Dean | Position Profile
THE SEARCH

Northwestern University (Northwestern), a private research-intensive university, seeks a forward-thinking, collaborative, community-building leader to serve as the next dean of the Henry and Leigh Bienen School of Music (the Bienen School or the School). An award-winning school with a national and international reputation that is well-positioned for the future, the Bienen School combines conservatory-level training with the academic rigor of a top-tier R1 university. A Bienen education empowers students to develop informed and superb musicianship, a mastery of communication about and through music, and a commitment to excellence, all in a supportive and comprehensive environment that prepares them for success wherever their interests may lead.

Founded in 1895, the Bienen School is situated in the state-of-the-art Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Center for the Musical Arts (the Ryan Center), which opened in 2015. The School’s 130 full- and part-time faculty members are performers, scholars, and composers who serve 682 students — 425 undergraduates and 257 graduate students. Faculty and students alike bring diverse and wide-ranging interests from research to performance across all historical periods of Western classical music, jazz, and many other traditions. Students engage in numerous areas of study, including but not limited to, Brass, Composition & Music Technology, Conducting & Ensembles, Jazz Studies, Music Education, Music Theory & Cognition, Musicology, Percussion, Piano, Strings, Harp & Guitar, Voice & Opera, and Woodwinds. Unique to the Bienen School, roughly 70 percent of its undergraduate students are pursuing double majors or dual degrees at another school within Northwestern while simultaneously pursuing their Bienen degree.

The Bienen alumni community includes more than 17,000 graduates who hold positions as performers, administrators, academics, and educators in leading arts and educational institutions. They have won nine Grammy Awards in the past seven years alone.
Benefiting from the School’s existing assets, the next dean will help shape, drive, and implement new strategic priorities that seek to enhance research and scholarship within the performing arts, expand curricular offerings, and continue to develop a school culture that rewards excellence and innovation, and promotes collaboration and interdisciplinary efforts.

The successful candidate will join a community of faculty, students, staff, advisory board members, and alumni who are poised to partner with a new leader to articulate a vision of excellence that both respects tradition and inspires the entire Bienen community to achieve greater heights and pursue new directions. This leader will be passionate and enthusiastic, with the ability to lead, implement, and influence change. They will demonstrate unwavering dedication to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion and will prioritize building and maintaining strong relationships within and outside the Bienen community.

Northwestern has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national search firm, to assist in this search. All applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed in confidence to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

HENRY AND LEIGH BIENEN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Northwestern’s Bienen School of Music is one of the oldest degree-granting music schools in the United States. Its beginnings date to 1873, when the Northwestern Female College and the Evanston College for Ladies were incorporated into the Northwestern University Woman’s College. This new institution established the Conservatory of Music, and in 1891 Peter Christian Lutkin was named its director. In 1895 it became the School of Music, with Lutkin serving as its first dean.

In 2003, Toni-Marie Montgomery was named the School’s seventh dean, becoming Northwestern’s first African American dean and the first woman dean of the School of Music. Under her distinguished two-decade tenure, the Bienen School has enhanced its reputation and visibility in the U.S. and globally.
Today, the Bienen School embodies a distinctive combination of excellence in scholarship and the arts. The School has established two major international awards, the Michael Ludwig Nemmers Prize in Music Composition (2003) and Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in Piano Performance (2005); increased guest-artist residencies by internationally renowned performers; established the Institute for New Music in 2012; provided all Doctor of Musical Arts candidates with full-tuition scholarships; appointed the acclaimed Dover Quartet as the School’s first quartet-in-residence; and secured funding for a tour to Asia in 2018 by the Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra. Propelled by fundraising successes, 23 new endowed merit-aid scholarships and fellowships have recently been established to recruit outstanding music students. To further the School’s diversity, equity and inclusion goals, a Black Composers Showcase Series was established in 2021 as well as the introduction of a reconceived undergraduate musicology core curriculum that provides a more inclusive and diverse representation of music history.

The Bienen School is situated in the world-class Ryan Center for the Musical Arts, which opened in 2015. This 155,000-square-foot building, with its breathtaking views of Lake Michigan, houses three performance venues as well as faculty studios, administrative offices, classrooms, and rehearsal and practice spaces. The Bienen School is now comprised of three buildings which house five total performance venues (Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, Regenstein Hall of Music Master Classroom), forming a musical village on the southeast corner of Northwestern’s stunning Evanston campus.

The Bienen School, which hosts approximately 400 concerts and events each year, has an operating budget of $17 million, and an enrollment of 682 students — 425 undergraduates, 145 master’s students, 54 Doctor of Musical Arts candidates, and 58 PhD candidates. The School develops and champions scholar-musicians offering five dual-degree programs — Music & Liberal Arts, Music & Communication, Music & Education and Social Policy, Music & Engineering, and Music & Journalism—which afford undergraduate music students the opportunity to concurrently earn bachelor’s degrees from the Bienen School and a second Northwestern school. Bienen students can also earn a double major at another Northwestern school or an additional music major within the Bienen School. Seventy percent of Bienen undergraduates are pursuing a dual degree or double major at another school in addition to their studies at the Bienen School. The School is highly selective with 2,000 applicants for each year’s class of 200 students, and offers a student teacher ratio of nearly 1:3.

At the core of the Bienen School’s outstanding musical education is its world-class faculty of almost 130 performers, scholars, and composers who are recognized for their dedication to excellence and a passion for teaching. They include 32 tenure-line faculty, 97 non-tenure-eligible faculty of both full- and part-time status, and around 60 instructors, all of whom provide artistic assistance to the School across a variety of domains, including as collaborative pianists, chamber music coaches, and individual teachers within the music academy.

Bienen alumni hold positions as performers, administrators, academics, and educators in leading arts and educational institutions throughout the world. Their scholarly contributions through books, articles, research, new compositions, master classes, and presentations are noteworthy. Nationally, they are members of top orchestras, including the Atlanta, Boston, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit,
Houston, Minnesota, San Francisco, and St. Louis Symphony Orchestras, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, and wind ensembles from all branches of the U.S. Military, to name a few. Others conduct, sing, and play in concerts, recitals, operas, oratorios, and with choral ensembles. Recent PhD graduates fill tenure-line positions at the University of California-Riverside, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Arizona State University, Colby College, and Florida International University, among other institutions. Bienen alumni have won nine Grammy Awards since 2015. The Bienen alumni community’s more than 17,000 graduates live in all 50 U.S. states and 50 countries around the world.

THE ROLE OF THE DEAN:
OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

As chief executive and academic officer for the Bienen School of Music, the dean will develop a strategic vision for the School and lead its operations. The dean will oversee an annual budget of approximately $17 million and will be responsible for the full range of the Bienen School’s activities including: the curriculum and academic programs; faculty and personnel; financial management; student recruitment and career development; alumni engagement; facilities; community relations; and fundraising and resource development. Reporting to the provost, the dean will collaborate with senior academic and administrative leaders across Northwestern, including the deans of the other schools.

Direct reports include the assistant dean for Student Affairs; the assistant dean for Admissions, Financial Aid and Graduate Services; the associate dean for Administration, Finance and Planning; the director of Music Performance Graduate Studies; the director of Graduate Music Studies; the co-chairs of the
Department of Music Performance; the chair of the Department of Music Studies; the director of Concert Management; the senior communications coordinator; and the executive assistant to the dean.

By leveraging Northwestern’s global reputation and the Bienen School’s distinguished profile, this dean has a remarkable opportunity to chart the course for its next institutional chapter. The dean will ensure that the School has the faculty, staff, resources, and infrastructure necessary to take the Bienen School to new heights.

To accomplish this, the new dean will:

**Articulate and implement a vision that both respects tradition and inspires, energizes, and unites the Bienen School of Music community in support of the School’s long-term success.**

The richness, rigor, and distinctiveness of the Bienen School’s programs, along with the high caliber student body and eminent faculty, are recognized among schools of music. The School’s deep commitment to its legacy and traditions — a conservatory-level teaching practice alongside research-intensive music studies offerings — has long informed its success. The next dean will have a significant opportunity to introduce creative change, as the world of music education, training, and performance evolves to meet the needs of students, alumni, and the professional world.

The Bienen School is primed for a new dean to work closely with key Bienen constituents to articulate a vision that inspires the School to greater eminence, prioritizing the assets, qualities and programs that best demonstrate the Bienen School’s distinctiveness in an increasingly competitive artistic and academic landscape. Moving forward, the dean must galvanize the Bienen community, advance an ambitious set of strategic priorities that define the School’s next chapter, and broadcast a unified vision within the Bienen School, across Northwestern, and beyond.

**Continue to build excellence in artistry, scholarship, and research while leading the recruitment and retention of the next generation of world-class faculty.**

Given the unique positioning of the Bienen School, this dean must simultaneously focus on excellence in performance, scholarship, and research. Key opportunities for the new dean include securing support and developing systems to enable the breadth of the School’s activities, including investment in research infrastructure and new technology.

In addition to retaining the Bienen School’s long-standing cadre of world-class faculty, the dean will actively recruit the next generation of exceptional new faculty and will ensure that these additions are well supported in their scholarly and creative work and engaged in the life of the School. There is also an opportunity for the dean to identify ways to further enhance professional development of faculty and staff.
Ensure that the Bienen School’s curriculum and programmatic offerings continue to be of the highest quality, reflecting the needs of an ever-changing professional music world.

The next dean, like other deans at Northwestern, will have a great deal of agency in launching new initiatives and allocating resources. Priority areas will include curriculum, wellness, and recruitment, as the Bienen School aims to offer a compelling learning environment in which students thrive holistically while preparing rigorously for careers in the music profession.

The next dean will be expected to enhance educational excellence at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, while coupling innovative and creative programming with pioneering scholarship. This leader will continue to ensure that the Bienen School’s programs are preparing students to become accomplished performers, composers, scholars, and educators, as well as creative thinkers, entrepreneurs, and organizational leaders. With an eye towards a more diverse and inclusive musical landscape, and investment in entrepreneurship, career-readiness, and technology, the dean will encourage faculty to assess approaches to learning, scholarship, and performance that will accompany and build on the core programs of the School.

The key to success will be the dean’s ability to develop and grow new efforts and maintain a high-caliber faculty and staff with the skills and expertise needed for the future.

With respect to the co-curriculum, opportunities aimed at enhancing students’ social-emotional, intellectual, and professional development will be critical. A priority for the overall student experience at the Bienen School is aligning support resources for mental and physical wellness with the needs associated with performance-related training and education.

The next dean will work closely with faculty and staff in support of recruiting talented students. The School’s commitment to its legacy and traditions have long informed its successes, and opportunities exist as the worlds of music education, training, and performance continue to evolve; as diverse musical styles and genres attract student interest; as more attention has been placed on diversifying the curriculum for students; and as technology in music advances.

Continue to foster collaboration, transparency, and effective communication school-wide, along with advancing the values of diversity, equity and inclusion at the Bienen School of Music.

Consistent and effective school-wide community building, and communication are critical since faculty, students, and staff are spread across distinct artistic disciplines and academic programs. The incoming dean must have a desire to work internally by setting the tone and organizational culture for faculty, students, and staff; creating forums and interactions that will strengthen a shared sense of community; and ensuring that the School’s core constituents are apprised of and invited to contribute to strategic initiatives.
While key school-wide efforts have prioritized diversity, equity, and inclusion, there is significant opportunity for further engagement. This dean will advocate for, invest in, and advance the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all institutional areas and will hold the Bienen community accountable for making measurable progress. They will prioritize recruiting, retaining, and developing talented faculty, students, and staff who contribute to the overall diversity of the School, including those from historically marginalized groups, and the dean will invest in programs and resources to ensure that the Bienen School is welcoming and inclusive for all members of the campus community. In addition, in collaboration with the faculty and staff, the dean will lead the School in diversifying its curriculum and programming to expand the canon of classical music, ensuring that academic and artistic offerings represent the breadth of the present-day global music landscape.

**Ensure that administrative functions of the Bienen School of Music are best-in-class and well-coordinated to efficiently and effectively support faculty, students, staff, and alumni.**

Given the continuity of leadership over two decades, the next dean will have the opportunity to assess the School’s internal organization, whether that be examining existing protocols, policies, and administrative systems, or thinking through how to foster more operational efficiencies, or better utilizing technology. This dean will be able to consider the ideal administrative structure for implementing their vision and will work to establish best practices for regularly sharing key school-wide data and updates, leveraging the School’s assets, and fostering a sense of community among diverse constituents. There are complexities involved in the day-to-day management of a diverse school of music – constraints of space, of students’ time, of faculty and staff capacity; the dean should understand these challenges and bring necessary experience, energy, and resources to address them.

**Work closely with Northwestern’s provost and deans to promote more interdisciplinary collaboration between schools and across the University campus.**

Northwestern’s distinctive reputation for interdisciplinarity extends to the Bienen School, which offers faculty tremendous opportunities for interdisciplinary partnerships that span and, indeed, expand the spectrum of academic and artistic inquiry.

Working on behalf of Bienen faculty and in collaboration with the deans of Northwestern’s other schools, this dean will develop creative strategies for more fully integrating Bienen faculty within the greater Northwestern community. Along with promoting interdisciplinary scholarship, success in this regard will also include collaborative academic offerings that connect other Northwestern students to the Bienen School’s work.

**Engage with external constituents to promote the Bienen School of Music regionally, nationally, and globally.**

The incoming dean will continue to promote and champion the Bienen School and the performing arts across the Northwestern campus, the Evanston community, Chicago, and on the national and
international stage. This dean will be expected to serve as a successful spokesperson and advocate for the School and be an engaged university citizen and community member. To accomplish this, the next dean will develop, maintain, and leverage relationships, including with leaders across Northwestern, Bienen alumni, industry leaders, and nationally and internationally recognized artists and scholars. Ultimately, these relationships should serve to support the development of the Bienen community and would translate into new opportunities for supporting performance, learning, and scholarship for students, faculty, and staff. An area of special attention is deepening current ties and forging new ones with community and artistic organizations across Chicagoland, which boasts a vibrant musical scene that influences as well as attracts talent from around the world.

*Thoughtfully steward and grow the Bienen School of Music’s resources to support strategic priorities and its commitment to excellence.*

As a school within one of the nation’s top research universities, the Bienen School benefits from Northwestern’s institution-wide stewardship, and the University also empowers its deans to secure funding and resources to support their ambitions. The dean will be the School’s leading advocate who will cultivate and sustain relationships with prospective and current donors and present strategic opportunities for philanthropic impact through investment in student scholarships, faculty and academic programs, research infrastructure, and facilities to attract and retain talent.

**QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

The Bienen School of Music seeks a forward-thinking, creative, collaborative, community-building leader who will leverage the School’s traditions and strengths while embracing innovation and the exciting opportunities of 21st century music education that lie ahead. Candidates are expected to hold strong academic and/or artistic credentials, preferably including a terminal degree. While the search committee
understands that no single candidate will possess all the ideal qualifications, it seeks candidates who have demonstrated many of the following skills, experiences, and characteristics:

- Dedication to the intellectual mission of Northwestern and the Bienen School of Music as well as a deep commitment to excellence in the performance, research, teaching, and learning of music;

- A record of success in implementing a vision by building enthusiasm among diverse constituents and managing associated budgetary and organizational change in a sustainable fashion;

- A commitment to curricular innovation along with emerging technologies;

- Demonstrated support for traditional classical music, new music, and jazz;

- Experience recruiting and leading a diverse and talented group of musicians, educators, and staff who represent different musical disciplines, each with its own focus, knowledge, artistic processes, and methods;

- A passion for education and an understanding of the needs of students and academic professionals;

- The ability to create a strong sense of school-wide community that complements and supplements faculty and students’ identification with their performance and research specialties;

- A demonstrated commitment to proactively advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion within an organizational context;

- A track record of raising the public profile of an organization and connecting with donors, strategic partners, and representatives of the local, national, and international arts scene;

- A strong financial acumen and aptitude for allocating resources to sustain existing initiatives, launch new ones, and respond to unanticipated challenges;

- A creative, consultative, and entrepreneurial mindset with strong emotional intelligence, maturity, approachability, and a commitment to excellence.
Northwestern is a private institution founded in 1851 to serve the Northwest Territory, an area that now includes the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and parts of Minnesota.

The Northwestern campus sits on the traditional homelands of the people of the Council of Three Fires, the Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa, as well as the Menominee, Miami, and Ho-Chunk nations. The greater Chicago area was also a site of trade, travel, gathering, and healing for more than a dozen other Native tribes, linking the Great Lakes to some 100,000 tribal members in the state of Illinois.

Today, Northwestern strives for a level of preeminence achieved by only a handful of universities in the world. Its endowment stands at approximately $16 billion, placing Northwestern among the best endowed institutions. The University encourages innovation and the integration of experiences across many fields. This orientation positions the University well to lead higher education into the 21st century. Northwestern also offers an unusually broad range of substantive academic opportunities for an institution of its size. The combination of close inter-school cooperation and a distinctive academic calendar (the quarter system) enables students and faculty to tailor their education and research individually in innovative ways.

Northwestern is committed to supporting a diverse and inclusive campus community. The four intertwined strands of access, equity, enrichment, and well-being guide the focus of the institution’s work through the development and implementation of strategic equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives across the University.
A charter member of the Big Ten and the conference’s only private institution, Northwestern sponsors 19 intercollegiate athletic teams.

Northwestern’s 240-acre campus in Evanston, which houses the Bienen School, is located 12 miles north of downtown Chicago and provides opportunities for extensive collaborations with area institutions. A wide range of cultural and entertainment opportunities — outstanding museums, performing arts, recreation, and sports — are available to enrich the lives not only of students, faculty, and staff at the University, but also members of the greater Evanston and Chicago communities.

Located in the bustling Streeterville neighborhood, Northwestern’s Chicago campus houses a thriving academic and interdisciplinary research enterprise that spans most of the University’s academic disciplines, and it engages the city’s civic, social, and cultural institutions and also partners with medical affiliates like Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Shirley Ryan Ability Lab, and the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago.

Northwestern in Doha, Qatar (NU-Q), established in 2007, offers programs in journalism and communication. NU-Q seeks to train journalists and media professionals who will help bring the story of the Middle East to the wider world. NU-Q also offers students the opportunity to complete a certificate in Middle East Studies and a minor in media and politics.

**Academics**

Northwestern is a comprehensive research university that is deeply interdisciplinary across multiple schools and units. The University's rigorous yet empathetic academic environment provides a robust mixture of theory and practice with an emphasis on top-tier research, new knowledge, creative expression, and practical application.

Northwestern is one of only four top 10 U.S. universities also ranked in the top 20 in each of the five graduate education categories.

Northwestern has a broad array of [12 schools], all of which are highly ranked and recognized:

- Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences (1851)
- Feinberg School of Medicine (1859)
- Northwestern Pritzker School of Law (1859)
- Bienen School of Music (1895)
- School of Communication (1878)
- Kellogg School of Management (1908)
- McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science (1909)
- The Graduate School (1910)
• Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications (1921)
• School of Education and Social Policy (1926)
• School of Professional Studies (1933)
• Northwestern University in Qatar (2008)

Students

Undergraduates
As of the 2021-2022 academic year, Northwestern enrolled approximately 8,800 undergraduate students representing all 50 states and 105 countries. In that year’s entering class, students of color account for over 55% of the student body; 15% of students are the first in their families to attend college; 10% of students are international; and 95% graduated from high school in the top 10% of their class. With an acceptance rate of 7%, Northwestern is one of the most selective universities in the country. The University awarded more than $200 million in scholarships to undergraduate students in 2021-2022; 21% of undergraduate students are Pell grant eligible. A low student to faculty ratio of 6:1 reflects Northwestern’s commitment to an unparalleled learning environment where students build lifelong relationships.

Graduate and Professional Programs
Northwestern is home to ten world-class schools that offer graduate and professional degree programs. More than 14,000 graduate students are enrolled in 160+ graduate and professional programs. In The Graduate School (TGS), approximately 5,300 students are pursuing master’s and doctoral degrees in 110 programs representing fields as diverse as the life sciences, engineering, and the arts. For the 2021-22 academic year, TGS’s student population was 24% domestic underrepresented minority and 32% international.

University Leadership

President
Michael H. Schill began his tenure as the president of Northwestern in September 2022. Schill came to Northwestern from the University of Oregon, where he served as president since 2015 while holding a tenured faculty appointment in the University of Oregon School of Law. He previously served as the Dean and Harry N. Wyatt Professor of Law at the University of Chicago Law School and the Dean of the UCLA School of Law. He is a nationally recognized expert in property law, real estate, low-income housing and land use, and discrimination in the housing market.

Provost and Executive Vice President
Kathleen Hagerty assumed the role of provost in September 2020 after serving as associate provost for faculty during the 2019-20 academic year and previously as interim Dean of the Kellogg School of Management. She joined Kellogg more than 30 years ago and holds the First Chicago Professorship in
Finance. She has earned a reputation as an accomplished scholar and respected faculty leader, with vast experience attracting and retaining top faculty in an increasingly competitive market for academic talent

TO APPLY

All inquiries, nominations/referrals, and applications (including resume and letters of interest responding to the requirements outlined in the position profile) should be submitted via Isaacson, Miller’s website:

Rebecca Swartz, Partner
Karson Freeman, Associate
Stephanie Simon, Associate
Isaacson, Miller
http://www.imsearch.com/8838

Electronic submission of application is required.

Northwestern University is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer of all protected classes, including veterans and individuals with disabilities. Women, racial and ethnic minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans are encouraged to apply. As per Northwestern University policy, this position requires a criminal background check. Successful applicants will need to submit to a criminal background check prior to employment.