

2024

# YEAR IN FOCUS

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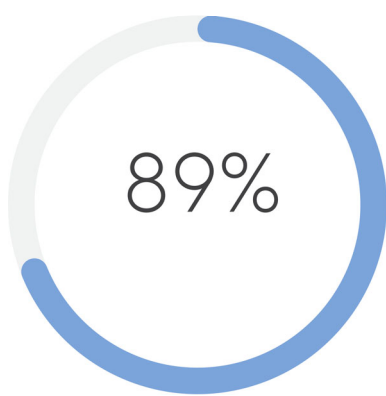
Welcome to GA&A's Year in Focus, a resource that highlights our work from the past fiscal year and provides forward-looking insights. As we reflect on a year of growth and transformation, we remain steadfast in our mission to support institutions in securing innovative, mission-driven leaders who drive lasting impact.



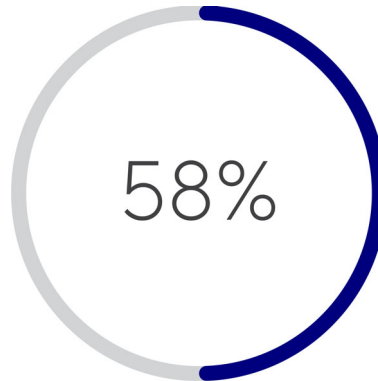
# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

This year, GA&A's executive recruiting efforts have been defined by measurable impact and meaningful partnerships across higher education.

The following infographics highlight key achievements, including our success in placing transformational leaders and aligning institutions with visionary talent to meet their evolving needs and opportunities.



Search engagements with repeat clients.



Searches closed in 4 months or less.



11%

Presidential, Chancellor, and Superintendent searches.



7%

Provost / Vice Provost search engagements



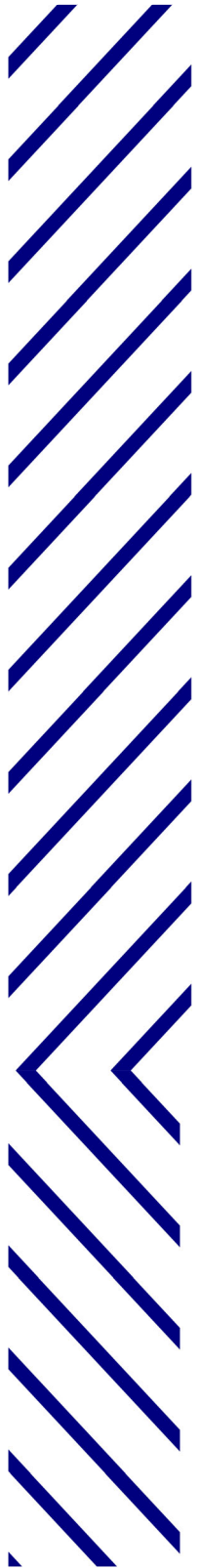
29%

Deans search engagements.



70

Total search engagements.



# TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP PLACEMENTS

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This past year, GA&A successfully completed 70 executive searches, partnering with institutions across higher education and other mission-driven organizations. Search highlights include:



## MILWAUKEE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

*President*

When MATC engaged GA&A to lead its presidential search, the institution faced some challenges, and GA&A's high-touch and consultative approach enabled MATC to meet this opportunity with confidence, resulting in a successful placement and a reinvigorated vision for the college's future.

## OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

*Dean, College Arts & Sciences*

GA&A's search for a new Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences exemplified how a well-executed, consultative approach can deliver outstanding results. With a clear vision from the Hiring Authority and GA&A's hands-on guidance, the search was smooth, efficient, and highly successful.

## PENNSYLVANIA WESTERN UNIVERSITY

*President*

As a newly configured institution created through the merger of three distinct institutions—California, Clarion, and Edinboro—Penn West selected GA&A to lead this critical search. We leveraged our hands-on approach to address the blended history, culture, and identity of Penn West to deliver a successful outcome.

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**VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC  
UNIVERSITY**  
*Chief Financial Officer*

Virginia Tech faced a unique set of opportunities with this newly restructured role. With GA&A as their trusted partner, Virginia Tech successfully navigated these complexities, ensuring a seamless process and a strong final placement.

**UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE**  
*Dean of the College of  
Education & Human  
Development*

UofL sought to fill a vital leadership role in the College of Education, a college with immense potential and evolving needs. GA&A's comprehensive search process identified a leader who could unify the college and elevate its trajectory.

**MONTGOMERY PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS**  
*Superintendent*

MCPS engaged GA&A to lead the search for their superintendent. They sought a trusted partner to navigate a highly visible, complex, and expedited process. GA&A delivered a seamless and successful outcome that exemplified our commitment to excellence in executive search.



**WEST CHESTER  
UNIVERSITY**  
*Vice President for Student  
Affairs*

WCU needed a partner who could adapt quickly to unforeseen challenges. The search demonstrated GA&A's high-touch approach and unwavering commitment to delivering outstanding results.

**NORTHERN VIRGINIA  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
*Vice President for Student  
Affairs*

The scope of the project expanded when NOVA requested GA&A simultaneously conduct two additional searches for AVP positions within the same division. Managing these overlapping searches required extensive coordination, customization, and attention to detail — all hallmarks of GA&A's approach.

**UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
RIO GRANDE VALLEY**  
*Dean, College of Sciences*

UTRGV is on a transformative journey toward achieving R1 research status. With the College of Sciences positioned as a cornerstone in this pursuit, UTRGV sought a dynamic leader to serve as its next dean. GA&A was honored to partner with UTRGV on this pivotal search to identify a candidate who aligned with the University's bold vision.

# OUR GROWTH

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## EXPANDING OUR IMPACT THROUGH SEARCH-DRIVEN RECRUITMENT

At GA&A, inclusivity is a foundation of our search process. We are deeply committed to advancing leadership in higher education by cultivating pools of highly qualified candidates that empower our clients to select exceptional leaders. GA&A employs search specific recruitment strategies designed to ensure our clients have access to a candidate pool of leaders with a rich array of backgrounds, experiences, skills, and perspectives, equipping them to navigate the complex challenges facing today's institutions. Our clients have selected leaders that reflect a broad representation of leadership, underscoring the importance of a search partnership that offers an extensive pool of talented leaders who are well-positioned to lead in today's complex higher education landscape.



## INCREASING THOUGHT LEADERSHIP AND INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

Our team is engaged on topics such as:

- [The Importance and Benefits of Executive Search](#) | Jeremy Duff
- "Improving Public University Systems at Scale" | Jim Johnsen | [Changing Higher Ed Podcast](#)
- Building 'Adaptive Strategies' in State University Systems | Jim Johnsen | [The University Business Podcast](#)
- "Public University Systems: Leveraging Scale in Higher Education" | Jim Johnsen | [Johns Hopkins University Press](#)

These activities allowed us to share actionable insights while fostering collaboration across the sector.

## INTERNAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

GA&A continued to expand by identifying and recruiting successful leaders in higher education and/or executive search to join the GA&A team. This year, we welcomed [Andriel Dees as Vice President of Executive Search](#). This growth enhances our ability to meet client needs with agility and expertise.

# 2025 OUTLOOK

## Preparing for the Future of Higher Education Leadership



### **FUTURE-FOCUSED SEARCH STRATEGIES**

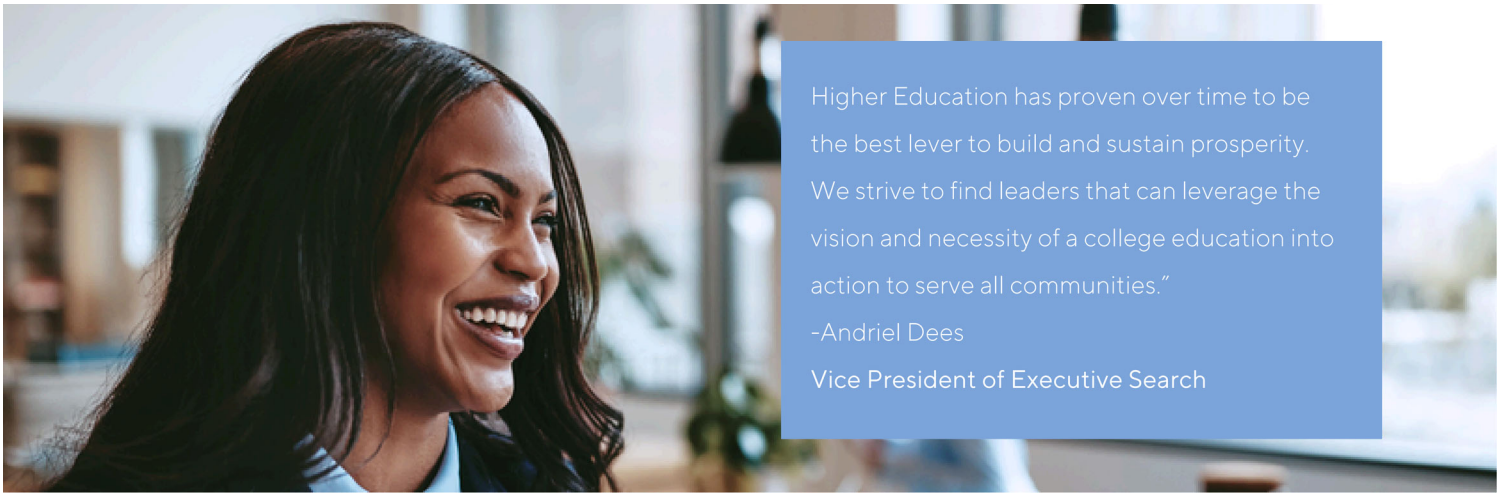
Higher education is navigating a transformative era, defined by shifting priorities, financial pressures, and evolving societal expectations. Insights from the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO) survey and the latest U.S. News 2025 Best Colleges Rankings reveal critical challenges and opportunities for governing boards and leaders in higher education. To thrive in this dynamic environment, GA&A will provide the strategic guidance and proactive engagement institutions will need to adapt.

The following are key trends GA&A is watching and actionable steps our firm is taking to address these pressing priorities effectively:

### **THE CHANGING ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

The survey and rankings underscore the need for leaders to possess a broad skill set beyond traditional academic credentials. GA&A Vice President for Executive Search, Bob Caret, notes that future leaders must be:

- Politically savvy to navigate shifting state and federal priorities.
- Industry-connected to align education with workforce demands.
- Student-focused to address affordability and student success.



Higher Education has proven over time to be the best lever to build and sustain prosperity. We strive to find leaders that can leverage the vision and necessity of a college education into action to serve all communities.”

-Andriel Dees

Vice President of Executive Search

## FUTURE-FOCUSED SEARCH STRATEGIES



### THE NEED FOR POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL ACUMEN

State support and financial aid are top priorities, but they require leaders to have political acumen and demonstrate financial expertise. GA&A's network includes leaders who have navigated state and federal funding challenges, securing multi-million-dollar appropriations for their institutions while maintaining operational independence. GA&A identifies candidates with:

- Proven success in advocating for sustainable state funding models.
- Strong bipartisan relationships to secure funding and protect institutional autonomy.
- Experience adapting to new legislation and regulations.



### THE NEED TO BUILD PUBLIC TRUST

Public perception of higher education is declining. GA&A helps our clients build trust by identifying leaders who:

- Communicate the value of higher education to diverse audiences.
- Highlight alumni success to demonstrate return on investment.
- Advance initiatives to align with societal values.



### THE NEED TO LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY FOR TRANSFORMATION

Institutions must embrace technology to remain competitive. GA&A finds leaders adept at:

- Investing in data-driven tools to improve student outcomes.
- Expanding online learning platforms to engage new learners.
- Using AI and predictive analytics to identify and support at-risk students.



## INSIGHTS FOR LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

Expect more thought leadership resources from GA&A, including:

- Reports and articles on leadership trends in higher education.
- Case studies showcasing best practices in executive recruitment.



## STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

We will continue to build strong partnerships with our clients, offering value-added services such as leadership assessment, executive coaching, and leadership development to support long-term success.

**Explore Current Opportunities on Our [Website!](#)**



### SUSANNE GRIFFIN

#### Vice President & Managing Director

As we step into 2025, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of the clients and candidates who chose to work with us in 2024. Our work is deeply rooted in relationships, and it's your trust, collaboration, and shared vision that allow us to do what we do best—help institutions shape their futures through transformational leadership.

As we look to 2025, we are more committed than ever to supporting your success. Our team at GA&A will continue to provide personalized, high-touch service, leveraging our deep expertise and passion for education to meet your evolving needs. We are here to listen, to collaborate, and to help you achieve your boldest goals.

On behalf of the entire GA&A team, I extend my warmest wishes for a year filled with growth, innovation, and success. May 2025 bring new opportunities, meaningful partnerships, and accomplishments that move your mission forward.

Thank you for allowing us to be part of your journey. We look forward to continuing our work together in the year ahead.