

Position Profile: Chief Executive Officer

South Dakota School of Mines and Technology | Center for Alumni Relations & Advancement (CARA)

Introduction to South Dakota Mines CARA

The South Dakota School of Mines and Technology is one of the nation's leading science and engineering colleges. Founded in 1885, South Dakota Mines offers its students an affordable, world-class STEM education that fosters groundbreaking innovation, scientific breakthroughs, and a deep exploration of the cutting-edge. The university is consistently ranked among the best engineering schools for return on investment, with a 97% job placement rate and an average starting salary consistently above the national average.

South Dakota Mines is a place of quiet greatness that benefits from the fervent support of its students, alumni, and faculty. A recent *Wall Street Journal* report named South Dakota Mines as one of the top-ten most-recommended schools nationally by students and recent alumni. The university has an extraordinary opportunity to highlight its innovations and accomplishments and celebrate how it continues to make a significant regional and global impact. South Dakota Mines students and faculty are engaging in cutting-edge research and partnering with industries to address the challenges of the twenty-first century. And their alumni continue to be pioneers in their fields.



The Center for Alumni Relations and Advancement (CARA) promotes the traditions, interests, influence, and reputation of South Dakota Mines through meaningful engagement and by inspiring and stewarding philanthropy. CARA's staff of 19 connects with thousands of alumni and friends each year, and together, they support the greatest needs of Mines' students and faculty—from scholarships and department resources to facility updates, industry partnerships, and more. In everything they do, CARA's staff and Board of Directors embody the values of collaboration, tradition, excellence, diversity and inclusion, and stewardship.

Opportunity

South Dakota Mines CARA seeks an experienced, strategic advancement leader to oversee the university's fundraising growth and success. Supervising a team of advancement and alumni-relations professionals, CARA's CEO will be a key member of the university's Executive Council, and report to the Chair of the Center's Board of Directors.

This position carries tremendous opportunity. The incoming CEO will assume leadership at a pivotal time in the institution's history. Leveraging the combined strengths of a long-tenured, talented team and committed volunteer leadership, the new CEO will oversee a transformative capital campaign. This campaign will take the university to *New Heights* and address its most pressing priorities: academic and athletic scholarships, innovative learning spaces, academic programs, and the Center for Alumni

Relations and Advancement (CARA). Already, the campaign has been well received and supported by the university's close friends and donors.

The next CEO of South Dakota Mines CARA will bring a deep understanding of fundraising principles, methods, and tactics. They will be highly collaborative and a strong motivator who will promote a culture of philanthropy among the board, university leadership, and staff. In addition, they will bring a keen understanding of management, team dynamics, and accountability to lead a high-performing development staff to continued excellence.

Key Position Functions

The incoming CEO will work in partnership with CARA and South Dakota Mines leadership to oversee fund-development tactics that will support the operations, growth, and long-term sustainability of the university. They will also lead the advancement team, providing day-to-day management in addition to building and maintaining relationships with high-capacity prospects. Specific activities include:

Fundraising Strategy: Oversee and direct all fundraising activities, including the current *New Heights Campaign*, annual fundraising plan, grants, individual major gift fundraising, corporate and foundation funding, special events, planned giving, donor relations, and fundraising operations. Analyze and evaluate the donor base and external relationships to identify opportunities for new and increased revenue. Create development and fundraising plans to achieve goals, meeting or exceeding the annual budget.



Leadership and Management: Motivate and manage a 19-person team, directly supervising eight senior leaders. Provide effective team leadership and professional development. Develop employees through effective performance management, salary planning and administration, training and development, workflow and organizational planning, hiring and placement, and team engagement. Ensure a commitment to a safe, secure, and healthy work environment by establishing, following, and enforcing standards and procedures.

Donor Engagement and Stewardship: Cultivate, strengthen, and sustain strategic relationships with key donors, ensuring a high level of donor satisfaction and involvement. Oversee the creation and implementation of donor development, solicitation, and stewardship plans. Lead the creation and implementation of alumni relations strategies to engage alumni and current students, fostering enduring relationships with South Dakota Mines. Guide strategy for the development of recognition activities for key stakeholder groups.

Development Operations: Develop, implement, and monitor appropriate metrics for overall development and individual team performance to achieve strategic objectives. Ensure the development infrastructure provides an efficient and effective pathway for alumni and donor engagement; and oversee the team responsible for all donor data tracking and reporting, donor relations, gift

acknowledgement and gratitude activities, donor solicitation tracking and portfolio management, and gift and fundraising policies and processes.

Collaboration: Serve as a member of the university's Executive Council and participate in strategic planning and management activities that guide the direction of the university overall. Establish and maintain strong relationships with South Dakota Mines faculty, staff, and other stakeholders. Collaborate with academic departments to ensure strong working relationships and identify and secure support for the university.

Board Relations: Report to the Chair of the Board of Directors with responsibility to the Executive Committee and full Board of Directors. Work collaboratively with the Board, as well as with the leaders throughout the university, to ensure that all activities and resources are aligned with the university's priorities.

Qualifications

Required Qualifications

- Proven professional experience leading multi-disciplinary teams
- Demonstrated record of significant achievement in fundraising, specifically with major and planned giving
- Previous fiscal management accountability and comfort with the fiduciary responsibility accompanying an organization with a large asset base
- Exemplary communication and presentation skills
- Bachelor's degree

Desired Qualifications

- Leadership experience in complex or matrixed organizations
- Master's degree
- Successful experience at a like-sized institution and knowledge of fundraising in the higher education sector
- Demonstrated and successful comprehensive and capital campaign experience

Competencies and Attributes for Success

- Communicates effectively
- Drives vision and purpose
- Strategic mindset
- Collaborates
- Builds effective teams
- Instills trust
- Action oriented
- Interpersonal savvy
- Builds networks
- Financial acumen
- Cultivates innovation
- Business insight

Compensation

South Dakota Mines CARA is pleased to offer a competitive compensation and benefits package for this position. Target base salary is \$175,000-\$225,000, commensurate with experience; the CEO is also eligible for a performance-based bonus of up to 15% of base salary.

Application Process

Benefactor Group is pleased to be assisting South Dakota Mines CARA with this executive search. Applications will be reviewed as they are received. All applications are considered highly confidential. To be considered for this position, please send a cover letter and resume to:

Benefactor Group Recruitment Team

HR@benefactorgroup.com

<http://www.benefactorgroup.com>

Please do not contact South Dakota Mines CARA staff or the Board of Directors with questions or interest in the role. All inquiries about the position should be directed to Benefactor Group.

To learn more about South Dakota Mines CARA, please visit <https://cara.sdsmt.edu/>.

About Rapid City, South Dakota

Nestled in the heart of the Black Hills, Rapid City, South Dakota, is known for its unique blend of natural beauty, rich history, and vibrant community. With its growing job market and thriving cultural scene, this city is an ideal place to live and work.

Rapid City is surrounded by some of the most breathtaking natural and manmade wonders in the United States. Just a short drive away, you can explore the iconic Mount Rushmore National Memorial, see the world's largest mountain carving in process at the Crazy Horse Memorial, or discover the other worldly landscapes of Badlands National Park. Hiking, biking, and camping enthusiasts will find endless adventures in the Black Hills, from Custer State Park to the scenic Needles Highway.

The city's historic downtown district is filled with charming boutiques, galleries, and restaurants. The City of Presidents, an art installation that lines the streets, provides an educational walk through American history. You can also explore the Journey Museum and Learning Center to learn about the region's history, geology, and Native American heritage.

Rapid City is also known for its welcoming and family-friendly community. The city hosts a variety of events and festivals throughout the year, such as Downtown Summer Nights, Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo, and the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. Attractions such as the Reptile Gardens, Bear Country USA, and Storybook Island entertain kids of all ages.

The fastest-growing city in the Midwest, Rapid City is poised for incredible economic growth. A key reason for this: Rapid City boasts an affordable cost of living—2% lower than the national average and nearly 10% lower than the average for South Dakota. Its booming job market offers career opportunities in education, healthcare, agriculture, forestry, mining, tourism, government, and more.

With an array of outdoor activities, historical attractions, family-friendly options, and a thriving local economy, Rapid City is an ideal place to build a career and a home. The city blends natural beauty, economic opportunity, and a strong sense of community seamlessly.