



The Council of  
Independent Colleges



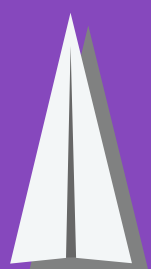
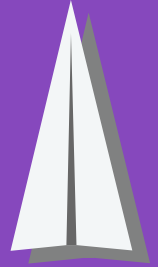
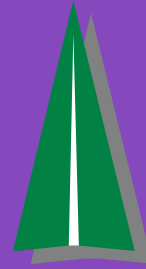
American Association  
of State Colleges and  
Universities  
Delivering America's Promise



AMERICAN ACADEMIC  
LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

# Executive Leadership Academy 2025–26

A leadership development program  
to prepare college and university  
vice presidents and cabinet-level  
officers for presidencies and other  
senior executive positions



OPENING SEMINAR:

June 16–17, 2025  
Washington, DC

CLOSING SEMINAR:

June 12–13, 2026  
Washington, DC

CIC NOMINATION DEADLINE:

Friday, January 24, 2025  
5:00 p.m. ET

[cic.edu/executiveleadershipacademy](https://cic.edu/executiveleadershipacademy)

# Executive Leadership Academy 2025–26

The Executive Leadership Academy (ELA) is a yearlong program cosponsored by the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC), the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), and the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI) to prepare experienced provosts and vice presidents to move to positions of greater responsibility, including presidencies. Participants will acquire knowledge, skills, and experiences germane to the responsibilities and activities central to the work of a president or other senior-level leader. The program assumes that participants will remain in their current positions throughout the program.



*“ELA has been a first-class experience. I have gained knowledge and skills to assist me in my current job and prepare me for my future. I met great people that are now friends and colleagues. These relationships will be critical as I move forward in my career. I am very thankful for this opportunity.”*

Debbie D'Anna

ELA 2022–23

Vice President for Student Success  
and Dean of Students  
Brevard College (NC)

## Developing the Next Generation of Presidents

The president’s role, as well as that of other senior administrators, has changed. It now requires an understanding of all aspects of the institution—from enrollment to endowment management and from governmental to alumni relations—not to mention inclusion and belonging, athletics, fundraising, marketing, student affairs, strategic planning, and financial management. The president’s necessary expertise also has expanded beyond institutional borders, to include regulatory and legislative issues and crisis communications. Further, it is more essential than ever that the pipeline of senior leaders prepares a diverse range of candidates from all backgrounds to succeed. ELA develops the wide-ranging skills that new presidents and senior executives will need to meet the challenges of today’s educational environment and serve today’s students.

## Program

The program consists of:

- Two seminars in Washington, DC, (**June 16–17, 2025**, and **June 12–13, 2026**) led by current and former presidents as well as specialists in key areas;
- A highly individualized Professional Experience Plan (PEP) designed to fill “gaps” in the participant’s expertise and experience;

- Mentorship by both the participant's current president and the program director;
- Individualized executive coaching;
- Peer-to-peer participant-led webinars, regional gatherings, and activities.

## Program Leadership

The program director is Javier Cevallos, president of AALI and president emeritus of Framingham State University (MA).

## Participants

Individuals currently serving in cabinet-level positions in any division of their institution are eligible to participate. Approximately 35 participants will be selected for the 2025–26 cohort—half from CIC member institutions and half from AASCU institutions.

## Costs

The program fee for the 2025–26 academic year is \$3,575. This fee includes all program costs as well as meals during the two seminars. The participants or their institutions are responsible for travel and lodging expenses.

## Fellowships Available

CIC is committed to preparing a diverse new generation of leaders to thrive on today's campuses. Nominators will be expected to explain how the candidacy of their nominee will support this goal. Through generous support from AALI and the Mellon Foundation, CIC is also able to provide a select number of fellowships to support this broad participation. All candidates will be considered for one of these fellowships.



*"ELA was the most impactful professional development experience of my career. Every meeting and webinar was focused on concrete skills and specific knowledge we need to be successful presidents. From day one, I knew I would have a supportive community of colleagues and mentors from across the country: something rare in this hypercompetitive world of higher ed. I am incredibly grateful for this opportunity."*

Manya Whitaker  
ELA 2023–24  
Interim President  
Colorado College (CO)



The ELA is supported by AALI and Academic Search.



*"The Executive Leadership Academy provided me with a realistic view of what the landscape is for incoming college presidents. The Academy provided me not only with a curriculum of important topics to consider for the future, but an extensive coterie of some of the top minds in the CIC to discuss their experiences in leadership. Further, having the opportunity to consider my path alongside other leaders on their own journey was helpful given the sometimes lonely space you can find yourself in as a leader. Remarkable, practical, and memorable experience."*

Shawn Daley  
ELA 2023–24  
Chief Strategy and Business  
Development Officer  
George Fox University (OR)

## Nomination Procedure

All nomination materials must be submitted on the CIC website at [cic.edu/executiveleadershipacademy](http://cic.edu/executiveleadershipacademy).

Nominations must come from the president to whom the nominee reports and indicate the president's commitment to serve during 2025–26 as a mentor. Individuals who wish to be nominated should discuss the opportunity with the president to request nomination.

The nomination packet should consist of the following items:

- A nomination form, available at [cic.edu/executiveleadershipacademy](http://cic.edu/executiveleadershipacademy);
- The nominee's curriculum vitae;
- A letter of nomination;
- A statement by the candidate explaining their interest in and potential for a presidency or other senior position in higher education.

See the website for full details about the nomination process:  
[cic.edu/executiveleadershipacademy](http://cic.edu/executiveleadershipacademy).

## Nomination Deadline

The nomination packet is due by **Friday, January 24, 2025, 5:00 p.m. ET**. Selection of participants will be announced by **Friday, March 7, 2025**.

## Questions?

For questions about the nomination process, contact Marina Esteve Wagstaff at [mwagstaff@cic.edu](mailto:mwagstaff@cic.edu) or (202) 552-8986. For questions about program content, contact Javier Cevallos, president, AALI, at [javier@americanali.org](mailto:javier@americanali.org) or (202) 263-7488.



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One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 320  
Washington, DC 20036-1142  
(202) 466-7230 • [cic.edu](http://cic.edu)