



**Search for the Assistant Vice President of Talent Performance and Relations  
University of Alabama at Birmingham  
Birmingham, Alabama**

**THE SEARCH**

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) seeks an experienced, innovative, and visionary leader to serve as its next Assistant Vice President for Talent Performance and Relations (AVP). Reporting to the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO), the AVP will oversee, administer, and manage talent relations and performance initiatives at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. The new AVP is expected to be a leader who can establish and maintain positive, effective working relationships across the institution to recruit and retain a strong workforce and support a safe working environment for employees.

This leader, whose career exemplifies a commitment to consistent and effective communication, will possess a track record of collaboration and developing strong relationships across a variety of stakeholders, ranging from top subject matter experts to local leaders. They will have the opportunity to lead and bolster talent acquisition programs and develop talent relations policies, plans, and objectives to foster positive working relationships among UAB's employee population and within various work environments.

As UAB continues to grow in both academic and research reputation nationally and expand its economic impact across the state, the AVP will be pivotal in translating the University's goals and initiatives into human resources strategic and operational plans in the area of talent performance, relations, and acquisition. This is an opportunity to join a renowned research institution and play a key role in achieving UAB's mission to demonstrate excellence across a complex organization that was selected as America's Number One Large Employer by Forbes and recognized as a Great College to Work For.

UAB has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national search firm, to assist in this search. All inquiries, applications, and nominations for this opportunity should be directed in confidence to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

**UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM**

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is a leading employer in the nation—recognized in 2023 by the [Great Colleges to Work For®](#) program. Strengths identified include shared governance, faculty experience, job satisfaction, confidence in senior leadership, and diversity, inclusion, and belonging. The University was also named among the [Best-In-State Large Employers in 2023](#).

UAB is part of the University of Alabama System. Since becoming an autonomous campus in 1969, UAB has earned international recognition for its innovative academic programs in a range of disciplines, groundbreaking research and scholarship, and leading-edge patient care. UAB has helped build the future through innovative ideas and initiatives in the classroom, the laboratory, the studio, and the clinic.

UAB is in a strong financial position with a growing research base, healthy financial margins, and modest debt. The total operating budget for the UAB Campus for FY25 was \$1,878,171,000. The total budgeted FY 25 State Appropriations were \$397,409,628, with \$49,263,523 allocated to the Hospital and \$16,497,393 being line items and earmarks for specific purposes. The state appropriation allocation has increased 46.1% or \$125.3 million since 2018. The university has an Aa2 rating from Moody's and an AA+ rating from S&P.

## STRATEGIC PLAN

UAB's strategic plan for 2024-2028, [Forging Ahead](#), outlines the institution's mission, vision, values, peers, foundations, and pillars. It also outlines institutional goals, strategies to achieve them, and success measurements. It also provides a guide and framework for each school, college, and unit across the enterprise to update localized strategic plans.

In January 2022, President Ray Watts launched and charged the Strategic Planning Council to refresh UAB's 2018-2023 strategic plan, *Forging the Future*. The goal was to guide the institution's continued growth, unprecedented success, and positive impact for the next five years, 2024-2028, keeping in mind the plan's positive impact on the people who make up the UAB community as well as those in Birmingham, across Alabama, and around the world.

*Forging Ahead* was presented to the campus community on October 25, 2023. The plan is built on the foundations of Financial Sustainability, Diversity, and Environmental Stewardship, with four pillars of focus — Education; Research, Innovation, and Economic Development; Community Engagement; and Patient Care. The University of Alabama System Board of Trustees approved the Plan in February 2024, and it is currently being implemented campuswide, with individual schools and units developing their own localized plans that complement and support *Forging Ahead*.

## Research

UAB is continuing the most successful era of research funding in its history, with annual research expenditures increasing by 82% over the past decade to \$780 million in FY23. The new Research Strategic Initiative, *Growth with Purpose*, will substantially increase the impact on people's lives locally and globally as UAB pursues the ambitious goal of \$1 billion in research expenditures (a level attained by less than 30 universities nationally).

UAB ranks among the top five percent of U.S. universities for federally funded research expenditures and 13<sup>th</sup> among public universities in funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). All six of the UAB's health-related schools rank in the top 20 among public schools for NOH funding, and UAB remains in the top 1 percent of all NIH-funded institutions— private, public, and international. UAB's research portfolio continues to diversify, consistently including awards from an array of federal agencies such as the Department of Defense, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, NASA, and Department of Energy, as well as private industry.

Notably, every school and college at UAB actively participates in sponsored research, demonstrating UAB's commitment to research in action across hundreds of interests and specialties. Research includes a wide range of disciplines and emerging new fields and spans the continents in scope: developing revolutionary treatments for the most devastating human diseases, from diabetes to cancer to Alzheimer's disease; pioneering new materials for medical, industrial, and military applications; combating cybercrime perpetrated from computers around the globe in a one-of-a-kind cyber forensics center through collaborations with the FBI, Homeland Security, and industry partners; and making significant advances in climatology, marine biology, and medicine in the far reaches of Antarctica. UAB's Center for Clinical and Translational Science (CCTS)—which engages a network of 11 academic health centers, research institutes, and universities across Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi—recently received four NIH grants totaling \$82 million over seven years to enhance research capacity and improve health outcomes throughout the Deep South.

As the leading public academic medical center in the Deep South, UAB took a lead role in the battle against COVID-19. Through January 2022, UAB Hospital treated over 6,400 COVID-positive patients and 74% of on-campus students - nearly 92% of UAB employees were compliant with COVID-related policy, and working with the Alabama Department of Public Health and other partners, more than 267,500 residents in all 67 counties of Alabama. UAB experts in health informatics quickly developed an online symptom assessment and contact tracing tool adopted by the Alabama Department of Public Health and used at dozens of universities and organizations nationwide. UAB was on the front lines of public health and spearheading the development of possible therapeutics against COVID-19, including [Remdesivir](#) (developed initially under the guidance of the UAB-led Antiviral Drug Discovery and Development Center to treat MERS), which was considered one of the most promising treatments for the disease.

## **Academics**

The university comprises 12 academic units (Schools of Business, Dentistry, Education, Engineering, Health Professions, Medicine, Nursing, Optometry, and Public Health; Graduate School; Honors College; and the College of Arts and Sciences). In Fall 2024, UAB had an overall enrollment of 20,095 with a first-year class of 2,014 (34 percent of whom were first-generation students). The Honors College had an enrollment of 2,429, including 543 first-year students with an average ACT score of 30.4 and an average high school GPA of 4.20. UAB was the first academic partner to support the Birmingham Promise scholarship in providing Birmingham City Schools graduates an opportunity to attend the university with a tuition scholarship

match and additional academic support.

Academic programs at all levels — undergraduate through postdoctoral — are nationally recognized for exceptional research and service-learning opportunities. Undergraduate programs and the Honors College offer the type of hands-on, closely mentored research experiences found primarily at the graduate level in most universities. In the past few years, UAB has launched new BS and PhD programs in immunology, biotechnology, cancer biology, and neuro-engineering, the first programs of their kind in the Southeastern U.S. and the nation. In current *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, UAB's BS in Nursing is third nationally, and 19 graduate programs are among the top 25, including a Master of Science in Health Administration program that is number one in the nation.

### **UAB HEALTH SCIENCES AND MEDICAL CENTER**

As a nationally and globally competitive academic medical center, UAB provides world-class patient care for the state and region — with approximately two million patient visits annually — and is committed to educating medical professionals and advancing medical science through research. The UAB Health System, as a separate not-for-profit corporation, directs and provides the coordination and management of the healthcare entities affiliated with UAB. The UAB Health System (UABHS) consists of the UAB Hospital, the University of Alabama Health Services Foundation, Triton Health Systems, the UAB Callahan Eye Hospital Authority, the Valley Foundation, the Health Care Authority for Baptist Health, Medical West Hospital Authority, L.V. Stabler Hospital, J. Paul Jones Hospital, Brian Whitfield Memorial Hospital, Cooper Green Mercy Health Services Authority, and many other managed hospitals. On November 1, 2024, the UAB Health System Authority will acquire the Ascension St. Vincent's Health System in central Alabama — pending approvals and satisfaction of closing conditions — to further sustain and expand patients' access to the highest quality care in Birmingham and surrounding communities.

The flagship UAB Hospital is the largest in Alabama and the eighth largest in the U.S. (1,207 beds) and consistently ranks as the top hospital in Alabama in *U.S. News & World Report*, with eight clinical specialties currently in the nation's top 50. The Hospital also has strong ties with other governmental and private nonprofit institutions located within and adjacent to the UAB campus, including Veterans Affairs Medical Center and Children's of Alabama. As the state's only level 1 adult trauma center, UAB treats the most catastrophic injuries suffered anywhere in Alabama, and the emergency department is currently undergoing a \$73 million expansion supported by \$50 million in state funding. The O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB is the only National Cancer Institute-designated center in Alabama, in the four-state region, and is a national leader in driving cancer research, treatment, and training.

### **LOCATION**

Located in the heart of the Southeast, Birmingham is a short drive from Atlanta, Nashville, New Orleans, Memphis, the Blue Ridge Mountains, and Gulf Coast beaches. Birmingham has been recognized as an "All-American City" by the National Civic League, as one of the top 10 American cities to live and work, one of

the top 10 entrepreneurial and job growth hot spots in America, and Conde Nast Traveler's pick for one of 22 Best Places to Go in 2022.

Downtown Birmingham has enjoyed a revitalization in recent years, with the development of Railroad Park — an award-winning urban park — and its adjacent Regions Field, home to the minor league Birmingham Barons — an award-winning stadium. The park and stadium projects have kickstarted major growth in surrounding districts, including craft breweries, boutique shops, restaurants, loft and apartment buildings, innovative workspaces, and hotels. Birmingham's airport, Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport, was completely renovated in 2013. Because of this platform and its sports history, Birmingham was selected to serve as the host city of the 2022 World Games. [UAB played a major role](#) in coordinating the spectacular event — providing athletic venues and hosting 3,600 athletes from more than 100 countries.

Birmingham is also a renowned culinary destination. One of its signature restaurants recently won two James Beard Foundation awards, and many other restaurants were named finalists. Food critics across the country have discovered Birmingham's food scene and consistently rank it as one of the best food cities in America.

There are a host of attractions only a short walk from UAB's campus. The Birmingham Civil Rights District National Monument, composed of sites such as Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, Kelly Ingram Park, and the Civil Rights Institute, is a major destination for visitors from around the world. Birmingham's cultural scene is thriving, with museums, galleries, music and arts festivals, theaters and live music venues, a professional ballet company, a professional opera company, a School of Fine Arts, the Jazz Hall of Fame, the recently restored historic Lyric and Alabama theaters, and UAB's Alys Stephens Performing Arts Center, home of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra.

Birmingham is in proximity to many state and national parks, lakes, urban greenspaces, and hiking and biking trails. The city has more green space per capita than any other major city in the United States.

## **THE ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT OF TALENT PERFORMANCE AND RELATIONS**

Reporting to the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO), the AVP will oversee a team of nearly 30, managing five direct reports including: the Director of Talent Relations; Director of Investigations; Manager of Talent Acquisition and Temporary Staffing; Manager of Talent Acquisition Technology and Analytics; and the HR Consultant Lead. The AVP will be responsible for the oversight and direction of strategic recruitment and talent acquisition programs for full-time, part-time, and temporary staff. By aligning with the University's overarching mission and values, the successful AVP will provide strategic consultation and guidance to faculty and staff on employee relations matters, demonstrating a commitment to confidentiality, integrity, ethics, initiative, and sound judgment.

The AVP will manage the annual performance management process and collaborate with Human Resources Learning and Development to deliver timely performance management tools and training. They will also guide investigators in conducting timely investigations, including those related to Title IX, Title VII, and Human Resources. The AVP will advise and mentor human resources consultants to develop competencies, enabling them to anticipate, identify, and address the needs of their respective business units. They will also oversee the disability management functions, including the AWARE program, as well as oversee the UAB unemployment compensation and On-the-Job Injury (OJI) program.

#### **KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT**

- Develop and build upon a robust talent management strategy that includes effective talent acquisition programs, policies, and procedures to ensure the appropriate recruitment and long-term retention of employees, as well as compliance with evolving laws and regulations governing employment relationships.
- Provide meaningful support to all levels regarding talent management issues. Assure the timely exchange of accurate information, reports, data, documents, and trends as appropriate to effectuate management and decision-making processes, particularly pertaining to hiring practices.
- Drive leadership development, performance management, training, and succession planning programs geared toward the increasing interest in UAB's progressive and forward-thinking strategic agenda.
- Actively cultivate cooperative and productive relationships with key constituents across the University, while emphasizing transparency and effective communications with the community, and improving the constituent experience.
- Provide strategic consultation and guidance to faculty and staff on human resource matters, demonstrating a commitment to confidentiality, integrity, ethics, initiative, and sound judgment.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The successful candidate will bring a spirit of innovation and a proven track record of success in leadership. While no single candidate will have all the qualifications, the search committee seeks candidates with a well-rounded combination of the following abilities:

##### **Essential Qualifications:**

- Bachelor's degree in human resources, business, or a related field.
- Ten (10) years of progressive leadership and management experience.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.

- Familiarity with the following areas: talent management/acquisition, employee relations, performance management, and investigations.
- Strong analytical, writing, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills.
- Ability to analyze, summarize, and effectively present data in a sound and supportable manner.
- Strong presentation and facilitation skills with an emphasis on the education and training of a diverse population.
- Demonstrated ability to establish and maintain positive, effective working relationships.
- Excellent time management and organizational skills.
- Ability to manage multiple projects to deadlines amidst competing priorities.
- High level of strategic thinking and personal initiative.
- High degree of energy and enthusiasm.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively in a fast-paced, team-oriented environment.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and act with discretion, sensitivity, and neutrality.

**Preferred Qualifications:**

- History of designing and leading change in complex, fast-paced, and growing organizations.
- Progressively responsible track record of demonstrated successes supporting a large and complex workforce in planning, organizational effectiveness, problem-solving, hiring, retention, facilitation, and decision-making skills and competencies.
- Demonstrated expertise with a record of achievement in evaluating proactive and competitive human resources practices and presenting recommended courses of action for development to senior leadership.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, as well as strong presentation and influencing skills.
- Ability to create and implement effective communications strategies to broadly disseminate information regarding talent management strategies, objectives, priorities, and accountabilities.

**Applications, Inquiries, and Nominations**

Interested candidates must submit a letter of interest and a current resume or curriculum vitae to be considered for the position. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and application materials should be directed to:

Rebecca Kennedy, Partner (she/her)  
Miguel Santiago, Senior Associate (he/him)  
Cortnee Bollard, Senior Search Coordinator (they/them)

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-alabama-birmingham/assistant-vice-president-talent-performance-and>

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