

POSITION STATEMENT

Canterbury School

CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER SEARCH

START DATE: SEPTEMBER 1, 2025



CANTERBURY
SCHOOL



OVERVIEW

An intimate, values-driven, and student-centered community located on a stunning 150-acre hilltop campus in New Milford, Connecticut, Canterbury School is a coeducational, college-preparatory boarding and day school for students in grades 9–12. Rooted in its Catholic heritage and with a strong tradition of academic excellence, the School nurtures intellectually curious, well-rounded students who are encouraged to embark on a transformational journey that allows them to stretch beyond what they thought possible to realize their unique potential. In addition to a broad, dynamic curriculum that enables students to discover and explore passions, Canterbury offers vibrant arts and athletics programs, opportunities for spiritual growth, and a rich experience centered on the School's Five Values: Honesty, Respect, Compassion, Spirituality, and Self-Reliance. Taken together, the Canterbury experience shapes habits of heart and mind that develop moral leaders ready to help inspire and shape a complex world.

Guided by new Head of School Caroline Blatti and an engaged Board of Trustees, Canterbury is entering an exciting new chapter in its more than 100-year history. The School seeks a strategic, relational, and action-oriented Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) to lead its advancement program and strengthen the culture of philanthropy that sustains and enhances every aspect of the Canterbury experience. This individual will join a close-knit, mission-driven community that believes deeply in the power of education to transform lives—and that sees philanthropy as an expression of that belief.

The ideal candidate will bring deep experience across the full spectrum of advancement, including annual, major, and planned giving; capital and endowment campaigns; alumni and parent engagement, stewardship, and advancement operations.



As a member of the senior leadership team and a key thought partner to the Head of School, the CAO will guide all fundraising and engagement strategy with vision, energy, and a deep commitment to Canterbury's values and aspirations. All those who are eager to make a transformational impact and build a best-in-class operation to inspire limitless possibility are encouraged to apply.

MISSION, SCHOOL CULTURE, AND PROGRAM

Founded in 1915, Canterbury School's mission is to provide a superior education in a community of sound moral values that fosters academic excellence, spiritual growth, and a commitment to service. Inspired by its Catholic identity, the School welcomes students of all faiths while nurturing a culture of reflection, compassion, and justice. Faith and service are woven into the fabric of daily life—through all-school Masses, community service, and intentional opportunities for students to grow in character, conscience, and conviction.

Canterbury's educational program challenges students to think deeply, communicate effectively, and lead honorably. The School's small size ensures that every student is known and valued.

Students benefit from close relationships with teachers and advisors, as well as from a residential experience that emphasizes personal responsibility and shared purpose. Whether in the classroom, on the stage, or on the athletic fields, students are encouraged to bring their full selves to the community—and to grow intellectually, spiritually, and ethically in the process.

“Saints Show Up for Saints.” A statement used often by students and faculty alike, the reality visibly manifests itself in the daily interactions of Canterbury’s family-like community across campus. Students actively celebrate the accomplishments of fellow students, yet are equally attuned to the moments in which support is needed. Seniors understand the important role they play in the lives of lower formers and model what it means to be welcoming, inclusive, and active participants in their community. In the words of a current student, “school spirit is out of this world,” and favorite traditions—from pep rallies to ‘pink outs’—shape a community that cares deeply about one another and pushes each individual to be their best selves.

Distinctive Centers and Programs

At Canterbury, academic rigor isn’t just about challenge; it’s equally about support. Adults on campus are committed to students’ success and provide robust tools and resources to ensure students are positioned to excel. [The Donovan Center for Learning](#) (DCL) is staffed by a Director and Academic Counselors and is part of the school’s Academic Hub. From a writing lab to SAT/ACT preparation to executive function skill development, the DCL offers multiple types of assistance in a culture that normalizes and encourages students to ask for help.

Similar to the DCL, the [D’Amour Center for Faith, Service, and Justice](#) centralizes the School’s community service, social justice, campus ministry, and servant leadership programming. Inspired by Canterbury’s Catholic heritage, the D’Amour Center serves as home to the School’s many service activities, retreats, discussion groups, and prayerful meditation throughout the day.



It is in combining intellectual growth with moral and spiritual development that Canterbury equips its students to be active, responsible citizens.

[The Keefe Center for College Counseling](#) is a flagship program at Canterbury. Students are supported in the college admissions process from the moment they set foot on campus. The experience is a four-year program that is age appropriate and highly individualized. During their junior year, students take part in “College Workgroup,” a weekly class that is embedded in their schedule to give each student the space, time, and resources they need to navigate the complex college process.

Last, but not least, the [Syracuse University Project Advance](#) (SUPA) provides students with the opportunity to earn undergraduate-level credits while at Canterbury. Students graduate with their Canterbury credentials and a Syracuse transcript! This program is offered in addition to more than 50 Advanced Placement (AP) and Honors courses. Learn more about the School’s distinctive academic programs [here](#).



Arts

The opportunity to explore creativity at Canterbury abounds. State-of-the-art facilities including The Stephen and Lacey Hume Music Center, the Edward J. Duffy '49 Family Art Center and Gallery, Maguire Auditorium, the L. Michael Sheehy '56 Choral Classroom and The Coleman Digital Media Lab ensure that students can both discover and expand their passions in studio arts, instrumental music, vocal music, theatre and more!

Athletics

Whether a novice or experienced student-athlete, Canterbury offers the chance to build skills, strength, and fitness that allows every participant to push personal boundaries. Every student at the School participates in multiple sports in order to teach powerful lessons in character, discipline, accountability, friendship, and teamwork. Canterbury offers Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Thirds teams over three seasons to ensure there is a space for every student to develop self-reliance that serves them throughout their lives.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

Canterbury is committed to creating a diverse, equitable, inclusive, just, and safe community that is founded upon, inspired by, and held accountable to the school's Five Values. These values and infrastructure create opportunities for members of the community to teach and challenge one another to think more broadly, take care of one another more deeply, and work at playing a true role in social justice more proactively, personally, and genuinely.

HISTORY AND LOCATION: CANTERBURY AND LIFE IN NEW MILFORD, CONNECTICUT

Founded in 1915 by headmaster Dr. Nelson Hume and entrepreneur Henry O. Havemeyer, Canterbury School was established to provide a rigorous academic education grounded in Catholic values and dedicated to the formation of moral and spiritual character. Modeled in the tradition of English boarding schools and rooted in the principles of truth, respect, and service, Canterbury quickly gained a reputation as a school that develops principled leaders and thoughtful scholars. Over its century-long history, Canterbury has remained committed to the vision of its founder: to educate young people who are prepared to meet the challenges of their time with clarity of purpose, strength of character, and faith in action.

From its earliest days, Canterbury has embraced a holistic educational model that places equal value on academic excellence, spiritual development, athletic engagement, and the arts. The School's small size and residential character foster meaningful relationships between students and faculty and allow for the cultivation of a community where every member is known and valued. In recent decades, Canterbury has continued to grow and modernize while preserving its commitment to timeless values—adding new facilities, expanding its global reach, and welcoming a diverse and talented student body from across the country and around the world.

The School's beautiful campus sits atop a hill overlooking the Housatonic River Valley in New Milford, Connecticut, a quintessential New England town known for its charm, natural beauty, and vibrant community life. Just 90 minutes from New York City, New Milford offers both the tranquility of the Litchfield Hills and convenient access to major metropolitan areas. Its historic downtown—lined with shops, cafés, galleries, and restaurants—sits adjacent to the town green, one of the largest in New England, and hosts year-round cultural events, farmers markets, and festivals.

Surrounded by scenic trails, lakes, and preserved open space, New Milford is ideal for those who enjoy outdoor activities, from hiking and kayaking to skiing and cycling. The town is home to artists, professionals, educators, and families who value community, creativity, and quality of life. For Canterbury faculty and staff, New Milford offers an enriching environment that supports both professional fulfillment and personal well-being.

With its strong town-school partnership, New Milford plays a meaningful role in the life of Canterbury. Students engage in local service projects, attend town events, and contribute to the broader civic landscape, while residents of New Milford take pride in supporting Canterbury as one of the town's most important cultural and educational institutions. It is a setting that enriches the student experience and offers a fulfilling lifestyle for those who call it home.



FAST FACTS

- Founded: 1915
- Location: New Milford, Connecticut, 90 minutes from New York City
- Who We Are: Independent, coeducational, boarding and day school serving students in grades 9-12
- Campus: 150 acres sitting on a stunning hilltop overlooking the Housatonic River Valley
- Enrollment: approximately 330 students, 70% boarding, 30% day, 14% international
- Student-to-Faculty Ratio: 6:1
- Average Class Size: 12
- Number of faculty with advanced degrees: 75%
- Tuition and Financial Aid: Boarding, \$77,650; Day, \$57,300; Financial Aid as a % of Tuition: 26.1%
- Mascot: Saints

HEAD OF SCHOOL AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Head of School

Caroline Blatti was unanimously and enthusiastically appointed as Canterbury's seventh Head of School in December 2024 and will officially begin her tenure on July 1, 2025. With over 25 years of leadership experience in both independent boarding and day schools, Caroline has a deep appreciation for tradition while also embracing innovation to ensure students have the requisite skills and competencies required for success in a rapidly evolving world.

A lifelong advocate for values-based education, Caroline believes in the foundational role spirituality plays in developing students' empathy, moral clarity, and sense of purpose. A first-generation college student, Caroline earned a B.A. in English Literature from Princeton University and an M.A. in English Literature from University College London.

Most recently, Caroline served as Head of School at Roland Park Country School in Baltimore, where she led an eight-figure capital campaign, expanded the endowment to more than \$65 million, and helped to fund major initiatives including the Gore Leadership Institute and the Holliday Heine STEM Institute.

She also founded the Culture, Community & Belonging department to strengthen the school's inclusive and supportive culture and championed a balanced approach to academic excellence and social-emotional development. Early in her career, Caroline spent several years at The Lawrenceville School where she taught English, served as Assistant Housemaster and coached multiple sports. This experience immersed her in the unique rhythms and transformative potential of a boarding school environment, igniting her passion for the holistic development of students and deepening her appreciation for close-knit residential communities. Caroline's experiences have led her to deeply value the critical role philanthropy plays in the life of a school, and have fostered a belief that generosity propels institutions from good to great.

Board of Trustees

Canterbury is governed by a 21-person Board of Trustees. The Board is chaired by Nicholas "Nick" Ragland '88, P '21. Nick is co-president of The Gorilla Glue Company, a family-owned manufacturer of industrial-strength adhesives, tapes, and sealants. The company, which was originally Lutz Tool Company, acquired the Gorilla Glue brand in the mid-1990s and has since grown into a global enterprise with more than 650 employees. A graduate of Babson College (MBA'00), Ragland has shared insights on multi-generational business leadership, emphasizing putting "the business first" and supporting collaborative succession across generations. Nick is passionate about Canterbury's impact—"it moves the needle for students... no school supports children better."—and is excited to help support the growth of an advancement team and operation that is worthy of the school.



A SCHOOL WITH AMBITIOUS VISION: PHILANTHROPIC AND FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Canterbury serves approximately 330 students from across the country and around the globe, with 70% boarding and 30% day. Its tight-knit and inclusive community, grounded in tradition and forward-thinking in approach, is one of its hallmarks. Recent strategic investments in academic programs, athletic facilities, and residential life—along with the momentum of the School's current [strategic plan](#), People. Purpose. Program. Permanence.—have positioned Canterbury to strengthen its value proposition and expand its impact in the years ahead.

As Canterbury prepares to launch future capital and endowment initiatives, the timing is ideal for a seasoned CAO to shape and lead a bold, comprehensive advancement strategy. The next CAO will build upon a proud history of generosity while designing new systems, programs, and engagement pathways to support the School's ambitions. With a loyal alumni body, a devoted parent community, and a values-driven mission that resonates deeply, Canterbury is poised to significantly grow its philanthropic capacity.

Canterbury's operating budget is approximately \$30 million, with 80% of the budget covered by tuition. The endowment is valued at nearly \$50 million, and the school holds \$15 million in debt. There are \$2 million in capital reserves. While on solid financial footing, there is great opportunity for growth.

Canterbury's annual fund goal in 2024-25 is \$1.7 million. On average, the Advancement team has raised \$4 - \$5 million over the last five years. In 2021, the school successfully completed a comprehensive campaign that raised nearly \$85 million. Canterbury's alumni base is 5,000 strong - passionate, yet uncultivated. Both the Head of School and the Board of Trustees are eager to partner with the CAO to strengthen the culture of philanthropy, expand the donor base, grow the annual fund, increase the endowment, and develop a campus plan that will inspire strategic capital improvements over the next 5 - 10 years. This role offers a rare chance to make a profound and lasting impact on a school that fosters the development of young people who are imbued with values that lead them to leave the world better than they find it.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER

Canterbury is characterized by an engaged community life that allows for growth and discovery in every dimension. Faculty, staff, and administration meet students where they are and champion everything they aspire to be. The Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) will conceive and oversee all fundraising efforts to ensure effective and productive engagement and support from all stakeholders. The CAO will develop and implement a comprehensive strategy that is bold, creative, and inclusive of all members of the school community. Reporting to the Head of School, the CAO will create short- and long-term fundraising strategies that ensure Canterbury's ability to

fully lean into a values-based and relevant academic experience that graduates students of integrity who contribute significantly to the communities of which they are a part.

The CAO will build genuine and meaningful relationships both internally and externally; have a proven track record of fundraising success; demonstrate a deep understanding and appreciation for the school's mission and aspirations; approach the work with a sense of possibility, tenacity, and professionalism; and will build, inspire and invest in a high-performing team to foster long-term stability and growth.

In a community where every person's participation is valued, the CAO will be a visible and engaged member while serving as a strategic thought partner to the Head, Board of Trustees, and Senior Leadership Team. A gritty, agile, sophisticated individual who is confident yet grounded with a high-EQ is desired. Carrying a portfolio of major and principal-level prospects, the DOA will be an inspirational storyteller and a trusted advisor, providing meaningful opportunities for constituents to make a difference for a place they care deeply about.

Those who are visionary, approachable, and have a talent for building productive relationships are encouraged to apply. Ideal candidates will be forward-thinking, able to establish clear priorities, action-oriented but collaborative, a gifted problem-solver and challenge-seeker, stay abreast of trends and best practices, and last, but not least, enjoy being with teenagers!



Strategic Leadership

- Provide visionary leadership for all advancement functions, including annual, major, and planned giving; capital campaigns; operations; and alumni and parent engagement.
- Build, manage, and inspire the advancement team and oversee hiring, yearly performance reviews, and professional development and growth. Develop and oversee the advancement office budget.
- Participate in meetings of the Board of Trustees and serve as the liaison for the Advancement and Marketing Committee, ensuring the smooth functioning of this committee per Canterbury's bylaws.
- Communicate a broad understanding and awareness of the School's mission, values, and strategic plan and key priorities.
- Serve on the Head of School's Senior Leadership Team, contributing to institutional strategy, culture, policy- and decision-making.
- Maintain an active and visible presence within the community.
- Remain abreast of industry standards and innovation through a commitment to ongoing learning; represent the School within local and national professional development associations.



Fundraising and Engagement

- Lead the design, implementation, and oversight of a comprehensive fundraising strategy that aligns with the School's mission, values, and strategic priorities.
- Partner with the Head of School and Board of Trustees to identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward high-capacity donors and strategic philanthropic partnerships.
- Oversee and manage capital campaign planning, implementation, and fundraising efforts, working collaboratively with the Head of School, and fundraising volunteers.
- Establish and maintain the necessary volunteer programs and committees to enhance and maximize fundraising initiatives and foster donor engagement.
- Systematize and strengthen advancement operations, including prospect management, gift processing, reporting, and data analytics.
- Envision and implement a robust alumni program that effectively engages alumni in the life of the school while meeting them where they are and adding value to their lives today.
- Direct all constituents (alumni, parents, guardians, grandparents, and faculty/staff) engagement strategies and activities directly related to fundraising.
- Establish and oversee the School's policies on fundraising, gift acceptance, and data protocols and processes.



LEADERSHIP QUALITIES, PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES, AND QUALIFICATIONS

Leadership Qualities and Personal Attributes

- Enthusiastic commitment to the school's mission.
- High degree of emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and empathy.
- An active listener and curious learner.
- Superior talent for identifying, selecting, retaining, and inspiring outstanding advancement professionals—supporting, guiding, and championing their growth.
- Professionalism and discretion; ability to maintain confidentiality.
- Flexible and trustworthy.
- Ability to navigate the complexities and ambiguities of leading and inspiring others in a complex, deeply invested community.
- Exceptional interpersonal, communication, and organizational skills; ability to articulate complex ideas in a credible, meaningful manner.
- Ability to translate big ideas into action.
- Motivated, problem-solver, and willingness to roll up your sleeves.
- Cooperative, open-minded individual who appreciates the value of teamwork and collaboration.
- Growth mindset and ability to seek and utilize data to inform decision-making; implementing strategies to enhance development efforts.
- Comfort and proficiency with inspirational and informative presentation-making.
- Managing up, down, and sideways in an effective manner.
- Strong organizational and project management skills with keen attention to detail and ability to manage multiple priorities simultaneously.
- Warmth, a strong ethical compass, and a confident approach.
- A commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging as essential components of institutional strength and vitality.

Qualifications

- A minimum of 10 years of progressive leadership experience in independent schools, higher education, or nonprofit fundraising, with an understanding of the boarding school environment preferred.
- Proven track record of designing and executing effective fundraising strategies in the areas of annual giving, major gifts, capital campaigns, and planned giving.
- Exceptional leadership and team-building skills with the ability to inspire, motivate, and grow team members.
- Demonstrated ability to build strong relationships with donors, families, alumni, trustees, and community partners.
- Strong organizational and project management skills.
- Comfortable serving as a public ambassador for the School.
- A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree in a relevant field (e.g. education, nonprofit management, business) strongly preferred.

TO APPLY

If the possibilities in this opportunity excite you, please apply online at the RG175 website:

<https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>

The application should include:

- Letter of interest
- Resume or CV

For inquiries or additional information about the position, please contact:

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