



**LEADERSHIP PROFILE FOR  
MISSOURI WESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY'S  
NEXT PRESIDENT**





# INTRODUCTION

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The Board of Governors at Missouri Western State University is seeking candidates to fill the position of the University's seventh President.

Missouri Western State University, affectionately MoWest, is a comprehensive public university providing a blend of traditional liberal arts, fine arts, business and professional degree programs. As the state's largest open-enrollment university and home to the #1 Nursing School in Missouri\*, MoWest serves a diverse student population, and more than 40 percent of our students are first-generation college students. MoWest is also designated as the state's official applied learning university, so all students gain hands-on, practical experience in their chosen fields before graduation.

With its focus on affordability, access and applied learning, MoWest is ranked #1 in social mobility and is poised for growth. This year, we adopted a new five-year strategic plan, "Building a Premier Regional University," with an overarching goal of student success through a culture that demonstrates the University's values of service, quality, enthusiasm, freedom, respect and courage.

Our next President will help us build on these strengths with visionary leadership to better serve our students, our community, our region and the world.

\*Ranked #1 Nursing School in Missouri by RegisteredNursing.org, Sept. 2025

## THE OPPORTUNITY

The next President of Missouri Western State University will have the exciting opportunity to take MoWest to the next level of excellence. The President will work with University's Board of Governors, outstanding faculty and staff, students, alumni, external constituencies, key partners, the St. Joseph, Missouri community and the surrounding region to accomplish this task.

As MoWest's chief executive officer, the President reports to the Board of Governors and is responsible for refining the vision and setting the direction for the institution. Serving as the seventh President of MoWest is a unique opportunity for a transformational leader to build on the exceptional strengths of the University, including its statewide applied learning mission, strong teaching tradition, rich environment for scholarship, high-quality faculty, committed staff, inspirational students, great overall value and sense of place in St. Joseph.





## MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

### Mission

Missouri Western State University is a student-centered learning community preparing individuals for lives of excellence through applied learning.

### Vision

MoWest will be the premier open access regional university, known for transforming the lives of our students and the communities we serve.

### Values

**Service.** We share the common purpose of serving students, one another and the people of the region.

**Quality.** We are committed to the quality of our programs, our students, and our partnership with the people of the region.

**Enthusiasm.** We are enthusiastic about learning and confident that we can make a difference in the lives of students through their learning.

**Freedom.** We promote the free exchange of ideas that makes education liberating and democracy unique.

**Respect.** We act as individuals and as a campus community with respect for diversity and for the best in human potential.

**Courage.** We seek the challenge and adventure of shaping the future with an increasingly global perspective.



# BUILDING A PREMIER REGIONAL UNIVERSITY

Missouri Western State University is committed to becoming the premier open access regional university by preparing students for success through applied learning experiences. Guided by a strategic plan centered on four key priorities, the university continues to remove barriers to expand access and opportunities to education while meeting the evolving needs of our students and the communities we serve.

## Priorities and Opportunities

### Priority 1: Enhance student-centered transformational learning experiences.

- + **Opportunity 1:** Optimize recruitment, retention and degree completion empowering each student to thrive academically and personally. Focus on creating transformational experiences through enhanced campus life.
- + **Opportunity 2:** Develop and maintain academic programs that equip students and lifelong learners to lead and innovate in the regional economy and beyond.
- + **Opportunity 3:** Enhance MoWest brand awareness and reputation to improve student, faculty, staff and community experience.

### Priority 2: Invest in our people, processes and places.

- + **Opportunity 1:** Cultivate a culture of excellence by investing in and supporting faculty and staff. Including the implementation of a People Plan and consistent professional development framework.

- + **Opportunity 2:** Optimize and memorialize institutional processes to improve quality, communication and overall performance.
- + **Opportunity 3:** Revitalize and implement a Master Facilities Plan to modernize and create an inspiring campus environment.

### Priority 3: Cultivate meaningful regional collaborations.

- + **Opportunity 1:** Execute the role of a public regional university by aligning academic programs and student experiences with regional workforce needs.
- + **Opportunity 2:** Expand and diversify non-tuition/fee revenue sources while fostering a culture of data-informed decision-making.
- + **Opportunity 3:** Build a regional advocacy coalition to champion and elevate public support for the University.

### Priority 4: Improve educational attainment.

- + **Opportunity 1:** Support and improve educational attainment in the region.

## Our Culture.

We embody a culture that demonstrates our values of service, quality, enthusiasm, freedom, respect and courage by fostering:

- + Creativity and Collaboration
- + Evidence-based Decision Making
- + Agile Innovation
- + Accountability
- + Every Employee is an Educator
- + Every Student Matters

# FINANCIALS

## Budget

Like most public universities, MoWest faces a challenging financial environment due to declining state appropriations. However, for the past two fiscal years, state appropriations remained stable. The proposed operating budget for FY '27 is \$84.5 million.

## Tuition

MoWest strives to keep education affordable and accessible. Despite the relatively low cost of a MoWest education, we continue to address the affordability gap that faces our particular student population to ensure students emerge with minimal debt and the ability to succeed and prosper.

## Foundation

The Missouri Western State University Foundation is a separate not-for-profit charitable organization that raises private resources to support Missouri Western's mission. During FY 2025 the Foundation transferred more than \$3.95 million to the University for programs, scholarships and capital improvements. The FY 2025 total assets of the MWSU Foundation were almost \$70 million. Of this, the endowment base represented over \$ 30 million.

## Tuition and Fees (2026-27)

15 Credit Hours/Semester	One Semester	Full Year
<b>In-State/Griffon Rate</b>	<b>\$ 5,670</b>	<b>\$11,340</b>
<b>Out-of-State</b>	<b>\$10,350</b>	<b>\$20,700</b>
<b>Tuition, Room and Board*</b>		
<b>In-State/Griffon Rate</b>	<b>\$10,888</b>	<b>\$21,776</b>
<b>Out-of-State</b>	<b>\$15,568</b>	<b>\$31,136</b>

\*Hall and meal plans vary depending on residence hall choice and meal plan level. Rates posted here are for Vaselakos Hall double room and unlimited 7 + 100 meal plan.

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**Griffon Rate** In-state tuition rate offered to students from Missouri and 19 other neighboring states.

**Active-duty military, veterans and their dependents, regardless of their home state, are granted in-state tuition. MoWest participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program.**

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# LEADERSHIP PRIORITIES

## Build Upon and Advance MoWest's Mission

The President must build upon and advance Missouri Western State University's distinctive statewide mission as a student-centered learning community preparing individuals for lives of excellence through applied learning. The President will inspire the University community to new levels of excellence across the institution and in all of its myriad endeavors, with a forward orientation to meeting the dynamic conditions and challenges of the current and future higher education landscape.

**Mission:** Missouri Western State University is a student-centered learning community preparing individuals for lives of excellence through applied learning.

**Vision:** Missouri Western State University will be the premier open access regional university, known for transforming the lives of our students and the communities we serve.

## Building a Premier Regional University

The President must champion "Building a Premier Regional University: Strategic Vision for Missouri Western State University 2026-2030" by engaging in strategies and initiatives to provide a learning experience

that is affordable, engaging and barrier-free; creating a culture that demonstrates MoWest's values and affirms the role of every employee as an educator; expanding partnerships that meet regional needs and enhance learning opportunities across campus; providing quality programs that are future-focused, demonstrate a commitment to meeting workforce needs, and prepare students for success; and stewarding resources to achieve long-term financial stability.

## Commitment to Academic Excellence

The next President will be committed to fostering excellence in learning, teaching, scholarship, research, creative activity and service and creating a culture of academic achievement, effectiveness and aspiration. The President will have a passion for student success and be committed to the intellectual, emotional, social and ethical development of students who are critical thinkers, career ready and life-long learners.

## Increase Enrollment Growth and Student Retention

The next President must ensure that the University's enrollment and retention goals are reached and promote a student success culture committed to continuous improvement. The President will exhibit an energized spirit to evaluating and refining all

of the factors that impact university growth and increased enrollment aligned with the strategic plan and overall goals. Increasing the retention of undergraduate students is a particular priority for MoWest, and improvement in retention and graduation rates will be recognized as an important point of success for the President.

## Identify Opportunities and Develop Innovative Solutions

The President must be capable of assessing and evaluating MoWest's strengths and areas for improvement related to academic programs, staffing, facilities/campus, financial stability, marketing and communications, athletics and operations and addressing challenges with nimble and rapid responses and innovative solutions that will advance the future of MoWest.

## Provide Inspiring, Collaborative Leadership

The President will be committed to the development of faculty and staff and have a track record of inspiring teams and people through principled, collaborative leadership and inclusive decision making. The President will appreciate and celebrate the MoWest faculty and staff, who are motivated by the University's students, collegial and family-friendly campus environment, and deep commitment to MoWest's mission.

## **Improve Long-Term Financial Stability**

Ensuring long-term financial stability will be critical for the President. The President will work with the Board of Governors to develop and oversee a comprehensive and responsible budget that considers MoWest's current and future strategic priorities, address pressing needs and operational changes, and carefully steward the University's finances. The ability to work effectively within the state higher education community, with local officials and with state legislators to enhance the financial position of the University is essential. The President must manage competing interests and control expenses, requiring a leader who can make difficult decisions. The President must bring fresh ideas to an evolving higher education business model by broadening revenue streams and driving efficiency without compromising mission or student success.

## **Broaden Philanthropy and External Funding**

Fundraising will be an important priority for the President. The President must create and foster a culture of philanthropy among alumni, partners, faculty, staff, the St. Joseph and regional communities, parents and other external stakeholders to secure new sources of financial support that will enable MoWest to ensure its success and accelerate its upward trajectory. The

President will work collaboratively with the Board of Governors, the advancement team, faculty, staff and other strategic partners to articulate state funding priorities and set goals and priorities for private fundraising.

## **Facilitate Visionary and Effective Shared Governance**

The President will have the opportunity to forge a strong partnership with the MoWest Board of Governors, which looks forward to a highly collaborative, productive and rewarding relationship built on trust and confidence with the President in alignment with the best practices in governance in higher education. The President must be committed to the importance of shared governance in sustaining the quality of MoWest and must communicate the institution's challenges and options with the agencies of shared governance to make the case for change.

## **Elevate Missouri Western State University's Presence**

The President will foster a stronger relationship with the city of St. Joseph and facilitate partnerships and initiatives that will deeply integrate MoWest with the regional community. The President also will lead efforts to increase the University's visibility and reputation regionally to create new opportunities to build on MoWest's impact.



## Enhance Workforce Development

MoWest is committed to workforce development in the region through a portfolio of programs in all academic areas to meet the changing student and workforce needs of St. Joseph and the region. The President will foster partnerships across campus and with businesses, healthcare organizations, governments and other entities throughout the local and regional area to improve programs, research, internship and employment opportunities for students.

## Embrace Technological Innovation and Social Media

The President will embrace the rapid technological changes that are transforming how students learn and how education is provided and will look to the cutting edge of technological innovation as academic programs are evaluated, improved and created. The President also will embrace the potential of social media to communicate more effectively with students, alumni and the community; market the University; and build brand identity.

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**Our next President will have the exciting opportunity to take MoWest to the next level.**

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## DESIRED PRESIDENTIAL ATTRIBUTES

The next President of Missouri Western State University will be a dynamic and inclusive leader who passionately embraces and promotes the University's statewide mission in applied learning and identity as a comprehensive regional university on the

rise. MoWest's core values of service, quality, enthusiasm, freedom, respect and courage will infuse all aspects of the President's leadership.

The candidate of choice will have a strong academic background and a substantial record of accomplishment at the executive level, demonstrated success in fundraising and external relations, and a Ph.D. or other terminal degree is preferred.



## MoWest's Next President Will Be:

- + A mission-driven **servant leader** with a deep commitment to public higher education.
- + An individual with a strong understanding of the trends and national issues impacting higher education and a thorough appreciation for the **unique leadership** qualities and demands of a comprehensive regional university.
- + A **strategic, proactive leader** who will respect MoWest's history, tradition and culture while looking forward and positioning the University to prosper in the increasingly competitive and fast-changing higher education environment.
- + A **strong academic** background, and **senior administrative experience** as an academic at a university or college.
- + A **visionary** and **entrepreneurial** executive who can develop and advance MoWest's agenda by identifying short-term, mid-range and longer-term goals and ensuring their implementation through **collaborative** organizational leadership, inclusive decision-making and calculated risk-taking.
- + A **student-centered** leader who has a passion for teaching, scholarship and learning with a commitment to academic excellence for undergraduate, graduate and professional programs.
- + A leader who is **actively engaged** in, and exercises appropriate administrative control over, the institution's intercollegiate athletics program.

- + A person who has **an appreciation for MoWest's diverse and multicultural student population**, including students of color, first-generation students, veteran students, international students and nontraditional students, and knowledge of strategies for increased access, recruitment, retention and student services and activities.
- + An **action-oriented creative thinker and innovator** who has a track record of leading transformational change.
- + **A connector** who builds strong and meaningful relationships with internal and external constituencies and develops and advances beneficial partnership opportunities with community, corporate, government, nonprofit and service organizations.

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**The President is responsible for refining the vision and setting the direction for the institution.**

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- + A proven fundraiser capable of partnering with the University's advancement team to stimulate a robust culture of philanthropy and **generate increased financial support** from individuals, corporations, foundations and state and national resources.
- + An **inspiring team builder** and experienced administrator who can attract, identify and develop faculty and staff talent, empower them to achieve at their highest level, and inspire a commitment to MoWest.
- + An administrator with **business acumen** and strong skills in **fiscal planning** and management to develop a comprehensive and responsible operating budget that is used to advance MoWest's strategic goals and priorities and ensure efficient operations.
- + A **transparent and open** leader who balances decisive leadership with inclusiveness to make decisions that are in the best interests of the academic enterprise and the University.
- + A **data informed, analytical** individual who employs measurable metrics to

assess the achievement of goals and objectives, as well as the performance of the leadership team, deans and others.

- + An individual versed in the potential and growth of **technology and social media for educational uses**, marketing and **communication**.
- + A persuasive and **effective internal and external communicator** who can articulate a compelling vision for MoWest and tell the University's distinctive story to diverse audiences across multiple audiences and settings.
- + An individual with **high emotional intelligence**, exceptional interpersonal skills, a genuine interest in others, executive presence, a positive demeanor, warmth, resilience, personal integrity, moral character, humility and high energy.
- + A person who is a **highly visible and engaged** community member and who makes St. Joseph their home.



# BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The University's **Board of Governors** provides oversight to ensure Missouri Western State University fulfills its mission of education for its students, the community and the state.

The Board's members are appointed by the governor of Missouri and confirmed by the state senate.

## Current Board Members

### **Bill Grimwood, Acting Chair**

Chief Information Officer,  
Hillyard Companies  
Appointed: July 31, 2023

### **Todd Michalski '92, Acting Vice Chair**

Senior Vice President-Sales and Marketing,  
Gray Manufacturing  
Appointed: March 3, 2025

### **Scott Albers**

President,  
Nor-Am Cold Storage  
Appointed: March 3, 2025

### **Dan Danford '78**

Founder,  
Family Investment Center  
Appointed: February 27, 2025

### **Judy Hausman**

Chief Financial Officer,  
MoDocs  
Appointed: May 8, 2026

### **Lisa Norton**

Chief Executive Officer,  
BioZyme Incorporated  
Appointed: September 28, 2020

### **Bill Severn**

Executive Vice President,  
News-Press and Gazette Company  
Appointed: February 27, 2025

Learn more about MoWest at [missouriwestern.edu](https://missouriwestern.edu)

Learn more about the city of St. Joseph at [stjosephmo.gov](https://stjosephmo.gov)

