



**Chief Engagement & Culture Officer**  
Development & Alumni Relations  
*Philadelphia, PA*

The University of Pennsylvania's Office of Development & Alumni Relations (DAR) seeks an inspiring, community-oriented Chief Engagement & Culture Officer (CECO) to serve as a creative visionary and connector in implementing a vibrant people and culture strategy that promotes organizational success and connection and advances a diverse and inclusive workplace in alignment with organizational mission, values, and goals.

The inaugural CECO's efforts will enhance the experience for 600+ employees across DAR's central office, twelve schools, and six centers and maximize the success of DAR in support of organizational goals and Penn's Campaigns. Reporting to the Senior Associate Vice President for Strategy, Planning, and Advancement Services (SAVP), the CECO will bring a strategic culture-building framework to DAR's human resources functions, strategic DAR communications, engagement and learning, and organizational change management. Partnering with other senior leaders in outlining departmental goals and objectives, the CECO will provide human-focused, and business centered strategic recommendations related to the methodologies and resources needed to achieve a shared vision and values-aligned actions.

The CECO will lead a team of ~seven professionals, including three direct reports, to augment existing efforts encompassing talent acquisition and retention, learning and development, employee engagement, and HR operations. The incumbent and their team will champion an engagement and communications framework focused on transparency, celebration, and collaboration. Using a data enlightened perspective, the CECO will measure employee engagement and retention, utilizing success metrics to further professional growth pathways and institutional success in ways that enhance DAR's reputation and brand. The CECO will partner with the VP of DAR, the SAVP and other senior leaders to ensure that DAR's culture and values are reflected in its messaging to key internal and external audiences.

A commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) is at the core of DAR's culture. As the CECO, this role will support that commitment through the lens of human resources, talent management, learning, and staff engagement. Together with DAR's Chief of Staff & AVP for Diversity Initiatives, the CECO will evaluate the needs of the department and define a comprehensive approach for the infusion of DEIB efforts within its tailored employee engagement practices, programs, and policies.

This is a unique and exciting opportunity for a strategic people-centered leader to join a team committed to employee excellence, mission-driven work, and organizational growth. DAR is re-envisioning its people programs and operations and is seeking a champion for HR and talent management that promotes a growth mindset among leaders and staff through innovation, agency, and inclusion. Working closely with the SAVP and other senior leaders, the incumbent will co-design opportunities for information-sharing and cross collaboration and build relational understanding of the different ways that programs and people intersect in their work and relationships to one another.

The successful candidate will ideally bring at least ten years of experience creatively leading human resources and/or talent management operations and initiatives, experience working collaboratively with people of diverse backgrounds in a complex organization, and a demonstrated data-driven record of building workplace cultures that advance organizational objectives and goals. The CECO will have a thorough understanding of organizational development, human resources operations, and the ability to solve challenges strategically while ensuring effective communications internally and externally. The successful candidate should have a collegial style with a demonstrated ability to cultivate productive, mutually reinforcing relationships in a complex, distributed, and ever evolving environment. The inaugural CECO will be an inspiring, inclusive leader, and a strategic visionary of a workplace culture that fosters employee success and cultivates a positive organizational platform, leading with excitement, humility, and transparency.

## **Penn's New Strategic Framework**

### **In Principle and Practice: Penn's Focus on Tomorrow**

Announced in November 2023, Penn's new strategic framework is grounded in University founder, Benjamin Franklin's, ethos centered on discovery, dissemination, and knowledge. The Penn community was asked to consider two essential questions: (1) What does the world need from Penn? (2) How do we cultivate a community that will rise to that challenge? With these questions as guideposts, Penn launched the [Tomorrow, Together](#) process, led by the Red and Blue Advisory Committee of faculty, students, and staff. The committee sought input from across the University and its global alumni, families, and friends. Informed by the Committee's important work and many other sources, the new strategic framework is responsive to the two guiding questions.

*In Principle and Practice: Penn's Focus on Tomorrow* captures what the world needs from Penn and how the University will cultivate a community that rises to the challenge. With its principles focused on an anchored, interwoven, inventive, and engaged University, Penn's strategic practices directly support and strengthen its core educational mission. These practices include:

- Accelerate interdisciplinary pursuits
- Lead on great challenges of our time
- Grow opportunity and strengthen community
- Deepen connection with neighbors and the world
- Foster leadership and service

These practices serve as a guide for Penn, and each one will be pursued as comprehensively as possible through the University's schools, centers, and people. As the inaugural CECO, the incumbent will have the unique opportunity to mirror these principles and practices in DAR's culture, ensuring alignment and cross collaboration with university-wide efforts across human resources and DEIB initiatives.

To learn more about Penn's new strategic framework, visit: <https://in-principle-and-practice.upenn.edu/>.

## **Development & Alumni Relations at Penn**

The Office of Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) advances Penn's educational mission through high-performing philanthropy and global engagement activities. Excellence in education, research, and service to the community require continued investment, and DAR teams work together to secure the funds needed to



advance the University's mission by securing the resources that maintain Penn's current strengths and support its vision for the future.

Fundraising and alumni engagement responsibilities at Penn are shared among the University's twelve schools, six centers, and centrally based staff in an overall department structure that emphasizes cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. DAR's 600+ staff demonstrate imagination, compassion, and persistence while keeping a clear eye fixed on engagement and fundraising goals. With a message that a Penn education lasts a lifetime, DAR encourages alumni – who number more than 300,000 and form the core of the University's philanthropic and volunteer network – to participate in university activities, both on and off campus.

During the last capital campaign that concluded in 2021, The Power of Penn, the University exceeded its initial goal and raised more than \$5.4 billion, raising gifts from 389,535 donors and engaging more than 6,500 volunteers. In addition to bolstering access and opportunities for students, donors to the campaign endowed 186 new positions for faculty and staff and fueled new facilities and renovations that have enhanced the campus living and learning environment.

Support for Penn advances a set of key priorities to help the University meet the unique challenges of the present and fulfill its mission by advancing opportunity and access, powering innovation through learning and research, and transforming the present state of the University through the Annual Fund and The Penn Fund. To learn more about DAR's priority areas, visit: <https://giving.upenn.edu/priorities/>.

Since October 2022, DAR has been led by [Vice President of Development & Alumni Relations Jim Husson](#), who brings over 35 years of experience working on behalf of some of the country's leading universities and secondary schools. Over the past 16 months, Penn DAR has undergone a strategic re-organization focused on maximizing resources, increasing connections, and driving innovation. The inaugural CECO will create and drive a culture strategy throughout DAR that aligns with divisional mission, values, and goals in partnership with senior leaders, including the Vice President of DAR and the SAVP for Strategy, Planning, and Advancement Services, and informed by employee data and feedback.

### **Lisa McClatchy Deming**

[Senior Associate Vice President for Strategy, Planning, and Advancement Services](#)

Lisa McClatchy Deming serves as Senior Associate Vice President for Strategy, Planning, and Advancement Services for the University of Pennsylvania. In her role, Lisa supports the strategy creation and planning process for Penn's Development & Alumni Relations division. She oversees all the central advancement service areas, including marketing and communications, programs and special events, DAR human resources and talent management, gifts administration, data services, volunteer support, and finance and administration. While also serving as Campaign Director, Lisa is responsible for campaign communications, planning, programming, events, reporting, and volunteer management.

Lisa joined Penn in 2004 as Director of the Penn Fund, Penn's Undergraduate Annual Fund, and in January of 2007 was appointed to the position of Assistant Vice President and Campaign Director of Penn's Making History Campaign. In 2015, her role transitioned to also include department annual and strategic planning and she was promoted to Associate Vice President. Before joining Penn, Lisa worked for The American Red Cross (ARC), Southeastern Pennsylvania Chapter (SEPA) for 13 years, beginning as the Director of Major Gifts and

holding several roles, ultimately rising to the position of Chief Advancement Officer. Prior to the Red Cross, Lisa held development and communication positions for The Devereux Foundation and United Cerebral Palsy and continues to work as a volunteer for several Philadelphia community human service organizations.

Lisa graduated from Villanova University with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications.

## Chief Engagement & Culture Officer

### Development & Alumni Relations

As a leader in the Strategy, Planning, and Advancement Services team and reporting to the Senior Associate Vice President for Strategy, Planning, and Advancement Services (SAVP) Lisa McClatchy Deming, the CEO will cultivate and build a values-driven, mission-aligned work culture. This includes revitalizing human resources policies and procedures and expanding talent management and learning programs through a culture-building lens. The CEO will collaborate with senior leaders to set divisional priorities and goals and spearhead related communications strategies.

The CEO will lead a team of seven professionals that advances business needs, supports talent retention, and builds a strong increasingly integrated and inclusive community grounded in DEIB tenets. As the CEO evaluates DAR's people and culture needs, assesses existing practices, and formulates new strategies, they will have the opportunity to modify the existing team structure of HR, learning, and engagement and advocate for resources that best support a high-functioning and responsive department.

The CEO is responsible for influencing and supporting a positive mindset and staff engagement in organizational change and new ways of working. This can include changes to processes, systems, and policies, ultimately implementing and driving innovative best practices to ensure long term success and sustainability. This role assures change management tactics and awareness are part of department and area strategies and works to support DAR leadership, area managers, and team leads in this key aspect of culture.

### Essential Duties

- **Manage and lead a team of seven professionals** with three direct reports that include the Director of DAR Human Resources, the Senior Learning Strategist, and the Senior Engagement Strategist to provide support and guidance in all these respective areas to DAR staff both in Central DAR and Penn Medicine as well as DAR staff working in additional schools and centers. **Inspire**, motivate, develop, and engage them to bring their maximum potential and innovation to their positions.
- **Promote a positive and inclusive work environment:** Foster a positive and inclusive work environment that promotes employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention. Develop programs and initiatives to support diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. Drive DEIB and employee engagement journeys to foster a culture of belonging.
- **Lead change management:** Manage organizational change and ensure Penn's culture and values are integrated consistently; including changes to programs, processes, systems, and policies.
- **Enhance employee engagement and retention:** Design and implement programs and initiatives to

engage and retain employees, including development pathways and performance management processes. Elicit feedback through employee surveys, focus groups, and employee engagement programs to support a data-driven approach to continuous quality improvement. Create a standard to evaluate staff engagement and retention and report on metrics in this area to senior DAR leadership.

- **Advise the leadership team:** Provide guidance to the VP, the SAVP, and other senior leaders on issues related to workplace culture; act as a liaison between employees and leadership; provide feedback and recommendations to the leadership team to improve the culture of the organization, connecting culture to organizational drivers for success.
- **Co-design a communications plan and support messaging:** Communicate Penn's culture and values to employees, internal partners, external constituencies, and other stakeholders. In partnership with the strategy and communications team, create an effective and engaging communications plan with a cascading set of messages that support DAR's culture and goals. Serve as a thought partner to the VP about DAR-wide imperatives and support strategic messaging inclusive of talking points, tone, cadence, and communications channels that galvanize staff around common purpose.
- **Lead and implement DAR employee engagement initiatives:** Develop strategy for and manage 4-6 All Staff gatherings and Town Halls per year. Recruit external speakers and presenters that support staff engagement and learning objectives. Advise on internal employee messages from VP. Recognize and highlight individual staff and team contributions through formalized programs and initiatives.
- **Manage the organization's reputation and brand:** Both internally and externally, work to ensure Penn's culture and values are reflected in messaging and branding and consistently communicated to employees, customers, and other stakeholders. Increase awareness and raise the visibility and prestige of DAR with other professional peers by advancing stories about DAR's fundraising success in ways that support DAR staff program objectives.
- **Develop and support learning and development initiatives for DAR staff** in areas of highest priority with a focus on role-specific skills, cultural humility, management training, team collaboration, and professional growth. Develop and support fundraiser training programs for every level of fundraiser in the organization.
- **University alignment:** Ensure alignment with Penn's mission, culture, values, and strategic framework.

## Experience & Qualifications

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

- Degree in Business Administration, Psychology, Human Resources, Organizational Development, or related field is required. An advanced degree and/or specialized certification is preferred.
- Minimum of 10 years' experience in a role as a catalyst, leading organizations through transformational change

- Demonstrated business acumen understanding an organization's business model; assessing situations, analyzing data, and proposing decisions that align with the culture strategies, goals and objectives.
- Proven track-record managing transformative organizational changes creatively and effectively, ensuring integration and alignment with organization's culture and values.
- Exceptional leadership, communication, coaching and interpersonal skills with the ability to develop and implement culture strategies, inspire, engage, and retain employees and influence change effectively.
- The ability to establish and maintain relationships with colleagues, stakeholders, and team members; includes demonstrating integrity, reliability, and transparency in all interactions while consistently delivering on commitments.
- Knowledge of best practices, industry trends, evolving working norms, and the application of data-driven insights related to workplace culture and organizational development with the ability and experience to apply those practices to improve and change the culture of an organization.
- Previous experience managing and advising a leadership team, providing feedback and recommendations to the leadership team to improve the culture of the organization.
- Public speaking and presentation skills with the ability to translate complex operational issues and decisions into people-centered messages.
- Outstanding analytical skills with the ability to apply data to strategically drive changes in support of organizational best practices.
- Solid experience in practical problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills.
- Lived or professional experience implementing strategies to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging and overall cultural awareness.
- Ability to work in a fast-paced and dynamic, complex environment.

### **Location, Schedule, and Compensation**

This is a Philadelphia-based position. Penn offers a unique working environment within the city of Philadelphia. The University is situated on a beautiful urban campus, with easy access to a range of educational, cultural, and recreational activities. With its historical significance and landmarks, lively cultural offerings, and wide variety of atmospheres, Philadelphia is the perfect place to call home for work and play.

DAR is offering a hybrid working schedule for most employees, which allows employees to work in the office or remotely. Candidates should expect to work on campus on a regular basis every week. More information about the University's work policies is available here: <https://www.hr.upenn.edu/PennHR/wellness-worklife/flexible-hybrid-remote-work>.



Compensation is highly competitive and budgeted in the range of \$190,000 – \$200,000 annually, depending on experience. Penn offers a comprehensive [benefits package](#), which adds significantly to the employee’s total compensation.

### **Interested in Learning More?**

The University of Pennsylvania has partnered with Talent Citizen to assist in this recruitment. Please contact President Tracy D. Welsh, Senior Associate Eva Kotilinek, and Associate José Cisneros to share your resume and cover letter via email at: [up-ceco@talentcitizen.com](mailto:up-ceco@talentcitizen.com).

*The University of Pennsylvania adheres to a policy that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, age, disability, veteran status, or any other legally protected class.*

### **University of Pennsylvania**

The University of Pennsylvania, the largest private employer in Philadelphia, is a world-renowned leader in education, research, and innovation. As a historic, Ivy League school, Penn consistently ranks among the top ten universities in the annual U.S. News & World Report. The University has twelve highly regarded schools that provide opportunities for undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education, all influenced by Penn’s distinctive interdisciplinary approach to scholarship and learning. As an employer, Penn has been ranked nationally on many occasions with the most recent award from Forbes who named the University one of America’s Best Large Employers in 2023.