



University of Iowa Center for Advancement (UICA) Associate Vice President for Athletics Development

About the Position

The University of Iowa Center for Advancement (UICA) seeks a seasoned, collaborative, and strategic fundraising executive to serve as Associate Vice President for Athletics Development. Reporting to the Vice President for Main Campus Development and working in close partnership with the Athletics Director and senior athletics leadership, the AVP provides vision, leadership, and execution for a modern, integrated athletics development enterprise that drives transformational private support, strengthens alignment between Iowa Athletics and UICA, and advances institutional priorities.

As the senior leader for all philanthropic strategy, fundraising operations, and donor engagement in support of Iowa Athletics, the AVP operates at the intersection of advancement, athletics, and institutional strategy. The role leads an integrated team of 17 professionals across major and principal giving, annual giving, donor engagement, and events, aligning strategy and priorities to deliver a cohesive, donor-centered program that supports both near-term fundraising goals and long-term objectives.

The AVP is also a senior frontline fundraiser, personally cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding a portfolio of major and principal gift prospects, including some of the institution's most significant and complex donor relationships. Serving as a trusted strategic partner to Athletics and UICA leadership, the AVP advises on philanthropic strategy, campaign priorities, and engagement approaches that position Iowa Athletics for sustained success at a pivotal moment for collegiate athletics and philanthropy.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Executive Leadership and Strategy

- Provide vision, leadership, and direction for a comprehensive Athletics Development program encompassing major and principal gifts, annual giving, donor engagement, and events.
- Establish and execute a multi-year fundraising vision aligned with Athletics strategic priorities and campus-wide advancement goals.
- Serve as a senior leader within both UICA and Iowa Athletics, contributing to long-term visioning and financial sustainability by providing counsel on philanthropic strategy, campaign planning, and revenue diversification while advancing transformational funding opportunities.
- Leverage data, analytics, and market insight to inform revenue strategy, goal setting, performance management, and organizational planning.
- Ensure strong integration and alignment between Athletics Development and UICA advancement systems, policies, donor strategies, and best practices to support a unified, donor-centered approach.

Team Leadership and Talent Development

- Lead, mentor, and develop a high-performing, multi-functional Athletics Development team.
- Establish clear expectations, performance metrics, and goal-setting processes that support individual and team success and promote ongoing professional development.
- Foster a collaborative, results-driven culture grounded in professionalism, accountability, innovation, and service.

Partnership and Stakeholder Engagement

- Build deep trust and credibility across Iowa Athletics, UICA, campus leadership, and high-visibility donor communities, serving as a reliable problem solver and relationship builder.
- Serve as the primary connector between Iowa Athletics and UICA, coordinating fundraising strategy, donor engagement, marketing and communications efforts, and other shared priorities to ensure alignment and effective execution across organizations.
- Collaborate with external Athletics units—Ticket Operations and Sales, Marketing, and Strategic Communications—to ensure that premium and priority seating initiatives, as well as donor parking, align with and enhance the overall Athletics Development strategy.
- Partner with Hawkeye Sports Properties (HSP) on crossover accounts to optimize both philanthropic contributions and corporate sponsorship opportunities.
- Partner closely with coaches, senior administrators, and Athletics colleagues to support relationship-driven fundraising and prepare leaders for effective donor engagement.

Frontline Fundraising and Donor Strategy

- Personally manage a portfolio of principal- and major-gift prospects, modeling best practices in cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.
- Develop and advance complex gift strategies in collaboration with fundraising colleagues and cross-campus partners, engaging others meaningfully in donor strategy.
- Serve as a trusted philanthropic advisor to donors, aligning donor intent with Iowa Athletics' highest priorities and ensuring strong stewardship.

Travel and Donor Engagement Expectations

- This role requires extensive travel and a strong, visible presence with donors, alumni, and athletics stakeholders across Iowa, the Big Ten footprint, and nationally. The Associate Vice President will spend significant time traveling to engage high-capacity donors, cultivate and steward relationships, support athletics leadership and coaches in donor interactions, and represent Iowa Athletics and UICA at events, competitions, and cultivation opportunities. Evening and weekend work is expected, particularly in connection with athletics competitions, donor events, and high-touch engagement activities.

Desired Qualifications and Attributes

The successful candidate will bring a combination of deep fundraising expertise, leadership maturity, and relationship-building skill. Core attributes include:

- An experienced Athletics fundraiser with at least 10 years of management and leadership experience, ideally with a long track record of success in major, principal, and transformational giving and proven success closing complex gifts and working on ambitious campaigns.
- Demonstrated experience leading and building high-performing teams across multiple development functions (annual giving, major and principal gifts, events, engagement, and related areas).
- A strategic operator with experience shaping long-range plans, building or evolving fundraising programs, and using data and analytics to inform revenue strategy, goal setting, and organizational planning.
- A skilled manager of complex relationships, comfortable navigating and influencing multiple stakeholder groups across Athletics, UICA, campus leadership, and high-visibility donor communities.
- A collaborative, credible leader with exceptional communication skills and the ability to partner closely with coaches, senior administrators, and colleagues to advance shared priorities.
- A steady, confident frontline fundraiser capable of managing a principal-level portfolio while also serving as a strategic leader for the full Athletics Development operation.

- Exceptional cross-organizational influence and stakeholder leadership, with a demonstrated ability to build trust, communicate with clarity and intention, and align teams toward shared goals even when objectives, incentives, and timelines are not naturally aligned.

Education and Experience

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred.
- Minimum of 10 years of progressively responsible fundraising experience, including significant management responsibility.
- Experience in higher education and/or athletics fundraising strongly preferred.
- Willingness and ability to travel extensively and work evenings and weekends as required.

Application Process

UICA invites nominations and applications or expressions of interest to be submitted to the search firm assisting the Center for Advancement. 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 April 29, 2026. Confidential review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made. For additional information, please contact:

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