

Position Profile

Chief Financial Officer/  
Vice President of Finance and Administration  
Alverno College

Milwaukee, Wisconsin



# About Alverno College

*Alverno College is deeply rooted in the Milwaukee community it calls home. At Alverno, you'll find a community that inspires, challenges, and supports its students throughout their academic journey.*

Founded in 1887, Alverno College (“Alverno”) is a four-year independent Catholic liberal arts college for women sponsored by the School Sisters of St. Francis, and Wisconsin’s first [Hispanic-Serving Institution](#). The College also offers a robust array of graduate and degree completion programs for women and men.

For more than 130 years, Alverno has been transforming lives with a powerful combination of liberal arts education and career preparation with an innovative and empowering educational model that includes non-graded assessment and an abilities-based approach to teaching and learning which has been studied by colleges and universities around the world.

With more than 17,000 alums worldwide, Alverno prepares undergraduate women and graduate women and men for lives of personal and professional distinction and meaningful engagement with the world. Alverno purposefully fosters an inclusive community based on our Catholic and Franciscan values that engages students in active and collaborative learning and fosters academic excellence.



Christy Brown, President of Alverno College

Alverno College welcomed Milwaukee native, Christy Brown, J.D. during the 2023 – 2024 academic year as its ninth president. Like many Alverno students, President Brown was a first-generation college student.

Brown’s passion is centered upon the unique strengths of Alverno’s [8 Abilities](#), the diversity of the student body, the Franciscan values that center on social justice and equity, and the dedication of faculty and staff.

Alverno’s mission and vision creates an organization that attracts purpose-driven students, faculty, staff, and professionals. The College enrolls approximately 525 undergraduates and 528 graduate students in its 29 majors and 19 graduate programs.

There are 196 full-time employees (40 full-time faculty and 153 full-time staff) plus 20 part-time/temporary staff, 195 adjunct faculty members and 100 student employees. The operating budget for Alverno is approximately \$35 million and the College’s assets total \$88 million.

During the summer of 2024, Alverno declared financial exigency as a proactive measure to restore financial stability and secure its financial future. As a result of the exigency declaration, Alverno underwent a substantial restructuring plan, which included reducing its undergraduate majors and graduate programs and reducing full-time faculty and staff positions.

Today, Alverno has demonstrated its promise of sustainability and its growth and success in the years ahead. Over the past year, Alverno has experienced a remarkable surge in philanthropic investment—a clear vote of confidence in our mission and our path toward long-term financial strength. In August 2024, the College received a transformative \$10 million gift from John and Tashia Morgridge through the TOSA Foundation, reinforcing their belief in Alverno’s enduring impact. Just months earlier, a \$1.5 million matching gift from anonymous donors catalyzed an extraordinary outpouring of support: more than 470 donors helped us meet — and exceed — the match two months ahead of schedule, generating over \$3 million in total gifts. This growing momentum continues. Most recently, Gwen and Rudy Godinez committed a \$1.1 million legacy gift in gratitude for the life-changing Telesis program, ensuring that future learners will benefit as they once did. Together, these acts of generosity signal a rising tide of confidence in Alverno’s mission and provide essential support as we build a financially sustainable future.

### **A Vital Asset to the Milwaukee Region**

Alverno serves undergraduate women whose academic and professional success are critical to their families' futures and the Milwaukee region’s many businesses and organizations. 66% of Alverno’s incoming undergraduate students are first-generation college students. Almost all full-time students receive scholarships or other forms of financial aid. For example, 62% of Alverno’s incoming undergraduate students are Pell Grant eligible compared to the national average of 34%. Nearly 60% of students represent racially or ethnically diverse groups. As of late 2023, more than 1,100 Alverno alums were employed by Milwaukee’s top companies and 70% of Alverno graduates live and work in Wisconsin.

In 2025, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Alverno College highest in the state in its “Strong Commitment to Teaching” category, the only Wisconsin college ranked in this category for 16 years in a row. Alverno was also recognized for its innovation and social mobility, which measures how well schools graduate students who receive Pell grants.

Learn more about Alverno College at [alverno.edu](https://alverno.edu)

## Mission Statement

Alverno College prepares women for lives of personal and professional distinction and meaningful engagement with the world. Alverno extends this mission by offering graduate and adult programs to women and men. Inspired by its Catholic, Franciscan, and liberal arts heritage, the College intentionally creates an inclusive community that engages students in active and collaborative learning and fosters academic excellence.

## Vision

To be the leading Catholic, Franciscan college inspiring passionate and principled leadership through transformational education.

## Alverno College At-a-Glance

56% of undergraduate students come from the city of Milwaukee.

Enrollment Range: 180-195

Students of Color: 59%

Acceptance Rate: 90%

Student-Teacher Ratio: 13-1

Average HS GPA: 3.01

# The Opportunity

Alverno College is seeking a Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of Finance and Administration (CFO/VP) who will be a strategic leader with a proven track record of financial management and business acumen. This executive role requires a talented, collaborative individual who can oversee Alverno's financial operations, drive fiscal strategy, and support the administrative functions that are critical to the College's success. This leader will bring a blend of technical competence, astute financial judgement, and disciplined execution to the table, ensuring that Alverno's financial systems, practices, and procedures are robust, yet agile enough to meet the challenges of a rapidly evolving higher education landscape.

The CFO/VP of Finance and Administration is a pivotal role that reports directly to the President; in this regard, they will serve as a key advisor, steering the financial and administrative functions of the organization towards operational excellence and helping to position the organization for sustainable growth. This executive leader will bring a deep command of core financial and accounting expertise while crafting strategic financial plans, ensuring robust financial reporting, and managing the organization's capital and budgeting processes. With a keen eye on the future, the CFO/VP will not only safeguard the financial integrity of the College but also drive and refine financial programs and initiatives that align with the President's vision and the College's long-term objectives.

Building upon a solid financial foundation and positive momentum, the CFO/VP will lead, develop, and manage a team of professionals including the Controller, the Director of Human Resources, and the Facilities manager, and their respective teams. In addition, the CFO/VP will oversee the wholly outsourced Information Technology function, including the Chief Information Technology Officer assigned to the College from our external technology partner. The CFO/VP and team will coordinate and oversee the financial functions of the College and work collaboratively with important partners including the cabinet members leading the Advancement Office, Academic Affairs, and Enrollment Services/Financial Aid. As staff liaison to the Finance and Audit committee of the Board of Trustees and an effective partner to the President, the CFO/VP will be committed to excellence, consistently providing strategic leadership and judgment using tools that ensure strong and effective governance. In addition, they will interpret and effectively communicate to the College leadership, board, faculty, and staff complex financial information and translate it into clear implications for the institutional strategies needed to ensure the future success of Alverno.

## **Key essential duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:**

### **Financial Leadership**

- Plan and oversee the annual operating and capital budgetary planning process, ensuring the appropriate level of executive team and board of trustee involvement.
- Ensure timeliness and accuracy of financial and management reporting data for federal funders, grantors, foundations, and the board of trustees.
- Prepare and present quarterly financial budgeting reports including forecast vs budget and cash flow. Plus, analyze monthly financial results and provide recommendations.
- Review and ensure application of appropriate internal controls, compliance, and financial procedures.
- Review all month and year-end reconciliation and closing procedures.

### **Strategic Leadership and Planning**

- Serve as a key participant and advisor in the strategic planning of the College, including as a member of the President's Cabinet.
- Conduct analyses of business opportunities, programs, and new partnerships and services that support the strategic vision; provide advice on the financial impact of both short-term and long-range planning.
- Assess and evaluate the financial performance of the College regarding long-term operational goals, budgets, financial risk, and forecasts.
- Provide leadership and management for budgeting, audit, tax, accounting, and insurance activities. Plus, engage with the board of trustees on matters of fiduciary responsibility.
- Enhance financial sophistication and capacity via recruiting, hiring, managing, and coaching staff of reporting departments.
- Develop and implement policies and procedures as deemed appropriate.

### **Administrative Leadership**

- Provide shared financial services and overall management of Human Resources, Technology Services, and other administrative functions that are high-quality and cost-efficient and that demonstrate administrative excellence. In addition, provide support in fundraising efforts.
- Oversee Facilities department including identification and assessment of campus-wide capital renewal and deferred maintenance needs.
- Negotiate contracts.

# Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate will have a record of successful and progressively responsible financial management, administrative, and business roles within small to medium-sized, complex organizations. The CFO/VP of Finance and Administration will bring a demonstrated record of success in building relationships and communicating with confidence across organizations with a variety of constituents. Preferred candidates will have that experience in a higher education setting, collaborating with all college constituents including College administration, staff, faculty, students, and external partners. In leading a team to manage the College's finances, the ideal candidate will utilize data, sound judgment, and an analytical mindset to navigate complex financial situations and develop proven, and innovative strategies for solving any issues that arise.

While no one candidate will have every experience outlined in the position description, the strongest candidates will display the following professional and personal qualities, skills, and characteristics:

## **A Commitment to the Mission of Alverno College**

The CFO/VP of Finance and Administration will bring an unquestionable passion for the educational mission of Alverno College. They will have an appreciation for working in partnership and service to a diverse community, treating others with respect regardless of race, ethnicity, age, education, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and physical and mental abilities. This leader will also have genuine interest in maintaining outstanding financial services relationships (including with banks, audit firms, and investment managers) and strategic alliances with vendors and business partners in the Greater Milwaukee area in service to the College. Relative to Alverno's principles and values, this individual will be someone who can be trusted without reservation with confidential information.

## **Financial Acumen and Stewardship**

The CFO/VP of Finance and Administration will bring financial rigor and in-depth knowledge of financial systems, accounting, and process improvement strategies. Approaches specific to higher education would be especially valuable. This leader will also bring demonstrated experience aligning financial functions with strategy and organizational goals, including a keen understanding of and appreciation for how to leverage technology to achieve efficiencies in financial operations across the entire organization. They will remain current on audit best practices as well as state, federal, and local laws regarding college operations. The ideal candidate will bring a comprehensive understanding of revenue management principles and philosophies in addition to using both quantitative and qualitative analytical skills, consistently providing proactive guidance and early warnings of negative trends.

## Operational and Strategic Leader

The CFO/VP of Finance and Administration will have an entrepreneurial spirit and a keen sense of opportunities for financial growth and sustainability and proactively take steps to mitigate organizational risk. They will also have an ability to think long-term, creating a vision that energizes others to commit and invest in Alverno College and its students. As a strategic partner to the President, they will be able to identify, develop, and execute analysis of business initiatives and program and/or service offerings. They will create, establish, and ensure financial objectives that align with the College's plan for short-term and long-term growth. A tactical executor, the CFO/VP will have strong attention to detail and a proven ability to work in close partnership with leaders throughout Alverno in continuously assessing and improving financial processes and operational efficiency.

## Enterprise-wide Collaborator

As a visible representative of Alverno in the Greater Milwaukee area, the CFO/VP of Finance and Administration must have the interpersonal skills to successfully interact with a wide range of internal and external constituents and potential partners. In addition, this leader will conceptualize and analyze problems and bring solutions in a constructive, collaborative manner geared towards helping the entire organization. In collaboration with the President, they will have the ability to advise in selection and engagement with auditors, investors, bankers, and consultants. The CFO/VP will also bring a track record of engagement and partnership with Human Resources, Financial Aid, and Advancement to ensure appropriate legal compliance. They will exhibit objectivity and openness to others' views, give and welcome feedback, contribute to building a positive team spirit, and put the success of Alverno above their own interests. The CFO/VP must demonstrate high emotional intelligence and embrace a proactive, open, and effective communication style.



**In addition, strong candidates will offer:**

- Ten or more years of progressive finance experience and management oversight.
- Previous experience in higher education administration, preferably in a private college environment.
- Sensitivity for and understanding of academic disciplines and issues preferred.
- Experience applying accounting/finance knowledge within an integrated reporting system.
- Strong project management and organizational skills with attention to detail and the ability to prioritize and manage multiple tasks/events on time and within budget.
- Extensive knowledge of accounting software, spreadsheets, and word processing software.
- Broad and deep knowledge of and experience with complex financial business models is required.
- Advanced experience with contract negotiation.
- CPA preferred and master's degree preferred.

*Alverno College is an Equal Opportunity Employer and committed to workplace diversity. Alverno College does not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, student, or applicant for admission on the basis of actual or perceived inclusion in a protected class or group. Alverno College seeks to comply with all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances prohibiting discrimination in private post-secondary education institutions.*





## Location, Compensation & Benefits

Milwaukee is a vibrant city on the western shore of Lake Michigan, about a 90-minute drive from Chicago. It is the largest city in Wisconsin, with a metropolitan population of approximately 1.8 million with nearly 200 distinct neighborhoods. Aside from the shore of Lake Michigan, Milwaukee's location is at the confluence of three rivers. The Milwaukee RiverWalk District, along the Milwaukee River, was formed in the 1990s and today, is a shining example of bringing life through commercial, residential, and entertainment accessibility to a downtown neighborhood. Milwaukee has earned the nickname "City of Festivals" hosting celebrations from cultural to holiday, music and film, and all things Milwaukee.

Abundant experiences in nature are available with over 150 state and county parks, 1,500 acres of beaches, and over 150 miles of bike trails. The opportunities to experience city life are endless with 30 museums, 11 major colleges and universities, more than 200 locally owned restaurants, and 8 professional sports teams, including the Milwaukee Bucks and the Milwaukee Brewers.

This is a full-time, on-site work environment. The successful candidate must be based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. As a senior leader of the organization, the flexibility to adapt schedules to meet business needs is necessary. Relocation support will be provided.

The annual salary for this role will be based on a range, starting at \$185,000- \$225,000 and will be commensurate with the successful candidate's skills and experience. Alverno College also offers a generous benefits package.

# Contact

DSG | Koya has been exclusively retained for this engagement, which is being led by Tiara D. Muse. Submit a compelling letter of interest and resume by [filling out our Talent Profile](#). All inquiries are strictly confidential.

DSG | Koya is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals living with disabilities. If you are a qualified individual living with a disability and need assistance expressing interest online, please email [NonprofitSearchOps@divsearch.com](mailto:NonprofitSearchOps@divsearch.com). If you are selected for an interview, you will receive additional information regarding how to request an accommodation for the interview process.

## About DSG | Koya

DSG | Koya, a DSG Global company, is the nation's premier search firm dedicated to mission-driven leadership. Since its founding in 2004, DSG | Koya has had an exclusive focus on mission-driven clients and was founded on the belief that the right leader can transform an organization and have a deep and measurable impact on our world. DSG | Koya works with nonprofits & NGOs, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

DSG Global is consistently recognized by Forbes on its top 10 list of "America's Best Executive Recruiting Firms" and is an industry leader in recruiting transformational leaders for a changing world. The firm is deliberately different in its approach, with best-in-class teams who have decades of experience in cultivating inclusive leaders, understanding the dimensions of diversity, and building equitable teams.

Learn more about DSG | Koya via the [firm's website](#).