



**BERKHEMER CLAYTON, INC.**  
RETAINED EXECUTIVE SEARCH



# Santa Clara University

**Director of Executive Communications  
Position Narrative**



## The Opportunity

This is a pivotal moment for [Santa Clara University](#). On July 1, 2022, Santa Clara University (SCU) welcomed [Julie Sullivan](#) as the University's 30th president. She is both the first layperson and first woman president in the University's 171-year history. With the support and leadership of President Sullivan, the University embarked on a comprehensive strategic planning process for a visionary strategic plan, [SCU: Impact 2028](#), which will be completed in February 2024 and expand the University's national and global preeminence

To help President Sullivan realize the goals of this plan, the University seeks a dynamic writer, strategic leader, and communications expert to serve as its next Director of Executive Communications. The successful candidate will be skilled across a range of executive writing and communications assignments, from formal speeches and message points, to statements, letters to the University community, video messages, blogs, and op-eds. They will have a track record of success developing communications for university presidents or other executive leaders, with an ability to reflect the leader's voice and leadership perspectives across a range of formats and channels in concise, clear, and compelling ways.

This executive will join a collegial team at an ideal and exciting time as President Sullivan develops and moves forward her leadership vision and strategic action agenda that will guide the University's investments and progress over the next several years. This is an exceptional opportunity for a proven leader to initiate positive change and make a lasting impact for one of the country's preeminent educational institutions.

## Commitment to Justice, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access and Belonging

Advancing inclusive excellence is a campus-wide goal reflected in Santa Clara University's Jesuit values and traditions. Inclusive excellence is the process of operationalizing justice, diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and belonging (JDEIAB) into all aspects of learning, working, and living at SCU.

Santa Clara University and Berkhemer Clayton, Inc. are committed to a process that values JDEIAB. We welcome all qualified candidates for consideration.

Santa Clara University is an equal opportunity/equal access/affirmative action employer fully committed to achieving a diverse workforce and complies with all Federal and California State laws, regulations, and executive orders regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action.

For more on the University's commitment to inclusion, please visit SCU's [Inclusive Excellence Division](#) and their [Office for Diversity and Inclusion](#). For a complete copy of Santa Clara University's equal opportunity and nondiscrimination policies, see <https://www.scu.edu/title-ix/policies-reports/>.

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**CONTACT: [BEN LAMBERT](#) OR [LINH DUONG](#)**



## Position Summary

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The Director of Executive Communications (Director) will provide leadership, guidance, and support to executive communications strategies and tactics for the President. The position will report jointly to the Chief of Staff (COS) and Vice President for University Marketing and Communications (VPUMC) to ensure the Director is fully integrated into the President's Office and the University Marketing and Communications (UMC) leadership team responsible for public relations, marketing, and executive communications. Working with members of the [President's Cabinet](#), the Director will have full access to the knowledge, relationships, and networks of university constituencies needed for the successful development of compelling leadership communications material for President Sullivan.

This Director will be tasked with helping to bring President Sullivan's vision and the University's strategic plans to life and communicating SCU's story and impressive trajectory to the nation, and world at large. This individual will manage a standard briefing process for approved appearances involving President Sullivan, and help ensure that support materials, such as video scripts and welcome remarks meet President Sullivan's stylistic and content information needs. The Director will also from time to time serve as a resource to the Executive Vice President and Provost for important leadership communications emanating from that office.

All of this shall be accomplished with a high level of professionalism and integrity, a transparent, team-oriented, collaborative and mentorship style, a demonstrated commitment to JDEIAB, a passion for the mission of SCU and a commitment to identifying and embracing opportunities for change that will move the University forward.

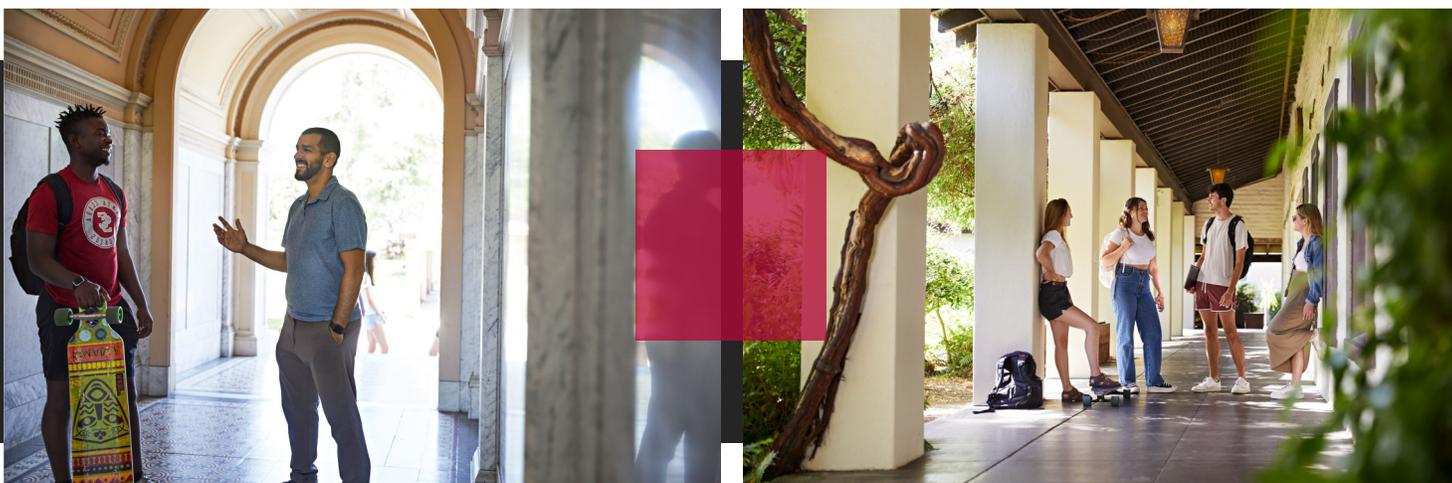
*Additional areas of responsibility will include, but are not limited to, the following:*

- Serve as the primary speechwriter and communications coordinator for the President in ways that build understanding and support for the President's leadership priorities and progress.
- Develop executive communications that reflect the President's voice, cadence, style, and accomplishments across a range of formats, settings, and channels, from formal speeches to message points, blogs, university and media statements, Op-eds, welcome remarks and more.
- Work closely with the VPUMC and other UMC marketing and communications leaders as part of a team with responsibilities for developing and implementing communications strategies that encompass President Sullivan's leadership positioning.
- Collaborate with COS and VPUMC to develop and implement a formal and consistent communications briefing process for units requesting the President's time for video messages, event remarks, news release quotes, and other related communications.
- Analyze and understand the audiences of key organizations where the President and other university leaders will speak; know the key issues and interests of those audiences; anticipate questions and concerns specific to each.
- Respond effectively to communication challenges and work closely with the COS and the VPUMC on sensitive campus issues involving the Office of the President.

## Position Summary (CONTINUED)

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- Help translate complex ideas and strategies into simple and cohesive communications that are visually appealing, tell a story, and are action oriented.
- Prioritize and expand efforts to center JDEIAB as they relate to SCU's mission, and intentionally apply a mission-centric lens to all decision-making and strategic planning within the University.
- Remain current on the relevant issues and trends affecting higher education that should be referenced or reflected in communications.
- Support UMC initiatives ensuring synergistic messaging and brand consistency.
- Conduct story-mining and use curiosity about what is happening inside and outside of SCU to determine the most important stories to tell.
- Translate the vision, themes, and dominant messages personified by the President such that SCU becomes better known for those brand themes and areas of expertise.
- Position and illuminate President Sullivan with subject-matter expertise as a thought leader and industry expert in articulating the significance and value of SCU and its vision.
- Develop and execute a plan for regular communications to key constituencies of the President, including alumni, parents, and community leaders, as well as the campus community of faculty, staff, and students.
- Work with University Relations teams including Donor Relations, Capital Campaign team, and University Events for messaging, speeches and other communications at events or meetings where the President is expected to speak or participate.



## Candidate Profile

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The successful candidate will be a skilled communicator and inclusive, collaborative, transparent, and action-oriented leader with the professional experience and leadership style to inspire respect for a common vision among diverse stakeholders throughout the SCU community. This leader will be an exceptional writer with the ability to write with purpose and engage and inspire diverse audiences. This executive will have demonstrated ability developing and executing successful executive communications plans and content, with 12 or more years of relevant marketing, communications, and/or media relations experience, writing for and providing strategic counsel to CEOs and senior executives from higher education, healthcare, political leadership, or corporations.

This executive will have a solution-oriented service approach with interpersonal, communication, organizational and decision-making skills to work effectively and thrive in an inclusive, highly collaborative, and consensus-driven environment. The ideal candidate will also have the values and a demonstrated record that allows them to build on SCU's deep commitment to JDEIAB, through actions that further these values. Current or prior experience in an educational environment would be helpful, but not required.

Santa Clara University seeks candidates with the following specific qualities, characteristics, experience, and degrees. Understanding that each candidate brings relative strengths and areas in need of improvement and that no single candidate will be equally strong in every area, we encourage all who are interested to apply.

### ***Professional Experience, Skill, and Ability***

- Proven experience in crafting speeches & message points covering leadership progress, ceremonial functions, formal events, and announcements, and providing support for thought leadership.
- Outstanding written, oral, listening, and interpersonal skills to serve as an enthusiastic, charismatic, and credible leader of executive communications and ambassador for the marketing and communications team.
- A clear, concise, and compelling writer with deep experience and success writing with intent for senior executives on a diverse range of topics and across all communications platforms.
- Demonstrated success working with senior executives, with the confidence, polish, and finesse to deal with VIPs, donors, and other community and industry luminaries.
- Experience in developing briefing strategies for executive communications, events, and engagements, such as press conferences, video shoots, and announcements.
- Success developing and implementing creative solutions to marketing and communications challenges, with expertise using a range of digital and traditional media channels.
- Excellent project management/organization leadership skills, the acumen to handle complex situations and multiple responsibilities simultaneously mixing long-term projects with the urgency of immediate demands; the agility and inclination to advance complex projects and solve problems collaboratively.
- Strong understanding and demonstrated track record of success utilizing technology to enhance marketing and communications initiatives, along with an appreciation for research and analytics and how data can inform and educate decision-making.



## Candidate Profile (CONTINUED)

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### *Personal Attributes*

- A creative, action-oriented leader, with proven success driving consensus and unified vision within an organization and translating broad goals into achievable steps.
- A humble, trustworthy, accountable leader, with a genuine interest, strong alignment, and commitment to Santa Clara University's Catholic identity and Jesuit educational mission.
- A forward-thinking outlook that embraces diversity, inclusivity, sustainability, technology, wellness, and a wide range of progressive strategies. A leader who considers issues of JDEIAB in decision-making and strategic planning and is mindful of biases in their own decision-making and in that of others within the organization.
- Exceptional deductive reasoning, critical thinking, analytic, strategic planning, and synthesis skills, with the intellectual curiosity and willingness to encourage and champion innovation, and the ability to generate buy-in and develop consensus and excitement for new ideas, while maintaining a sense of urgency and commitment to results to keep initiatives on track.
- A thoughtful listener, strategic thinker, and strong communicator with unquestionable integrity; poised under pressure with the ability to maintain a sense of humor in stressful situations.
- Strong interpersonal skills with proven ability to build and nurture meaningful, lasting relationships, and foster collaboration and support among diverse constituents across an organization, and to educate, inspire, influence, and motivate key audiences.
- The ability to navigate a highly collaborative and cross-functional environment and assimilate and coordinate multiple and diverse viewpoints into a unified narrative that captures the voice of an individual executive.
- An accessible, caring, facilitative leadership style, with the ability to mentor, inspire and empower others with respect and kindness; a commitment to transparency, collaboration, and fairness; and the ability to balance these with the needs for expediency, decisiveness, and accountability. Ability to demonstrate a strong sense of personal accountability and requires the same discipline from others.
- Progressive, data-driven marketing and communications mindset, with a firm grasp on trends and technologies, as well as the ability to effectively deploy these resources.
- A leader with the highest ethical and professional standards, as well as the ability to manage the most sensitive and challenging issues with tact, diplomacy, and discretion.
- A mission orientation to work in a higher education environment with an understanding and appreciation of student life.

## Education Requirements

Bachelor's degree in communications, marketing, advertising, journalism, business administration, or equivalent combination of relevant education and experience required. Advanced degree preferred. Bilingual or multilingual a plus.

## About Santa Clara University

[Santa Clara University](#) is a private Jesuit, Catholic University in the epicenter of Silicon Valley, infusing ethics and social consciousness into a rigorous cross-disciplinary education for its more than 9,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

In 2022, the University welcomed its first woman, lay president, [Julie Sullivan](#). In January 2024, President Sullivan will help the University celebrate the completion of a nine-year, \$1 billion campaign that has transformed the University through scholarships and new, cutting-edge learning facilities. She is also leading the University through a bold new five-year strategic plan, [Impact 2028](#), which will be completed in February 2024. The plan is focused especially on:

- Sustainability
- Affordable access to a Santa Clara education for all talented students
- Human-centered solutions to the world's most pressing issues
- Intercultural initiatives to expand learning, research, and service on a global scale
- A deep commitment to a culture of belonging and inclusion

Ranked among the top 15 percent of national universities and No. 13 for undergraduate teaching by U.S. News & World Report, SCU has among the best four-year graduation rates in the nation. PayScale has rated the University among the top 10 schools nationwide for salaries of its alumni five and 10 years after graduation. SCU has produced elite levels of Fulbright Scholars as well as four Rhodes Scholars. With undergraduate programs in arts and sciences, business, and engineering, and graduate programs in six disciplines, the curriculum blends high-tech innovation with social consciousness grounded in the tradition of Jesuit, Catholic education. SCU is home to 20 NCAA Division I programs, winning 60 West Coast Conference titles and three NCAA national championships across men's and women's sports. Our athletes have gone on to success at the highest level, winning Olympic gold medals, World Cups, NBA world championships, and two NBA MVP awards.

The University Marketing and Communications (UMC) Division is tasked with strategically communicating SCU's differentiation and brand across channels that include social media, web, earned media, the alumni magazine, and other digital and print platforms, as well as increasing the University's brand visibility, enhancing its reputation, and communicating its differentiation and value among our key audiences.



## Compensation

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The salary range is \$130,000 to \$150,000 annually. Final salary will be based on education, experience, skills relevant to the role and internal equity.

## Procedure For Confidential Candidacy

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Submit resumes or nominations, with assurance of confidentiality, to Berkhemer Clayton, Inc.:

Ben Lambert  
President  
Higher Education, Healthcare & Nonprofit Practice  
[ben@berkhemerclayton.com](mailto:ben@berkhemerclayton.com)

Linh Duong  
Senior Associate  
[linh@berkhemerclayton.com](mailto:linh@berkhemerclayton.com)

