



Matt McNair

Matt McNair is a dynamic, results-oriented leader with a distinguished career spanning law, government, higher education, fundraising, and economic and workforce development. Beginning his career in the U.S. Navy JAG Corps, he later served as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Southern District of California and as a General Partner at a venture capital firm based in Santiago, Chile. He practiced corporate and securities law before serving as Chief Deputy Attorney General for the State of Nebraska.

Matt then moved into higher education where he led fundraising for the University of Nebraska – Lincoln and the Ohio State University College of Engineering, where his teams raised more than \$1 billion and completed two comprehensive campaigns. Matt next served as Vice President of Economic and Corporate Engagement at Ohio State, where he had campus-wide responsibilities for corporate relations, economic development, and technology commercialization at one of the largest and most complex college campuses in the country. He also served as the President of the Ohio State Innovation Foundation, and his team drove growth in corporate-sponsored research, licensing revenue, and startup creation while working closely with state and local economic development partners. He then served as President of the Oregon Health & Science University Foundation, where his team completed a \$2 billion comprehensive campaign supporting medical research, education, and patient care.

Currently, as President of Cardinal Advisors, Matt consults with institutions like the University of Alabama, the University of Michigan, and Nicholls State University, forging strategic alliances that enhance research, sponsorships, and philanthropy. Matt is also the founder and CEO of TrustLab, a nonprofit using evidence-based methods to rebuild community-police trust, underscoring his commitment to social impact and criminal justice reform. Last year Matt served as interim CEO of the South Carolina Technical College System Foundation, where he focused on workforce development innovations to fill gaps in South Carolina's workforce.

Matt has deep governance experience, serving on boards such as the Ohio State Innovation Foundation, University of Nebraska – Lincoln Alumni Association, Nebraska Bank of Commerce, Lincoln Electric System, Oregon Health & Science University Foundation, Doernbecher Children's Hospital Foundation, and Invest Nebraska.

Matt has a BS in Business Administration from the University of Kansas and a JD from the University of Nebraska College of Law, and was recognized as a Midlands Business Journal 40 Under 40 recipient.

Matt McNair

February 14, 2025

Nevada System of Higher Education Chancellor Search Committee
Via Julie Holley, Greenwood Asher & Associates

Dear Search Committee Members,

I am pleased to apply for the position of Chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). With extensive experience in higher education leadership, strategic institutional growth, and public policy, I am eager to contribute to NSHE's mission of advancing student success, faculty excellence, and economic and community impact across Nevada.

NSHE has built a strong foundation in higher education, research, and workforce development. As a leader in university advancement, corporate engagement, and economic development, I understand how to position an institution for long-term success through strategic planning, multi-disciplinary collaboration, and financial stewardship. My career has spanned multiple senior leadership roles across academia, law, government, and philanthropy – each of which has prepared me to lead NSHE in the coming years.

LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

I believe the best university leaders possess the vision, strategic thinking, management skills, and political acumen needed to lead any large, complex organization, while embracing the unique culture and mission of academia. Over the past two decades, I have led and advised large universities in key areas such as fundraising, technology commercialization, and corporate relations. I have had campus-wide responsibilities at universities with significant athletics programs and medical centers.

As Vice President for Economic & Corporate Engagement at The Ohio State University, I led corporate partnerships, economic development, and technology commercialization. Under my leadership, Ohio State set new records in licensing revenue and startup creation, establishing the university as a national model for university-industry collaboration, evidenced by Ohio State's very strong record in corporate sponsored research.

As President of the Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) Foundation, I led an organization managing a \$1.1 billion endowment, and completed the \$2 billion ONWARD

campaign during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. I have extensive experience aligning institutional goals with state and national priorities, securing funding, and fostering public-private partnerships that enhance institutional sustainability and impact. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss how I would apply my experience and insights to provide stability to NSHE, maintain a strong financial foundation, and effectively implement the goals and directives of the Board.

GOVERNANCE, POLICY, & LEGAL EXPERTISE

Understanding and navigating the complexities of higher education governance is critical to the Chancellor role. I have reported directly to a governing board and several university and corporate advisory boards, successfully implementing strategies that align institutional priorities with stakeholder expectations.

My experience as Chief Deputy Attorney General of Nebraska gave me deep insight into state government operations, legislative processes, and legal affairs. I worked in the state capitol for five years, working closely with the Governor, his Chief of Staff, agency directors, and legislators, on a wide variety of legal and policy issues. I have also worked extensively with state and federal leaders to advocate for higher education funding, workforce development initiatives, and university research priorities. This experience will be of great value as NSHE navigates evolving policies affecting higher education. Recent announcements by the federal government that impact higher education highlight just how relevant my experience in law and politics will be as higher education leaders navigate a new and challenging environment.

COMMITMENT TO STUDENT & FACULTY SUCCESS

A university's most important mission is student success and faculty empowerment. I have created programs that enhance student engagement, workforce readiness, and career pathways such as internship and cooperative education initiatives that connect students with real-world opportunities.

I also understand the importance of faculty governance, academic freedom, and tenure, ensuring that universities foster environments where teaching, research, outreach, and innovation thrive. Strong faculty leadership is essential, and my experience in higher education has taught me that collaborative decision-making, multi-disciplinary research, and shared governance are powerful tools that enhance the impact of the university.

Universities are among the leading organizations that must provide a platform for free inquiry to ensure that the marketplace of ideas will continue advancing the human condition. Diversity of every kind should be valued in a university setting – racial, economic, political, ideological, etc. The best way to defeat bad ideas is with good ideas, and no person or group has a monopoly on

good ideas. I believe in using a growth mindset to ensure a culture of respect, professionalism, and belonging.

ALIGNING HIGHER EDUCATION, BUSINESS, & COMMUNITY NEEDS

Higher education plays a pivotal role in economic development. My leadership at institutions like The Ohio State University, the University of Nebraska, and Oregon Health & Science University has focused on bridging the gap between academia and industry to ensure that universities are producing the workforce and research that drive regional and national economies. These experiences have reinforced my belief that higher education should be responsive to student and industry needs—a vision that I would champion as NSHE Chancellor.

In my role as interim CEO of the South Carolina Technical College System Foundation, I learned a great deal about workforce training initiatives, particularly among underrepresented groups, and how to address labor market shortages and attract and retain businesses in the state. I believe NSHE has a unique opportunity to build on the impressive trajectory of economic and population growth that Nevada has experienced by designing coordinated strategies to deliver the workforce that the private sector needs.

The NSHE Chancellor will bring people together to agree on common goals and priorities, but not everyone will agree on the methods or resources needed to accomplish those goals. Bridge building skills will be critical for the new leader. I utilized many of these skills as an attorney and as a fundraiser. I learned profound lessons about bridge building when I founded TrustLab, a 501(c)3 with the mission to heal the relationship between police and marginalized communities. I have worked closely with the founder of Braver Angels and with the President of the National Unity Council in Rwanda, who have taught me a great deal about how to bridge divides. These same principles apply to any divide, whether red/blue, rural/urban, or any other.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF NSHE

The next NSHE Chancellor must be a unifying leader who brings together faculty, students, business leaders, policymakers, and communities, and projects strength and stability. I have spent my career strengthening partnerships and creating solutions by listening to understand, charting a course that accounts for the perspective of all interested parties, communicating clearly, and executing plans with transparency and accountability.

NSHE's *Success by Design* strategic plan lays out a clear vision for expanding access, enhancing student outcomes, and driving economic development. My experience improving student access to professional opportunities, implementing workforce development programs, making university research more accessible, and recruiting national and international companies directly aligns with these priorities.

If selected, I would focus on:

- Expanding student success initiatives that enhance workforce readiness and economic mobility.
- Strengthening faculty and research excellence through targeted investments and policy support.
- Enhancing corporate partnerships and public-private collaborations to drive NSHE's role in regional economic development.
- Advocating for NSHE at the state and national level, ensuring strong relationships with policymakers and funding agencies.

I am excited about the opportunity to serve as NSHE Chancellor, and I am confident that my experience, leadership, and commitment to higher education will bring value to the system and the state of Nevada.

I am eager to further discuss how my background and vision align with NSHE's mission and goals. Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to contribute to NSHE's continued success and growth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt McNair". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "M".

Matt McNair, JD

MATT McNAIR

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Former Navy JAG officer and Chief Deputy Attorney General turned leader in higher education with a specialty in fundraising, university/corporate relations, technology commercialization, and intellectual property. Holds a consistent record of exceeding stretch goals, building collaborative teams, and developing cultures of respect, accountability, and inclusion. An effective leader with a commitment to ethics, DEI, and achieving organizational goals through collaboration. Additional expertise includes dispute resolution, city, state, and federal government relations and legislative processes, economic development, public/private partnerships, public safety and community engagement.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Fundraising and Relationship Management
- Organizational & Culture Alignment
- Change Management
- Systems Design & Operations
- Strategic Planning & Implementation
- Team Growth & Development

CAREER

South Carolina Technical College System Foundation

Columbia, SC

Interim CEO

June 2024 - Dec 2024

- Served as the leader of a workforce innovation organization utilizing the SC Technical College System as the primary asset to meet the workforce needs of South Carolina
- Developed innovative programs to fill workforce gaps to help recruit and retain companies in South Carolina
- Programs under management include Create Opportunity (software programming), Tech 2 Teach (teachers), and Young Men of Color. All programs address workforce needs identified by corporate and government leaders statewide
- Worked with Board and System President to expand programs to campuses across the state

Cardinal Advisors

Portland, OR

CEO

2018-Present

- Transforming university and corporate relationships from transactional to strategic, resulting in increased revenue, longer lasting partnerships, and better aligned departments and team members
- Collaborating with university leaders, faculty and administration to conduct qualitative and quantitative research and data analysis, culminating in recommendations for more efficient operations and strategic partnerships
- Guiding and assisting university leaders in the implementation of enhanced corporate engagement and fundraising practices
- Creating a unified corporate engagement system in areas of philanthropy, sponsored research, athletics, procurement, and student opportunities
- Advising university corporate partners on accessing university resources more effectively by improving communication methods, aligning goals, mapping assets, and creating a culture of collaboration
- Serving as a consultant for BlueSky Collaborative Network, led team that created a proposal to the U.S. Department of Commerce to create Centers of Excellence at HBCU's under the CHIPS Act
- Serving as a consultant for the University-Industry Demonstration Partnership Collab, led sessions on University/Corporate partnerships and Innovation Centers at the 2024 KPMG Innovation Summit
- Clients include the University of Michigan, University of Alabama, Morehouse College, Cheyney University

OHSU Foundation

Portland, OR

President

Aug 2018-Oct 2021

- Led all aspects of the Oregon Health & Science University Foundation including Development, Donor Relations, Communications, Finance and Accounting, Advancement Services
- Managed team of 115 people at a legally distinct foundation supporting Oregon's only academic medical center and the state's top-rated hospital system
- Managed \$22 million annual budget
- Managed \$1.1 billion endowment in concert with Jasper Ridge Partners and a highly-sophisticated volunteer investment committee
- Transformed the organization following a period of high turnover and disruption to embrace a culture of excellence and accountability
- Successfully completed the \$2 billion ONWARD campaign in 2020 during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic

The Ohio State**Innovation Foundation**

Columbus, OH

President

Oct 2015-July 2018

- Served as the Intellectual Property Portfolio Manager of The Ohio State University
- Increased startup creation rate by 30% in three years
- Set record for licensing revenue by creating a monetization strategy utilizing favorable terms and patent prosecution
- Led investment decisions including internal & external funds investment, licensing, & start-up venture creation

The Ohio State**University**

Columbus, OH

Vice President,*Economic & Corporate Engagement*

Oct 2015-July 2018

- Led The Ohio State University's first centralized corporate relations office, requiring strategic coordination of academic and administrative leaders across campus
- Created and recruited members for the External Advisory Board of Fortune 500 partners (Ford, GE Health, P&G, AbbVie) to build best-in-class customer service
- Led economic development efforts by serving as the liaison for Jobs Ohio, Columbus 2020, and other state and regional economic development organizations to demonstrate university capabilities and resources to attract corporate partners to Ohio
- Set all-time highs for technology commercialization performance - licensing revenue (23% above previous record) and invention disclosures (15% above previous record)
- Developed a new operations model for licensing managers to provide top-tier customer service to corporate licensees and entrepreneurs
- Served as OSU's campus leader to engage Smart Columbus, the Smart Cities effort to spend \$50 million in grants from the U.S. Dept. of Transportation and Vulcan to integrate technology solutions throughout the city

Chief Advancement Officer

College of Engineering

Oct 2012-Oct 2015

- Led College efforts in fundraising, communications, alumni relations, government relations, and economic development
- Exceeded campaign goal by raising \$399 million (goal \$350 million)
- Led College of Engineering to become top fundraising unit on campus for the first time
- Increased annual fundraising total by nearly 50%

Adjunct Professor

College of Engineering

2015

- Professor for ENGR 4891 Non-technical Skills/Emotional Intelligence for Engineers

**University of
Nebraska
Foundation**

Lincoln, NE

Vice President, Director of
Development, University of
Nebraska-Lincoln

June 2007-Sept 2012

- Successfully completed \$550 million UNL campaign goal more than two years prior to end of campaign, ultimately raising \$608 million
- Led all UNL fundraising operations & personnel
- Partnered with NU President, UNL Chancellor, and faculty to align fundraising with university priorities
- Collaborated with UNL administration and top donors to change campus approach to technology commercialization
- Led effort to embrace metrics to improve transparency, performance, and accountability

**Nebraska Department
of Justice**

Lincoln, NE

**Chief Deputy Attorney
General**

Jan 2003-June 2007

- Managed legal affairs for the state of Nebraska
- Led office of 120 with responsibility for Criminal Prosecution and Appeals, Consumer Protection, Public Records and Meetings, Attorney General Opinions, and Civil Litigation
- Led collaborative efforts with National Association of Attorneys General and other Attorneys General across the country on issues of public policy and criminal justice
- Managed \$11 million annual budget
- Established the Medicaid Fraud unit and Consumer Protection Bureau to protect Nebraska consumers

Cline Williams Law Firm

Omaha, NE

May 2001-Jan 2003

- Practiced Corporate & Securities Law, Mergers & Acquisitions
- Publicly-traded company filings, Sarbanes-Oxley compliance, private placements of securities, sales of restricted securities, and business planning and formation

ITC Ventures, Inc.

Santiago, Chile

General Partner/Counsel

May 2000-May 2001

- Evaluated business models, intellectual property, valuation, financial projections, potential market, and management teams of portfolio companies
- Invested in technology startups, several of which are still thriving
- Managed outside counsel in the U.S., Brazil, Chile, and Argentina

U.S. Attorney's Office

San Diego, CA

**Special Assistant United
States Attorney**

Dec 1998-May 2000

- Selected as the single Navy Judge Advocate General (JAG) on the West coast to litigate civil cases filed against the United States in federal court
- Clients included the U.S. Navy, DEA, and Border Patrol

United States Navy

San Diego, CA

Lieutenant, JAG Corps

Oct 1995-Dec 1998

- Claims Attorney - supervised team of attorneys, paralegals, and support staff
- Negotiated and settled hundreds of claims filed under the Federal Tort Claims
- Trial Defense Counsel - handled over 60 criminal cases and over 70 administrative (employment termination) hearings - 50% acquittal rate in ten jury and two bench trials

EDUCATION

University of Nebraska College of Law - JD

University of Kansas - BS Business Administration

- Psychology Minor
- Honors Program
- University of Kansas Crew

NON PROFIT ESTABLISHMENT

TrustLab

Portland, OR

Founder & CEO

Oct 2021-Present

- Founded TrustLab to serve as a catalyst for a new public safety system built on a foundation of trust between the community, city officials, and police
- Facilitating relationship building by utilizing subject matter experts in mediation and reconciliation, law enforcement, and trauma healing
- Engaging a coalition of Black community leaders, current and retired police officers, police union leaders, and city officials by creating space for face to face conversations, listening sessions, town hall meetings, and workshops.
- Leading a coalition of global experts in police/community relations. Partners include Braver Angels, Common Ground USA, The Policing Project (NYU), Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP), and the Rwanda National Unity Council

BOARD SERVICE

TrustLab, 2021 - Present

Oregon Health & Science Univ. Foundation 2018-2021

Doernbecher Children's Hospital Foundation 2018-2020

The Ohio State Innovation Foundation 2015-2018

Nebraska Bank of Commerce 2010-Present

Lincoln Electric System 2009-2012

UNL Alumni Association 2008-2012

Invest Nebraska (Chairman) 2007-2012 (rebuilt the board and convinced the state to continue funding and grow the nonprofit responsible for promoting entrepreneurship and technology innovation using state economic development funds)

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Smart Columbus Executive Committee 2017-2018

OSU Intellectual Property, Patent, and Copyright Committee 2015-2018

Columbus Metropolitan Club Program Committee 2013-2015

University of Nebraska Business Plan Competition Judge 2006-2009

Midlands Business Journal – 40 Under 40 award recipient 2006

University of Nebraska – President's Advisory Council 2005-2007

Nebraska State Bar Assoc. – Ethics Rules Drafting Committee 2004

Nebraska State Bar Association – Legislation Committee 2003-2007

Advisor to Geneseek - 2005-2006

Cabrillo Fed. Credit Union– Chairman, Bd. of Supervisors 1999-2000

Big Brothers of San Diego County - Volunteer Big Brother - 1996-1998

Federal Bureau of Investigation - Honors Intern - Wash., D.C. 1990