

David Johnston

March 15, 2025

Dr. Jennifer Sobanet
University of Colorado Colorado Springs
Office of the Chancellor, Main Hall 402
1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Re: Vice Chancellor for University Advancement, Communications, and Engagement - 36345

Chancellor Sobanet:

It is with honor that I write to formally submit my application for Vice Chancellor for University Advancement, Communications, and Engagement at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs. I believe my prior experience has uniquely prepared me for this role, including 20 years in alumni and donor engagement; brand stewardship and message development; talent development and executive-level team leadership at complex and decentralized public research institutions, including the University of Kansas and currently Boise State University.

I've been fortunate to successfully address new challenges and effectively lead change management processes while advancing my career purposefully at places closely aligned with my personal values of respect, inclusivity, collaboration, empowerment, trust and accountability. I am ready and excited for this important leadership opportunity at UCCS.

Specifically, I'd like to highlight three areas in which my prior experience would help strengthen and advance strategic outreach, resource development and engagement efforts.

Brand Marketing, Fundraising and Stakeholder Engagement – At the University of Kansas I served as its inaugural director of marketing, centralizing integrated marketing functions, conducting extensive market research and building the university's first institutional brand identity structure—including a new institutional logo—while contributing to the recruitment of KU's most talented and diverse enrollment in history.

I also participated in the readiness and development of multiple campaigns, including *KU First* (goal: \$500 million), *Far Above* (goal: \$1.2 billion) and the current campaign, *Ever Onward* (goal: \$2.5 billion). At Boise State, I've been part of our Advancement leadership team that conducted feasibility research and constructed a detailed roadmap for our most comprehensive campaign, *UNBRIDLED: The Campaign for Boise State University* (goal: \$500 million), which launched in October 2023, including responsibility for campaign naming, messaging and launch assets. Through careful planning and stewardship, we've raised 80% of our goal to date with three years remaining, already doubling the number of endowed faculty positions.

I've also helped lead significant organizational changes at Boise State designed to drive our new alumni and donor engagement strategy, including the evolution of our dues-based alumni association to an inclusive engagement model utilizing CASE alumni engagement metrics.

Team Leadership and Talent Development – Any success I've achieved has always been attributable to the team assembled around me, and I take great pride in their individual achievements while celebrating our collective success. This requires an intentional commitment to nurturing a strong and cohesive culture that empowers team members to do their best work, while strengthening alumni and donor relationships and collaborative alliances on campus, with board members and community partners. At Boise State, our team recently hosted our annual Volunteer Summit, a fun and immersive training retreat for those who carry the banner for the university across the state and in the community.

I'm also a believer in best practice learning, encouraging professional development on my teams and actively contributing at national conferences like CASE. We lean on a national network of industry friends and colleagues at peer institutions who challenge and inspire our work and advance our profession.

Authentic Executive Leadership – This high-profile leadership role requires a balance of both executive presence and approachability, and while I've been comfortable in leadership roles, it is only because I'm firmly grounded by my values and a clear understanding of my strengths AND weaknesses. My top 5 Gallup CliftonStrengths include Individualization and Relator, allowing me to meet others where they are and identify common ground for finding mutually beneficial outcomes. I enjoy connecting with others on a deep and personal level, whether speaking with one person or an entire community of constituents.

The state of Colorado has always been close to my heart as a destination for frequent family reunions and vacations with friends and relatives. In the past few years, we've made dozens of trips to Colorful Colorado for visits to Estes Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, Ft. Collins, Castle Rock, Littleton, Denver, Boulder, Winter Park, Vail and Colorado Springs. We genuinely love the area and could see ourselves settling into the community and calling it home.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and learn more about this significant opportunity—and its unique challenges—in Colorado Springs. Meantime, please let me know if I can provide anything more. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



David Johnston

