Vice President of Human Resources

Brandeis University

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Brandeis University, in Waltham, MA, seeks an experienced, strategic and communicative leader for the position of Vice President of Human Resources (VP). Reporting to the Executive Vice President for Administration, the VP is responsible for all human resources functions concerning staff, and many relating to faculty. The VP serves as a key advisor to senior University leadership on all human resources matters and participates in the development and implementation of the University’s strategic plans. The VP advises the leadership in the innovative development of human resources policy and procedures and works with other senior leaders to seek efficiency and effectiveness in operations and in leading thoughtful organizational and cultural change.

Brandeis University

Founded in 1948, Brandeis University is named for the late Louis Dembitz Brandeis, the distinguished associate justice of the United States Supreme Court, and reflects the ideals of academic excellence and social justice he personified. Coeducational classes began on the site of the former Middlesex University in Waltham, Massachusetts, with 107 students and 13 faculty members. Guided for 20 years by its founding president, Abram L. Sachar, and a Board that included Eleanor Roosevelt, Brandeis grew quickly, establishing itself as an important national and international center for teaching and research. In 1961, only 13 years after the university’s founding, Phi Beta Kappa accreditation was conferred. Under each succeeding president, the University continued to grow in breadth and stature, while maintaining the very human scale of its educational environment and its solid liberal arts focus. In 1985, Brandeis was elected to membership in the Association of American Universities, which represents the 61 leading research universities in the United States and Canada. Brandeis University is one of the youngest private research universities, as well as the only nonsectarian Jewish-sponsored college or university in the country. Brandeis combines the faculty and resources of a world-class research institution with the intimacy and personal attention of a small liberal arts college.

The Brandeis community, representing more than 100 nations, consists of over 3,600 undergraduates and nearly 2,200 graduate students, more than 360 full-time faculty and more than 1,000 administrators and staff members. The University is comprised of the undergraduate College of Arts and Sciences, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the Brandeis International Business School, the Heller School for Social Policy and Management, and the Rabb School of Continuing Studies. Brandeis is also home to more than 30 research institutes and centers that contribute to the academic life of the campus. US News & World Report has ranked Brandeis among the top 35 national universities every year since its inception, and many of the graduate programs, particularly at the Heller School and the International Business School, are also very highly ranked.
Brandeis is located in Waltham, Massachusetts, just 9 miles west of Boston. The 235-acre campus is notable for its contemporary architecture, which is evident in nearly all of its more than 100 academic and residential buildings.

**University Leadership**

Ronald D. Liebowitz became Brandeis University’s ninth president on July 1, 2016. The former president of Middlebury College, Dr. Liebowitz is a recognized leader in higher education administration, whose academic scholarship centers on political geography, Russia, and higher education.

Under President Liebowitz’s guidance, Brandeis has reaffirmed its special leadership role in higher education, and has ushered in a new era of transparency and accountability as it refocuses on the quality of the student experience and the intellectual strength of its faculty.

In his October 2018 speech entitled “A Framework for our Future,” President Liebowitz outlined an ambitious and compelling vision for the university. The Framework includes plans for renewing support for the highest level of research excellence from the faculty, restructuring the student residential experience, re-energizing the university’s attention to its founding Jewish values, and re-thinking the university’s physical infrastructure to address the evolution of the university’s curriculum and best support its mission.

President Liebowitz earned a BA in economics and geography from Bucknell University, and a doctorate in geography from Columbia University. His scholarship has focused on fiscal federalism, intraregional economic relations, and the nationality question in the former Soviet Union. He has received a number of research grants, including awards from the National Council for Soviet and East European Research, the Kennan Institute/Woodrow Wilson Center, the Social Science Research Council, and the International Research and Exchanges Board.

His current research focuses on higher education. He is now working on a multiyear research project with his wife, Jessica, on the dynamics of the higher education workforce and the future of doctoral education in the United States.

Lisa M. Lynch, the Maurice B. Hexter Professor of Social and Economic Policy, serves as Brandeis’ provost and chief academic officer, and previously as dean of the Heller School from 2008 to 2014. Lynch is an internationally recognized labor economist, and a leader with experience at the highest levels of academia and government, having served as chief economist at the US Department of Labor and as a director of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. Lynch earned her BA in economics and political science at Wellesley College, and her MS and PhD in Economics at the London School of Economics.

Stewart Uretsky is the executive vice president for finance and administration, in which the Office of Human Resources is housed. Prior to joining Brandeis in September 2016, Uretsky was vice president, chief financial officer and treasurer for the Brookings
Institution in Washington, D.C. From 2009-2010, he served as chief financial and administrative officer at Conservation International, an environmental non-profit in Washington. Starting in 1999, Uretsky spent 10 years in finance and operations role at Harvard University, first at the Harvard Institute for International Development, and then at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, where he was chief administrative officer. Uretsky earned his bachelor’s degree in economics and management from New York University and his master’s in international economics and international relations from Johns Hopkins University.

The Position
The Vice President for Human Resources reports to the Executive Vice President for Administration and manages the full range of human resources (HR) services including recruiting and talent management, benefits, staff compensation, staff development, on-boarding, policy development and management, human resources information system including Workday human capital management, employee and labor relations, and legal compliance. The VP leads a department of nineteen professionals and works with them to establish, implement, and communicate policies, systems, and procedures to support a positive, diverse, and inclusive environment and culture. The VP is an inspiring and creative leader who understands business strategy and planning, and engages the HR staff to deliver those plans in an effective and responsive manner to all members of the University community.

The incoming VP will serve as a member of the President’s Management Council, the Policy Committee, and as one of the leadership liaisons to the Resources Committee of the Board of Trustees. Working with senior leaders, the VP will serve as a key driver in the creative development of strategic human resources plans and policies. Included in this are competitive compensation and benefits plans with an eye towards recruitment and retention, programs that motivate and reward effective performance and create a partnership between the employee and the University for the short and long-range health and welfare of the members of the Brandeis community.

The VP, along with outside counsel and the Director of Labor & Employee Relations, also maintains positive relationships with the existing labor unions and initiates appropriate strategies when additional labor organizing may be on the horizon.

Key Opportunities and Challenges
The incoming VP will join a team of human resources professionals seeking strategic and nuanced leadership and a senior leadership group that is actively looking for a vibrant partner to provide solutions and guidance. The need for the Vice President of Human Resources to provide strong and open communication across campus and within the University’s administrative team is clear. During a time of change at Brandeis, the incoming VP will have the chance to inspire and support the many different stakeholders in their commitment to fostering and sustaining a harmonious campus environment.
Understanding the various cultures of the different academic groupings at Brandeis will be crucial to the incoming VP’s success. While the Human Resources Office does work on behalf of the entire institution, recognizing the needs of the many different constituent groups will be critical. Providing support to the academic leadership to assist in the recruitment and retention of faculty and research staff as well as increasing access to professional development will also be important. The VP will also be an important partner with the recently formed Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

The incoming VP should also have a solid understanding of the best practices related to technology. The legacy PeopleSoft system is being completely replaced by the Workday enterprise resource system as of July 2019, along with Finance, and the student implementation is moving forward. This is already creating tremendous opportunity to implement new streamlined business processes and to move from a manual transactional environment to one of strategy, expertise and service.

There is an appetite on campus for more support and guidance from human resources and a matching desire on the part of the HR staff to implement and follow through on innovative approaches. The VP co-leads the newly formed HR/Finance Liaison Group, comprised of HR and Finance professionals from all of the Schools and departments across the university. The purpose of this group is to create a completely networked and connected HR environment with full transparency and mutual value delivery.

An HR Ad Hoc Advisory Group has also been recruited and in service for the previous six months, defining a draft HR Strategic Agenda to include the needs and aspirations of the University in the HR environment. The individuals are all important leaders serving directly under the leadership of a Dean or Vice President, and have been providing strong insights into university needs and the desired relationship between central HR and the distributed HR entities. The draft Strategic Agenda will be ready for the new VP to assess, improve, and finalize into a multi-year Strategic Plan.

Qualifications
The successful candidate will have many of the following qualifications and characteristics:

- Extensive leadership experience within Human Resources in higher education or similarly complex environment;
- Ability to think creatively and strategically, to build consensus and collaborate with others, and to articulate and implement human resources programs that reflect organizational goals;
- A proven track record of working with teams and managers to achieve more efficient and effective operations;
- Specific skills or training in the following areas are highly desirable:
  - Organizational Effectiveness
  - Business and Project Management
  - Systems Thinking
Process Re-Engineering

- Excellent communication, analytical, and problem solving skills; and
- Integrity and values that align with the mission of Brandeis University.

A Bachelor’s degree is required; Master’s degree, evidence of continuing professional education, and certifications relevant to the position are preferred. Final candidates will be required to complete a background check successfully.

Please send nominations and applications including a letter of interest and CV to: Spencer Stuart at BrandeisVPHR@spencerstuart.com.

Brandeis University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and encourages minorities, women, disabled individuals, and eligible veterans to apply. It is the policy of the University not to discriminate against any applicant or employee on the basis of race, ancestry, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, genetic information, national origin, disability, veteran status, or on the basis of any other legally protected category.