



*Search for the President  
Ithaca College  
Ithaca, New York*

*Educate, engage, and empower through theory, practice, and performance*

*—Ithaca College's Mission Statement*

## **The Search**

Ithaca College (IC), a private, comprehensive, residential campus community offering a learning experience that combines the best of liberal arts and professional education, seeks a strategic and inspiring leader as its 10th president.

Founded as the Ithaca Conservatory of Music in 1892, IC has grown to a modern campus overlooking the largest of the Finger Lakes and has transformed itself into a private, coeducational, residential comprehensive college, ranked by *US News and World Report* as one of the top 10 regional universities in the North, serving 4,818 undergraduates and 421 graduate students in fall 2021. Since its founding, IC has recognized the profound impact of combining academic theory with hands-on practice and a distinctive integration of performance. Today, the college offers 90 undergraduate majors from five nationally recognized, industry-leading schools and combines education for leadership in professional fields with the intellectual foundation of the liberal arts. Educational innovation continues to be at its core with new programs such as the physician assistant studies degree program, launched in 2021 in response to a growing need in the area and nationally.

The next president will lead IC at a critical juncture and moment of transition, challenge, and opportunity. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, IC underwent a bold and collaborative planning process that produced the college-wide strategic plan, *Ithaca Forever*. The strategic plan had already been launched when the pandemic changed the landscape of higher education worldwide and elevated the need for institutional nimbleness. With *Ithaca Forever* underway, IC gained tremendous momentum by using the plan to redesign the college's structure to meet the demands of the 21st-century student while enhancing its strategic financial and future competitive position. IC is well-positioned to build on its momentum to meet the challenges of the pandemic and post-pandemic era.

IC seeks a new president who will build on the college's significant work and considerable success towards a new strategic direction and chart a vision for the future that aligns with its mission and its distinctive strengths. This presidency is an exceptional opportunity for an inspiring, forward-thinking, financially astute, equity-minded, and engaged leader who connects deeply with IC's mission and the values of its students, faculty, staff, and alumni. IC seeks a president who can galvanize an academic community, effect cultural change by integrating the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging across the institution, apply business acumen to leverage its assets and ensure its long-term financial sustainability,

and engage in significant fundraising activities. Honoring the institution's past while charting a course for its future is central to the next president's charge.

Ithaca College has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this important search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

## **About Ithaca College**

Founded in 1892 by violinist W. Grant Egbert, [Ithaca College](#) began as the Ithaca Conservatory of Music in rented rooms in a house on East Seneca Street in downtown Ithaca. Over the ensuing decades, the institution added to its curriculum elocution, dance, physical education, business, and the liberal arts, among other programs. In 1931, the conservatory was chartered as a private college. By the 1960s, with 2,000 students, construction of IC's modern campus began on South Hill, overlooking downtown Ithaca. The college continued to expand over the ensuing decades to accommodate the growing student body, curriculum, and areas of study.

From its modest beginnings in rented rooms to a campus on South Hill offering breathtaking views of Cayuga Lake, Ithaca College now offers 90 undergraduate majors, 21 graduate majors, and 78 undergraduate minors from five schools: the School of Business, the Roy H. Park School of Communications, the School of Health Sciences and Human Performance, the School of Humanities and Sciences, and the School of Music. Ithaca College also operates satellite campuses including the Ithaca College London Center (since 1972) and the Los Angeles Program at the James B. Pendleton Center. Ithaca College also operates direct enrollment programs with several international universities in countries across the globe, including China, Australia, and Sweden, among many others.

Today, IC is known for its intellectually curious, creative, and innovative students who are eager to make their impact on the world after graduation. IC's small class sizes and extensive alumni network provide students the opportunity to build personal mentorships, collaborative partnerships, and professional guidance during their time at Ithaca and long after.

## **Overview of the Five Schools**

### ***School of Business***

The [School of Business](#) strives to deliver an innovative and inclusive student-centered business education, steeped in the liberal arts and experiential learning, to develop graduates who make a positive impact on business and society. The school offers undergraduate degrees in accounting and business administration (with concentrations in finance, international business, management, marketing, and sport management), as well as an MS in accounting and a specialized MBA, all of which are accredited by AACSB International. The school also offers minors that serve the entire campus, including options in entrepreneurship and analytics. With 25 full-time faculty and just over 500 students, the School of Business offers an educational experience defined by experiential learning, personalized advising and mentorship, and the opportunity to network with a robust alumni network.

### ***Roy H. Park School of Communications***

The [Roy H. Park School of Communications](#) (the Park School) has been a leader in the media studies landscape for more than 70 years. Beginning with classes in radio in the 1930s to today's curriculum with [10 undergraduate degree programs](#) and [three graduate programs](#), the Park School has about 1,800 students, 69 faculty, and 26 staff, all of whom are housed in Roy H. [Park Hall](#), a state-of-the-art facility with television studios, a sound stage, photography studios, 14 media labs and classrooms, and a 200-seat auditorium. The Park School commits \$250,000 each year to upgrade facilities, and, with over 13,000 alumni, students are connected with opportunities during and after their time at the school.

The Park School is home to the national award-winning student television station [ICTV](#), radio station [WICB Radio](#), and newspaper [The Ithacan](#).

### ***School of Health Sciences and Human Performance***

The [School of Health Sciences and Human Performance](#) (HSHP) has [16 undergraduate](#) and [five graduate degrees](#) in clinical and non-clinical careers, and is home to 1,133 students, 106 faculty, and 19 staff. Degree options include one of the nation's oldest physical therapy programs, a speech-language pathology program, an occupational therapy program, a physician assistant studies program housed in a state-of-the-art facility, athletic training, health care management and public and community health, health sciences, health education, and physical education. At any time, there are more than 400 active field placement sites. Eighty-two percent of students graduate within six years and 100% complete fieldwork, internships, and/or research prior to graduation.

### ***School of Humanities and Sciences***

The [School of Humanities and Sciences](#) (H&S) has the largest and most diverse curriculum at IC with more than [50 undergraduate programs and 40 minors](#). Students within the school as well as from other schools at IC can take advantage of the H&S curriculum to cultivate a learning experience applicable to any field through H&S's focus on intellectual flexibility, critical literacies, and the ability to integrate learning and socially responsible action. H&S is home to 1,620 students, 240 faculty, and 45 staff. Students can apply to the highly competitive [H&S Summer Scholars Program](#), where they work alongside faculty mentors for eight weeks, collaborating on research projects.

### ***School of Music***

For more than a century, the [School of Music](#) has proudly prepared musicians and educators. The students in each incoming class of over 400 undergraduate students have the option to choose from [eight majors](#) in the Departments of Music Education; Performance Studies; and Music Theory, History, and Composition. The School of Music is home to 98 renowned and award-winning faculty and 13 staff who often participate in leading three summer preparatory programs for current and potential students: [Summer Music Academy](#), [Summer Piano Institute](#), and the [High School Piano Competition](#). Faculty and staff lead two master's workshops during the summer, including [music education](#) and a [graduate workshop](#) for educators in the field.

The [Whalen Center for Music](#) is a 141,000-square-foot facility that houses recital halls, faculty teaching studios, an ensemble library, piano and instrument repair facilities, and state-of-the-art recording studios.

## Location

Ithaca College sits in the heart of the Finger Lakes region of New York. Located roughly halfway between Manhattan and Toronto, the thriving, culturally diverse city combines small-town warmth and charm with cosmopolitan flair. Home to Ithaca College, Cornell University, and Tompkins Cortland Community College, the progressive community attracts visitors, students, and scholars from around the globe.

At the heart of this progressive community is the Ithaca Commons. The Commons is a pedestrian-only area that is home to local businesses and restaurants. In October 2014, Cornell University, Ithaca College, and Tompkins Cortland Community College launched a collaborative project to help foster the redevelopment of Ithaca's downtown. REV: Ithaca Startup Works helps local entrepreneurs grow their businesses by providing a coworking space and access to the local entrepreneurial community. Also on the Commons, Ithaca College's physician assistant studies program has a newly opened, state-of-the-art instructional site, which offers a clinical learning and simulation center with advanced technology to provide students the opportunity for hands-on practice.

Ithaca offers a wealth of arts, culture, and activity while maintaining a small-town feel. Rolling hills, breathtaking gorges, and lakes offer countless outdoor activities. Fantastic restaurants, exciting nightlife, vibrant theater, mainstream and independent cinema, and live music abound. Activities include visits to central New York's award-winning wineries, swimming beneath waterfalls, hiking, skiing, and skating throughout the winter, visiting museums and galleries, or shopping along the downtown Commons.

In appreciation of the area's abundant natural resources, the Ithaca community is focused on sustainability. Ithaca's Sustainability Center brings the county's sustainability initiatives to life, provides information to residents, and offers internship opportunities to students. The Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative brings together organizations of all kinds that are committed to climate protection, and it leverages these commitments to focus on retrofitting buildings. Most recently, Ithaca's common council voted unanimously in favor of a measure that calls for the city government to meet all of its electricity needs with renewable energy by 2025, as well as reduce its vehicle emissions by half. Ithaca has also set an ambitious goal of being a carbon-neutral city by 2030. Across the IC community is a vision and actionable commitment to sustainability through over 150 sustainability-focused courses and the management and preservation of over 550 acres of natural lands.

## Faculty

The core faculty at IC is characterized by a longstanding and deep commitment to the institution, its liberal arts values, and most importantly, its students. Faculty are true teacher-scholars who create a personalized and supportive environment for students to thrive. The faculty body is composed of 537 full-time and part-time and adjunct teaching faculty. Fifty-one percent of the faculty identify as female, and 11 percent self-identify as BIPOC. The average class size for fall 2020 was 17 for undergraduate courses, with a fall 2021 student-to-faculty ratio of 10.7:1.

As evidenced in the current curriculum, IC faculty support innovation throughout all five of IC's schools. Under the current strategic plan, staff and faculty have launched new, innovative programs and have enhanced opportunities for scholarship, research, and artistic endeavors. The faculty bring energy and excitement as well as a willingness to be innovative in response to the challenging and ever-shifting higher

education market. Students express great satisfaction with their education and point to the small class sizes and personal relationships with faculty as among IC's greatest strengths.

## **Staff**

The staff at IC are also dedicated to the institution, its values, and its students. Staff members are integral in the creation of opportunities for students, which are key components of the IC experience. The 815 staff members manage everything from facilities to career advising, from advertising to enrollment, and budgeting to recordkeeping. Staff not only ensure that the needs of the students and faculty are met, but they are facilitators and creators of an open and collaborative culture within IC. Many of the staff in the academic departments are also highly skilled, talented, and collaborative specialists in their fields, a distinction that enhances the overall educational experience. Staff members are frequently the conduits of IC's extensive outreach into the communities and are often the consistent points of contact for resolving student concerns.

## **Students**

Students are the life force of Ithaca College, and they're composed of aspiring journalists, musicians, television directors, educators, sound engineers, health-care professionals, writers, business administrators, entrepreneurs, and many other future professionals. Classified as a Carnegie Master's I Institution, IC enrolls approximately 4,818 undergraduates and 421 graduate students who represent 49 states, three U.S. territories, and 49 countries. Roughly 45 percent of IC's students are from the state of New York. The college's 10.7:1 student-to-faculty ratio allows for a substantial degree of individual attention yet also provides the diversity of educational opportunities generally present at large universities.

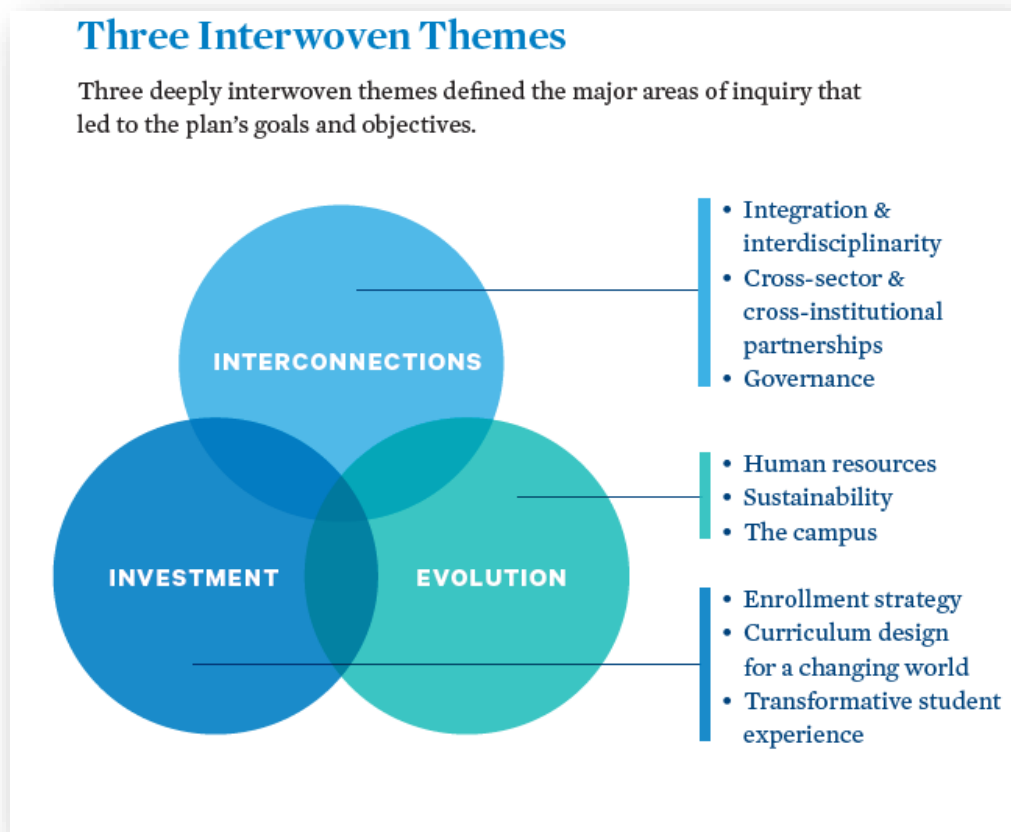
From activism to professional growth—students can connect with peers in meaningful ways and engage in over 200 clubs and organizations across campus. They can also participate in the Student Engagement's Leadership Development and Community Involvement programs to learn and connect outside the classroom.

Athletics play an important role for students at IC, and the college offers a robust and well-integrated sports program that provides students opportunities to develop critical leadership skills. IC's Bombers compete in 27 competitive sports teams in the NCAA Division III athletics program and reflect the intense drive, professionalism, and spirit of contribution and support that is alive throughout the entire IC community. The Bombers compete as members of the Liberty League and the Eastern College Athletic Conference and represent one of the Division III's strongest athletic programs, winning a total of 15 team national championships, 46 individual national championships, and more than 1,600 All-Americans. IC student-athletes are also recognized for their academic standing with an average GPA of 3.27 during the 2019-2020 academic year. In November 2019, IC helped establish a new Division III college football attendance record of 45,161, when it bested archrival SUNY Cortland in the Cortaca Jug match at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey. In November 2022, the famed Cortaca Jug game will be played at Yankee Stadium in the Bronx.

## Ithaca Forever Strategic Plan—Bold Thinking for a Global Good

In 2019, IC launched its five-year strategic plan: [Ithaca Forever](#). The plan is a result of a yearlong, inclusive collaboration between faculty, staff, students, alumni, and off-campus community members. It provides a framework for how the college will deliver an exceptional educational experience that is accessible, affordable, and responsive to the needs of the next generation of Ithaca College students.

The plan addresses the myriad challenges facing higher education, including affordability, accessibility, and the demographic decline of the college-age population in the Northeast. Ithaca Forever was designed to address these issues around three interwoven themes—interconnections, investment, and evolution—that represent nine goals and objectives: integration and interdisciplinarity, cross-sector and cross-institutional partnerships, governance, human resources, sustainability, the campus, enrollment strategy, curriculum design for a changing world, and transformative student experience.



Now in its third year (of five), the plan has seen its challenges through the pandemic. February 2021 marked a milestone in the implementation of IC's plan, with former President Shirley M. Collado and Provost La Jerne Terry Cornish's approval of all the recommendations in the *Shape of the College* final report. This report outlined necessary changes to the academic affairs division to align the size of the faculty in the right proportion to the size of the student body and IC's academic programs in the right

proportion to student interest and need. This was a difficult but necessary moment for the institution, and the campus is eager for restoration and forward momentum.

The campus continues to be excited and energized by the strategic initiatives and are hopeful for their continued success in acknowledgement of the following goals:

- Become a model for student success, engagement, and well-being, helping students to develop their unique potential.
- Become a year-round campus for living and learning opportunities.
- Structurally support and value collaboration, interdisciplinarity, curricular flexibility, and shared governance.
- Develop cross-sector and community partnerships that address challenging issues, optimize the use of resources, and serve the public good.
- Become a national model for colleges committed to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Determine and maintain appropriate and sustainable size programs and structures, and the associated resources, at every level of the institution.
- Commit to being an employer of choice.
- Advance the Campus Master Plan and improve space utilization to enhance the student experience and promote teaching and learning.
- Cultivate an Ithaca Forever community, inspired by the power of the Ithaca College experience.

## **Finance and Governance**

Over the last few decades, IC's leadership has made forward-thinking decisions to strengthen the institution's financial stability and flexibility, which has helped maintain its strong financial position. While IC has not been immune to the financial impact of COVID-19 and shifting higher education enrollment challenges, its endowment has grown, and the discount rate has remained stable. In fiscal year 2020, IC's generated total operating revenue was \$228 million. At fiscal year-end 2020, total assets were \$834.7 million and total liabilities were \$202.4 million, with net assets at \$632.2 million. Over the past decade the college's endowment has grown from \$209.5 million in fiscal year 2011 to \$425.2 million in fiscal year 2021. The growth in the endowment is primarily due the college's solid operating margins coupled with strong investment management and market gains. The remaining growth over this period can be attributed to donor contributions.

For the 2020-2021 academic year, total student costs are \$62,386. Ithaca College is committed to supporting the students who are admitted to the college, and in fiscal year 2020 the aggregate discount rate was 51.6 percent.

Ithaca College is governed by the IC [Board of Trustees](#), of which the president is a full voting member. Ithaca College trustees serve as fiduciaries of the institution and oversee all of IC's institutional affairs in accordance with the college's charter, bylaws, evolving statements of mission and purpose, and strategic plan. The IC Board of Trustees works in strategic partnership with the president of the college. The board presently has 28 members.



The [Faculty Council](#) is the representative body of the faculty as a whole, and the council offers recommendations to the provost and vice president for academic affairs. The [Staff Council](#) is the representative body of the staff, and this group presents recommendations to the vice president for human resources and planning of the college for action. The [Student Governance Council](#) (SGC) is the representative body of the IC students, and this council submits recommendations to the vice president for student affairs and campus life for action. Additionally, SGC is the link between the students and the Senior Leadership Team, providing student feedback on campus issues and plans. The Alumni Association Board of Directors is the representative body of alumni, serves in an advisory capacity, and helps guide the college's efforts to create a vibrant, dynamic alumni community with strong ties to the college and each other.

### **The Role of President of Ithaca College**

The president serves as the chief executive and administrative head of the college, reporting to the board of trustees, setting a vision and strategy to lead the institution forward. The president's Senior Leadership Team, the key executive team, currently includes the provost, vice president for marketing and enrollment strategy, vice president for philanthropy and engagement, vice president for human resources and planning, vice president for student affairs and campus life, vice president for finance and administration and chief financial officer, chief information officer, secretary and legal counsel to the board of trustees, and chief of staff.

Ithaca College seeks a new president who will embrace transformational change and provide visionary, inspiring, and collegial leadership to the institution. Personifying the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, the new president will be a strong organizational leader, a creative thinker, a community and culture builder, a connector, and a passionate and powerful representative of Ithaca College and the value of an Ithaca College education. The new president will also apply business acumen to leverage the college's assets and ensure its long-term financial sustainability and will engage in significant fundraising activities, including leading a major capital campaign. Moving Ithaca College forward in its immediate institutional work ahead and leading its longer-term visioning for a sustainable future is the overarching challenge for the new president.

### **Key Challenges and Opportunities for the New President**

#### ***Inspire, unite, and energize faculty and staff around the next phase of success***

The president will work together with faculty and staff to lead Ithaca College in continuing the implementation of Ithaca Forever and its important academic initiatives, bringing together all elements of the community to realize the benefits of this reimagination.

Navigating the fundamental and profound changes that higher education has experienced in the COVID-19 crisis will figure prominently in the president's immediate work. The president will need to continue to refine, articulate, and promote IC's long-term sustaining institutional identity and academic vision, ensuring that the campus responds to and embraces changing demographics and enhancing its commitment to academic excellence, respect and accountability, innovation, sustainability, and equity.



### ***Support and engage faculty and staff***

The strength of any institution is embodied in the character, intellect, and passion of its community. At Ithaca, the faculty and staff are deeply committed to students and engaged in the work across the campus for them to flourish. Over the past few years, the campus has weathered many challenges not unique in higher education as it has worked to review and adjust programming for the changing enrollment landscape and set the institution on the best financial grounding for the future.

Ithaca's faculty and staff have been part of transformational change that has reshaped the institution. The work has been a complicated and challenging process while surviving and managing through a global pandemic, and, although the most challenging pieces are complete, work remains to be done. Change is not easy, but the next president will need to bring a deep appreciation for the work done and yet to be done by faculty, staff, and academic leadership and engage in building collaborative relationships for the work ahead. Ithaca needs a president who will be a visible and active presence both on and off campus, a responsive and a proactive communicator, and a champion for the mission of Ithaca College.

### ***Lead significant cultural change and actualize the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging***

Building and maintaining a more diverse and inclusive institution is a key element in Ithaca College's strategic plan. As part of this work, Ithaca College seeks to critically address and reduce all forms of prejudice, foster diversity, and reduce ethnocentrism and intolerance. The college has made great strides, but there is significant work to be done to fully realize the institutional commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The next president will be a transformative leader who not only has a deep-seated commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging but also is an engaged student of these issues and has demonstrated a record of successful action and courage, both personally and professionally, in this important work. The president will be expected to be a thought leader on these issues in word and action and to bring a working theory of change related to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice grounded in the Ithaca College context.

### ***Provide effective leadership and management***

Like most colleges and universities, IC faces financial pressures with limited resources. Ensuring long-term sustainability will mean substantially increasing the endowment, balancing financial aid and rising costs, continuing to examine and manage spending priorities, and securing and strengthening all current and future sources of revenue. The successful candidate must continue to engage the IC community in the work ahead to develop and execute a broad, ambitious, and fiscally responsible plan in determining and maintaining the appropriate and sustainable size of the institution while also looking for opportunities for growth and revenue generation. Familiarity with the current issues impacting higher education is essential, as are highly developed business acumen and substantial management experience.

### ***Strengthen ties with alumni and accelerate philanthropic successes***

Fundraising leadership will be a critical element of the next president's agenda. While Ithaca has grown its endowment in the past through reinvesting revenue, the annual alumni participation has been at 6.3%.

A critical task for the next president will be to strengthen alumni relations, cultivate increased support from alumni, and develop relationships and interest from new donors, corporations, and foundations.

The president will work in collaboration with the board of trustees to embark on a campaign feasibility study and launch a comprehensive campaign. The president will need the ability and appetite to represent Ithaca College compellingly to donors and to energize stakeholders to support and champion the college. The president will be tasked with securing new donors; engaging and inspiring an evolving community of over 70,000 alumni around the world including award-winning entertainers, musicians, composers, journalists, politicians, and business and industry leaders; and inspiring the whole Ithaca College community of today and tomorrow to invest in its future. The next president will work collaboratively with the senior leadership team and key members of the community to strengthen the brand and visibility of Ithaca College nationally and globally.

### ***Develop enrollment strategies for the future***

Ithaca faces many of the same challenges the higher education market is grappling with today with the economic model stressed, therefore making student enrollment and retention critical to Ithaca's future success. Ithaca's enrollment has peaked at 7,000 students and over the last few years shifted its average to 5,000 students. The leadership of the college has recalibrated IC's financial model, but there is work to be done to sustain enrollment and increase retention. IC will need a crisper definition of identity, and the president will work to expand the story and reach of Ithaca College beyond the Northeast region, championing initiatives to bolster enrollment and retention with data-informed decision making. Outside of the Ithaca campus, IC's programs in London and Los Angeles have significant opportunities for growth and expanding the reach of student enrollment.

The college will also continue to improve retention outcomes with a more organized and data-driven approach. The first-year retention rate in 2021 was 84.2 percent and 76 percent in the second year. The president will partner with the vice president of marketing and enrollment strategy and will work closely with leadership across the institution to create a comprehensive enrollment plan that ensures excellence and sustainability and targets students who are likely to succeed at Ithaca College.

### **Qualifications and Characteristics**

Ithaca College seeks a president with intellectual vision; a demonstrated record of action in support of and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; and the capacity to champion and inspire the college community to new levels of excellence. The next president will combine an appreciation for Ithaca's strategic direction, the skills and experience to guide the journey, and the imagination and courage to navigate a shifting higher education landscape.

Ithaca seeks a leader who brings a history of successful organizational and financial leadership, the ability to cultivate and secure philanthropic support for Ithaca College and its programs, and a record of accomplishment in creating and supporting a climate of transparency, understanding, and excitement. The Search Committee understands that no single candidate will have all the ideal qualifications, but it seeks candidates with the following experience and abilities:

- A deep professional and personal commitment to the mission of Ithaca College, along with an appreciation and understanding of its history.

- Demonstrated experience as a visionary, strategic, innovative, and inclusive leader who brings constituencies to actionable consensus around bold choices and executes large and ambitious plans with fiscal responsibility.
- A demonstrated commitment to, and track record of, accomplishment around diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging.
- Exceptional communication skills, able to engage effectively with the many constituencies of the college, skillfully negotiating different points of view; a knowledge of academic governance, including experience working with faculty and boards of trustees, aiding both to achieve productive, meaningful outcomes.
- A demonstrated personal confidence to lead, humility to listen, and propensity to support the efforts of others.
- A substantial understanding of trends and developments that will affect the future of higher education.
- Strong administrative leadership experience, with equally strong financial management skills; experience with building alternative revenue streams.
- The skills, passion, and personality to fundraise successfully and appeal to a wide variety of donors; the character to inspire alumni and to lead a strong development effort.
- Terminal degree preferred; demonstrated success in roles of similar scope, scale, complexity, and responsibility.

### **Applications and Nominations**

All inquiries, nominations/referrals, and applications (CVs and letters of interest) should be sent electronically and in confidence to:

Kate Barry, Partner  
Karen McPhedran, Senior Associate  
Stephanie Simon, Associate  
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/search-detail/S8-233>

Ithaca College is committed to building a diverse academic community and encourages members of underrepresented groups to apply. Experience that contributes to the diversity of the college is appreciated.