



BeecherHill



Kenyon College

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**Position Profile**

Associate Vice President for Finance

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# About Kenyon College

Kenyon College is one of the nation's finest liberal arts colleges, a small school where academic excellence goes hand in hand with a strong sense of community. The College brings together 1,750 students to study with nearly 200 professors on an exceptionally beautiful hilltop campus in central Ohio. Kenyon's curriculum is rooted in the traditional liberal arts and sciences and enriched by interdisciplinary programs. Kenyon offers more than 50 majors, minors and concentrations. Kenyon is proud to share that 130 students have been named Fulbright Fellows in the last 15 years, making the college a top producer of these international scholars and teachers.

Founded in 1824, Kenyon is the oldest private college in Ohio. The College's literary prominence dates to 1939, when poet and critic John Crowe Ransom founded the Kenyon Review. Since then, Kenyon has grown - welcoming women in 1969 - and has expanded intellectually, earning national recognition in many fields. Well-known alumni include not only a host of eminent writers but also actors, scientists, educators, artists, and leaders in business and the professions. Other notable strengths include many opportunities for research in the sciences and programs connecting students to the college's rural surroundings. The Kenyon experience fosters connections of all kinds — to classmates and teachers and friends, to the life of the mind, to global perspectives, to its unique traditions and history, and to a place of inspiration.

## Foundations for Kenyon's Third Century | Strategic Plan

As Kenyon prepares to celebrate its bicentennial, its graduates must be prepared to meet the global challenges presented by climate change; to develop and apply technology not only effectively but also ethically; to build equitable, just, diverse and inclusive communities in an increasingly polarized environment; and to solve complex, dynamic problems in uncertain contexts. And, Kenyon must do this while addressing unprecedented challenges facing American higher education, including the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic, continued shifts in student demographics, and the barriers created by the combination of higher tuition costs and stagnant family income.

The work of the College will focus on three priorities:

- **Rigorous Learning in a Global Context:** Engage students in rigorous learning on enduring and emerging questions, rooted in Gambier's residential community, with a global reach.
- **A Thriving, Diverse Community:** Recruit, retain and educate a community of academically excellent students, reflective of the diversity of our nation and representative of the world, thriving as individuals, and united by a shared sense of belonging.
- **Strong Financial Foundations:** Fully realize Kenyon's mission into its third century by securing the College's financial foundations, advancing equitable access, and stewarding our built and natural environment.

More information about Kenyon's Strategic Plan can be found [here](#).



# Introduction of Opportunity

Reporting to the Vice President for Finance, the Associate Vice President for Finance has responsibility for the College's accounting functions, and assists with the annual operating budget process as well as the College's debt management program. Other major areas of responsibility include insurance and risk management, dining services, purchasing, and auxiliary services such as mail, vending, and laundry. The Associate Vice President for Finance serves as an Officer of the Corporation, with direct oversight of the Controller, Manager of Mail Services, Manager of the Bookstore and General Manager of the Kenyon Inn.

## Essential Functions of the Position

### Accounting Department Oversight

- Supervises the Controller, who is directly responsible for all Accounting functions including accounts payable, accounts receivable, student accounts, student loans, payroll, financial management of grants, accounting for physical assets and any special reporting as needed. The Controller is also responsible for the preparation of the audited financial statements.
- Works with the Controller in overseeing the accounting functions for the Kenyon Inn, as well as the College's related organizations: Philander Chase Conservancy, the Kokosing Nature Preserve, the Kenyon Review, and the Gund Gallery.
- Serves as staff liaison to the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees.

### Budget Management

- Works with the Vice President for Finance in coordinating the development of each annual operating budget in conjunction with the Campus and Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees, other members of Senior Staff, and members of the faculty and administration.
- Helps develop other specific budgets as needed, e.g. the budget for a new program under development, or the projected operating budget for a proposed new facility.
- Works with the Vice President for Finance on financial modeling.
- Works with the Vice President for Finance to evaluate the impact of proposed budgetary changes.
- Works closely with the Director of Human Resources to help evaluate the financial impact of various fringe benefit programs.

### Debt Management

- With the Vice President for Finance, serves as a liaison to the underwriters, bond counsel, and College counsel, rating agencies, bond trustees and liquidity providers when debt is issued.
- Coordinates the preparation of Appendix A of the offering circular, collects the necessary documentation for recovering capital expenses paid for with unrestricted funds and calculates the useful life of the overall bond project.
- Monitors the requests for reimbursement from bond proceeds and oversees post-issuance bond compliance.

### Insurance and Risk Management

- Responsible for the acquisition of appropriate amounts of property, automobile, and general liability insurance coverage for the institution.
- Contributes to the conversation affecting decisions and practices where the College is exposed to risk of loss or litigation.
- Complies with the inspections and advise of insurer, local and state officials, and trustees concerning policies, practices, and facilities.
- Manages the insurance reserve funds for premium deductible expenses.

### Dining Services

- Acts as liaison on behalf of the College for the coordination of campus dining entities, foremost of which is the contracted services for the student board plan and catering services.
- Consults with, and directs if necessary, the management team on site with contracted dining service.
- Negotiates price and breadth of services provided by contracted dining service.

# Introduction of Opportunity, continued

## Purchasing

- Establishes and maintains college-wide purchasing procedures, implemented through the Purchasing Coordinator.
- Directly reviews and approves all purchases over departmental thresholds.

## Auxiliary Services

- Oversees and supports the work of the Manager of Mail Services, the Manager of the Bookstore, and the General Manager of the Kenyon Inn.
- Negotiates price and breadth of vending and laundry services.

# Key Qualifications and Competencies

## Key Qualifications

- Be committed to the mission and expectations of a small, highly selective residential liberal arts college.
- Be competent in all aspects of financial literacy including accounting, financing capital projects and improvements, and budgeting.
- Be able to plan, develop, organize, implement, direct and evaluate the College's fiscal functions and performance.
- Be able to work effectively with the College's wide variety of constituents which includes, but is not limited to, Trustees, administrators, faculty members, students, alumni, donors, community members and external service providers.
- Be a consensus builder.
- Possess a bachelor's degree with a major in finance, accounting or a related field. Public accountant certification preferred.

## Attributes

- Flexible yet decisive administrator
- Attentive listener
- Visible and present leader
- Collaborative colleague
- Skilled communicator
- Trusted partner
- Engaged community member



## Kenyon Leadership



Sean Decatur

President  
Kenyon College

Sean M. Decatur became the 19th president of Kenyon College on July 1, 2013.

Decatur is a lifelong champion for the liberal arts and a leading voice in the national conversation about higher education. Under his leadership, Kenyon has attracted its most diverse and academically talented incoming classes in history. In 2017, Kenyon became a member of the American Talent Initiative, a coalition of colleges working to expand access and opportunity by graduating 50,000 additional highly talented lower-income students by 2025. Additional efforts like the Kenyon Access Initiative, combined with an ensemble of Kenyon programs aimed at increasing diversity and fostering inclusion, support Decatur's commitment to building educational communities that talented students from all backgrounds can access, and where they thrive.

This commitment has been a priority in the two strategic plans Decatur has led at Kenyon: the Kenyon 2020 Plan, and, starting in 2021, "Foundations for Kenyon's Third Century" — a plan based on Kenyon's revised 2020 mission statement to "build strong foundations for lives of purpose and consequence." This plan focuses on three key areas: strengthening Kenyon's commitment to rigorous, dynamic learning in a contemporary context; building a thriving and diverse community united by a shared sense of belonging; and reinforcing a strong financial foundation for increased access and sustainability.

Decatur has garnered significant support for these priorities through the Our Path Forward comprehensive campaign, publicly launched in October 2018 with a goal of \$300 million and buoyed by a \$75 million lead gift. In 2021, the campaign's goal was increased to \$500 million thanks to an anonymous \$100 million gift, the largest in the College's history, and renamed Our Path Forward to the Bicentennial, recognizing Kenyon's upcoming 200th birthday in 2024.

With a background in chemistry, Decatur often teaches courses including seminars in biochemistry and has developed Kenyon's natural sciences division, with the College becoming a leader in providing students with experiences rivaling those found at major research universities.

Prior to assuming the Kenyon presidency, Decatur served as a professor of chemistry and biochemistry and as the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Oberlin College from 2008 to 2013. From 1995 to 2008, he was an assistant and associate professor of chemistry at Mount Holyoke College, where he helped establish a top research program in biophysical chemistry. He was a visiting scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 2004 to 2005.

Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Decatur attended the Hawken School before earning his bachelor's degree at Swarthmore College, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in 1990. He earned a doctorate in biophysical chemistry at Stanford University in 1995.

## Kenyon Leadership



Todd Burson

Vice President for Finance  
Kenyon College

Todd Burson is the vice president for finance at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio. In his role as vice president, Mr. Burson oversees the financial operations of the College. He also serves on the President's Senior Staff and as the administration liaison to the Campus and Finance Committee, the Investment Committee, and the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Burson served as associate vice president for finance at Kenyon College from 2013 to 2015. In that role, he oversaw the College's accounting operations and the budgeting process, and ensured that the annual financial statement audit was conducted in a timely fashion along with all appropriate regulatory filings. From 2011 to 2013, Mr. Burson was the assistant controller/director of special projects with responsibility for completing multiple projects, most importantly seeing the implementation of the COGNOS Business Intelligence software.

From 2004 to 2011, Mr. Burson served as the controller at the College of Wooster, where he was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the accounting office and helped lead the implementation of the Colleague ERP system.

From 2000 to 2004, Mr. Burson served as a senior accountant at Kenyon College, overseeing the student receivable, payroll, and grants offices and was instrumental in the implementation of the Banner SCT ERP system.

A 1994 graduate of Ohio Wesleyan University, Mr. Burson became a Certified Public Accountant in 1997 and earned a master's degree in business administration from Ashland University in 2002. Mr. Burson is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Ohio Society of Certified Public Accountants.

# Knox County, Mount Vernon and Gambier



## About Knox County and Mount Vernon

Gifted with some of the finest landscape views in Ohio, Knox County offers a rural lifestyle with easy access to the Columbus metro region. As the county seat, the City of Mount Vernon enjoys an innovative community with an authentic hometown feel. Home to 17,000 people, the City boasts historic buildings and districts as well as business and professional, educational, and recreational opportunities through many adaptive reuses of the community's infrastructure and spaces. Specific attractions include the historic Woodward Opera House, the Knox County Memorial Building and Theater, and the 250-acre Ariel-Foundation Park adjacent to the scenic Kokosing River. The City has strong ties to higher education, with Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Kenyon College, and Central Ohio Technical College operating satellite locations in the historic downtown.

## About Gambier

With a population of 2,450 sprinkled across less than one square mile, the Village of Gambier is located five miles from Mount Vernon and an hour drive from Columbus. The proud home to Kenyon College, Gambier identifies as a caring, close-knit community with residents who have deep connections to the area and to one another. Running the length of the Village is Kenyon's "Middle Path," the main artery where students, faculty, staff and community members interact daily. Among the Village's main features are the Kokosing Gap Trail, which offers 14 miles of jogging, hiking and biking to its residents and all those that visit; the Brown Family Environmental Center with its attractive nature walks, and the Gambier Community Center with a playground and dog park, athletics fields, and picnic facilities. The Village also enjoys several restaurants, retail establishments, an historic post office, the Kenyon Inn, and bed & breakfasts.

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Learn more about Knox County at [www.visitknoxohio.org](http://www.visitknoxohio.org), Mount Vernon at [www.mountvernonohio.org](http://www.mountvernonohio.org) and Gambier at [www.kenyon.edu](http://www.kenyon.edu)



# Kenyon College

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Kenyon College is an equal opportunity employer.

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## BeecherHill

### Process of Candidacy

BeecherHill is pleased to partner with the Kenyon College search committee and Board of Trustees on this critical search. Please submit nominations, referrals and resumes with preferred contact information to our Firm:

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