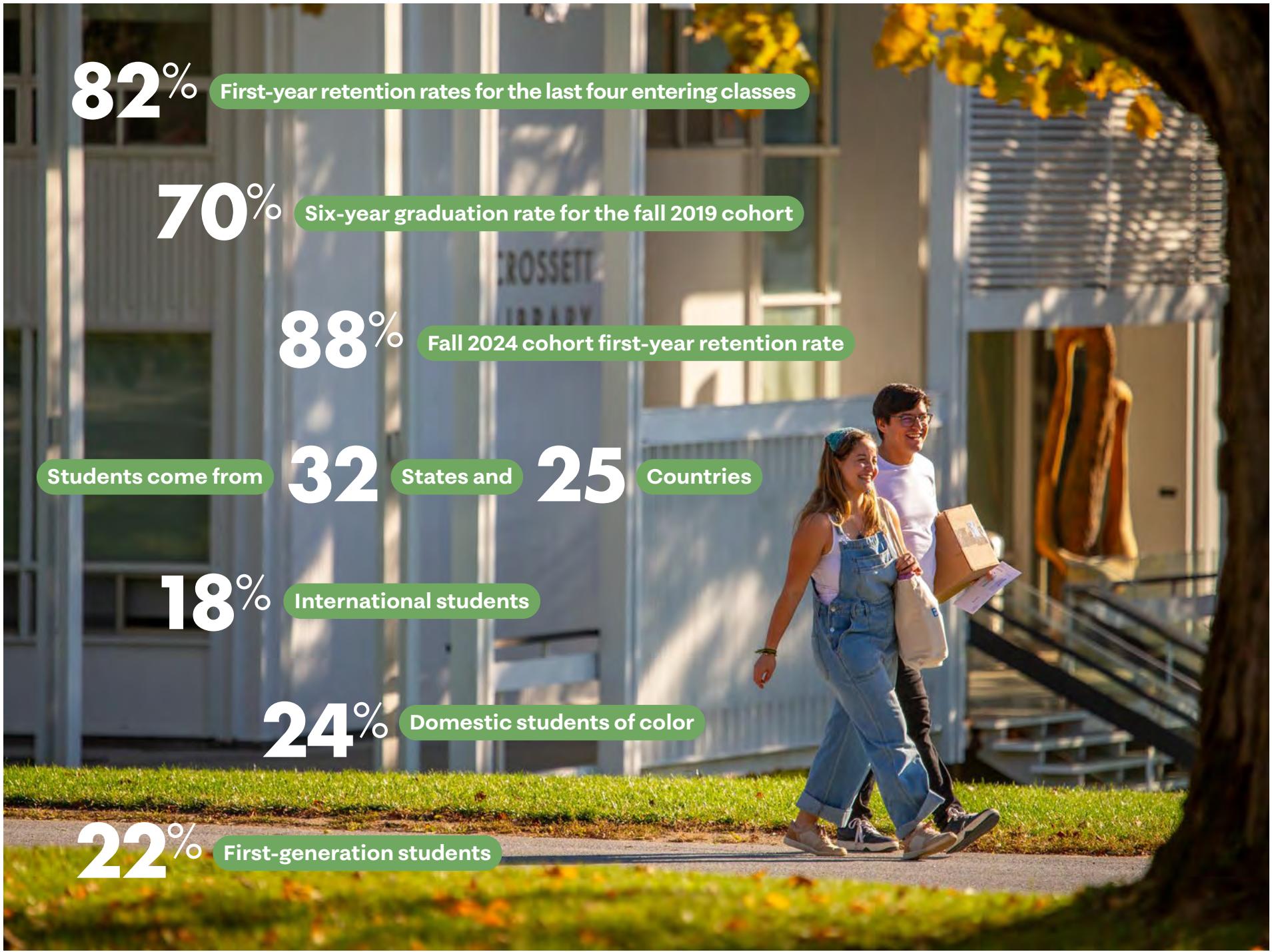
More recently, Bennington has added two Bachelor of Fine Arts programs—one in Dance and one in Writing—where the approach is more structured and directed, akin to a conservatory model. Just as in the Plan process, students bring their intellectual curiosity to these pursuits, but generally the focus is more narrow. Common to all programs at Bennington is strong faculty mentorship, a vibrant intellectual community, internships and field experiences, and a weaving together of living and learning that is core to Bennington's founding principles.



759 Undergrads **150** Grad Students

Year	Applications	Acceptances	Acceptance Rate	Enrollment
2020-2021	1382	829	60%	138
2021-2022	1726	1155	67%	241
2022-2023	2801	1269	45%	220
2023-2024	2825	1357	48%	216
2024-2025	2996	1334	45%	154





82%

First-year retention rates for the last four entering classes

70%

Six-year graduation rate for the fall 2019 cohort

88%

Fall 2024 cohort first-year retention rate

Students come from

32

States and

25

Countries

18%

International students

24%

Domestic students of color

22%

First-generation students

“I got to a point where I was developing things that nobody can do but me.... It’s an incredible structure to live under.”

Rachel McCauley '25, playwriting resident at Mouths of Babes Theater in Wilmington, NC



#5 LGBTQ-Friendliness

The Princeton Review

“I didn’t learn science from textbooks. At Bennington, I learned science by performing experiments and reading primary literature: in other words, working as a professional scientist.”

Carlos Mendez-Dorantes '15 Ph.D.,
Jane Coffin Childs Research Fellow at
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard
Medical School



“I’ve never felt as seen and appreciated as I have since coming to Bennington.”

Jen Nash '26, who studies Drama and Psychology



#3 Most Politically Active Students

The Princeton Review

Faculty

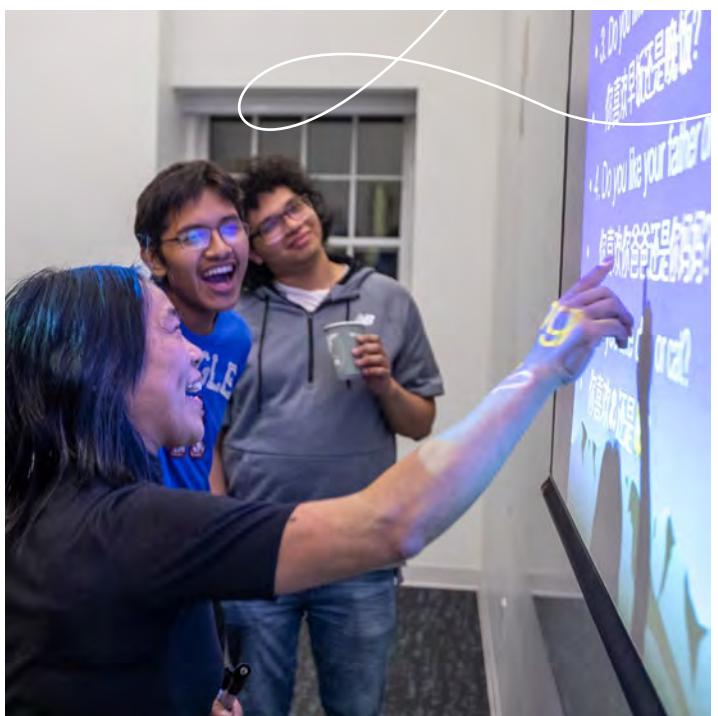
Top 6 Things to Know About Faculty at Bennington

1. Because Bennington's faculty are active practitioners in their respective fields, they serve as models and facilitators for our students. They take students seriously and encourage their efforts at every turn. They are tirelessly dedicated to students and their own intellectual development.
2. While our students can opt to receive grades, the default mode of evaluation is a narrative, which prompts students to reflect on their work and progress in detail, thus supporting greater understanding and mastery of their chosen disciplines.
3. The teacher-practitioner model is central to faculty members' approach to teaching and the unusual autonomy they have to create courses. The latter makes the curriculum exceptionally vibrant and unique, which is one of the hallmark features of the Bennington experience. Faculty design new courses continually, so about half of all courses are new term-to-term, and intensive "pop up" mini-courses are proposed by students or faculty who want to investigate issues as they unfold.
4. Faculty orbit around and between areas of study, like Drama and Visual Arts or Literature and Black Studies. They often collaborate across disciplines or together with faculty in seemingly unrelated fields, like Music and Biology, Geology and Anthropology, Psychology and Visual Arts. They design courses with practical applications and involve members of the community outside the College.
5. In place of tenure, faculty members undergo an extensive performance review conducted by a faculty-elected committee of their peers. There are no department heads or other formalized positions of leadership among the faculty; rather, individual faculty members take turns leading discipline area organizational meetings and committees on a rotating basis.
6. Faculty members also orchestrate a wide array of events, including the Carriage Barn Music Series, Cultural Studies and Languages Series, Dance Workshop, Literature Evenings, Poetry at Bennington, the Public Policy Forum, Science Workshop, Society, Culture, and Thought Colloquium, and the Visual Arts Lecture Series, to name a few.

70 Faculty members

1:9 Student to faculty ratio





11 Best Classroom Experience
The Princeton Review



“If you want to have a unique life-changing experience, Bennington is probably the place for you.”

Shawtane Bowen, faculty member in Drama

3 Best College Theater
The Princeton Review



“Bennington is an emancipating place from an academic standpoint. To be free to take the classes that you want to take, which directly inspire your own work, is an exciting prospect that sets Bennington apart.”

Joseph Alpar, faculty member in Music



“Great literature faculty members [at Bennington] expanded what I was reading... and the possibilities of what kind of poet I could be. That really gave me the tools to begin writing the poems that set me on my way publishing my first book.”

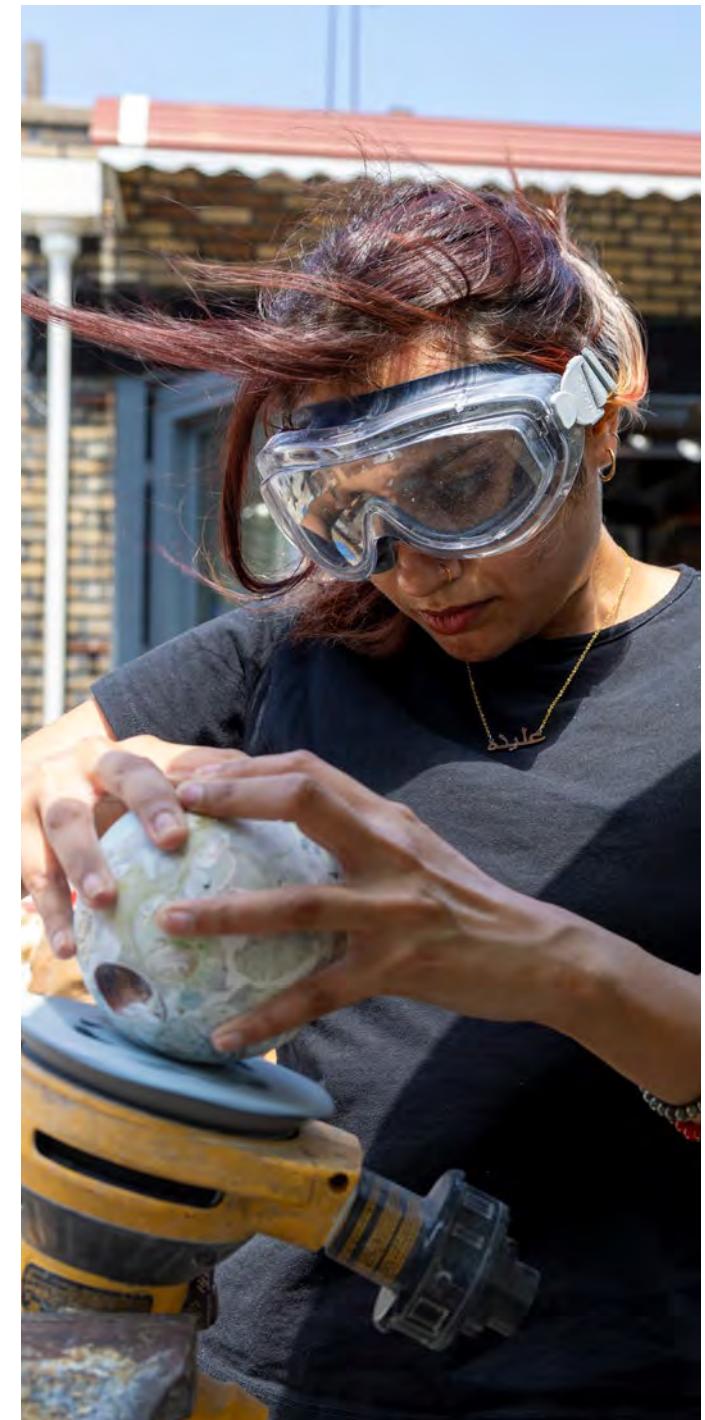
Safiya Sinclair '10, Author of the memoir *How to Say Babylon*, a National Book Critics Circle Award Winner and one of the most notable books of the year according to *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, and *TIME* magazine

Learning by Doing: Field Work Term

Bennington is the only college to require work experience every year.

For six weeks each year, Bennington students venture into the world for firsthand experience. These Field Work Terms are a defining element of the Bennington education. Nearly 400 of our students will complete Field Work Terms in January and February 2026. They work in a wide range of establishments including theaters, research labs, community organizations, startups, and cultural institutions, engaging locally, nationally, and globally. The program reflects Bennington's remarkable mentorship ecosystem, where faculty, staff, alumni, and peers actively open doors to new opportunities.

And Field Work Term makes an impact on student success. Based on employer surveys and a national survey from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), employers rate Bennington students higher in key professional capacities compared with recent graduates from other colleges.



Employer Rating	Bennington Students	Recent Grads from Other Schools
Communication	95%	54%
Critical Thinking	95%	56%
Professionalism	97%	50%
Teamwork	93%	82%

Where Field Work Happens

A small selection of the companies and organizations where our students have worked lately:



Accademia Dell' Arte
Arezzo, Italy

ANIKAYA Intensive
Delhi, India

Arnold Arboretum
Harvard University, Boston

Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM)
Brooklyn, New York

Climate Action Now
Woodside, California

The CODEX Foundation
Berkley, California

D&S Editions
La Force, France

Dia Art Foundation
Beacon, New York

FracTracker
Johnstown, Pennsylvania

The Jewish Museum
New York, New York

Lucille Lortel Foundation
New York City

Marmoset Music Licensing
Portland, Oregon

Museo del Prado
Madrid, Spain

National Tribal Trial College
Madison, Wisconsin

New York Supreme Court
New York City

Nordoff-Robbins Center for Music Therapy
New York University, New York City

PuSh International Performing Arts Festival
Vancouver, Canada

Shakespeare & Company
Lenox, Massachusetts

Van Andel Institute Graduate School
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission
Montpelier, Vermont

Williams College Children's Center
Williamstown, Massachusetts

Yurok Tribe
Klamath, California

What Students Say

“My favorite thing about Bennington is the different opportunities for students, like Field Work Term and working off campus at the Village School [of North Bennington]. I also worked at [the on-campus] Purple Carrot Farm. I feel lucky to be a part of that.”

Natalie Maldonado '25, who studies Environmental Studies, Agriculture, and Community Regeneration

“We get to do a lot of things in practice, rather than just sitting in a classroom and learning. I value that practical approach.”

Lorena Fernández Camba '25, who studied Architecture, Directing, and Set Design

What Field Work Term Employers Say

“Exceeded expectations— would hire them immediately if a position were available.”

“Less supervision was needed than expected. They took initiative and contributed meaningfully to projects.”

“I was inspired to see just these wonderful, happy, invigorated people who are doing jobs that I can see as my own job, making a career out of exactly what I love.”

Sophie Locke '26, who studies Dance, Photography, Anthropology, and Human Rights and who worked as a research assistant with Bennington's low-residency MFA in Dance program in Montpellier, France

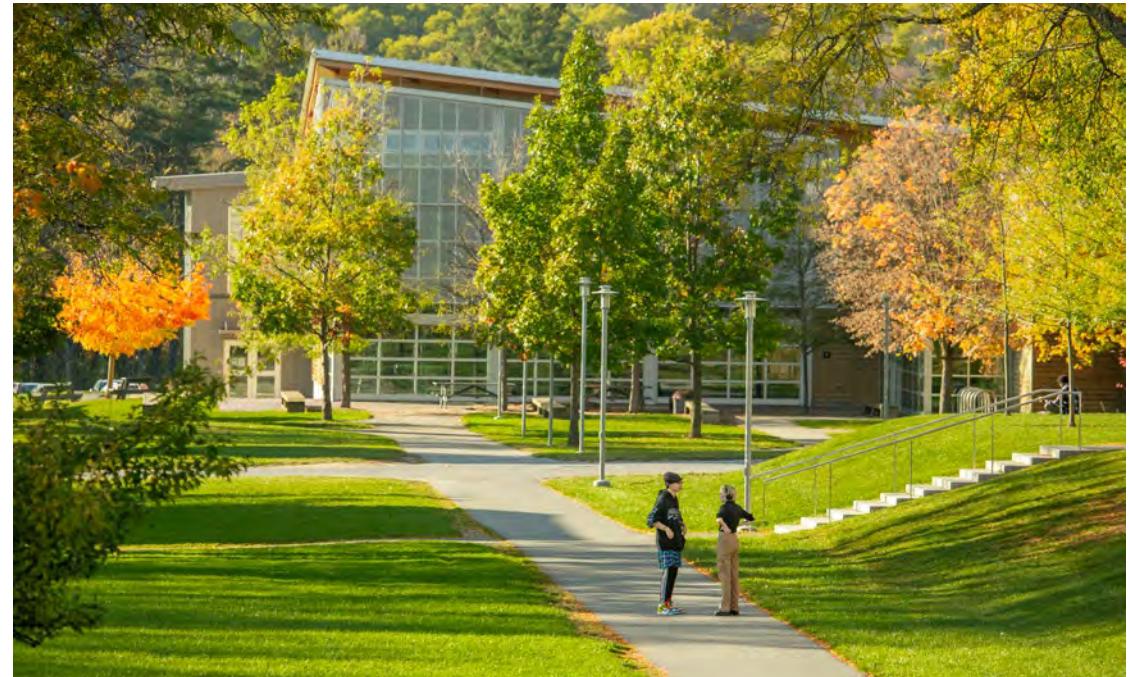
“Their performance surpassed that of many of our current entry-level employees.”

An Inclusive Community on a 440-Acre Makerspace

Bennington's campus is a gorgeous, creative incubator for all areas of study—from Astronomy to Visual Arts—with all of the classrooms, studios, labs, stages, equipment, and materials students need to formulate and test their ideas.



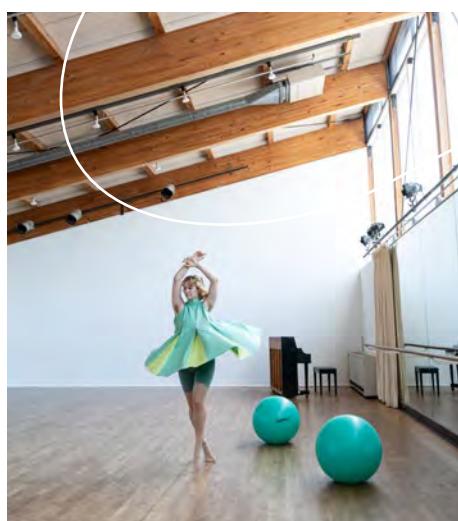
17 Academic/administrative buildings



13 Community life buildings/amenities



28 Student houses





#3 Most Beautiful Campus

The Princeton Review

“My time at Bennington was completely idyllic. I loved that I could be around this beautiful landscape and think for myself. I was, in a good way, forced to focus on what was in my own head.”

River Valadez '20, designer, ceramicist, and glassblower

top 10

Colleges with Best Architecture

Architectural Digest

“There’s something about this campus in the mountains that is magical.”

Nico Garmendia Turner '25, who studied Literature and Visual Arts

#16 Best College Dorms

The Princeton Review

“The whole campus is open for students to imagine and create things.”

Erin McKenny, Director of the Robert Frost Stone House Museum

#5 Most Green Campus

The Princeton Review



Life at Bennington

Music. Bold fashion. Dramatic performances. A vibrant dance scene. Organic farm-raised food. Literature Evenings. Film screenings. Drag shows. Fashion shows. T-Shirt Day. Voices engaged in thoughtful conversation. Teaching languages at a local elementary school. Cultural programs. Collaboration. B-Rad Radio. Late-night Breakfast. Guest lectures. Sunfest.

For a small community, there is no shortage of things to do. Most events are designed and coordinated by students themselves. Through more than 40 student-driven clubs, students have many opportunities to serve the local community; play sports, like soccer or volleyball; and lean into their interests, like Magic the Gathering or Michael Cera. Students find room to be who they are and explore who they might become.







“Not only did I learn a lot in my classes, but I learned a lot from my friends. There are so many different types of people here. It has been great getting to know everyone. I am glad I went here. I think it was exactly what I needed.”

Ryan Fahey '25, who studied Drama





Staff

Bennington's staff love the College and care deeply about its mission. Along with its faculty, they are Bennington's biggest asset. Experienced and imaginative, staff members take on big projects and get things done.

Top 6 Things to Know About Staff at Bennington

1. In the past year, our staff has collectively launched several new programs; hosted over 400 alumni, parents, and family.
2. Bennington College has two main organized labor groups: Bennington College United (BCU), representing faculty, staff, and campus safety in three bargaining units, and the existing Service Employees International Union (SEIU) for dining hall and buildings and grounds workers. BCU is an AFT-affiliated union that recently gained recognition and finalized contracts in 2025.
3. Staff members throughout the college consistently demonstrate high levels of personal and professional ethics and integrity, fostering a climate of trust and mutual respect.
4. The staff's commitment to the greater good of the institution is a cornerstone of our community.
5. Across all divisions from Student Life to Buildings & Grounds, many staff end up playing deeply impactful roles in the lives of our students, and some even forge lifelong friendships.
6. Many of our staff have rich lives outside of the College as well, and our current ranks include accomplished writers, poets, musicians, and comedians.



“The staff, faculty, and students are all creative, brilliant, and kind. Everyone pitches in to make Bennington better.”

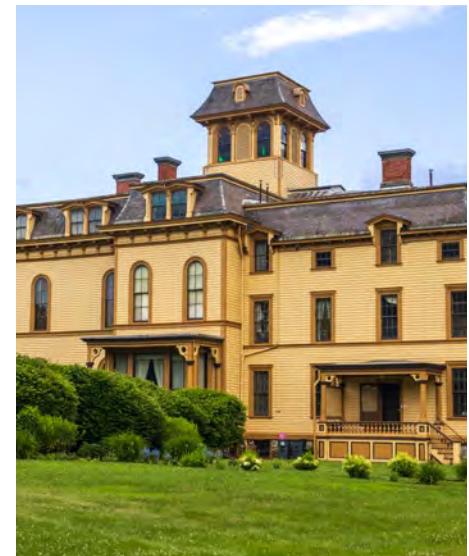
Fred Baumgarten, Director of Institutional and Academic Grants



“I appreciate being in a place like this, the ideal of Bennington and people’s hard work making it what it is. It feels good to work in a place that you believe in.”

Sebenele “Sbobo” Ndlangamandla ’21,
Assistant Director of Academic Services
and Student Success Specialist





• MONTREAL



Bennington, VT

Southwestern Vermont combines a beautiful mountain landscape with rich history, a healthy outdoor lifestyle, and access to sustainable food, arts, and culture. A busy independent theater scene, live music, family friendly festivals, funky shops, a wide variety of dining options, craft brews and spirits, a vibrant entrepreneurial economy, and a civically engaged community make the region a great place to live.

Nearby, there are several world-class museums and the best skiing in the east, and Boston, Montreal, and New York are each within a few hours' drive.

Students interact with the local community in interesting and important ways. They volunteer with local migrant workers through GANAS, participate in food security work, research water pollution, mentor local youth, and teach languages at a local school. The College contributes to the community's economy and cultural offerings.



“I am just one of many alumni who have chosen to return to Bennington to buy homes and businesses locally. There’s a magic here that we have not been able to find anywhere else.”

John Getchell '86, owner of the Blue Benn, a nationally recognized, regionally loved diner



“The community is extremely welcoming thanks in huge part to organizations like the Southwestern Vermont Chamber of Commerce and the Shires Young Professionals, and there is a lovely theater right in the middle of town with tremendous programming!”

Kaiya Kirk '20, Executive Director, Bennington Theater

“After graduation, I chose to stay in Bennington because of the hardworking spirit and kindness of neighbors.

Bennington embraces newcomers with an open heart and an open mind.

The community here is unlike what you would find anywhere else.”

Will Greer '24, Vermont state representative for North Bennington



“Bennington is the up-and-coming place to be. There are a lot of exciting new things in the works, many related to work being done by Bennington alumni.”

Bri Magnifico '08, owner of Magnifico Home & Café Briette

Finances & Fundraising

Over the past two decades, Bennington College has steadily strengthened its philanthropic foundation while navigating the distinct challenges and opportunities inherent to a small, innovative liberal arts institution. During the last twenty-three years, the College has completed two comprehensive campaigns, each advancing key institutional priorities and deepening donor engagement across its alumni, trustee, and parent communities:

- **Bennington's 75th Anniversary Campaign** from 2002-2009 raised \$92 million against a \$75 million goal. The Campaign included a \$20 million commitment.
- **The World Needs More Bennington Campaign** with an ambitious \$150 million goal began in 2015 and concluded in 2022. The campaign included three significant commitments of \$16 million, \$12 million, and \$10 million.

\$50.1M Endowment
as of June 30, 2025

\$50M Operating budget
for year ending June 30, 2026,
plus a restricted expenditure of \$4M

\$48.5M Debt

\$12.5M Annual fundraising
included in the FY26 budget,
plus an extraordinary
endowment draw of \$3M



Bennington's current fundraising model is primarily focused on securing current-use support, which provides critical annual resources for student learning, faculty excellence, and the operational needs of the College. This emphasis on annual, flexible funds has enabled the College to sustain its core mission and maintain momentum during periods of leadership transition and strategic change.

During the last five years the College has averaged \$15.3 million in new gifts and commitments with a high of \$18.1 million in FY25. In terms of cash received to support current operations and new initiatives, the College has averaged \$12.2 million per year.

In FY26, an experienced team is advancing both a \$12.5 million annual fundraising goal and a three-year \$100 million Sprint Campaign, which aims to secure resources for current use, new initiatives, endowment growth, and capital needs. Other fiscal year priorities include strengthening donor engagement, expanding the leadership and major-gift pipeline, and enhancing stewardship and communication practices.



As Bennington looks ahead, a central institutional priority is to “right-size” the level of current-use giving—ensuring that annual philanthropic revenue reliably meets operational needs. Achieving this balance will enable the College to shift its long-term fundraising strategy toward growing endowment support, capital investment, and principal gifts, all of which are essential to strengthening the College’s financial sustainability and advancing its ambitious vision for the future.

With strong trustee leadership, a committed donor base, and a renewed focus on building philanthropic capacity, Bennington is poised to broaden the scope of its fundraising program in support of strategic priorities, long-term institutional resilience, and the next century of growth.

The Results: Bennington Alumni

In a host of disciplines, Bennington graduates punch above their weight. Our alumni create a powerful network in nearly every field: media and entertainment, dance, computer science, politics, visual art, biology, drama, journalism, and literature.



14K Bennington alumni



“Bennington focuses on learning by doing and finding your authentic voice. Being oneself in the world, expressing one’s own point of view, and learning how to self-realize, how to take an idea, any idea, and make it happen. These are things Bennington teaches really well.”

Melissa Rosenberg ’86, creator of Marvel’s *Jessica Jones* and screenwriter of the five *Twilight* films

“The largest life lesson I got from attending Bennington was the sense of possibility: that one could make a life in the arts in a quirky and independent way.”

Brian Rogers ’95, Cofounder of The Chocolate Factory Theater



“I have never been someone who plays well within the rules. I chose Bennington for that reason. The College helped me to learn to see the infrastructure presented and... look beyond [it] to figure out how to use [it] to work for me.”

Artist **Sarah Fetterman ’14**

“When I run into anyone who has gone to Bennington, it’s an instant sense of connection and understanding. One of the great gifts of Bennington is this community follows you through your whole life.”



“Bennington gave me confidence to pursue writing as a career. You must have confidence to even attempt something like that, and Bennington instilled the belief that it was possible.”

Claudia Rowe '88, 2025 National Book Award Finalist for Nonfiction



“People always say to me: ‘For such a small school, it seems like there are so many of you.’ I find that really interesting, and I kind of think that’s perfect. We can’t help it; we burn very brightly.”

Peter Dinklage '91

Dylan Thuras '04, Cofounder of Atlas Obscura media company



“It all started while I was here at Bennington.”

Asad Malik '19, founder of Jadu AR Inc., an augmented reality gaming company

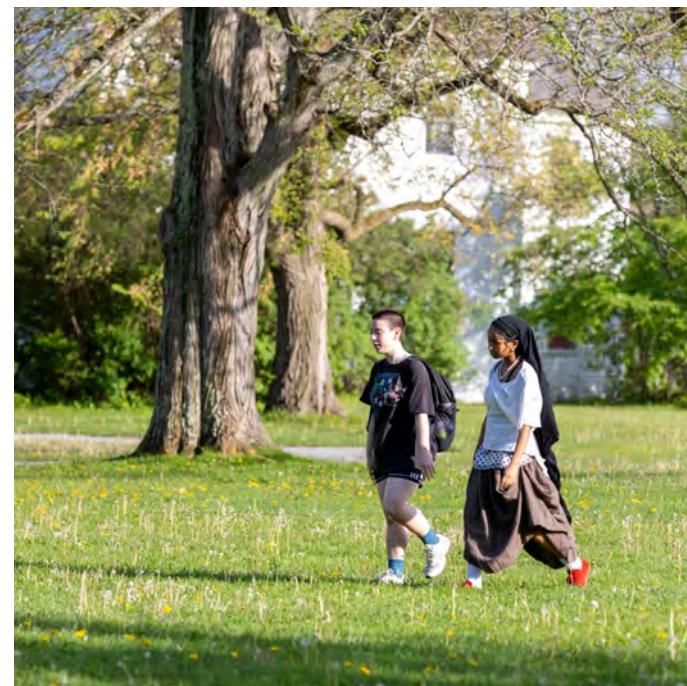


Position Details

Bennington College seeks a bold, progressive, creative, and seasoned higher-education administrator with the acumen required to lead a singular liberal arts institution whose cultural impact far outsizes its physical footprint and age. Bennington's twelfth president will lead a college where ideas can come to fruition quickly in an environment focused on the specific interests and passions of its students, faculty, and staff. The President will have the opportunity to put their stamp on Bennington during a complicated time in higher education that is particularly challenging for liberal arts colleges.



The ideal candidate will take pleasure in leading a college where students are driven, self-directed, and relish the truly interdisciplinary nature of the Plan and a Bennington education. **The President will thrive at an institution that centers the human condition and inspires students to become resourceful, nimble, and adaptable so that they may not only face, but conquer, the problems of the world.**



The President of Bennington works closely and collaboratively with the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and parents to provide leadership, direction, and inspiration for the College. The new President will be expected to build on the College's existing strengths and help it develop new educational pathways and new revenue generating opportunities during their tenure as its twelfth President. The President will preserve and capitalize on the College's mission and unique educational model, while adhering to its culture of innovation and self-reliance. While strengthening Bennington's reputation for academic and creative excellence, they will extend the College's impact and raise its profile in the United States and abroad, as well as within the local community. In light of the challenges created by tight financial margins and limited resources that loom at Bennington and most other small liberal arts colleges, the President will need to exercise the courage, creativity, entrepreneurship, and foresight to protect and sustain progressive liberal arts education in a small college setting.

Opportunities

Bolstering philanthropy

Bennington seeks a seasoned, experienced, and entrepreneurial administrator to guide the College through a period of strategic progress and improvement that results in reinforcing its stability and enabling continued growth. As its chief fundraiser, the President will be an impassioned, zealous, and authentic storyteller able to translate the outstanding work of Bennington's students, faculty, and staff to donors and other external partners—new and old. The President will support a real, coordinated effort to rebuild and cultivate Bennington's alumni base and build a true, diverse, and wide-reaching fundraising pipeline. They must be able to present and elucidate a realistic outlook to the Board so that all members are fully aware of the challenges facing Bennington and liberal arts colleges and higher education philanthropy, in general. The President will work to bolster Bennington's endowment and move to build a budget that does not rely as heavily on fundraising or borrowing from the endowment.



Driving strategic enrollment and programmatic growth

The next President will be tasked with reimagining concepts to ensure Bennington's future success. They will articulate and tease out what still works in higher education and understand what needs to change. To ensure Bennington's success in its next centennial, the next President will work tirelessly with myriad stakeholders to lower the discount rate, stabilize and increase Bennington's enrollment, and seek new sources of both tuition and non-tuition revenue, such as summer programs and off-site programming. The ideal candidate will understand the particular enrollment headwinds that liberal arts colleges face and identify previously untapped pipelines and formulate a clear and comprehensive strategy toward financial sustainability. The President will work with the faculty to come up with ways that preserve Bennington's academic ethos—self-direction, autonomy, and the Plan—while bringing in other programs, enhancements, and changes that complement Bennington's existing strengths. Capitalizing on the momentum currently underway to restore and energize better alumni relations with the College will also be a priority. The ideal candidate will have an established record of performance strengthening financial health, enhancing operational efficiency, and supporting long-term sustainability within a college, university, or similarly complex, tuition-dependent institution. They will be challenged to match Bennington's ambitions with its financial realities and the resources at hand.

Articulating a clear and ambitious vision for Bennington

The next President of Bennington will articulate a clear strategy of the College that is not reactive, but rather rooted in a belief about what is best for Bennington, making a clear connection between that strategy and the operational implications of the College. The President will relish telling Bennington's story and communicating what makes it unique—loudly and proudly. They will formulate a vision of what Bennington is and what it wants to be, moving out of survival mode and toward an era of thriving. There is real opportunity for someone who wants to rethink education and is not bound by top-heavy structures found at other institutions. The President will serve as Bennington's chief spokesperson and ambassador, manage an active set of relationships connecting the College with other leading academic institutions, and effectively advocate for the values and importance of a progressive education in the larger world.

Exhibiting community-oriented leadership

The new President must be an inclusive, accessible, community-oriented leader of a talented and devoted faculty, a strong management team, and a committed support staff. They must interact with students with wisdom, respect, and genuine interest. As a “practitioner of ideas,” the President will be committed to public, as well as academic, discourse and will be eager to bring the values and insights of his or her own profession to the urgent issues of our time. But above all, Bennington's new President will be expected to embody and champion the core values of independent learning with the responsibility and freedom of choice in an inclusive community that fully embraces diversity and equity in all aspects of campus life. Of critical importance, they must be an innovative and dedicated fundraiser who can secure ongoing financial support across a broad spectrum of sources. When on campus, the President will be a warm, ingratiating presence, approachable by all members of the campus community.





Cultivating community and campus culture

Bennington's President will understand the need for growth and evolution while simultaneously embracing the beloved things that make Bennington special. They will be an embedded leader who plants personal and professional roots in the town of Bennington. They will listen and build trust among each constituency, then create a plan and get true buy-in, so everyone feels they have their fingerprints on it. This leader secures genuine trust, follows through on commitments, and communicates progress consistently. The President is Bennington's community builder-in-chief. The next President will be a culture-changer who can establish good will quickly and authentically, and speak to all members of the community in a single, authentic voice. This leader will prioritize relationship building and be invigorated by it. They will create a hospitable campus culture and reinforce positive relationships with the local community.

They must look forward to becoming an integral member of the community: accessible, highly engaged, and always looking to strengthen morale and build spirit. The President must embrace an inclusive model of leadership and partnership with transparency and integrity. While gravitas is required, the President must also have the grit and scrappiness to handle the more mundane tasks of running a small college. Personal dedication to the values of self-direction, community service, international understanding, and academic excellence is an important prerequisite, as is the ability to inspire students, faculty, and staff to uphold these core values.

Candidate Profile

Leading candidates for the presidency of Bennington must have distinguished records of accomplishment in higher education, diplomacy, scholarship, the arts and/or other professional fields that can bring special insight and value to Bennington's mission and the important role of its next President. While we recognize that there is a spectrum of lived and professional experience that will set up candidates for success as Bennington's twelfth President, strong candidates will demonstrate the following:



- **A record of increasingly responsible, creative leadership in education or a comparably complex, mission-driven organization**
- **Experience building, articulating, and implementing shared strategic vision and shared values**
- **The soft skills required to lead, engage, and inspire a vibrant, diverse, and dynamic campus with multiple constituencies**
- **Ability to inspire others to engage with and financially support ambitious goals**
- **Deep appreciation and understanding of the mission, values, and economic realities facing private higher education**
- **Emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, and communication skills of the highest caliber**

An advanced degree, along with a record of professional excellence appropriate to lead and engage a unique and dynamic academic community, is expected.

While no single candidate will have every experience outlined in the prospectus, ideal candidates will exhibit many of the following professional and personal qualities, skills, and characteristics:

Leadership

- Exhibit inspirational, uplifting, bottom-up leadership with a keen understanding of what this looks like in higher education
- Deep experience with change management and a true desire to be transformational
- Guide a non-hierarchical team of faculty-practitioners and administrative officers responsible for the College's teaching and research programs, administration, business and financial affairs, institutional advancement, and student life.
- Confident in abilities but able to rely on and defer to other subject-matter experts on campus
- Possess a sense of curiosity and entrepreneurial thinking
- Ability to recruit and retain exceptional cabinet-level administrators
- Must be able to listen, understand, analyze, and make decisions expediently
- Ability to bring ideas to fruition and passion for developing programs and partnerships
- Media and political savvy and comfort being the face of Bennington

Operational Effectiveness, Financial Acumen, and Fundraising

- Capacity to analyze and report data in real time
- Oversee the preparation and management of the budget and ensure the resources are secured to meet it
- Experience working closely with a Board of Trustees and the ability to advise on best practices and responsibilities of the Board
- Innate understanding of the ways in which a small college works
- Socially astute with higher education financial acumen
- Assure that multiyear strategic planning leads to effective resource allocation and management, while respecting both the need for bold institutional vision and leadership and for the collaborative nature of the College's decision making

Culture Building

- Foster within the Bennington community a more universal understanding of the changing and evolving natures of higher education and liberal arts education
- Cultivate a culture of concord, respect, and acceptance
- Allow others to be subject-matter experts and give them due credit
- Promote a supportive and uplifting workplace culture that is motivating and energizing
- Engage with notably dynamic and creative student and alumni bodies and a supportive group of local community leaders, in advancing all aspects of the College
- Prioritize building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community with belonging as a fundamental principle interwoven into every aspect of campus life

Faculty and Staff Affairs

- Value the teacher-practitioner model and the egalitarian sense of the College
- Embrace self-directed learning and the Plan
- Ability to work with faculty to address possible changes in academic programs
- Deep understanding of and respect for shared governance
- Desire to default to subject-matter experts on campus

Student Affairs and Student Success

- Understand equity and stakeholdership, especially for underrepresented student groups
- Develop close working relationships with student representatives like House Chairs and Student Council
- Acknowledge the particular issues faced by underrepresented groups

In addition, strong candidates will offer:

- A palpable sense of generosity
- A desire to be “all in” and be on campus year-round
- Kindness, humanity, empathy, and respect
- Personal charm, charisma, and authenticity
- Playfulness and creativity
- Ability to instill hope and confidence

Compensation and Benefits

Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience. The salary range for this role is \$500,000 to \$535,000, subject to negotiation depending on candidate qualifications, with a generous benefits package, including a residence. To learn more about Bennington's offerings, please visit bennington.edu.



Contact

DSG Storbeck has been exclusively retained for this engagement, which is being led by Susan VanGilder, Managing Director, and Danielle Mebert, Managing Associate. Submit a compelling cover letter and resume by filling out our Talent Profile at <https://talent-profile.dsgco.com/search/v2/22708>. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

Please send all confidential nominations to BenningtonPresident@dsgco.com.

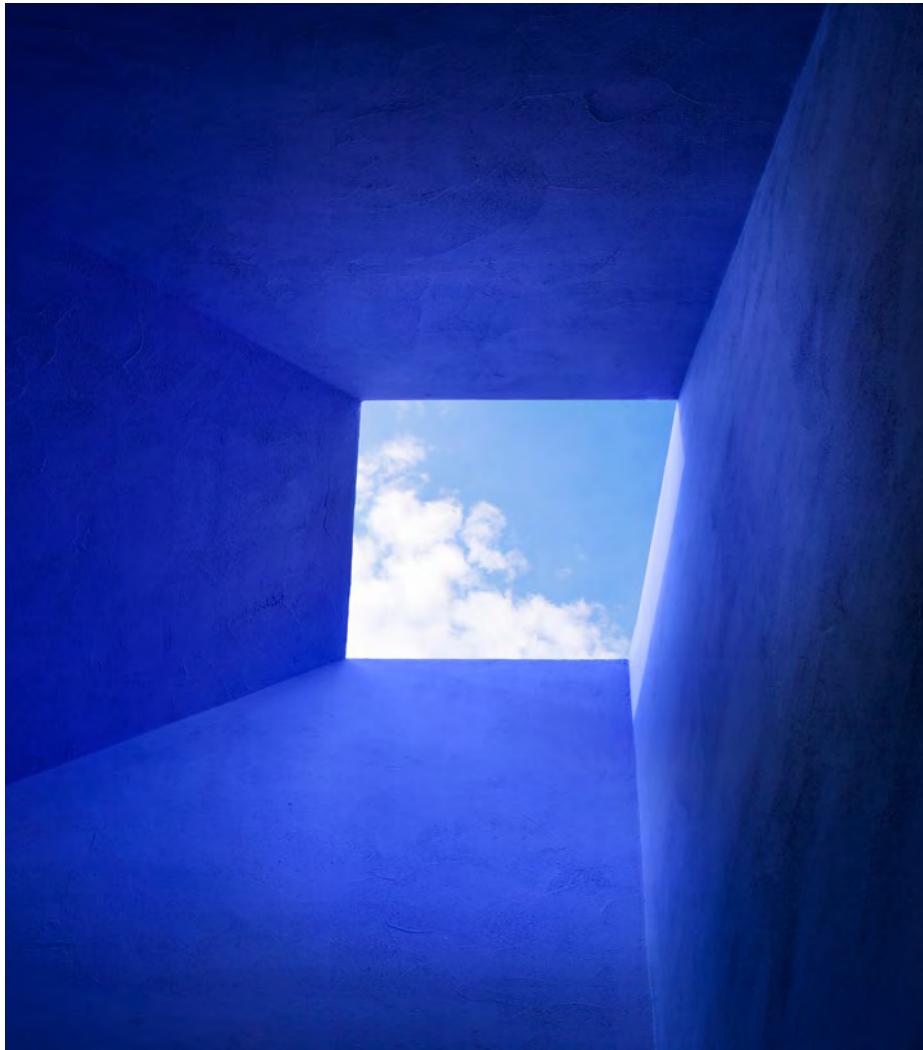
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Equal Opportunity at Bennington College

Bennington College is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination as defined under applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities. The College does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity (perceived or actual), HIV test, or any other legally protected status.

The College maintains policies and procedures for reporting, investigating, and adjudicating different types of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and bullying. Complaints that fall within the College's Title IX Sexual Harassment, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking Policy or the College's Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence and Stalking Policy should be directed to the College's Title IX Coordinator, whose office is located in Bennington College's Barn 101 office, whose telephone number is (802) 440-4306, and whose email address is alfredomedina@bennington.edu.

Complaints that fall within the College's Standards of Ethical Conduct and Non-Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy should be directed to the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, whose office is located in Bennington College's Downtown Office (Putnam/Winslow Building), whose telephone number is (802) 440-4423 and whose email address is hroffice@bennington.edu.



**This leadership profile is not exhaustive and may be subject to change. While every effort has been made to confirm information at the date of publication, the accuracy or completeness of the information provided herein cannot be guaranteed.



BENNINGTON COLLEGE

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