Executive Summary

Presented by:
Martin M. Baker
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Buffkin/Baker is a retained, executive search firm. The members of the firm have extensive backgrounds in retained executive search, collectively bringing some 150 years experience. The professional staff of the firm have conducted over 1,500 searches for a diverse corporate and non-profit clientele. Our searches include engagements for clients in many industrial, service, and non-profit sectors of the economy. Our higher education practice is one of the strongest in the country, having conducted over 500 searches for universities and colleges.


In 2016, the firm was ranked among the top 11 search firms in the country by *Forbes* Magazine, a ranking attributed to our receiving a "disproportionately high number of client recommendations."

We are a proud member of the AESC, the organization which sets the standards for quality and ethics in executive search and leadership consulting.
Through our global partnership, Panorama, we can respond effectively to the increasingly international demands of high level search in higher education. With sector expertise covering the globe, we are able to offer our clients the advantage of a global team of colleagues with a commitment to excellence and service. Our global presence and reach provides coverage across key higher education markets, including Australia, Europe, and the Far East.

In addition to the 500 searches Buffkin/Baker has conducted for colleges and universities in the United States, Panorama’s collective client base covers Australia’s Group of 8, French- and English-speaking Canada, UK’s Russell Group, and mainland Europe.

Below are some of our recent global clients in higher education.
Patrick Kenniff, Ph.D.
Consultant, Higher Education Practice, Canada

Patrick has been active in executive search since 1997. He co-founded Kenniff & Racine in 2003. His experience of the public and private sectors, as well as of organizational management and management team building, constitutes an important advantage in his practice. A significant amount of his practice is carrying out assignments for universities and non-profit organizations.

During a ten-year tenure as Rector and Vice- Chancellor of Concordia University, he played an active role in community affairs and the promotion of Montréal, notably as President of the successful celebrations organized to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the founding of Montréal in 1992. As Québec’s Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs from 1979 to 1984, he planned and oversaw the implementation of a number of important legislative reforms relating to the organization and operation of municipal institutions in the province.

Patrick graduated in law from Université Laval, is a member of the Québec Bar and holds a Ph.D. in Law from the London School of Economics.

Sean Davies, Ph.D.
Consultant, Higher Education Practice, Australia

During the last 12 years, Sean has led search assignments with most Australian universities, including those searches to recruit Vice Chancellors, Deans, Heads of School and Institute and Centre Directors.

He was previously with global executive search firm Egon Zehnder and earlier spent four years with the Boston Consulting Group advising Australian and international blue chip companies on a diverse range of management and strategic business issues.

Sean spent his early career as a Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne after completing a PhD in Molecular Biology and Genetics. He also holds an MBA from the Melbourne Business School.

Jennifer Barnes, Ph.D.
Consultant, Higher Education Practice, UK

Dr. Barnes has held leadership roles in higher education, business and the arts. From 2010 – 15 she was Pro-Vice-Chancellor, International Strategy and Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Cambridge, developing the University’s global engagement through strategic partnerships. From 2008 – 2012 she was President of Murray Edwards College, founded as New Hall, in the University of Cambridge. From 2005 – 2007, Dr. Barnes was BP’s first Global Director of Education, building partnerships with governments, universities, and industry. She currently serves as a member of the Advisory Board for Vestd, a high-tech company, as a Director of the University of Suffolk, and as a member of the International Board, University of Oman.

Jennifer has a BA from Smith College in the USA, attended the Britten International Opera School and was awarded her MMus from the Royal College of Music, and her Ph.D. from the University of London. She is an authority on the history of opera and media and has contributed to the field of neuroscience through research on the impact of pressure on performance.
Proactive Recruitment and Commitment to Diversity

One of the primary values we bring to any recruitment effort is the identification of and contact with successful men and women who might not under ordinary circumstances come to our clients’ attention and whose current success might preclude their seeing the need to look at another professional opportunity. Of the 500 searches we have conducted for universities and colleges, only two placements came as the result of that individual’s responding to an advertisement. Our firm has been enormously successful in the identification of women and minority candidates. The identification of under-represented individuals is one of the highest priorities of our firm, and we are pleased that we have very tangible results to confirm that commitment. We have a strong commitment to diversity and identifying not just underrepresented candidates, but individuals who would promote an inclusive, respectful, and welcoming environment across the University.
Buffkin/Baker, a retained executive search firm, is committed to the principles which have always been the hallmark of its practice: safeguarding the integrity of a thorough search process, respecting the value and importance of confidentiality, honoring the trust that our clients place in us, treating every prospective candidate with dignity, and adhering to the highest ethical standards.

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