

AdventHealth University Selects the Expertise of HealthSearch Partners to Fill 5 Leadership and Faculty Positions



The searches: Provost, Dean of Nursing, Program Director of Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice program, Master of Healthcare Administration Faculty

The organization: AdventHealth University, Orlando, FL

Primary organization contacts: Jennifer Carpenter, JD, Human Resources Director, and Deena Slockett, EdD, RT(R)(M), Associate Provost

Senior HSP consultant: Ivan Bartolome, President & CEO, HealthSearch Partners

Selected candidates:

- Dr. Karen Benn Marshall, Provost, Chief Academic Officer, Senior Vice President
- Dr. Laura Fero, Dean of Nursing
- Dr. Karen Gomez, Assistant Dean, Program Director, Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice
- Dr. Holly Orozco, Associate Professor of Healthcare Administration
- Michael Merrigan, Associate Professor of Healthcare Administration

Challenge

Educating tomorrow's nurses and health care professionals continues to be a priority in the United States healthcare industry. Staffing challenges during the pandemic have highlighted the importance and need for qualified clinical professionals. Like all academic institutions, AdventHealth University has found itself responding to the increasing demand for its graduates while evaluating and adapting to the ever-changing knowledge and skills requirements for its leaders and faculty. In 2022 and 2023 AHU was faced with an opportunity to fill key positions – Provost, Dean of Nursing, Program Director for the Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia program and Master of Healthcare Administration faculty – to support and grow its programs.

Solution

The University's President was familiar with HealthSearch Partners (HSP) through a previous search experience. When a few key positions became available around the same time, he suggested to Deena Slockett, EdD, RT(R)(M), Associate Provost, and Jennifer Carpenter, JD, Human Resources Director, the University partner with HSP to quickly and adeptly search for top academic professionals.

"I didn't really have that much experience working with a search firm and I had never heard of HealthSearch Partners," Carpenter admits. "At first, I was hesitant because I thought they might come in and take over my area and give us candidates to consider without listening to us about our specific needs. But after meeting with them, I was immediately relieved, because I knew HSP was going to provide us with the expert help we needed at a time of growth and development for the University."

Carpenter says she was impressed with HSP's commitment to listening to the University's concerns, and thoroughly understanding its culture, mission, vision and values. After explaining what was important to the institution in terms of the character and expertise of the candidates the University was looking for, Carpenter says HSP was able to absorb the information and use it to narrow the field of candidates to extremely high-quality professionals who were an excellent fit.

"We were excited to work with an executive search firm that actually specializes in conducting searches for leaders and faculty for healthcare academic institutions," Carpenter says. "The candidates they brought us were not only able to do their jobs, but they fit in so well. It felt like these new hires had worked here for forever. They were well informed about the challenges they would encounter when they assumed their positions."

Carpenter says all the candidates placed by HSP have been up to those challenges. "It was such a stress reliever for me," Carpenter admits. "They were such good fits for the culture and the mission, and to me, those are the hardest things to find. You can look at a resume or CV with education and work experience, but that doesn't always tell you how the individual will fit into the organization. HSP did an excellent job of making sure the fit was exactly right."



AdventHealth University

Orlando, FL, Denver, Colo. and online

AdventHealth University (AHU), with campuses in Orlando, Florida, Denver, Colorado and online, specializes in allied health and nursing undergraduate and graduate education with an enrollment of more than 1,600 students. AHU offers Master's degrees in Healthcare Administration, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Spiritual Care and Physician Assistant Studies and Doctoral degrees in Physical Therapy, Nurse Anesthesia Practice and Nursing Practice. Baccalaureate degrees in biomedical sciences, health sciences, medical lab sciences, nuclear medicine technology and nursing are also available as are Associate of Science degrees in nursing, diagnostic medical sonography, health sciences, occupational therapy assistant, and radiography. AHU also offers nearly two dozen workforce development certificates.

Results

Over a short five-to-six-month period, HSP sourced and placed leaders and faculty who are adeptly leading and enhancing AdventHealth University's Nursing, DNAP and MHA programs. The Provost search was the last search conducted by HSP. "What I really appreciated was after we engaged HSP for the MHA search, we had other job openings become available," Carpenter explains. "HSP's response was immediate and positive because they already knew us, knew our culture, and knew our mission. All we had to do was explain each position to them and the type of candidate we were looking for and they took it from there. I was amazed they were able to turn the searches around so quickly."

"AdventHealth University is grateful to HealthSearch Partners for connecting us with outstanding educational leaders over the last 12 months," said Dr. Slockett. "Candidates come to us well-suited for our mission and academic rigor and are passionate about inspiring the next generation of health care workers."

"HSP made it so easy to for me, for the University, and for the candidates, and I definitely appreciate that," Carpenter says. "I would tell other healthcare academic institutions needing leaders or faculty that HealthSearch Partners is great at helping you find someone who is going to be the ideal fit for the job and for the institution. As a result, AdventHealth University saved time and money because the attention to fit means the chosen candidates are committed to long-term success."

Meet AdventHealth University's HSP Placements

Karen Benn Marshall | EdD, Provost | Chief Academic Officer | Senior Vice President

"I was familiar with HealthSearch Partners, having used them for searches at a previous employer. I kept in contact with them over the years and they would send me opportunities they were working on. I had been with my previous employer for several years, but I wasn't actively looking for a new opportunity. From the moment HSP made me aware of the Provost position with AHU, I appreciated their process, their focus on promptly responding to my questions and ongoing communication about the status of the search. I found their transparency to be helpful and something that differentiated them from other search firms with whom I've worked. When I read the job description and received more information about the University's expectations, I thought to myself these are all things I have done before and I have experience doing. I also knew some professionals who were currently employed by the University and from my first day, I found everyone to be so kind. AHU is a wonderful place. Working with HealthSearch Partners was an affirming experience. I felt valued and respected, so I knew I was the right fit for the University and for the position."



Laura Fero | PhD | RN | Dean of Nursing

"I knew I was ready for a change. I get emails every day about job opportunities. When I saw the Dean of Nursing position at AdventHealth University, it caught my attention. I liked the way the institution was described so I replied. Ivan with HSP was quick to respond. I really appreciated his personal approach and the way he represented the University and its culture. I immediately felt a connection. I appreciated his attention to detail, and he was able to answer my questions, especially about the organization's structure and its strategy about nursing education. I felt knowledgeable and prepared when I participated in the interviews. He was honest, and I trusted his perspective. This helped me better understand the strengths and opportunities I encountered when I started at AHU. I pursued the Dean of Nursing position for basically two reasons – AHU's faith-based mission and its marriage of the practice of health care with academics. It brought what I love doing together – nursing management and nursing education leadership."



Karen Gomez | DNP | APRN | CRNA | Assistant Dean | Program Director of Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice

"I was quietly looking for a new opportunity. There are only 132 schools of nurse anesthesia in the country. So, everyone in the industry knows when there is a leadership opening at one of them. I responded to a general email about the position at AHU. Almost immediately, Ivan contacted me and that opened a new door for me. He was efficient and I appreciated that. At the same time, he took a lot of time getting to know me and helping me understand the organization. HSP was transparent about the strengths and challenges I might face in my new role and that helped prepare me for my new responsibilities. The marriage of corporate medicine with healthcare academics really appealed to me. HSP did a great job of articulating AHU's mission and values and that resonated with me. I came into a program that was established and had achieved the highest accreditation possible. The entire institution - and the program I lead within it - is going through a promising transition and a period of development and growth. If I were trying to capture my experience working with HealthSearch Partners, I would say efficient communication with personalized attention. It was definitely a positive experience for me because they got to know me as an individual so they could match me with this wonderful opportunity."



Holly Orozco | PhD | Associate Professor of Healthcare Administration

"Ivan sent me the AHU-Healthcare Administration Faculty position announcement while I was working for another university. I wasn't looking for another job, but I wanted to work with other believers or work at a Christ-centered university. Ivan and Amy at HealthSearch Partners understood this was a big decision for me and that it would initially require a commute from where I was living. They encouraged me to continue praying about it and walked me through the process. I felt they did a very good job diligently seeking information from me and preparing me for the opportunity. Most importantly, they were aligned with me in faith 100 percent to continue seeking the Lord throughout the entire recruiting and hiring process. I would highly recommend them to any candidate or organization because they serve with excellence."



Michael Merrigan | Associate Professor of Healthcare Administration

"I enjoyed working with HealthSearch Partners during my hiring process. I have had the opportunity to work with search firms throughout my professional and academic careers and this was one of my best experiences. Ivan Bartolome and Amy King were very professional and very relatable at the same time. I always felt like I was treated with dignity and respect. They communicated on a timely basis through email and phone conversations. They did their best to answer my questions and provide me with some insights into AdventHealth University. They conducted themselves ethically throughout the process and I really appreciated that. They were thorough in their interviews with me and took their time getting through them. They painted a clear picture of the organization and the type of person they wanted for their faculty and students. I would highly recommend them for any future searches on behalf of the University."

