



Vice Chancellor for Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence/Chief Diversity Officer Position Profile

The University of California, Merced (UC Merced) invites inquiries, nominations and applications for a visionary and inspiring leader to serve as the Vice Chancellor for Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence/Chief Diversity Officer (VC/CDO). The University seeks a VC/CDO who is a collaborative leader and possesses a passion for equity, a broad concept of diversity and inclusive excellence, a strong appreciation for the academic environment, a demonstrated administrative competence, and a commitment to UC Merced's vision and values.

The University

The University of California, Merced is the newest of the University of California system's 10 campuses and the first American research university built in the 21st century. With over 9,000 undergraduate and graduate students, UC Merced offers an environment that combines a commitment to diversity, inclusive excellence, collaboration and professional development. With bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs, strong research and academic partnerships, and extensive community engagement, the UC Merced campus continues to evolve and requires talented, knowledgeable and dynamic educators, researchers, management and staff.

Ranked among the best public universities in the nation by U.S. News and World Report, UC Merced is uniquely equipped to provide educational opportunities highly qualified students from the San Joaquin Valley and throughout California. UC Merced enjoys a special connection with nearby Yosemite National Park and the Sierra Nevada mountains. The campus, which is guided by a long-range vision of sustainable construction and design, supports the economic development of Merced and the surrounding region.

The recently completed Merced 2020 Project doubled the physical capacity of the campus by enhancing academic distinction, bolstering student success, and boosting research excellence. UC Merced's Downtown Campus Center, a \$33 million, three-story administrative building, was constructed in the heart of Merced in 2018. For more detailed information about the campus, visit <https://www.ucmerced.edu/>.

Chancellor Juan Sánchez Muñoz

In May 2020, the University of California Board of Regents appointed a dynamic, capable, and inspiring new leader, Dr. Juan Sánchez Muñoz, as Chancellor of UC Merced. Prior to joining UC Merced as Chancellor, Dr. Muñoz served as President of the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD), a Hispanic Serving Institution that serves more than 15,000 students in Houston, TX.

During his first year at UHD, Dr. Muñoz launched the university's largest capital campaign and led the institution's recovery efforts after Hurricane Harvey. Dr. Muñoz also presided over UHD's increases in enrollment, retention and graduation, in addition to new degree programs including a bachelor's of science in nursing and data science; awards from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the university's model success programs; and a \$1 million grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute — the only university in Texas to receive the award in 2018.

Prior to UHD, Dr. Muñoz served as Senior Vice President and Vice Provost at Texas Tech University.

A California native whose parents immigrated from Mexico and whose father worked in the fields of the San Joaquin Valley, Dr. Juan Sánchez Muñoz has deep roots in the UC System and the Central Valley. To learn more about Chancellor Muñoz, visit <https://chancellor.ucmerced.edu/meet-chancellor/munoz>.

The Office of Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence

The Office of Equity, Justice, and Inclusive Excellence (OEJIE), previously the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, was established in 2019 in response to campus wide efforts to centralize EJIE efforts and ensure UC Merced institutionalizes inclusive excellence as it grows. In the office's founding, the inaugural Associate Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer was to prioritize the needs of faculty and staff and extend support to students via strong partnerships with the Division of Student Affairs. Efforts to define OEJIE's role at UC Merced included the [Listening Tour of 2019](#), the creation of the Bobcat IDEAs Strategic Framework, and the increased visibility of campus wide EJIE efforts. The pandemic and 2020's racial justice protests focused OEJIE's initiatives, programming, and services on community building and uplifting the needs of staff, faculty, and students to senior leadership (i.e. the People's First Workgroup and the Valuing Black Lives Taskforce).

In its second year of operation, the office has grown from two Graduate Student Researchers and an Executive Assistant to hiring a Deputy Chief Diversity Officer, Executive Director of Equity and Justice, and an Equity Analyst. With this accomplishment, it has also expanded partnerships throughout the university. The AC-CDO role has been elevated to Vice Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer in order to expand the office's oversight to all campus constituency groups. Thus, the VC-CDO will strategically build upon the current infrastructure, both internally as a unit and for the campus at large. To learn more about OEJIE's current scope of work, visit <https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/>.

Position Summary

Reporting directly to the Chancellor and serving as a member of the Chancellor's senior leadership team, the Vice Chancellor for Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence/Chief Diversity Officer (VC/CDO) is charged with providing visionary and strategic leadership that will place UC Merced into national prominence as a model for inclusive excellence. The VC/CDO will be empowered to collaboratively convene a broad group of stakeholders to engage in strategic planning and set priorities via assessments and metrics with the clear authority and responsibility to achieve the goals of the University and the Chancellor.

In leading UC Merced's Office of Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence, the VC/CDO will foster an environment that embraces change and the values of equity, justice and inclusive excellence as critical components of UC Merced's continued commitment to ensuring the success of its students. The VC/CDO will promote initiatives that address the issues of equity, diversity and inclusive excellence and serve as a champion for these endeavors across UC Merced. In doing so, the VC/CDO will help guide the continued development of an inclusive campus community that nurtures learning and growth for all its members. Moreover, the VC/CDO will assess the University's needs related to equity, justice and inclusive excellence and coordinate with all divisions and units on campus to ensure that these needs are prominent in and met by stakeholders' decision-making processes, event planning, and organizational cultures.

The VC/CDO will serve as the senior administrator responsible for leading efforts aimed at defining and achieving measurable goals for furthering equity, diversity and inclusive excellence at UC Merced. To that end, the VC/CDO's key responsibility will be to embed the inclusive excellence pillars effectively and dynamically into UC Merced's campus culture specifically through:

- 1) Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence Vision for all campus constituency groups – The VC/CDO will leverage their EJIE expertise and use a diffused leadership approach to ensure partnerships are robust and effective.
- 2) Diversity Strategic Planning – The VC/CDO will be responsible for working with campus stakeholders to create a campus diversity vision and mission and develop clear priorities and tactics for achieving this vision in alignment with the campus strategic plan. Under the Chancellor's guidance and direction, campus leadership shares responsibility for implementing these policies and practices. In doing so, the VC/CDO monitors progress and provides advice and assistance as needed.
- 3) Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Faculty and Staff – The VC/CDO will be responsible for working with other senior leaders to implement policies and practices to enhance the campus's ability to recruit and retain diverse faculty and staff.
- 4) Student Success – The VC/CDO will work with other senior academic and co-curricular leaders to develop and implement policies and practices that ensure the social, cultural and academic success of undergraduate and graduate students.
- 5) Assessment and Accountability – The VC/CDO will develop and implement data-driven assessment tools to measure the effectiveness of existing programs and services designed to advance equity, justice and inclusive excellence at UC Merced, and is responsible for assessing and monitoring the campus diversity plan and campus climate surveys.
- 6) Policies, Practices and Programs – The VC/CDO will work with other senior academic leaders and EJIE advocates to review and recommend policies, practices and programs that support an inclusive working, learning and research environment.
- 7) Community Relations – The VC/CDO will provide leadership in working with diverse external stakeholders to develop a more engaged and inclusive campus community and regional partner.
- 8) Coordination, Communication and Advice – The VC/CDO will provide advice and counsel to senior leadership and others when the campus faces difficult challenges related to equity, justice and inclusive excellence.
- 9) Management and Budget – The VC/CDO will oversee office staff, standing diversity committees, and units to be added.
- 10) Affirmative Action and Equity – The VC/CDO will provide oversight for development and implementation of UC Merced's affirmative action plan, pay equity and parity initiatives, and the establishment and implementation of affirmative action goals.

Opportunities and Challenges

The VC/CDO is expected to have a significant impact on UC Merced and its campus community. This individual must serve as a confident consensus builder committed to the tenets of transparency, collaboration, and inclusive excellence as they lead the continued evolution of the Office of Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence. With this in mind, the VC/CDO will be required to provide leadership and direction in several critical areas, including but not limited to:

- **Creating a Comprehensive Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence Strategy** – The VC/CDO will lead UC Merced’s efforts to foster an environment in which the Office of Equity, Justice, and Inclusive Excellence and its partners further infuse EJIE ideals and best practices into campus policies and activities. To do so, the VC/CDO must be willing to engage on- and off-campus populations in meaningful dialogue to identify tangible goals and metrics, and ultimately, the development and implementation of a forward-thinking strategic plan to achieve them.
- **Leading the Evolution of the Office of Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence** – The VC/CDO will guide the continued growth of the Office of Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence and continue efforts to implement a data-driven culture that enables its staff to leverage their expertise appropriately across UC Merced’s institutional landscape. In doing so, the VC/CDO will play a central role in guiding the strategic prioritization of the campus’s EJIE efforts and ensuring the efficient use of resources and personnel. The VC/CDO will leverage the Office’s existing infrastructure by identifying key functions, duties and services to be provided by the Office. Ongoing assessment of campus needs is needed to ensure that Office staff are operating as a cohesive and impactful team and appropriately supporting the University’s stakeholders.
- **Leading Engagement and Building Trust** – The VC/CDO will serve as a visible, engaged, and highly interactive leader when working with the community. Every effort should be made to establish trust amongst stakeholders and implement best practices across the University. To that end, the VC/CDO must maintain an environment that is focused on actively engaging faculty, staff, students, and community members. In doing so, the VC/CDO will ensure that trust is established between the Office and key stakeholders. Communication should be open and honest and promote the creation of formal and informal partnerships. By serving as the chief architect of these newly developed relationships between the Office of Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence and University stakeholders, the VC/CDO must maintain a visible presence that embraces transparency and collaboration aimed at achieving high priority institutional goals.
- **Responding to Today and Preparing for Tomorrow** – The next VC/CDO will join UC Merced at critical time in its history. Built in the 21st Century, UC Merced’s relative youth will provide the VC/CDO with the unique opportunity to create an indelible impact on its institutional culture through the Office of Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence’s efforts. The VC/CDO will be responsible for identifying and addressing current needs at UC Merced as well as national trends that may affect the University’s myriad of stakeholder groups.

- **Long-Term Commitment to UC Merced** – The VC/CDO will play a key part in guiding the development of a comprehensive plan for addressing the University’s long-term equity, justice and inclusive excellence needs. Given the import of leading and nurturing cultural change on a university campus, it is important that the next VC/CDO make a long-term commitment to see this important work through.

Qualities and Characteristics

UC Merced seeks candidates whose education, perspectives, and personal and professional experiences have together prepared them to serve as an effective and collaborative leader of the University’s efforts to create a more equitable and inclusive environment. The successful candidate will possess:

- The interpersonal strengths of an open-minded, strategic, and creative thinker and active listener who can mediate diverse opinions to address shared needs;
- The knowledge, ability, and a demonstrated track record (and deep commitment to) applying practices of equity and inclusive excellence;
- The ability to assess campus issues and priorities related to diversity and inclusive excellence and design and implement a strategic plan addressing these needs;
- An excellent track record managing change along with proven experience as an organizational leader and program builder, especially around initiatives that promote equity, justice and inclusive excellence in a professional environment;
- The ability to connect with students, staff, faculty, administrators, and community members and to work closely with faculty in an environment of shared governance;
- Strong communication skills and conflict-resolution skills to effectively navigate politically-charged situations, resolve problems, build consensus, and reconcile competing interests;
- The ability to set clear goals and milestones and to maintain regular assessment and accountability for achieving them;
- A passion for UC Merced and the community it serves;
- The ability to further develop financial resources through grant writing activities;
- The ability to understand the University needs and expectations by collaborating with students, faculty, staff, administrators, community partners and other stakeholders;
- The ability to serve as a champion, advocate, and ambassador for equity, justice and inclusive excellence efforts on campus;
- Visionary and highly collaborative leadership skills, with an in-depth understanding of equity, justice and inclusive excellence issues and opportunities;
- The ability to engage intellectually on equity, justice and inclusive excellence matters and develop and implement actionable plans and initiatives from these discussions;
- The ability to enhance team dynamics with key stakeholders at all levels in the University;
- An evidence-informed decision-making style and demonstrated experience collecting and using data to assess programs and increase shared accountability with a focus on continued improvement;
- An action-oriented, collaborative leadership style that seeks consensus while effectively managing sensitive issues as well diverse opinions and perspectives;
- The ability to lead with comfort and composure in a fast-paced, dynamic environment.

Qualifications

The successful candidate will be a strategic, innovative, and visionary leader with proven experience in leading equity, justice and inclusive excellence initiatives. The candidate must have a genuine commitment to promoting an inclusive environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Candidates should also have:

- A Master's Degree in related area and five years of progressive responsibility related experience developing diversity and inclusive excellence initiatives and programs within Higher Education or similarly complex organization; a terminal Degree such as Ph.D., J.D. or Ed.D. in related area is preferred.
- Demonstrated prior leadership in developing diversity and inclusive excellence initiatives and programs within a complex organization.
- Deep knowledge in the field of Equity, Justice and Inclusive Excellence, including the historical and social context, the language/terms that have evolved, complexities of the intersection of these communities as evidenced by scholarly work, and demonstrated ability to translate that knowledge into practical applications.
- An appreciation of the education, research, and service mission of a major research university. A clear understanding of the theoretical, epistemological, and actionable historicity of diversity and inclusive excellence scholarship.
- An understanding of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) Standards of Professional Practice for VC/CDOs in Higher Education 2.0
- Ability to engage in data-informed strategic analysis of opportunities and challenges and to assess the effectiveness of EJIE initiatives and programs
- A value towards project management
- Demonstrated experience as a strong leader through visible and measured accomplishments, preferably in a research-driven higher education setting.
- An understanding of organizational issues facing a complex and growing institution.
- Demonstrated experience and success in strategic planning, resource management, and diverse student and faculty recruitment, retention and success.
- Demonstrated ability to lead effectively across organizational lines to achieve goals.
- Demonstrated contributions to a larger campus community, including efforts to promote equity, justice and inclusive excellence.
- Demonstrated ability to encourage expression of diverse interests and representations; capable of effective communication and action in representing the campus at the university-wide, state, national and international levels.
- A commitment to shared governance.
- An appreciation for the context and geographic region which UC Merced serves and its particular mission in the Central Valley and beyond.
- Ability to work with local governments and community partners to identify specific broad community needs and provide programming to meet those needs.
- Sensitivity to a wide range of disciplines, interests and constituencies represented at UC Merced and a deep commitment to diversity as part of its public mission.
- Commitment to achieving institutional diversity goals and strategic objectives.
- Exposure to undergraduate and graduate education, academic personnel and research, with a strong preference for a candidate who is eligible to qualify as a tenured member of the faculty.
- Ability to interact effectively with faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students, and other university leaders.
- Ability to communicate effectively and persuasively, as well as strong collaborative skills.

- Demonstrated experience in establishing collaborative, interdisciplinary initiatives that bring faculty, academic staff and students from multiple disciplines together to creatively address issues affecting equity, justice and inclusive excellence.
- Demonstrated knowledge of Higher Education and equal opportunity regulations, such as Higher Education Act of 1965, Title IX, FERPA, Clery Act, EEO, etc.

Application and Nomination Process

The Search Advisory Committee will begin reviewing applications immediately and continue to accept applications and nominations until the position is filled. Applicants must submit: a current resume or curriculum vitae, a cover letter describing relevant experience and interest in the position, and a statement of contributions to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion in their professional careers. Nomination letters should include the name, position, address, and telephone number of the nominee. All applications and nominations will be handled in confidence.

Applications and letters of nomination should be submitted by email to:



Alberto Pimentel, Managing Partner

Sal Venegas Jr., Principal

Email: apsearch@spaexec.com

Refer to code "UCM-VC-CDO" in the subject line

SP&A Executive Search

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The University of California, Merced is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer advancing inclusive excellence. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, pregnancy, or status as a disabled veteran or Vietnam-era veteran, or other protected categories covered by the [UC Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action Policy](#). UC Merced intentionally promotes and maintains a discrimination- and harassment-free workplace by demonstrating it neither condones nor tolerates employment practices that discriminate against or harass any person or specific group of persons on the basis listed above. We seek candidates who will support our vision to cultivate a vibrant, equity-minded, inclusive excellence university community. When applying to UC Merced, we strongly encourage you to reflect on our [Principles of Community](#) and our 2021 strategic plan.