



**Warren Wilson**  
COLLEGE



**POSITION PROFILE**

**Vice President for Finance &  
Administration/CFO**

**July 2023**



Warren Wilson College, an institution known for its innovative programming and commitment to environmental sustainability, invites nominations, expressions of interest and applications for the **Vice President for Finance and Administration/CFO.**

Situated just outside Asheville, NC, on a 1,135-acre campus, Warren Wilson College is one of only nine federally designated “work colleges” at which student life integrates rigorous academics, on-campus jobs, and active engagement in the surrounding community.



## ABOUT WARREN WILSON COLLEGE

Warren Wilson College is a vibrant, independent college with an innovative curriculum that purposefully integrates the liberal arts and experiential learning with community engagement and work experiences to prepare students for not only professional success, but also a life of meaning. Located on a 1,135-acre campus in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Asheville, North Carolina, the College enrolls approximately 600 undergraduates and 100 graduates in a learning community committed to sustainable practices, cross-cultural understanding, and the common good.

Warren Wilson College is one of the Fiske Guide's Top 20 "Best Buy" colleges for 2023. The College's most popular programs are Art, Biology, Creative Writing, Conservation Biology, Environmental Studies, Global Studies, and Pre-Vet. With nearly 100 on-campus work crews and over 250 community service partners, Warren Wilson College provides an educational program that promotes curiosity and empathy and prepares graduates with skills to engage in groundbreaking scholarship, pursue meaningful careers with professional integrity, and lead purposeful lives dedicated to fostering a just, equitable and sustainable world.

Warren Wilson College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts, and Master of Fine Arts degrees. Students are supported in and out of the classroom with their learning through a dedicated and talented faculty: 52 full-time, 15 part-time, and 47 adjuncts.

Visit <https://www.warren-wilson.edu>.

## Students: 740 Students | 10:1 Student-faculty ratio | 1,135 Acre Campus | 44 Programs of Study

Students choose from 21 majors, 33 concentrations, 33 minors, and four pre-professional advising areas for their academic pursuits. The College also offers a nationally renowned [MFA Program for Writers](#). Students are supported in and out of the classroom with their learning through a dedicated and talented faculty: 52 full-time, 15 part-time, and 47 adjunct.



Warren Wilson College is one of [nine work colleges in the country](#), where all residential students are required to work on campus, and in exchange they receive money towards their tuition. Warren Wilson receives an annual grant of \$2 million from the U.S. Department of Education that helps support the meaningful work experiences in which students engage.

In addition to the 1,100-acre campus classroom, laboratory, and library of natural resources which include managed forests, and native wilderness, students learn on a working farm, running a mixed crop and livestock operation with a commitment to sustainable practices which in turn provides public educational opportunities for the wider community.



Every student at Warren Wilson is also required to do community engagement, where they volunteer in the community. Focused on addressing social and environmental justice issues, Warren Wilson students are supported by the Center for Community Engagement and annually, complete over 50,000 hours with local, national, and global communities.



# Leadership & Governance



Dr. Damián J. Fernández is the 10th president of Warren Wilson College, assuming leadership on June 1, 2023.

A Cuban immigrant and first-generation college student who grew up in Puerto Rico, Fernández comes to Warren Wilson with more than 30 years of experience in teaching and leadership positions at both private and public institutions.

Chair of the Board Lach Zemp said, “Dr. Fernández brings a wealth and depth of experience in higher education that is in perfect alignment with the values instilled in our students from Warren Wilson’s long legacy of excellent academics, service to community and the importance of work.”

Fernández’s aspirations for Warren Wilson College include advancing innovative programs that deepen project- and problem-based learning, growing and diversifying enrollment, addressing facilities and other institutional needs, and rethinking the traditional business model of liberal arts colleges.

“Warren Wilson’s foundational commitment to access and its pedagogy of mind, heart, and hand—learning, service, and work—are as compelling now as in 1894,” Fernández said. “Together we will push the boundaries of experiential learning for the 21st century. Warren Wilson will be a leader in the renewal of the American liberal arts college by focusing on excellence, inclusion, innovation, and impact.”

“Ours is a pivotal moment in the history of the College and our nation,” Fernández said. “Together we will ensure Warren Wilson’s future as a place that contributes to individual and community transformation for the greater good. What an honor and responsibility to be steward of that mission. I thank the Board and the community for this extraordinary opportunity.”

Fernández received his bachelor’s from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, master’s in Latin American Studies from the University of Florida, and Ph.D. in International Relations from the University of Miami.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Fernández joins the governance structure of Warren Wilson College which consists of the [Board of Trustees](#), the President, a group of 14 faculty and staff representatives, and the Student Government Association, in addition to committees and working groups created as needed.





## THE POSITION

### Vice President for Finance and Administration/CFO

The Vice President for Finance and Administration/CFO (VPFA) reports directly to the President and is a key member of the President's leadership team. The VPFA must understand and be supportive of the mission of the College and be comfortable working transparently in partnership with the President, other administrative leaders, staff and faculty, and the Board of Trustees in an environment that embraces shared governance and values collaboration. This VPFA is also responsible for the fiscal integrity and operational efficiency of the institution. The VPFA oversees the offices of accounting and finance, information technology, human resources, facilities, public safety, conferences and rentals, Swannanoa Gathering, and dining services.

### An Opportunity for Visionary Leadership

Like many liberal arts colleges and universities, Warren Wilson College is facing challenges arising from current social, political, financial, and demographic realities. Successful navigation through these challenges requires independent colleges to move beyond conventional models that rely heavily on student tuition to fund the crucial work of higher education. The VPFA will partner with the President and other key stakeholders to leverage Warren Wilson's unique strengths, develop an innovative plan for growing the College's resources, and facilitate the transformation necessary to preserve the College's distinctive mission and secure its future for generations of students to come.

The College's VPFA must, therefore, have a distinctive set of key attributes and skills. The VPFA will:

- Share the commitment of President Fernández to the mission and social impact of Warren Wilson College and will be his thought partner in developing a new strategic plan and executing a path to financial sustainability for the College.
- Be a quick study and a strong communicator, able to comprehend, in their totality, the institution's finances and to communicate effectively about them to the Board and shared governance groups, creating understanding and support for the College's financial strategy and needed decisions.
- Be able to build and present budget models that reflect possible choices and projected results, basing models on variables like enrollment, tuition revenue, tuition discount, net tuition, student retention, auxiliary income, philanthropic giving, facilities costs, employee costs, and program costs.
- Possess acumen to assist the President by developing financial pro formas to support evaluation of current programs, proposed new programs, and potential revenue-generating initiatives and partnerships with for-profit entities.

## Responsibilities in Detail

### **Strategy and Financial Leadership:**

- Serve as a member of the President's Cabinet and advise the President and other key members of the leadership team on financial planning, budgeting, cash flow, investment priorities, and policy matters.
- In collaboration with the President and administration develop new revenue sources to support the mission of the College.
- Serve as the main financial liaison to the Board of Trustees and the Administration and Finance, Investment, Audit, and Building and Grounds Committees. Effectively communicate and present critical financial matters to the Board and its committees.
- Gain the trust of administration, staff, and faculty by effectively communicating with the campus about financial issues.
- Develop and execute a long-range financial plan for the institution that works to maintain the fiscal health of the College while simultaneously allowing for strategic growth.

### **Operations:**

- Partner with the President of the College and the Vice President of Enrollment and Marketing in developing strategies that work to increase undergraduate net tuition revenue.
- Review the operations of the College to ensure that they are efficient and effective and determine if there are areas that can be reengineered in ways that will allow for greater economies of operation.
- Direct and manage the assets of the College and develop and maintain systems of internal controls to safeguard financial assets of the College.

- Guide annual budgeting process and produce financial, expense and budgeting reports.
- Arrange for the preparation of the audited financial reports by external auditors.
- Oversee the management of Information Technology, including critical infrastructure, cybersecurity, enterprise data and intelligence, computing hardware and software, and instructional technology.
- Oversee the management of facilities including new construction, renovation, and non-routine maintenance.
- Maintain oversight of Risk Management and Property Insurance and collaborate with Human Resources on the financial oversight of other insurance (including health, life, dental).

#### **Fundraising and Endowment:**

- Oversee endowment investments as prescribed by the Investment Committee of the Board and advise the President and key stakeholders, including administration, on strategic use of endowment funds.
- Partner with the Vice President of Advancement to ensure effective stewardship of gifts to the College.
- Represent the College externally as needed, especially in banking and lease negotiations. Manage bond indebtedness and banking and auditing relationships.

#### **Staff Supervision and Development:**

- Promote a culture of high performance and develop staff using a supportive, collaborative and data-driven approach.
- Ensure all staff are customer-focused in their dealings with students, faculty, staff and others.
- Oversee, direct, and supervise offices of accounting and finance, information technology, human resources, facilities, public safety, conferences and rentals, Swannanoa gathering, dining services and the bookstore.
- Actively participate in the selection, hiring, training, and evaluation of direct reports, facilitate and direct the process of goal setting for direct reports, and conduct regular meetings with them to monitor workflow and offer feedback and guidance.

## Qualifications

#### **Minimum Qualifications:**

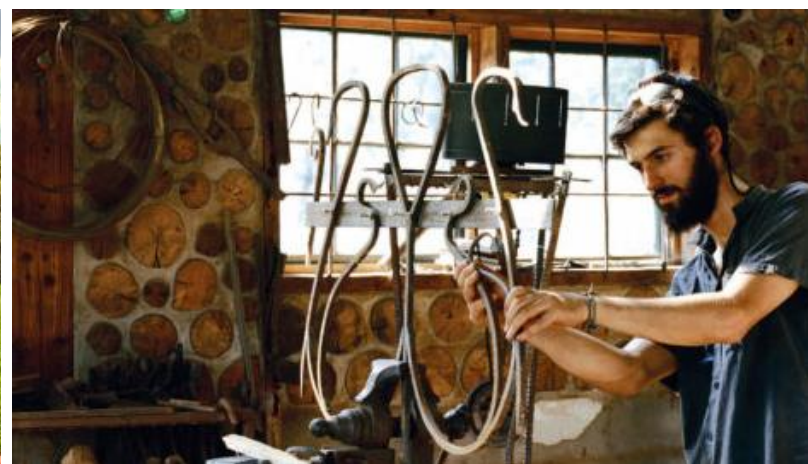
- Bachelor's degree in Business, Finance, or Accounting.
- Flexible, courageous, and honest leader who can positively and productively lead strategic and tactical finance and administration initiatives.
- Strong commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and the ability to work effectively with a diverse staff.



- Exceptional communication skills. Significant experience with strategic financial planning, budget modeling, and support for partnership development.
- Demonstrated financial and administrative leader with superior analytical and management skills, able to develop sophisticated financial models and comfortable with innovative approaches to funding the College and its programs.

**Preferred Qualifications:**

- Master's degree in Business, Finance, or Accounting.
- Certified Public Accountant (CPA).
- 10 years of experience in a leadership role, preferably with both external audit and in-house financial management experience.



# PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY

Confidential review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Interested candidates should submit a curriculum vitae/resume and a letter of interest.

To apply online, go to:

<https://theapplicantmanager.com/jobs?pos=su373>

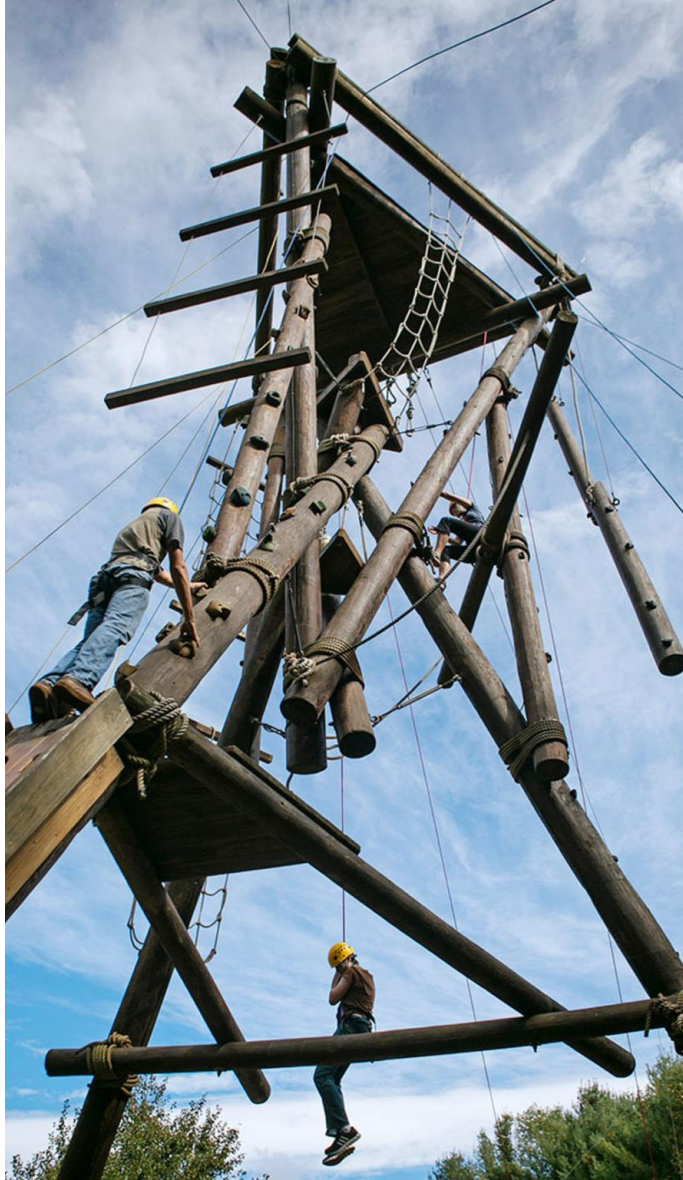
**For more information or to offer recommendations:**

**Andrea Martinez**

Senior Consultant  
Summit Search Solutions, Inc.  
919-357-8766  
[amartinez@summitsearchsolutions.com](mailto:amartinez@summitsearchsolutions.com)

**Dick Merriman, PhD**

Project Leader & Senior Consultant  
Summit Search Solutions, Inc.  
330-933-4809  
[dmerriman@summitsearchsolutions.com](mailto:dmerriman@summitsearchsolutions.com)



*Warren Wilson College is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to developing a campus community that reflects the full diversity of the human experience and, as such, welcomes all applicants.*

*Warren Wilson College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender or gender identity, age, marital status, disability, or sexual orientation, in the administration of its educational policies, recruitment or admission of students, scholarship, grant or loan programs, athletic or other College administered programs, employment procedures, training programs, promotion policies or other related personnel practices.*



# ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

Nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains, Warren Wilson College enjoys one of the most beautiful campuses in the country. It combines the best of both worlds while being surrounded by mountains and unending outdoor activities and is yet, just a 10-minute drive to the world-class city of Asheville known for its arts, entertainment and diversity.

Asheville is known as the hub of Western North Carolina and serves as the cultural, medical and economic center for the region serving on the forefront of social and climate justice, arts and creativity, and entrepreneurship. Residents explore eateries, clubs, coffee houses, funky shops, craft studios, theatres, galleries, craft breweries, festivals, independent bookstores, organic markets, curious museums, and mountain art/crafts/music festivals.

Asheville is unique in that it enjoys the small-town southern history along with its visionary future, providing space for community leaders, states people, artists, activists, young people and retirees who work together for the overall good of the community. Overall, Asheville is a city with a lot to offer, from its stunning natural surroundings to its diverse thriving cultural scene and strong economy.



1. *Niche.com*: Asheville gets an overall **grade of A** and is ranked as the **#4 Best City to Live in America** in part for its outdoor activities, nightlife, and diversity.
2. *Livability.com*: Asheville gets an overall score of 80 out of 100 and ranks it as the **#16 Best Place to Live in the United States** noting its thriving arts scene, strong economy, and high quality of life.
3. *U.S. News & World Report*: Ranks Asheville as the **#14 Best Place to Live in the United States** noting its strong job market and plenty of outdoor recreation opportunities.

*For additional information on Asheville, North Carolina, visit:*

[Asheville Chamber of Commerce](#)  
[Explore Asheville](#)



[Summit Search Solutions, Inc.](#) is a boutique executive search firm dedicated to serving education and nonprofit communities nationwide. Summit has a team of experienced recruiting consultants in strategic locations across the country including California, Kansas, Maryland, New York, and North Carolina.