

Gold Hill Associates

COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH



GOLD HILL ASSOCIATES: OUR SEARCH PROCESS

Gold Hill Associates is dedicated solely to community college presidential searches. To date we have successfully helped more than 100 community colleges find their next president. We assist colleges throughout the country, from small rural institutions to multi-college districts located in large urban areas.



STEPS OF THE CANDIDATE SELECTION PROCESS

- The Board appoints a Presidential Search Advisory Committee
- Committee meets with Gold Hill Associates to determine the candidate profile
- Recommendations are then sent to the Board
- Board approves the profile—now the formal search begins
- Ads are placed in professional journals and other publications
- Applications are collected, initial review conducted by Gold Hill Associates
- Gold Hill Associates submits a list of semi-finalists to the Search Advisory Committee, then meets with them to screen and narrow the list to a group of finalists
- This list is next sent to the Board to review
- Once the Board approves finalists, reference checks take place in advance of interview process
- Board interviews and makes final selection for next community college president

WHAT MAKES GOLD HILL ASSOCIATES A STANDOUT SEARCH FIRM?

Gold Hill Associates was started in 1990 by Bob Barringer, Ed.D. After a successful run, he was ready to retire. Long-time friend and business partner Preston Pulliams, Ed.D bought the company in 2011. Since then the search firm has continued to thrive.

GOLD HILL ASSOCIATES, GETTING STARTED

Kim MacQueen has handled PR and marketing for the company since its inception in 1990. She looks back on those early years: “Bob was a community college president on a unique career path. He was a

More inside . . .



(503) 704-3425 | Preston@GoldHillAssociates.com
1065 Stigger Road, Jackson, Mississippi 39209

FAQ: GOLD HILL ASSOCIATES

Q. What are the unique strengths of Gold Hill Associates?

A. Unsurpassed experience—all of our recruiters, including the company founder, are past presidents of community colleges. We know what it takes to successfully run a college. Therefore, we know what to look for in presidential candidates.

Q. Where does Gold Hill find its candidates?

A. We have a broad, nationwide network. Between the company founder and current owner, Gold Hill has more than 50 years of combined experience in community college management and operations. This gives us access to hundreds of similarly qualified professionals.

Q. What is the Gold Hill philosophy and guiding principles?

A. Selecting a new president is the most important task a Board will undertake. It should be an open process—no secrets. Gold Hill works for the Board, not the candidates. That means we conduct reference

checks beyond the ones provided by the candidate. Because ours is a small operation, we take on just enough clients to ensure we give our clients full attention. Finally, success is guaranteed. We keep working until the Board is satisfied with the slate of candidates.

“We believe you need good first-hand knowledge of what job is all about in order to place right candidate.”



PRESTON PULLIAMS

FROM STUDENT TO PRESIDENT
— HOW COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SHAPED HIS CAREER

The year was 1966 and Preston Pulliams had just earned his first degree—an A.S. in Science from Muskegon Community College. The excitement of this first-time achievement sparked a lifelong passion for community colleges and the value these institutions offer adult students nationwide. After graduation, he launched his career working as a counselor for Muskegon Community College, eventually becoming the dean of students and then the vice president of student affairs. By 1976 he had earned his doctorate and was providing top-level leadership for various institutions. In a career that has spanned nearly 40 years, Preston has held a variety of titular



roles. Most recently he was president of Portland Community College. Prior to that he was the vice chancellor for community colleges in Albany, NY; then president, Orange County Community College in Middletown, NY. Earlier executive positions were in Michigan and Philadelphia. “In large part I fell in love with the community college institution and how they helped me over the years. When it came time to retire, I was the president

at Portland Community College. I didn’t want to go home and sit on the coach or play golf, I wanted to find some way to stay engaged professionally,” he said. Opportunity came in the form of Gold Hill Associates. Preston had first met the company’s founder, Bob Barringer, Ed.D some years before. Preston himself was a recruiter for Gold Hill before buying the company nearly two years ago. The

When it came time for Bob to retire, he and Kim could only think of one person to assume the helm: Preston Pulliams. The transition took place in January 2011. Today Bob is positive about the future direction of the company: “I’ve always been very impressed with Preston and his communication skills. I feel very confident with him taking the lead here. So far he has done an outstanding job and has completed several searches very successfully.”

UNCANNY SKILL, A VAST NETWORK OF COLLEAGUES AND IS A GREAT NETWORKER

“Preston is a skilled educator, so good with people. He has a great sense of humor and it was a delight to work with him in every way. He has this uncanny skill to make people feel at ease and to just bring out the best in them.

He has a vast network of colleagues and is a great networker, he keeps in touch with people all over the country. His skills as a communicator serve him well with Gold Hill Associates, he can easily work with different boards and search committees.”

| Jan Coulton, former colleague during Preston’s tenure at Portland Community College

company performs about eight searches each year, always at the behest of a community college Board, not the candidate. “The college hires Gold Hill to facilitate the search process,” Preston explains. “I don’t tell them who to hire. I try to bring a certain number of qualified people who should be considered for the job.”

There are approximately 1,100 community colleges in the United States and first-time candidates are usually in their mid-50s. The pool is made up of senior officers, managers at community colleges and sitting presidents. Preston keeps an open file of about 250 potential candidates at any given time.

Preston meets potential candidates through his extensive personal network. He also attends conferences, and reads professional and association publications. “I’m always looking for talent and I do that by staying connected to the industry,” he said.

GOLD HILL ASSOCIATES, TODAY

Gold Hill Associates has established a strong reputation over the years. Here is how the company differs from its competition:

- It is the only company staffed exclusively with former community college presidents, all who have worked successfully with community college Boards, faculty, community members and foundations.
- **Gold Hill** runs smaller and leaner. This means the company is able to respond to RFPs quickly. It also does not take on search assignments that compete with each other. This decision helps create the best candidate pool.
- **Gold Hill** works for the community college, not the candidates. This is an important distinction because it goes to the integrity and ultimate success of the search. Community college leadership is critical to the success of the institution and its students. Therefore, the goal of Gold Hill Associates is to provide the best possible candidates and allow the Board to decide who is the best fit for the position.



“Everyone who does searches in our company has been a successful community college president, not just a recruiting expert who is available to assist with a search.”

EASY TO WORK WITH, ATTENTIVE, RESPONSIVE

“Preston did a wonderful job for us. Not only do we have the president we brought on board, all three of the applicants we spoke with would have been excellent presidents...Preston didn’t just get us qualified applicants, he found us people who were qualified and compatible with our unique needs as a small, rural community college. It was hard for us to choose the best candidate. He was easy to work with, attentive and responsive. He came down any time we had questions and he did absolutely everything we asked him to. I can’t say enough good about him.”

| David Jensen,
Board Chair and Search Co-Chair,
Klamath Community College,
Klamath, Oregon

WHAT MAKES GOLD HILL ASSOCIATES A STANDOUT SEARCH FIRM?

professional interim community college president. That means he was hired by a college after the sitting president was fired or some other crisis necessitated an immediate leadership change.” Bob fulfilled this role—more than a dozen times—before eventually starting **Gold Hill Associates**. His early advantage was significant: He had intimate knowledge of the community college system, could easily identify the needs and political realities faced by the governing

Boards, and had hundreds of contacts—potential presidential candidates—stretching coast to coast. While there are other search firms in the US, today Gold Hill is the largest one that is privately owned.

GOLD HILL ASSOCIATES, SELLING A THRIVING BUSINESS

Bob and Kim built Gold Hill into a well-respected search firm, one that has placed 100 presidents in community colleges nationwide.