

NOVEMBER 2024

VICE PRESIDENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS AND GENERAL COUNSEL

EXECUTIVE POSITION PROFILE

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

The Opportunity

Reporting directly to Kansas State's president, the vice president for legal affairs and general counsel is the principal legal officer for the university, with overall responsibility for the vision and leadership of the university's legal strategy.

A valued member of the leadership team and president's cabinet, the general counsel provides advice and counsel on all significant legal matters and serves as a strategic thought partner on key issues impacting the university. The general counsel also is responsible for leading and managing K-State's Office of the General Counsel, or OGC.

The OGC provides strategic, preventive and responsive legal advice and representation to the university and its leaders. Responsibilities include client counseling; legal research; internal dispute resolution; litigation before state and federal courts and regulatory agencies; policy review and development; contract review and negotiation; legal presentations and training seminars; and other duties concerning the array of legal issues arising in the context of higher education.

The OGC provides advice and representation to university administrators on topics including employment issues, nondiscrimination, constitutional rights, tort liability, public safety issues, crisis management, intellectual property, contracts, organizational governance, research, international activities, student issues, real estate, tax and other legal matters. The primary emphasis is on effective preventive law. The OGC strives to provide timely, thorough, accurate legal advice and strategic counseling with an absolute commitment to ethical conduct and exceptional client service to collaboratively solve and prevent problems.

For more information about the OGC, see www.k-state.edu/generalcounsel/.



Duties and responsibilities

Executive Leadership

- Serving as the University's chief legal officer and supervising the provision of all legal services to the University and its controlled entities.
- Serving as a senior advisor, strategic partner, and collaborative problem solver to the President and the Cabinet.
- Collaborating in the development and execution of university policies and initiatives.
- Assisting in assessing and mitigating business, compliance, and reputational risks.
- Serving as a reliable analyst and calming influence in the management and communication of campus crises and critical incidents.
- Contributing to fulfillment of the University's strategic plan, including development and implementation of the OGC's unit-level strategic plan.
- Collaborating with the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR), Office of the Attorney General, and counsel for other KBOR-related institutions to promote the University's strategic and legal interests.
- Collaborating with affiliated groups including Athletics, the KSU Foundation, and the Alumni Association to ensure alignment on interests and expectations.

OGC Leadership

- Leading the Office of General Counsel, including supervision, evaluation, development, hiring and other management duties regarding OGC attorneys, staff and other employees reporting to the General Counsel as applicable.
- Selecting, directing, and overseeing the work of outside counsel to obtain legal opinions or to handle claims, litigation or other matters.
- Managing the budget of the OGC and overseeing all other internal office operational matters.
- Conducting periodic staff meetings and consulting with OGC attorneys and staff to discuss pending legal issues and questions, which often involve complex analysis, research and strategic problem-solving.
- Delivering in-person, virtual, and written outreach and educational programs, activities, materials to maintain and enhance client awareness of legal issues and the role of the OGC and the services it provides, and to ensure positive client relationships in a collaborative, problem-solving environment.
- Fostering client service liaison relationships between OGC attorneys and the University colleges and major units.
- Providing opportunities for development and progressive responsibilities for all office personnel.

Legal Services

- Maintaining a portfolio of high-impact substantive legal matters, providing traditional, routine legal support and advice to University leaders and other clients.
- Delegating appropriate day-to-day matters to OGC attorneys while retaining responsibility for executive-level matters including discrete employment issues, high-priority transactions and policies, key litigation, and internal dispute resolution.
- With other attorneys in the OGC, assisting University leaders in reviewing, drafting, and modifying policies to ensure compliance with existing and evolving federal and state law and regulations.
- Serving as chief legal officer to the University's controlled entities, including K-State Athletics, Inc., the K-State Student Union Corporation, and others, and building and negotiating relationships with uncontrolled affiliates, including the Kansas State University Foundation and the K-State Alumni Association.

Qualifications and Skills

Minimum Qualifications

- A juris doctor degree from a law school accredited by the American Bar Association.
- At least 10 years of significant and broad-based legal experience.
- Membership in good standing with the Kansas Bar or membership in another U.S. jurisdiction with the ability to obtain Kansas licensure within one year of hire.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience managing attorneys spanning a wide range of legal expertise and selecting and managing outside counsel.
- A demonstrated track record in and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and promoting and supporting DEI efforts within an organization.
- Experience handling the legal issues facing land-grant universities, institutions with high research activity and/or Division I college athletics programs.

Personal Traits and Attributes

- A demonstrated commitment to excellence, intellectual curiosity, strong work ethic and integrity.
- Outstanding executive leadership skills with proven ability to support and counsel a large and complex organization with various constituencies.
- Enthusiasm for university life, and the confidence necessary to engage with high-level administrative and academic officials in a fast-paced setting.
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate effectively (both orally and in written form).
- Readiness to lead in a time of change; ability to bring out the best in each team member by consistently motivating, coaching and acknowledging contributions.
- Capacity to work proactively, collaboratively and as a member of a team, while empowering direct reports, emphasizing accountability and identifying opportunities for continuous improvement.
- Comfortability with change and the ability to pivot quickly as needs and priorities change.
- High ethical standards, a strong moral compass, integrity, courage and perseverance.



Search Process

Major, Lindsey & Africa is assisting Kansas State University with this search. All applications, nominations and inquiries should be directed to <https://careers.mlaglobal.com/us/en/job/206867/Vice-President-for-Legal-Affairs-and-General-Counsel>

Interested candidates should submit a resume in Microsoft Word format addressed to:

Deborah Ben-Canaan

*Partner and Global Practice Leader
In-House Counsel Recruiting*
dbencanaan@mlaglobal.com

Heather Fine

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Christina Tonioni

*Lead Search Coordinator,
In-House Counsel Recruiting*
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You will be required to complete additional documents to be considered for this position.

Please do not contact the university directly; all resumes sent to the university will be routed to Major Lindsey & Africa for handling and will create delays.

Upon acceptance of a written offer of employment, a candidate may be subject to a background check per [K-State's background check policy](#).

Applicants must be currently authorized to work in the United States at the time of employment.

Kansas State University is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, national origin, disability, or status as a protected veteran.

About the institution

Founded in 1863 as the nation's first operational land-grant university, Kansas State is a Tier 1 research university with more than 20,200 students, 1,300 faculty members, 3,000 staff members and three physical campuses: the main campus in Manhattan; the Kansas State Salina campus, home to aviation and technology programs; and K-State Olathe, which serves the industry and workforce needs of Greater Kansas City.

K-State has nine colleges, Graduate School and K-State Online and offers more than 400 degrees and options, from bachelor's to doctoral degrees. K-State Research and Extension also serves the citizenry with a presence in every county throughout Kansas and supports research in more than 20 K-State departments. K-State has an annual budget of more than \$900 million. K-State is known for the passion and pride of its alumni. With more than 200,000 living graduates, the K-State Alumni Association has been No.1 in the Big 12 for more than 25 years, based on the percentage of graduates who are members, and No. 4 among Power Five conferences. Private giving to the university is around \$200 million per year, and the KSU Foundation has an investment pool and endowment of more than \$950 million. The university and foundation recently completed a major fundraising campaign that raised \$1.6 billion. The Princeton Review recognizes the university as one of the nation's best colleges. Kansas State also has been designated as an Innovation and Economic Prosperity University by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and is recognized as a Carnegie Community Engaged Institution. Commonly referred to as K-State, the university is proud of its welcoming environment.





University Mission, Vision and Values

The mission of Kansas State University is to foster excellent teaching, research and service that develop the highly skilled and educated citizenry necessary to advancing the well-being of Kansas, the nation and the international community.

The vision of K-State is that to lead the nation as a next generation land-grant university - setting the standard for inspiring learning, creativity, discovery and engagement that positively impacts society and transforms lives in Kansas and around the world. The university Values and Principles of Community guide how the community lives out its mission. For more information about Kansas State, visit our University Profile.



Diversity and Inclusion

Kansas State University has a long, storied history of embracing diversity and inclusion as a core component of their educational mission.

As the nation's first operational land-grant, K-State has always admitted students without regard to race, gender, or creed. Their commitment to meeting the needs and interests of a diverse student body and preparing all constituents for meaningful engagement in an ever changing, diverse world is unwavering. They believe that diversity adds value to the educational fabric of their institution and students are encouraged to capitalize on the learning opportunities that differences can create. To learn more information about diversity and inclusion at K-State, please visit <https://www.k-state.edu/diversity-inclusion>.



The Community

Situated in the heart of northeast Kansas' scenic Flint Hills, Manhattan's 56,000 citizens enjoy a dynamic community with shopping, dining, entertainment, and nightlife. Manhattan is affectionately known as the "Little Apple," a nod to its East Coast namesake, but has a vibrant culture all its own.

Here is just a sampling of what residents look forward to year-round:

- Shopping, dining, and socializing in Aggieville, a local entertainment district with a fun, energetic vibe.
- A vibrant, revitalized downtown area with fine dining options and local boutiques.
- The Flint Hills Discovery Center, featuring exhibits about the beautiful surrounding region.
- Beautiful outdoor life at Sunset Zoo and The Gardens at Kansas State University.
- Recreation opportunities at the Konza Prairie, Tuttle Creek State Park, Linear Park Trail and more.
- The university's McCain Performance Series, which hosts acclaimed Broadway musicals, comedians, musicians, and other entertainers.
- Exciting Big 12 athletic events (faculty and staff are eligible for discounted tickets).
- Colbert Hills Golf Course, ranked as the top public golf course in Kansas.
- Excellent K-12 education. The local high school ranks among the top 5 percent of U.S. high schools, and the district is home to several Kansas Master Teachers.

Learn more about the Manhattan community at manhattan.org or madeformanhattan.org.





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