



**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE INTERIM APPOINTMENT OF THE
VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS**

WHEREAS, the Vice President for Student Affairs serves as an executive officer and is the chief student personnel officer for the university. The Vice President for Student Affairs provides leadership for the division of student affairs and its major work units: provides guidance designed to support students' academic and personal success; serves as the dean of students; acts as the university's student ombudsperson; and works directly with the President, executive leadership team, and community leaders to enhance the mission of the university for the benefit of the students; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Student Affairs will be comprised of the following areas: the Office of Student Experience, the Office of the Dean of Students, and the Office of Counseling Services; and

WHEREAS, University Policy 3356-9-10, Acting/Interim Appointments of University Executive and Administrative Employees, requires that an interim appointment of an executive level officer be approved by the board of trustees; and

WHEREAS, Joy Polkabla Byers was appointed on February 1, 2021, as the Associate Vice President, Student Experience to serve as part of the senior leadership team of the Division of Student Affairs; provide visionary and strategic leadership for departments and programs; Manage, direct, and supervise activities designed to optimize student experience, including a holistic, multidisciplinary approach to student wellbeing; supervise and oversee selected contracted services; directly supervise and provide oversight for Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center, Auxiliary Services, Housing and Residence Life, Student Activities/Greek Life/SGA, and Veterans Affairs units; and

WHEREAS, Joy Polkabla Byers was appointed on July 16, 2019, as the Executive Director of Campus Recreation and Student Well-being, provides overall management of Campus Recreation, Club Sports, Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center, Veteran Affairs and Student Counseling Center; provides visionary and strategic leadership for holistic, multidisciplinary approach to student wellbeing; and

WHEREAS, Joy Polkabla Byers has uniquely specialized skills, knowledge and experience in Student Affairs to provide overall leadership, and positively contribute to the vision and strategic direction of the division of student affairs; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Youngstown State University does hereby approve the interim appointment of Joy Polkabla Byers as the Interim Vice President for Student Affairs, effective July 1, 2025, attached hereto.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

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Name:
Effective Date: 7/1/2025
Salary Range/Pay Rate: G13 Excl.
POSN: 999080
FTE: 1.0
Reviewed By: JLA/MM
FLSA Review: Exempt
Hiring Range: \$128,729 - \$140,000

Title: Interim Vice President, Student Affairs and Dean of Students/Ombudsperson

Department: Student Affairs

Summary of Position: Provides leadership and guidance designed to support students' academic and personal success and to achieve university goals and objectives. Acts as the university's student ombudsperson. As an executive officer of the university, maintains overall leadership for a particular division or unit. As university officials, each executive officer has the responsibility to represent the university and provide leadership in the specified areas of responsibility. Executive officers serve as primary advisors and the members of the president's cabinet. Serves as an integral part of the university's leadership team that is responsible for the overall direction of the institution. Serves as the primary leader for the assigned area or department. Vice presidents are responsible for a major administrative division; develops and articulates a clear vision for the assigned area, aligning with the university's overall strategic goals.

Oversees operations and provides leadership in an assigned area or department, including supervision of staff and implementation and administration of all programs and/or services. Assigned areas include but are not limited to: Student Experience, Dean of Students, and Counseling Services. Provides administrative direction and develops guidelines and processes in accordance with policies and procedures for lower-level employees, setting the overall direction and strategy of the organization. Creates, develops, and interprets regulations, policies, etc. for the guidance of other employees or the public. May serve as designee of supervisor (president, etc.) as needed and as assigned.

Position Information

Essential Functions and Responsibilities: Provides support and resources for individuals and groups to address conflict, issues, or concerns with the goal of effective problem resolution. Collaborates with other campus units and outside entities as needed; provides educational and outreach programs designed to foster a culture of respect, collaboration, and problem resolution.

Leads the coordination of the university's responses to major crises and other unusual events impacting students.

Ensures that behavioral concerns that may negatively affect the campus learning environment or potentially harm the health, welfare, and safety of members of the YSU community or the individual(s) exhibiting such behaviors, are appropriately addressed. Develops and implements programs to assist students who are struggling in any number of areas including emotional, intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, etc.; reaches out to students and provides them with available resources and assistance. Guides students and supports them in resolving a variety of different issues and conflicts which may be impacting their ability to succeed as a YSU student.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

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Drives collaboration across the organization; identifies needs and develops scalable solutions by working with various teams.

Prioritizes objectives and implements strategies; contributes to achieving university initiatives as part of the leadership team.

Deploys data and research; uses data-driven insights to drive cross-functional prioritization. Forms and leads internal teams.

Functions as a member of the executive leadership team: sets the overall direction and strategy of the university, makes major strategic decisions, evaluates the success of the university in reaching its goals.

Oversees the complete operation of an assigned unit, or set of units, in accordance with the direction established in the strategic plan. Evaluates the work of other administrators within the scope of the assigned unit, or set of units.

Builds and maintains relationships with partners, stakeholders, and the community.

Maintains awareness of both the external and internal competitive landscape, opportunities for growth, industry developments, and standards.

Provides strategic direction and oversight for all programs and initiatives. Ensures programs align with the organization's strategic goals and objectives. Evaluates program effectiveness and enacts changes for improvement.

Develops and implements the assigned area's long-term strategic goals and objectives. Leads the unit in achieving its mission and vision through strategic planning and execution. Oversees the development and implementation of organizational policies and procedures. Leads initiatives to improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

Identifies and pursues opportunities for organizational growth and expansion. Leads efforts to innovate and improve services and programs. Monitors industry trends and adapt strategies accordingly.

Leads multiple work units/departments or performs a functional university-wide service.

Directs daily tasks related to the full scope of a department's/division's overall programs and/or services.

Utilizes reports and other information/documentation in strategic, and regular, planning of the assigned area; prepares reports, recommendations, and other information/documentation to assist in strategic planning of the assigned area as well as university wide.

Reviews recommendations by lower-level staff regarding the assigned area's policies and procedures as it relates to completion of work and/or provision of services; prepares recommendations to supervisor regarding the assigned area's policies and procedures as it relates to completion of work and/or provision of services.

Develops and implements new departmental policies that align with university-wide strategic goals.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

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Leads initiatives that span multiple departments, serves as a primary decision-maker for cross-functional projects that impact areas beyond the position's direct oversight.

Provides oversight and strategic direction for multiple programs, initiatives, or objectives, including supervision of managers. Establishes priorities and goals for assigned areas; develops staffing plans; approves work plans developed by lower-level managers; develops and implements unit-wide policies and procedures.

Develops, implements, and evaluates policies and procedures for assigned areas. Interprets and adapts broader organizational policies to meet the specific needs of the department.

Participates directly in the strategic planning process for the department. Develops long-range plans, goals, and objectives for assigned areas aligned with broader organizational strategy.

Directs the overall planning, implementation, and evaluation of multiple program areas or a major department/division function with significant operational complexity and resource requirements.

Provides general oversight and administration of any assigned program, initiative, or objective, including supervision of staff. Assigns and reviews work; establishes timeframes for the completion of assigned tasks; trains and orients new employees; approves/disapproves requests for paid leaves; interviews candidates for employment and makes recommendations for hire; evaluates employee work performance; receives and responds to grievances; helps with the development of unit work procedures and policies.

Researches and makes recommendations to supervisor regarding assigned area's policies and procedures as it relates to completion of work and/or provision of services; administers regulations and/or policies.

Prepares reports and other information/documentation to assist the supervisor in strategic planning of the assigned area.

Manages daily tasks related to one or more assigned components of a department's/division's overall programs and/or services.

Other Functions and Responsibilities: Trains new hires.

Performs other duties as assigned and/or required that are within the level of responsibility for this classification at the discretion of the supervisor.

Equipment Operated: Computer and all other standard office equipment.

Work Schedule: Typically, Monday through Friday. Available to work evening and weekend hours as needed.

Supervision Exercised: Supervision is exercised over staff and student employees.

Reports to: President

Qualifications and Competencies

Required Certifications, Training, and/or Licensures: None

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge of: strategic planning process; policy administration; process improvement; supervisory techniques; university policies and procedures*; office practices and procedures; department/division goals and objectives*; department/division policies and procedures*; workplace safety practices and procedures*; English grammar and spelling; records management; office management; project management.

Skill in: use of office equipment; typing, data entry; computer operation; use of computer software and other programs applicable to the assigned department/division*.

Ability to: deal with problems involving several variables within familiar context; define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions; determine material and equipment needs; calculate fractions, decimals, and percentages; compile and prepare reports; use proper research methods to gather data; understand a variety of written and/or verbal communications; prepare accurate documentation; maintain records according to established procedures; effectively interact with personnel and public to answer routine questions; train or instruct others; move quickly and effectively from one task to another; work independently and in a team environment; develop and maintain effective working relationships.

(*) Developed after employment.

Minimum Qualifications: At least a bachelor's degree in a related field and at least eight years of related experience. At least five years of supervisory experience.

Preferred Qualifications: A master's degree.

Physical Requirements: In accordance with the U.S. Department of Labor physical demands strength ratings, this position will perform sedentary work.

Sedentary: work involves exerting up to 10 pounds of force occasionally or a negligible amount of force frequently to lift, carry, push, pull, or otherwise move objects, including the human body. Sedentary work involves sitting most of the time but may involve walking or standing for brief periods of time. Jobs may be defined as Sedentary when walking and standing are required only occasionally, and all other Sedentary criteria are met.

Joy Polkabila Byers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategic higher education executive with over 20 years of visionary leadership in student affairs, campus wellbeing, and institutional administration. Known for guiding cross-functional teams, developing meaningful campus experiences, managing multimillion-dollar auxiliary portfolios, and delivering transformational projects in student engagement. Proven track record in crisis leadership, policy implementation, strategic planning, and public-private partnerships. Deeply committed to student success, professional staff development, innovation, and community collaboration.

EDUCATION

University of Georgia – Athens, GA

Master of Education, Recreation and Leisure Studies

Emphasis: Recreation Administration

Ohio University – Athens, OH

Bachelor of Specialized Studies

Emphasis: Leisure and Music Programming for Special Populations

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Youngstown State University – Youngstown, OH

2005–Present

Associate Vice President, Student Experience

2021–Present

- Lead strategic direction for student engagement, well-being, campus recreation, auxiliary services, housing, student center, student activities/fraternity and sorority life/student government/student media, and veteran affairs.
- Oversee operational budgets and vendor contracts (e.g., dining, childcare, bookstore, health services, pouring rights, vending).
- Chair the Student Center Planning and Renovation Committees, aligning capital projects with institutional goals.
- Spearheaded campus-wide Hazing Prevention Program and international student housing strategy.
- Directed request for proposal for a new 15-year dining provider, integrating retail, catering, and residential services.

Executive Director, Campus Recreation and Student Well-being

2019–2021

- Provided visionary and strategic leadership for campus recreation, club sports, student wellness, veteran services, and student counseling.
- Allocated CARES/GEER funding for COVID-19 mental health services and campus operations; implemented campus safety protocols and communication strategies.
- Coordinated RFP process, selection, and oversight of campus childcare services.

Director, Campus Recreation

2011–2019

- Managed a \$2M+ budget for campus fitness and wellness programs across five major facilities.
- Supervised over 190 staff and student employees; emphasized workforce development and inclusion.
- Led facility operations, branding, marketing, and long-range program planning.
- Created revenue-enhancing services and implemented student needs assessments.
- Provided leadership in assessing the student and community needs for out-of-classroom experiences.
- Develops relationships between community agencies and organizations to promote and advance the interests of the university.
- Oversaw campus mobile application (YSU App) and onboarding of new departments and campus initiatives.
- Coordinated Division of Student Experience professional development opportunities.

Advisor, Student Programming Board

2006–2015

- Guided Penguin Productions in event planning, budgeting, and contract negotiation for major campus events.

Assistant Director, Programs & Special Events

2005–2011

- Oversaw professional staff and student employees across multiple program areas.
- Developed assessment tools to guide learning outcomes, strategic planning, and reporting.
- Managed programming budgets; oversaw and approved operating budget expenditures of \$750,000.
- Oversaw, created, and implemented student employee and professional staff development initiatives.
- Coordinated the department's academic internship program and co-curricular experiences.
- Responsible for consistent implementation and revision of policies governing programs and facility operations, health, safety, security issues, and risk management protocols.
- Directed grand opening of a \$12M recreation facility.

Kent State University – Kent, OH

2002–2005

Fitness Coordinator, Recreational Services

- Directed fitness programming, personal training, education, and budget management.
- Generated over \$50,000 annually in fitness-related revenue.
- Created internships and customized fitness education programs.
- Instructed training seminars and certification preparation classes
- Developed and implemented Wellness IQ study

University of Georgia – Athens, GA

2000–2002

Graduate Assistant Roles: Fitness & Wellness, Strength & Conditioning

- Supervised up to 60 student staff, developed training/incentive programs, and evaluated fitness engagement data.
 - Developed and implemented staff development series and incentive program
 - Developed and coordinated a patron survey on music preference while working out
 - Planned and coordinated special events - Sneak Preview (2000 & 2001) and Regional Fitness Expo
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CAMPUS & COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- **University Emergency Response Planning Committee**, 2024–Present
 - **Student Center Planning Committee (Co-Chair)**, 2021–Present
 - **IT Steering Committee**, 2021–Present
 - **COVID Leadership and Response Team**, 2020–2021
 - **Healthcare and Childcare Advisory Committee (Chair)**, 2019–Present
 - **Higher Learning Commission Review Team**, 2017–2018
 - **Student Affairs Professional Development Coordinator**, 2012–Present
 - **Campus Climate Committee**, 2012–2014
 - **Intercollegiate Athletic Council**, 2011–Present
 - **Community Advisory Board, Counseling and Special Education**, 2010–2022
 - **Student Conduct and Title XI Hearing Board**, 2009–2020
 - **Assessment Council**, 2009–2019
 - **Kent Wellness Advisory Board**, 2002–2005
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ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION

Youngstown State University

- HPES 4805: Programming Administration (2008–2017)
- Counseling 7026: Foundations of Student Affairs (2007–2011)
- Supervised Higher Education Internship Program (2008)

Kent State University

- Co-Instructor: Administration of Leisure Services, Wellness for College Life (2002–2003)
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PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- **NASPA** (2020–2024), **ACUI** (2021–Present)
 - **Ohio Recreation Sports Association (ORSA)**: Member (2000–Present), President (2007–2009), Host Coordinator (2011, 2016)
 - **National Intramural-Recreation Sports Association (NIRSA)**: Member (2000–Present), Committee member (2004–2018), Presenter (2002, 2011, 2016)
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HONORS & AWARDS

- ATHENA Award Nominee, 2022
 - Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, 2022
 - John J. Gocala Sr. Award, 2021
 - Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, 2022
 - KSU Alumni of the Year, Recreational Services, 2017
 - YSU Distinguished Service Award, 2015
 - ORSA Honor Award, 2011
 - Leadership Mahoning Valley Graduate, 2011
 - Gillespie-Painter Award, Student Affairs Division, 2010
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PRESENTATIONS (SELECTED)

- **"Campus Free Speech and Student Organizations"**, YSU Student Leadership Retreat, 2024
 - **"Years Worked, Promotion Earned"**, NIRSA National Conference, 2015
 - **"Student Affairs & IT Collaboration: There's an App for That"**, OHECC, 2018
 - **"Sock Puppets to Interpretive Dance"**, NIRSA National Conference, 2011
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COMMUNITY SERVICE (SELECTED)

- Advisor, Jackson Milton Livestock Club (2016–Present)
 - PTO, Western Reserve School District (2012–2024)
 - Coalition for a Drug-Free Mahoning Valley (2011–2023)
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TECHNOLOGY

- Microsoft Office Suite, Banner, StarRez, Maxient, Fusion, Ready Education, IMLeagues, Campus Groups, United Educators