



Edward Waters University Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics

About Edward Waters University

Edward Waters University (EWU) is distinctively the state of Florida's first independent institution of higher learning as well as the state's first institution established for the education of African Americans. With a distinguished higher education lineage spanning more than 155 years, EWU is primed to continue its *Emerging Eminence* as a premier urban, private, Christian, historically Black, liberal arts university.

Offering a close-knit, collegial, and intellectual community, EWU prepares students holistically to advance in a global society through a rigorous, inclusive, and socially relevant liberal arts curriculum. The University provides both undergraduate and graduate degree programs, buttressed by comprehensive academic support services designed to foster high achievement and overall student success. Recent additions of graduate programs—particularly in business administration (MBA), public administration (MPA), Cybersecurity (MS), and Education Policy and Advocacy (MA)—have broadened EWU's academic reach and strengthened its reputation as a center for excellence and opportunity.

Under the leadership of President & CEO Dr. A. Zachary Faison, Jr., Edward Waters has become one of the fastest rising private HBCUs in America. The University recently reached a 20-year enrollment high of more than 1,200 students, launched a new strategic plan, secured long-term reaccreditation, and invested more than \$41 million in institutional infrastructure, including both academic and athletic facilities. Now in his eighth year as the longest serving President amongst Florida's four HBCU's, President Faison's recently renewed seven-year contract and his visible, student-centered leadership underscore EWU's stability, vision, and long-term trajectory.

Located in Jacksonville, EWU benefits from one of the nation's most dynamic cities. Jacksonville offers a unique blend of cultural richness, historic neighborhoods, thriving arts, creative coastal cuisine, and 22 miles of beaches. The city is also home to major league sports, including the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars, and has earned national recognition as one of the country's best value destinations. A central travel hub, Jacksonville provides easy access by land, sea, and air, with more than 30 U.S. cities offering non-stop flights to the region.

About EWU Athletics

Athletics is central to the Edward Waters experience, serving as a key driver of enrollment, campus life, and community engagement. Now a full member of NCAA Division II and the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC), EWU competes in a wide range of sports including football, basketball, baseball, softball, volleyball, track and field, soccer, golf, competitive cheerleading, and men's volleyball. Recent investments have transformed EWU Athletics into one of the rising programs in Division II. Highlights include the construction of a new football/soccer stadium, new arena enhancements, a wellness and training center, new tennis courts, new baseball field, and planned developments for softball, and track. The addition of men's volleyball, future hosting of NCAA championships, and SIAC postseason play have elevated the Tigers' national visibility. With nearly 400 student-athletes, EWU Athletics reflects the University's holistic mission: fostering academic excellence, personal development, and competitive achievement while contributing to institutional growth and community pride.

Position Overview

Reporting directly to the President & CEO, Dr. A. Zachary Faison, Jr., and serving as a member of his Cabinet, the Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics (VPIA) will provide superlative and strategic leadership, development, supervision, and operational management of the University's intercollegiate athletics program. The VPIA will work collaboratively with the President, as well as with Enrollment Management, Institutional Advancement, Development, Marketing, and Communications, to catalyze continued enrollment growth, elevate brand visibility, and secure high-level financial support for Tiger Athletics.

The VPIA will provide transformative leadership in the overall planning, development, and growth of the athletics program, while nurturing a strong commitment to the University's mission, values, and strategic priorities. Building upon the foundation of strong leaders who have served before them, the next VPIA will leverage Edward Waters' recent momentum and national recognition as one of the fastest rising private HBCUs to propel the program to new heights of competitive success, student achievement, and community engagement.

The VPIA will oversee and ensure sound fiscal management of all administrative, financial, fundraising, marketing, communications, recruitment, public relations, and compliance activities within athletics. This includes direct responsibility for the supervision of EWU's intercollegiate sports programs, student-athletes, coaches, administrative staff, and facilities. The VPIA will also serve as a visible ambassador for the University in Jacksonville and beyond, cultivating partnerships that strengthen both athletics and institutional advancement.

Central to the role is cultivating collaborative synergy with the university's divisions of Enrollment Management and Academic Affairs to drive quantifiable enrollment outcomes and academic success among student-athletes. In addition, and equally as critical, the VPIA must work at the advisement of the President and in tandem with Institutional Advancement to lead innovative fundraising strategies in support of athletics. The VPIA will ensure full compliance with NCAA Division II, SIAC, Title IX, and all applicable institutional and federal regulations, while modeling the highest standards of ethical leadership.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics (VPIA) will perform executive-level functions including (but not limited to) the following:

- Provide visionary leadership and strategic planning to advance EWU Athletics as a model of excellence aligned with the University's mission and strategic plan.
- Serve as a trusted cabinet-level thought partner, collaborating proactively with the President, fellow Vice Presidents, and institutional leaders to drive cross-campus initiatives.
- Champion the holistic development of student-athletes, prioritizing academic achievement, mental health, wellness, and personal growth alongside competitive success.
- Lead with servant leadership, fostering accountability, humility, empathy, and care in developing staff, coaches, and student-athletes.
- Develop an organizational culture of excellence, respect, and collaboration that values professionalism, integrity, and teamwork across all athletics programs, staff, and student-athletes.
- Ensure compliance with NCAA Division II, SIAC, Title IX, and institutional regulations while maintaining the highest standards of ethics and integrity.
- Strengthen organizational structures, policies, and processes to ensure operational clarity, transparency, and consistency.
- Recruit, mentor, and retain diverse and talented staff, providing professional development opportunities and fostering a culture of collaboration and excellence.
- Partner with Enrollment Management, Student Success, and Financial Aid to align athletics with recruitment, retention, and holistic student support strategies, assisting coaches with recruitment goals, student-athlete enrollment, and retention initiatives.
- Develop and execute transparent fundraising and revenue generation strategies, including annual giving, booster club engagement, corporate partnerships, and philanthropic support.
- Build strong external relationships across Jacksonville, the state of Florida, and nationally to enhance the Edward Waters brand, community visibility, and institutional partnerships.
- Leverage athletics facilities for broader institutional impact and community engagement, enhancing both game-day experiences and year-round use.
- Lead initiatives to modernize and innovate athletic programming, facilities, and operations, ensuring EWU Athletics maintains a competitive advantage.
- Implement data-driven approaches for tracking team performance, student-athlete academic success, enrollment, and departmental efficiency.
- Establish KPIs and performance benchmarks for athletics programs, staff, and student-athlete outcomes, reporting results to the President and Board of Trustees.
- Oversee emergency preparedness, risk management, and compliance strategies to protect student-athletes, staff, and institutional assets.
- Represent EWU Athletics with confidence, professionalism, and authenticity in regional and national forums, serving as the public face of the department.
- Support initiatives that enhance student-athlete retention and engagement, including mentorship programs, leadership development, and campus integration.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree strongly preferred.
- Minimum of five to seven years of progressive leadership experience in intercollegiate athletics administration, preferably at the NCAA Division II level or higher. Demonstrated success as a senior or mid-level higher education administrator is required.
- Proven track record of fundraising success, revenue generation, and community engagement. Experience expanding athletic branding, marketing, and communications efforts is highly desirable.
- High affinity and ability to work independently, coordinate multiple projects and meet deadlines.
- Proven record demonstrating the ability to take initiative to plan and execute.
- Expert-level knowledge of NCAA Division II intercollegiate athletics rules and regulations, with the ability to balance competitive excellence, academic priorities, and fiscal responsibility. Fluency with the NCAA Division II landscape and major issues/opportunities is required.
- Commitment to holistic student-athlete success and experience collaborating with faculty, academic services, and other university stakeholders.
- Experience working within an HBCU, small private university, or tuition-driven institutional model strongly preferred.
- Proven ability to build organizational infrastructure, clarify policies, and develop effective, high-performing teams. Ability to track projects, coordinate multiple initiatives, and execute plans independently.
- Exceptional interpersonal, written, and verbal communication skills. Ability to cultivate positive relationships and earn the trust of students, alumni, faculty, staff, community partners, and donors. Collaborative style with high energy, professionalism, discretion, judgment, diplomacy, and tact.
- High emotional intelligence, resilience, and authenticity, with the ability to inspire, motivate, and lead through change. Ability to deal with ambiguity and resolve conflict with diverse constituents.
- Demonstrates ability to perform duties with a high level of professionalism, flexibility, discretion, judgment, diplomacy and tact.
- Creativity, adaptability, and initiative to maximize resources, grow brand visibility, and advance the athletic program's mission.
- Prior experience with expanding Athletic branding, marketing, and communications efforts of an athletic program.
- Exceptionally strong interpersonal and written and oral communication skills are essentially required for this senior leadership position.
- Ability to develop and maintain good interpersonal relationships with all constituent groups including students, alumni, staff, faculty and others.
- A collaborative style and positively focused high energy.
- Strong ability to track and follow-up on projects, assignments, and initiatives.
- Ability to cultivate positive working relationships and gain the trust and respect of all levels of internal and external constituencies.
- A strong public service orientation to work well with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the community.

Application Process

Edward Waters University invites nominations and applications or expressions of interest to be submitted to the search firm assisting the University. Applications must include a cover letter, resume or curriculum vitae, and list of references. For full consideration, application materials should be submitted to Parker Executive Search's [website](#) by October 20th, 2025. Confidential review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made.

For additional information, please contact:

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