

Willa Stevens

Vice President of Administration and Chief Financial Officer, Higher Education Finance

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STRENGTHS

- 📊 **Fiscal stewardship**
Reserve reviews and expenditure analysis gave presidents and trustees a clearer view of financial choices, risks, and timing.
- ♥ **Executive reporting**
Complex forecasts became concise board materials. One clear page often opened a better conversation about institutional priorities.
- 🔒 **Internal controls**
Audit documentation and purchasing reviews created steadier workflows, and colleagues sought practical guidance on sensitive issues.
- 👥 **Cross portfolio leadership**
Finance, facilities, technology, and auxiliary teams worked from shared plans. Progress came from connecting details others held apart.
- 🎯 **Strategic planning**
Capital, equipment, enrollment, and program data shaped realistic choices. Leaders gained confidence when assumptions stayed visible.

SKILLS

Budget planning

Expenditure control

Internal controls

Financial reporting

Risk management

Contract administration

Resource planning

Enterprise systems

Governmental accounting

Board communication

Strategic planning

SUMMARY

Senior **higher education finance** and administration executive with 16 years of post graduate experience, including more than nine years leading **finance, accounting**, budgeting, facilities, technology, auxiliary services, and public safety portfolios. CPA with a Master of Business Administration in Finance and extensive Ellucian Banner experience. Advises presidents, trustees, faculty leaders, public officials, and community partners through clear forecasts, reserve analyses, expenditure reporting, audit preparation, and scenario modeling. Has aligned operating and capital resources with strategic priorities, program evaluation, equipment replacement needs, institutional effectiveness, and enrollment conditions. Leadership experience includes governmental accounting, internal controls, contracts, risk management, insurance, construction financials, property control, space planning, and **public private partnerships**. Brings ethical stewardship, confidentiality, practical judgment, and collaborative decision making to complex public college environments.

EXPERIENCE

Vice President for Finance and Administration

Hudson Plains Community College 📅 July 2021 to Present 📍 Albany, New York

Leads finance and administrative operations for a public community college, integrating budget, accounting, facilities, technology, auxiliary services, public safety, and executive planning.

- Unified budget, accounting, facilities, technology, **auxiliary services**, and **public safety** planning for executive review.
- Advised presidents and trustees through forecasts, reserve analyses, expenditure reports, and scenario modeling for resource decisions.
- Strengthened audit readiness, **internal controls**, governmental accounting compliance, **insurance** reviews, and confidential risk reporting.
- Aligned capital, technology, equipment replacement, and operating plans with enrollment, program, and strategic priorities.
- Oversaw **facilities**, construction financials, property controls, space planning, and **food service** vendor partnerships.
- Translated complex financial issues for public officials, faculty leaders, community partners, and governing bodies.

Associate Vice President of Finance and Operations

Finger Lakes Technical College 📅 August 2017 to June 2021 📍 Syracuse, New York

Managed collegewide budgeting, financial planning, accounting operations, administrative reporting, contracts, and cross functional planning within a resource constrained public **higher education** setting.

- Built multiyear operating and capital models connecting **program evaluation**, staffing, equipment replacement, and facilities priorities.
- Strengthened audit documentation and internal controls across purchasing, contracts, **inventory**, and **financial reporting** workflows.
- Used Ellucian **Banner** and Excel to consolidate forecasts, expenditures, and budget data for board presentations.
- Evaluated vendor agreements and public private service arrangements for sustainability, service expectations, and institutional risk.
- Led finance, **information technology**, facilities, and academic planning sessions that resolved competing resource priorities.
- Improved administrative reporting by translating detailed financial conditions into concise executive recommendations.

Director of Budget and Financial Planning

Mohawk Valley Institute 📅 July 2013 to July 2017 📍 Utica, New York

Directed annual budget development, recurring forecasts, **financial evaluations**, reserve monitoring, capital planning, and board reporting for academic and administrative units.

Facilities planning Audit oversight

Program evaluation

Public partnerships

LANGUAGES

English Native

Spanish Beginner

MY CAREER

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MONTHS

- Directed annual budgets and recurring forecasts with clear assumptions, variance analysis, and unit level accountability.
- Evaluated academic programs through cost structures, enrollment scenarios, and resource requirements for investment decisions.
- Monitored reserves and operating trends, escalating fiscal risks with practical options for institutional stability.
- Produced board materials that converted detailed **accounting** information into concise, decision focused financial reports.
- Coordinated equipment replacement and capital planning with facilities and technology teams for long range visibility.
- Protected confidential financial and personnel information during policy updates, contract reviews, and audit requests.

Senior Financial Planning Manager

North Country University 📅 June 2010 to June 2013 📍 Binghamton, New York

Managed **financial planning and analysis** for academic and administrative portfolios, supporting annual budgets, in year decisions, reporting, and enterprise system improvements.

- Managed budgets and financial analysis for academic and administrative units during annual planning cycles.
- Developed Excel models for compensation, operating expenses, and capital needs across departmental submissions.
- Analyzed expenditure patterns and program costs, giving leaders evidence for resource tradeoffs and planning discussions.
- Supported year end close, audit schedules, internal control documentation, and **institutional financial reporting**.
- Prepared briefings that translated financial detail for senior administrators with varied technical backgrounds.
- Improved enterprise system reporting, reducing manual reconciliation and expanding access to planning data.

PROJECTS

Enterprise Budget and Resource Planning 📅 2021

A clear budget can change a difficult conversation. Consolidated Banner, Excel, reserve, expenditure, capital, and enrollment information into executive planning models for resource allocation and board review.

Campus Capital and Equipment Replacement Planning 📅 2019

Small asset decisions reveal larger institutional choices. Connected facilities, technology, equipment replacement, program needs, and available funding within multiyear capital planning.

LEADERSHIP & AWARDS

- CPA designation recognized for financial reporting, governmental accounting, and ethical professional practice.
- Executive Finance Council member supporting public higher education budget dialogue and shared administrative learning.
- Mentor for emerging higher education finance leaders, offering practical guidance on judgment, communication, and stewardship.

EDUCATION

Master of Business Administration in Finance

University at Albany 🎓 GPA: 0 📅 2010 📍 Albany, New York

Coursework: *Financial management, strategic planning, accounting, organizational leadership*

Bachelor of Science in Accounting

State University of New York at Geneseo 🎓 GPA: 0 📅 2008 📍 Geneseo, New York

Coursework: *Governmental accounting, auditing, taxation, financial reporting*

CERTIFICATIONS

- Certified Public Accountant, New York 📅 2012
- New York Certified Public Accountant License 📅 2012

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Enterprise Systems:** Ellucian Banner, PeopleSoft, Colleague
- **Financial Analysis:** Excel, forecasts, scenario modeling
- **Accounting Standards:** Governmental accounting, financial reporting, audit schedules
- **Budget Management:** Operating budgets, capital budgets, reserve analysis
- **Control and Compliance:** Internal controls, audit readiness, policy review
- **Risk and Insurance:** Risk reviews, insurance oversight, financial evaluations
- **Contract Management:** Vendor agreements, contract reviews, service arrangements
- **Capital Planning:** Equipment replacement, construction financials, infrastructure planning
- **Facilities Operations:** Physical plant, maintenance, space utilization
- **Administrative Services:** Information technology, auxiliary services, public safety
- **Executive Communication:** Board reporting, presidential advising, public presentations
- **Planning Methods:** Program evaluation, institutional effectiveness, strategic planning

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Executive Finance Council, Public Higher Education Administrators
- Mentor, Emerging Higher Education Finance Leaders

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Work Status : Authorized to work in United States. No sponsorship required.

REFERENCES

AVAILABLE ON REQUEST