The Council of Independent Colleges

AAL AMERICAN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Senior Leadership Academy 2027–28

A leadership development program to prepare experienced administrators for provostships, vice presidencies, and other senior positions in independent higher education

OPENING SEMINAR:
November 5–6, 2027
Bellevue, WA

CLOSING SEMINAR:
June 6–7, 2028
Washington, DC

NOMINATION DEADLINE:
Friday, February 19, 2027
5:00 p.m. ET

cic.edu/sla

Senior Leadership Academy 2027–28

The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) and the American Academic Leadership Institute (AALI) are pleased to announce the 2027–28 Senior Leadership Academy (SLA), a yearlong program for experienced administrators whose next career move is a cabinet-level position in independent colleges or universities. Participants will acquire knowledge, skills, and experience germane to the responsibilities and activities central to the work of a vice president or cabinet officer.

"The opening and closing programs were my highlights, especially the opening—I felt as though I was being ushered into a new world, but a welcoming one. Both provided insights and information that were truly valuable, and I was able to meet a number of people with whom I was able to form some good connections. I think the program has prepared me to be a better senior leader than I might have been before."

Rachel Williams-Smith
SLA 2025–26
Dean of Journalism and Communication
Southern Adventist University (TN)

Leaders for a New Era

The SLA fills a gap in the current leadership pipeline by preparing talented leaders with the skills needed to advance to a senior leadership position on campus. The SLA also helps participants broaden their understanding of the higher education ecosystem and of the full range of leadership roles needed for institutional success.

Program

The program consists of:

- Two seminars—one in Bellevue, WA, **November 5–6, 2027**; and the other in Washington, DC, **June 6–7, 2028**—led by current presidents, vice presidents, and other senior leaders in higher education as well as experts in key areas;
- Readings in leadership theory and practice;
- A highly individualized Professional Experience Plan (PEP) designed to fill "gaps" in the participant's expertise and experience;
- Mentorship by both the participant's campus mentor and the program director;
- Individualized executive coaching throughout the program;
- Webinars, regional gatherings, book groups, campus visits, and other activities developed by participants.

Program Leadership

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

Participants

The program is intended for individuals who have been in their current role for at least two years, whose next position is in academic affairs, student affairs, finance and administration, enrollment management, or advancement, and whose current position might be assistant or associate provost, assistant or associate vice president, academic dean, or administrative director.

Approximately 40 participants from independent colleges and universities will be selected.

Costs

The individual program fee for the 2027–28 academic year is $3,455, which includes all program costs as well as meals during the two seminars. Participants or their institutions are responsible for travel and lodging expenses.

Fellowships Available

CIC is committed to preparing a new generation of leaders from varied backgrounds and perspectives 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, 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.

"Participating in the Senior Leadership Academy has been a truly transformative experience, one that has well prepared me for the next step in my administrative career. I grew in my perspective as a leader but also came to know and appreciate why I aspire to be the kind of leader I do, while appreciating and learning from other leadership models and approaches. This experience will sincerely impact me during the rest of my vocational life."

Bryan Zygmont
SLA 2025–26
Dean of the College of Liberal Arts
Mount St. Mary's University (MD)

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AS Academic Search

The SLA is generously supported by AALI and Academic Search.

"Participating in the SLA program this year was invaluable, ultimately helping to obtain a new role as vice president for academic affairs. Through shadowing senior leaders across higher education, I gained practical insights into board governance, institutional advancement, strategic leadership, and relationship building that prepared me for understanding both myself and the role that I was seeking. The program strengthened my leadership style by allowing me to gain insights from external feedback opportunities in safe places. A highlight was learning directly from experienced presidents, provosts, and vice presidents and seeing how they navigate complex institutional challenges."

Amie Anderson
SLA 2025–26
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Indiana Institute of Technology

Nomination Procedure

All nomination materials must be submitted as a single complete packet on the CIC website at *cic.edu/sla*.

Individuals who wish to participate should ask the president, provost, or a vice president of their current institution to submit the nomination. The nomination packet must consist of:

- A nomination form, available at *cic.edu/sla*;
- The nominee's curriculum vitae;
- A letter of nomination;
- A statement by the candidate explaining his or her interest in and potential for a senior administrative position.

See the website for full details about the nomination process: *cic.edu/sla*.

Nomination Deadline

The nomination packet is due by **Friday, February 19, 2027, 5:00 p.m. (ET)**. Selection of participants will be announced by **Friday, March 26, 2027**. Every year we receive more applications than we can accommodate, therefore we are unable to consider submissions received after the stated deadline.

Additional Information

For questions about the nomination process, contact Anthony Burton at ***aburton@cic.edu*** or (202) 519-3556.
For questions about program content, contact Javier Cevallos, president, AALI, at ***javier@americanali.org*** or (202) 263-7488.

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