

MOUNT HOLYOKE

Associate Vice President for Human Resources *South Hadley, MA*

Mount Holyoke College (MHC), a private liberal arts women's college that is gender diverse and the oldest member of the historic Seven Sisters colleges, seeks an inclusive and collaborative Associate Vice President for Human Resources (AVP) to lead people resource initiatives, drive organizational effectiveness, and enhance employees' experience during an exciting time of renewal. Reporting to the Vice President for Finance and Administration, the AVP will be a senior leader of the division and will have a unique opportunity to define a cohesive and people-centric community, infusing a sense of belonging and a system of support for those most critical to Mount Holyoke's future.

The MHC community is excited about the future growth and trajectory of the College, as President Danielle R. Holley, a legal educator and social justice scholar, became president on July 1, 2023. The board of trustees has outlined priority initiatives around experiential education, career preparation, sustainability, and leadership that are galvanizing excitement and laying the groundwork for modernization.

This is an exciting opportunity for an accomplished leader to strengthen MHC's human resources program by integrating modern processes, underscoring best practices, boosting morale, and applying data-driven strategies that will create a people culture that matches the creativity and drive of this exceptional liberal arts college. The AVP will educate and engage all members of the MHC community in ways that reflect the collaborative and collegial culture of the College. Working closely with college leaders, the AVP will play an integral role in identifying and setting human resources priorities and leading and facilitating regular lines of communication across campus to advance the college's strategic imperatives. Further, the AVP will contribute to building a culture of trust in an environment of shared governance and developing relationships with campus leaders and all campus constituents in support of the academic mission.

In partnership with the Vice President for Finance and Administration, the AVP will be responsible for leading an inclusive and transparent human resources program. This executive position involves managing, motivating, and mentoring the College's centralized human resources team. This position functions as a thought leader for people operations efforts and ensures the College's human resources team operates optimally, communicates transparently, and builds a culture of trust and reliability. Additionally, a bridge builder is needed to nurture integrative structures that support faculty hiring, working closely with Academic Affairs in a collaborative capacity and addressing any risk exposure concerns, particularly in relation to compliance with 504 and other relevant regulations.

The ideal candidate must possess a minimum of 10 years of human resources experience, a keen understanding of best practices in people operations, expertise in managing a team, and a demonstrated record of accomplishment as a leader in human resources. The candidate must possess a high level of integrity and credibility; be a self-starter with a sense of urgency and a clear set of priorities; and be adaptable to changing circumstances. The successful candidate must have extraordinary communication skills with a collegial, team-building style and a demonstrated ability to motivate staff as well as to cultivate productive, collaborative relationships with faculty and staff across campus. The candidate will foster a professional work environment that rewards individual and collective success, builds confidence, and promotes diversity and inclusion in all its forms. In accordance with its core values and mission, Mount Holyoke is especially



interested in recruiting members of diverse communities and individuals with a commitment to anti-racism. An undergraduate degree is required.

Mount Holyoke College

Mount Holyoke College is a selective, nondenominational, residential liberal arts college that welcomes applications from female, trans, and non-binary students. Mount Holyoke’s exploratory education opens new pathways for discovery and knowledge, while the collaborative community supports students as they develop skills to solve challenges everywhere. Students are encouraged to see the world through a different lens—exploring beyond traditional boundaries and connecting to global perspectives and points-of-view. Working closely with exceptional faculty and staff, students are challenged to think creatively, act collaboratively, and lead purposefully. That’s why Mount Holyoke alums can be found on the leading edge of change—from the arts and humanities to STEM innovation to social justice and beyond. As a community of achievement, Mount Holyoke celebrates what makes each of us extraordinary while cultivating a deep sense of connectivity.

Mount Holyoke’s vibrant campus is home to over 2,100 students, almost a quarter of whom are from around the world. Expanding beyond gender diversity, 25% of students identify as domestic students of color—African American, Asian American, Latinx, Native American or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or multiracial.

There is a treasure trove of [traditions](#) that are time-honored at Mount Holyoke which are emblematic of the ways in which students, alums, faculty, and leaders show up every day, treating each other with respect and affecting positive social change. These experiences and ways of being serve as unifying threads binding past and present students, faculty, and staff.

Mount Holyoke’s Strategic Plan

The College’s [current strategic plan](#) is coming to a successful close and work has begun on the next roadmap with a hopeful May 2025 approval date. Many of the objectives from the current plan have been completed, and of particular note for employees have been critical achievements as the result of establishing the [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Division](#), investing in employee development and training and navigating a complex employee relations and staffing environment as the result of the pandemic. As part of the College’s current strategic plan, the community committed to ensuring balanced annual operating budgets for the College each fiscal year. The College accomplished that goal in 2017 and has maintained it ever since, even during the pandemic. The Board of Trustees has adopted a \$154.7M operating budget for FY23. The College enjoys a healthy financial position but one that requires careful stewardship and planning to maintain. The College has a robust endowment, currently estimated at just over \$1B. During a tumultuous year for markets in FY22, the endowment protected capital and outperformed the policy benchmark while distributing over \$40 million to support the operating budget. In FY22, distributions from the endowment equated to almost \$18,000 per student.

Danielle R. Holley
President, Mount Holyoke College

On July 1, 2023, Danielle R. Holley took office as the twentieth president of Mount Holyoke College. Her scholarship focuses on the governance of public schools, increasing access to higher education, and diversity



in the legal profession. She has won numerous awards, including the inaugural Impact Award from the Association of American Law Schools, the American Bar Foundation's Montgomery Summer Research Diversity Fellowship Distinguished Alumni Award, the Lutie Lytle Conference Outstanding Scholar Award, the National Bar Association's Heman Sweatt Award, and the University of South Carolina Educational Foundation's Outstanding Service Award. She was twice awarded the Outstanding Faculty Member award during her tenure at the University of South Carolina School of Law.

President Holley serves as the co-chair of the Board of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, and previously served on the board of the Law School Admission Council and on the board of the Howard University Middle School of Math and Science. She is a moderator for the Aspen Institute, a Liberty Fellow through the Aspen Global Leadership Network, and a fellow with the American Council on Education. She is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. Most notably, President Holley is Mount Holyoke's first permanent Black president, and the fourth Black woman to lead one of the original Seven Sisters colleges.

President Holley served as the dean of Howard University School of Law prior to joining Mount Holyoke. She was also the associate dean for academic affairs and Distinguished Professor of Education Law at the University of South Carolina. Before joining academia, she practiced civil litigation at Fulbright & Jaworski in Houston, Texas.

President Holley holds a B.A. from Yale University and a J.D. from Harvard Law School, and she was a law clerk to Judge Carl E. Stewart on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Carl M. Ries

Vice President for Finance and Administration

Carl M. Ries joined Mount Holyoke in July 2023 from Hampshire College, where he served as Vice President of Finance & Administration and Treasurer, overseeing critical organizational transformations. He has over 18 years of experience in finance and business operations.

During his time at Hampshire, Ries successfully led the College through pandemic-related challenges. He secured significant federal aid through the Employee Retention Tax Credit; stabilized staffing across multiple departments; implemented significant improvements to wages and benefits, particularly health insurance; deftly carried forward a financial sustainability plan; and improved student meal plans and food access.

Prior to joining Hampshire, he was the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for the Los Angeles Opera Company, where he oversaw a complex financial portfolio in an institution vital to its community and the national arts ecosystem. His experience there included issuing debt, an enterprise resource planning (ERP) conversion, union contracts, real estate deals, insurance, risk management, complex HR issues, and successful collaboration and communication with the Board.

Ries' years of experience working in the higher education and nonprofit sectors have been characterized by creative problem-solving, effective and transparent communication with all constituents, sharp financial acumen and a collaborative and collegial leadership style. He has a constructive, positive, and service-oriented mindset focused on achieving collective goals, which is already making a positive impact at Mount Holyoke.



Ries has a B.A. in international relations from the University of Southern California and a Master of Science in accounting from Texas A&M University.

Human Resources at Mount Holyoke

The Human Resources Department supports the mission of the College by providing programs and services that attract, develop, and retain a highly qualified and diverse workforce. The Human Resources department comprises a team of 10 professionals encompassing talent acquisition, employee relations, talent development, compensation, payroll, and benefits.

The department is committed to working strategically with the community in advocating for a work environment where the contributions of each employee are recognized and where every individual is treated fairly and equitably. The HR team provides leadership in identifying and responding to the community's changing needs, and guides the development, implementation, and administration of policies and procedures in support of the College's mission.

Mount Holyoke College is a national leader in creating and sustaining diversity. The College is a truly multicultural community where inclusive excellence is demonstrated in numbers as well as in perspectives. Mount Holyoke College is an equal opportunity employer committed to the value of diversity in its faculty, staff, and student bodies.

Associate Vice President for Human Resources

The Associate Vice President for Human Resources will report to and work closely with the Vice President for Finance and Administration. The AVP provides strategic leadership and thought partnership to leaders across campus and leads the Mount Holyoke Human Resources Department. The AVP will be the primary leader in developing and implementing effective HR policies and operations that support the College's mission and strategic priorities, fostering an inclusive campus community, and positioning Mount Holyoke to attract, recruit, and retain a diverse and exceptional workforce.

Major areas of responsibility include: employment, employee relations, labor relations, compensation, payroll, benefits, compliance, policies and procedures, systems implementation, and performance management and training.

The AVP is a key member of the Finance and Administration leadership team (the Vice President's 'cabinet'), the College's leadership council, and as such participates regularly in decision making that affects the priorities of the College and the division. In addition, the incumbent is a close adviser to the board, president, and senior leadership team on all human resources best practices, trends, and opportunities, and will work closely with the VP to develop strategic plans, implementation of innovative systems and processes, and effective and transparent communication with the entire campus community, including students, staff, and faculty.

Essential Duties



Strategic Leadership of HR Functional Areas

- Provide strategic leadership and direction for all HR programs, policies, and processes; ensure compliance with relevant federal, state, and local employment laws
- Plan, organize, direct, and supervise all Human Resources operations and activities including but not limited to talent recruitment and hiring, payroll and benefits, employee records, employee engagement, contract negotiations and administration, policy development, and labor relations.
- Serve as an advisor to senior leaders on HR strategies and objectives; continuously benchmark and assess current practices and lead process improvement initiatives where necessary. Provide HR leadership and expertise for the College's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategies and goals
- Proactively lead workforce planning across the organization and drive succession planning for key roles
- Develop and drive attractive organizational talent management strategies; lead the design and implementation of professional learning and development programs, with a goal of becoming an employer of choice.
- Serve as the college's advisor for union negotiations and contract administration to carry out the direction of the President and Board of Trustees. Responsible for evaluating and discussing negotiation strategies with the Vice President of Finance and Administration and communicating appropriately with all stakeholders.
- Oversee the College's compensation program (including compensation philosophy, executive compensation, and merit pool recommendations); ensure total rewards package is competitive and equitable
- Lead relevant organizational assessments and surveys; develop data-driven strategies to enhance the employee experience and promote a respectful, inclusive, and collaborative work culture
- Formulate and drive change management strategies, developing appropriate strategies and effective communication to promote organizational transparency and employee buy-in

HR Team Oversight

- Develop and direct HR department strategy, objectives, and vision
- Establish clear individual and team goals and monitor progress toward those goals
- Oversee and formally evaluate the work of direct reports

Experience and Qualifications

The ideal candidate will bring many of the following professional qualities and experiences:

- Demonstrated leadership and coaching skills; ability to partner with senior leaders and other key stakeholders to develop, measure, and refine HR strategies that align with College's objectives and drive organizational success



- Exceptional interpersonal skills and proven ability to build credibility and trust across diverse internal and external constituents
- Compassionate and culturally responsive with a clear commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; ability and desire to weave DEI into HR processes, policies, and practices
- Depth of experience in employee relations; ability to navigate complex employee relations issues and mediate effective and appropriate solutions
- Skilled in counseling and conflict resolution; exercises a high degree of emotional intelligence, judgement, and integrity when managing sensitive personnel issues
- Fluency with talent management strategies and best practices; ability to develop and oversee programs across the employee lifecycle
- Extensive knowledge of current local, state, and federal employment laws
- Excellent communication skills
- Knowledge of management best practices; demonstrated ability to coach and mentor a team
- 10+ years of progressively responsible human resources experience, including experience providing strategic oversight of HR programs, policies, and practices
- Proven success in recruiting, managing, mentoring, and retaining a professional and diverse staff
- A SHRM or PHR certification preferred
- Complete proficiency in Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Microsoft 365; familiarity with Workday and Salesforce preferred.

Location, Schedule, and Compensation

Mount Holyoke College offers a competitive salary budgeted in the range of \$200,000 - \$230,000 annually for this position. The exact compensation offered will be determined by experience. Information about the benefits package is available [online](#).

This is a South Hadley-based position. Mount Holyoke is offering a hybrid working schedule for most employees, which allows employees to work in the office or remotely. AVP candidates should expect to work on campus on a regular basis.

Mount Holyoke College is situated on a 700-acre campus in South Hadley, Massachusetts, located in one of New England's most beautiful and intellectually vibrant regions: the Connecticut River Valley, where the life of the mind finds fertile soil. Mount Holyoke is a member of the [Five Colleges Consortium](#) along with Amherst, Hampshire, and Smith Colleges and the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

South Hadley is a charming community with a rich history, ample recreational opportunities, and convenient shopping, art, and cuisine. It is just 15 minutes away from Amherst and Northampton, 45 minutes from Hartford, Connecticut and Bradley International Airport, and 90 minutes from Boston.

Interested in Learning More?



Mount Holyoke College has partnered with Talent Citizen to assist in this recruitment. Please reach out to President Tracy D. Welsh and Senior Associate Eva Kotilinek to share your resume and cover letter via email at: mhc-avphr@talentcitizen.com.

Mount Holyoke College is a women's college that is gender diverse. The College is committed to providing equal access and opportunity in employment and education to all employees and students. In compliance with state and federal law, Mount Holyoke College does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, genetic information, sex, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, ancestry, veteran or military status, or any other legally protected status under federal, state or local law.