



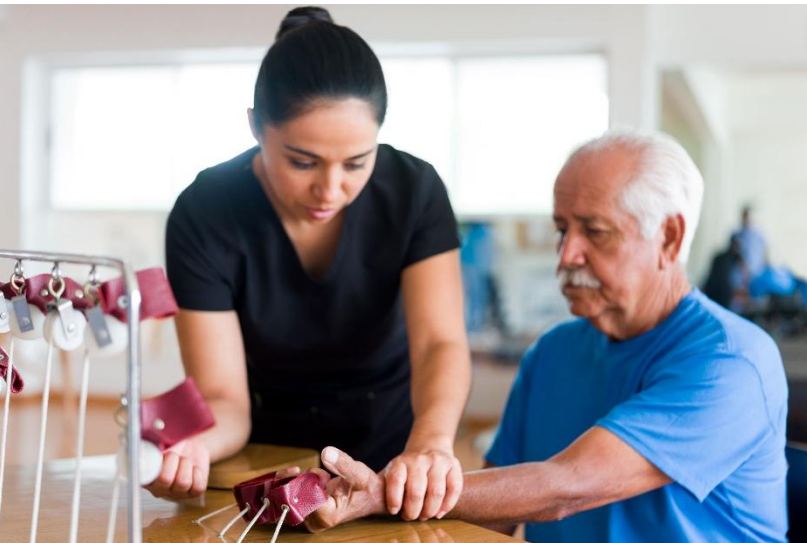
NATIONAL  
LOUIS  
UNIVERSITY

## POSITION PROFILE

# **Founding Program Director, Occupational Therapy Program**

July 2025

In partnership with Summit Search Solutions, Inc.



## THE OPPORTUNITY

### Founding Program Director, Occupational Therapy Program

**National Louis University** is seeking a visionary leader responsible for establishing and maintaining high-quality Occupational Therapy program pathways aligned with market demand, accreditation standards, and institutional and college goals. Initial planning efforts will prioritize a Master's degree program, while also evaluating additional degree options to support long-term program growth and workforce needs.

National Louis University is embarking on an ambitious journey to build a cutting-edge healthcare professions portfolio, addressing critical healthcare disparities and the growing shortage of healthcare professionals. A key part of this mission is the launch of its Occupational Therapy Program (OTP), a priority area given the OT's vital role in providing accessible, high-quality patient care. NLU recognizes that Occupational Therapists are essential to addressing the complex needs of today's healthcare landscape. Their expertise in helping individuals regain independence, adapt to life changes, and engage meaningfully in daily activities positions them as key contributors to interdisciplinary care. With a growing demand for rehabilitative and community-based services, the OT profession plays a vital role in bridging gaps in care and advancing health equity, particularly in underserved communities.

NLU is seeking an enterprising and visionary leader to serve as the Founding Program Director for this program. This is an extraordinary opportunity to build a transformative program from the ground up, develop an innovative curriculum, form strategic clinical partnerships, and attract a diverse student body. If you are passionate about shaping healthcare education and want to create a program that will have a lasting impact, we invite you to join NLU in this inspiring mission.

The Founding Program Director will assume responsibility for the entirety of the developing Occupational Therapy (OT) program pathways. Duties include, but are not limited to, planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating the OT curriculum, policies, and procedures; working collaboratively with healthcare, school, and community partners to ensure ample and optimum clinical learning experiences for students; student advising and monitoring academic progress and retention throughout the program; participating in program- and university-level committees; and ensuring that accreditation standards are met at all times. The Program Director will also lead the efforts in hiring, training, mentoring, and evaluating a dynamic team of faculty dedicated to ensuring the success of their students.

This role involves comprehensive program oversight, including student recruitment, curriculum development, faculty evaluation, and strategic planning. The Founding Program Director will work closely with faculty, academic affairs, and other internal and community entities to ensure the program meets accreditation standards and prepares students for successful careers as certified Occupational Therapists. This position reports to the Provost and includes a dotted line to the Vice Provost of Academic Programs and Accreditation and collaborates with various departments to support student and program success.

## Responsibilities:

### Program Leadership:

- Provide strategic direction, shaping the future of Occupational Therapy programs at NLU.
- Develop, manage and provide administrative oversight to the Occupational Therapy program(s).
- Lead programmatic accreditation, ensuring program(s) meet standards and maintain accreditation status.
- Oversee programmatic budget and resources.

### Curriculum Development:

- Design and manage program curriculum, creating cohesion across mission, goals, and learning outcomes.
- Develop clinical site partnerships, policies, and procedures.

### Continuous Programmatic Review and Analysis:

- Lead academic quality and program evaluation efforts, including using formative and summative assessments to analyze student and program outcomes data, informing continuous improvement of the program.
- Prepare accreditation self-study and annual internal program evaluation reports.

### Student Recruitment and Support:

- Collaborate with enrollment team and develop externship partnerships to recruit academically prepared students.
- Develop programmatic efforts and provide direct support to prepare students for a rigorous graduate program and certification exam.

### Faculty Management:

- Recruit, hire, supervise, and evaluate program faculty.
- Mentor faculty and commit to strategies for professional development.
- Foster a collaborative academic environment and student-centered approach.

### Interprofessional Collaboration:

- Facilitate collaboration with other departments and external healthcare, school, and community entities.
- Promote interprofessional education to foster cross-disciplinary perspectives and service delivery.

### Communication and Marketing:

- Ensure effective day-to-day communication within the program and across the University.
- Collaborate with Marketing and Admissions to enhance the program's visibility and attract prospective students.

### Community Engagement:

- Build partnerships across healthcare, school, and community entities and within the University to further program mission and goals.

## Qualifications and Experience:

### Education and Certification:

- Doctoral degree in Occupational Therapy or a related field awarded by an accredited institution required.
- Degree awarded in Occupational Therapy from an ACOTE accredited program required.
- Certification as an Occupational Therapist from the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, with current license or eligibility to be licensed in Illinois required.

**Experience:**

- Minimum of eight (8) years of professional experience in the field of Occupational Therapy, including:
  - Clinical practice experience as an occupational therapist;
  - Administrative experience including, but not limited to, program planning and implementation, personnel management, evaluation, and budgeting;
  - Relevant teaching and/or research scholarship;
  - Understanding the role of the occupational therapy assistant; and
  - Four (4) years of experience as a faculty member with teaching responsibilities at the postsecondary level.
- Management experience in a college, university, or academic post-secondary institution strongly preferred.
- Knowledge of the ACOTE Standards and accreditation process for Occupational Therapy programs.

**Skills and Abilities:**

- Visionary leadership and interpersonal skills.
- Excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service.
- Ability to build partnerships within and outside the program.

**Commitment to Community and Service:**

- A strong commitment to serving the community and fostering student success.

*This is a full-time, 12-month faculty appointment and all applicants must be available to report in person at NLU's Chicago Campus.*

**NLU Inclusion Statement:**

National Louis University is deeply committed to serving its community, advancing access and equity, and ensuring that all individuals are welcomed and valued. We are dedicated to fostering a culture where diversity, equity, and inclusion remain at the core of who we are. These are more than just words to us: they are truly a way of life for the NLU community. We recognize that differences in abilities, age, ethnicity, gender (identity and expression), race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and background bring richness to our work environment. We affirm diverse perspectives, innovative contributions, and authentic presentations of self from every member within the NLU community. We believe inclusion is grounded in the actions we intentionally take each day. Our goal is to inspire and empower NLU employees and community members to cultivate an environment where we collectively focus on uplifting and advancing our institutional culture.

**Compensation and Benefits:**

At National Louis University, we offer our employees an innovative environment to work together and inspire ideas that will make an impact. As our external environment changes, our employees are provided with the opportunities and tools needed to grow both personally and professionally to remain successful. NLU employees and dependents are offered a wide range of benefits, including but not limited to, health insurance benefits, retirement benefits, paid time off and Educational Opportunities.

The salary range for this position is \$120,000-\$160,000. Offers are based on multiple factors permitted by law, including but not limited to: budgetary considerations, job-related knowledge/skills, experience, current/previous faculty rank, market considerations, tenure and standing with the university (applicable to current employees), and internal equity.





## ABOUT NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY

National Louis University (NLU) is looking to honor its past while defining a bold new future as a contemporary comprehensive university dedicated to preparing diverse students for sustained professional success. NLU is keen on providing a career-building, life-changing education that is accessible to all students. The University offers more than 80 undergraduate and graduate degree programs through six academic units: the Undergraduate College, Kendall College of Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management, the College of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, the National College of Education, the School of Business and Information Technology, and Accelerate U (the University's workforce development division). NLU is one of the most diverse universities in the Midwest, helping students of all ages and backgrounds achieve their personal and professional goals.

NLU is a teaching-focused and student-centered university committed to providing access to a far-reaching exceptional education that is market-aligned and cost-effective. The University offers programs at multiple locations and through various modalities including face-to-face, online, synchronous and remote learning in which courses can be supplemented with well-planned and meaningful on-campus experiences. The University has experienced unprecedented growth and currently serves nearly 13,000 students at four locations in Illinois and Florida.

Founded in 1886, National Louis University is a private not-for-profit university offering programs through the doctoral level. NLU is an HSI (Hispanic-Serving Institution) and MSI (Minority-Serving Institution) and is classified as an Engaged Institution by the Carnegie Foundation and has been named as a top ten institution by Money Magazine where its alumni believe they are making the world "a better place." The University has had more Golden Apple Award winners among its graduates in teacher preparation than any institution across the state. Students completing an undergraduate degree from NLU enter the workforce earning an estimated \$43,000 per year after graduation, ranking NLU among the top five of all Illinois post-secondary schools. The University has received more than \$65 million in funding for applied research projects in urban development, childhood development, school improvement, and teacher preparation. Recently, NLU was ranked in the top 20 in Washington Monthly for Universities that are working to make the world a better place. National Louis, accompanied by the major ivy leagues, was number four for social mobility and number two for best bang for your buck in the Midwest. NLU is recognized as a national leader in closing the post-secondary completion gap through its innovative approach to undergraduate education.

Located in the center of Chicago's downtown loop, across the street from the Art Institute, NLU is in an area that has been recognized as America's largest campus with over 25 institutions and 50,000 students attending a college across the city. To learn more about National Louis University visit <http://www.nl.edu>.

## Leadership

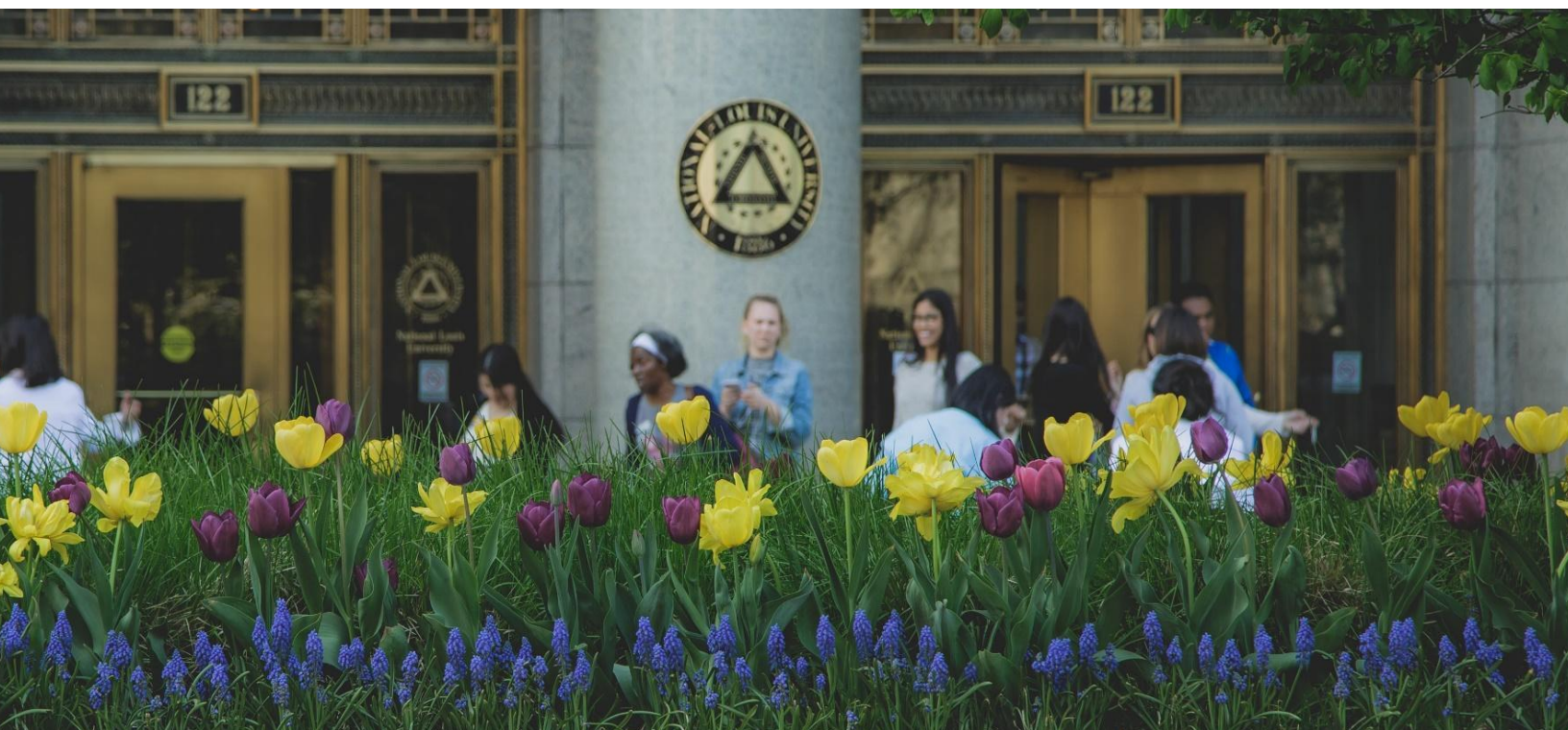
President Nivine Megahed became the eleventh president of National Louis University in March 2010. Dr. Megahed has over 30 years of experience making higher education more accessible for students of all backgrounds.

Under her leadership, the University has undergone a major transformation. Building on the success of the past decade, NLU recently completed its [2030 strategic plan](#). The plan continues to take the University on a bold path of innovation on behalf of its students and is built around five pillars with a central focus on advancing a diverse and equitable community with a culture of inclusion.

In the last 10 years, the University has undergone a significant transition, becoming increasingly data-informed, and efficient in its delivery of programming and services. New programs in high demand fields have been developed that have fueled enrollment growth. The University has re-envisioned undergraduate education and is committed to leading the effort to close the bachelor's degree attainment gap and serve all students affordably with quality programming. Blended and online modalities have been built to better serve adult students' needs for flexibility. The University completed the acquisition of Kendall College expanding its program offerings to include culinary and hospitality education and added new programs in the field of psychology and behavioral sciences over the last few years. It is now positioned to expand its impact with practitioner-focused programs.

Progress has been made in diversifying its faculty and staff. The University has also served as a catalyst for community transformation through its students and alumni focused on addressing some of the most pressing social issues such as violence prevention and prevention of human trafficking. The University set aggressive goals in improving student success, continuing enrollment growth, improving career readiness and employment outcomes, expanding its program portfolio, nurturing and retaining talent, and promoting positive community change and educational equity.

Today, NLU is viewed as one of the most innovative institutions in the country and has been dubbed as a model of the “new urban university” by the Gates Foundation. Committed to improving social mobility and economic opportunity, the University utilizes technology and innovation to continuously improve learning and outcomes for its students.







## PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY

Confidential review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position has been filled. Please submit a PDF version of your CV and a brief letter explaining your interest in and suitability for this position.

To apply online, go to <https://theapplicantmanager.com/jobs?pos=su460>

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

**Stephanie Rivas-Fowler**

Senior Consultant

Summit Search Solutions, Inc.

Direct: 480-213-7078

[srivasfowler@summitsearchsolutions.com](mailto:srivasfowler@summitsearchsolutions.com)

*National Louis University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer with a strong institutional commitment to the achievement of diversity among its faculty, staff, and students.*



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



# CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Few cities in the world can match the character and culture of Chicago. Visitors and residents alike find world-class dining, museums, entertainment, and striking architecture in the largest and most visited city in the Midwest.

Chicago is the third-most populous city in the United States, with approximately 2.7 million residents. The city is traversed by the Chicago and Calumet rivers, and with many parks and green spaces, the city offers stunning natural beauty along with an urban landscape. Lake Michigan offers a wonderful escape, and Chicagoans can stroll the shoreline, play volleyball, bike, or jog along the lakefront. The Chicago Park District consists of 552 parks with over 7,300 acres of municipal parkland. There are thirty-three sand beaches, two world-class conservatories, sixteen historic lagoons, and ten bird and wildlife gardens.

As a multicultural city that thrives on the harmony and diversity of its neighborhoods, Chicago embodies the values of America's heartland - integrity, hard work, and community - and reflects the ideals in the social fabric of its 77 distinct neighborhoods. Some popular communities to explore in Chicago include Greektown, Chinatown, Ukrainian Village, and Little Italy.



- Chicago has one of the most inclusive LGBTQ+ communities in the nation. It was named "**City of the Year**" by *GayCities.com*.
- *Condé Nast Traveler's* prestigious Readers' Choice Awards ranked Chicago first on their list of the **Best Cities in the United States: 2024** for an unprecedented eighth consecutive year.
- Chicago is recognized across the United States as a passionate sports town with professional teams such as Chicago Bears, Blackhawks, Bulls, Fire, Cubs, and White Sox.

The dining choices in the Chicago area are as diverse as the people are, and everything from ethnic food to contemporary and innovative dining can be found. The city is home to twenty-three Michelin-starred restaurants. *Saveur* magazine even dubbed Chicago "America's New Culinary Star."

Chicago has long been known for theatre, from big productions at landmark venues in Chicago's downtown Theatre District to experimental works at small storefront theaters in outlying neighborhoods. When it comes to music, there are live performances of every kind every night of the week, although jazz and blues have a special place in the city's cultural history.

Chicago is a travel hub, which means it is easy to get to and from anywhere in the country or the world. Chicago is served by Midway International Airport on the south side and O'Hare International Airport, the world's third busiest airport, on the far northwest side. Once one is in Chicago, there are many convenient options for getting around, from bike paths and L trains to buses and cabs.

For additional information on Chicago, please visit:

<http://www.choosechicago.com/>

<http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en.html>

