



Palo Alto University ^{1975 - 2025} 50 YEARS

Director of
Development

Hybrid – Palo Alto, CA | Spring
2026

Myra Briggs

Vice President, Executive Search
Development Guild

mbriggs@developmentguild.com

developmentguild.com

BOSTON | NEW YORK

*Palo Alto University seeks a dynamic, creative, and mission-driven
Director of Development*

About Palo Alto University



Palo Alto University (PAU) is a private, nonprofit university located in the heart of Silicon Valley with a singular focus on mental and behavioral health education. For five decades, PAU has been dedicated to addressing pressing and emerging challenges affecting individuals, organizations, and communities, preparing practitioners and scholars to meet the evolving needs of contemporary society. With an

enrollment of approximately 1,200 graduate students and a small cohort of undergraduate students, the University offers a comprehensive portfolio of bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and professional programs delivered through innovative online, hybrid, and residential modalities.

PAU is distinguished by faculty who are nationally and internationally recognized for their contributions to research, teaching, and clinical practice. Through rigorous academic preparation, applied research, and extensive hands-on clinical training, PAU equips students with the knowledge, skills, and professional judgment required for meaningful impact in the behavioral health fields. Together, these elements define PAU's mission-driven approach to education and its legacy of preparing confident, competent, and compassionate professionals who make a difference in the communities they serve.

For more information about Palo Alto University, please visit <https://paloaltou.edu>.

About the Position

Reports to: Vice President for Strategic Partnerships & University Relations

Location: Palo Alto, CA (Residential- 3 days a week on campus; additional days as needed)

Classification: Full-Time, Exempt

Salary Range: \$145-165K

Target Start Date: As soon as possible

The Director of Development serves as the University's senior fundraising leader and is responsible for strengthening and advancing a cohesive development function within the Strategic Partnerships & University Relations division.

Working within a collaborative advancement structure that brings together development, alumni relations, communications and engagement, government relations, and external partnerships, this role provides both strategic leadership and hands-on execution. The Director will design and implement a comprehensive fundraising strategy, enhance operational infrastructure, and deepen donor engagement in alignment with institutional priorities.

In close partnership with the Vice President, the President, Alumni Relations, Brand & Communications, and Finance, the Director will help cultivate a culture of philanthropy across the University, strengthen regional philanthropic relationships, and elevate the institution's ability to articulate its impact in the behavioral sciences and in preparing mental and behavioral health professionals to serve communities in need.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership & Program Development

- Design and implement a comprehensive development strategy aligned with institutional priorities and growth objectives.
- Establish and scale sustainable fundraising systems, processes, and workflows to support long-term advancement success.
- Integrate development activities across university stakeholders to ensure alignment, coordination, and shared accountability.
- Foster a collaborative culture of philanthropy in which cabinet members, faculty, alumni, and leadership serve as active ambassadors.



Major Gifts & Donor Engagement

- Develop and manage a portfolio of individual donors, cultivating and stewarding relationships across giving levels.
- Build personalized engagement strategies that reflect donor interests and align with university priorities.
- Partner with Alumni Relations to identify, qualify, and advance major gift prospects.
- Strengthen donor retention and long-term engagement through thoughtful stewardship and impact reporting.

Annual Giving & Philanthropic Campaigns

- Design and execute coordinated annual giving initiatives, leveraging digital, email, and targeted outreach strategies.
- Refine segmentation, messaging, and timing based on donor data and engagement insights.
- Expand recurring giving participation.

Corporate & Foundation Partnerships

- Identify and cultivate relationships with corporate and foundation partners aligned with the university's mission.
- Support proposal development, reporting, and stewardship activities in coordination with relevant campus stakeholders.
- Expand regional philanthropic visibility, particularly within the Bay Area, through strategic relationship building.

Infrastructure, Systems & Analytics

- Lead development operations, ensuring data integrity, reporting accuracy, and CRM optimization.

- Participate actively in system modernization efforts, including CRM migration and integration across external engagement platforms.
- Establish performance metrics and reporting dashboards to inform strategy and measure progress.
- Strengthen documentation, compliance practices, and internal processes to support operational excellence.



What Success Looks Like

In the first 12–18 months, the Director of Development will:

- Establish a coordinated and clearly defined development framework aligned across advancement functions.
- Strengthen donor pipeline development and portfolio management practices.
- Launch integrated annual giving initiatives with improved segmentation and engagement.
- Modernize reporting and workflow processes to support transparency and scalability.
- Deepen regional philanthropic relationships and expand the University's visibility within the Bay Area philanthropic community.

Key Qualifications

The ideal candidate is a strategic and entrepreneurial fundraising professional who thrives in a mission-driven, collaborative environment. This leader brings both the discipline to build infrastructure and the creativity to elevate institutional storytelling.

Qualifications include:

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred.
- 7–10 years of progressively responsible fundraising experience, preferably within higher education or mission-driven organizations.
- Demonstrated success managing major gifts and annual giving initiatives.
- Experience building or modernizing development systems, processes, or infrastructure in a lean environment.
- Strong technical proficiency with CRM systems; experience with HubSpot preferred.
- Demonstrated ability to analyze data and translate insights into strategic action.
- Established relationships within the Bay Area philanthropic community preferred.
- Exceptional communication skills with the ability to articulate impact and inspire engagement.
- Collaborative leadership style marked by emotional intelligence, partnership orientation, and comfort operating across diverse stakeholders.
- Dedicated to excellence in the behavioral sciences through education, research, and practice, to advance care for the human condition.

The Director of Development operates within a residential structure requiring presence on campus three days per week, with additional engagement as needed to support donor cultivation and University events.

EEOC Policy:

The University is an equal opportunity employer and is firmly committed to non-discrimination in its hiring and other employment practices and in the application of its personnel policies.

To express interest, please submit your cover letter and resume in confidence on our website:

<https://www.developmentguild.com/current-searches/director-of-development-at-palo-alto-university/>

SEARCH LEAD**Myra Briggs**

VICE PRESIDENT, EXECUTIVE SEARCH

mbriggs@developmentguild.com

About Development Guild DDI

For 45 years, Development Guild DDI has consulted to leaders across the nonprofit spectrum. We have successfully collaborated with more than 650 clients nationwide in the sectors of health & science, education, environment, the arts, and social justice. We are experts in executive search and fundraising and are at the forefront of delivering best practice in these services.

With each engagement, we work in teams tailored to a client's particular needs, providing sector-specific intelligence, cross-sector insight, and hands-on functional expertise. We combine our perspective on nonprofit leadership with our knowledge and experience in both fundraising and executive search. This distinct perspective enables us to deliver the most strategic and measurable impact.

