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## *Gaia Human Capital Consultants Retained Executive Search:*

### FURMAN UNIVERSITY

## Executive Director, The Shi Institute for Sustainable Communities

Furman University retained Gaia Human Capital Consultants, Executive Search Consultants to partner in its national executive search for its **Executive Director of The Shi Institute for Sustainable Communities**.

The Executive Director of the Shi Institute will provide vision and leadership for the Institute and works collaboratively to guide its strategic direction and lead its activities and resources. The Executive Director will support the financial sustainability of the Institute by seeking opportunities to expand programs that meet the needs of businesses, non-profit organizations, and governmental entities.

Location: **Greenville, SC**

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### Summary Overview:

#### Furman University's Four Institutes:

Founded in 1826, Furman University is the oldest private university in South Carolina and among the 75 oldest institutions of higher education in operation nationally today. The university has the following four institutes, where students gain valuable real-world experience in community initiatives, research, outreach and more. They work hand-in-hand with faculty and staff experts who are connected locally, nationally and internationally.

- **Shi Institute for Sustainable Communities**
- **The Richard W. Riley Institute**
- **Institute for the Advancement of Community Health**
- **The Hill Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship**

Each institute manages its own centers, programs and initiatives, many with efforts branching into the Greater Greenville community, connecting Furman students with residents and organizations who are leading efforts to solve community challenges. Furman's institutes also bring thousands of community members to campus each year, providing life-long learning opportunities for residents interested in issues around community health, sustainability, innovation, government and education.



Furman University's campus

#### The Shi Institute for Sustainable Communities:

The nationally renowned Shi Institute for Sustainable Communities, launched in 2020 is an institute focused on promoting sustainable human flourishing through its three centers focuses: **The Center for Sustainability Education**, **The Center for Applied Sustainability Research** and **The Center for Sustainability Leadership**.

"Furman is among a handful of universities that believes engaged learning, experiential learning, off-campus learning, real world learning, should be the centerpiece of its educational experience, Furman has come to define sustainability as not just environmental responsibility but also the sustainability of viable and vibrant communities."

*David E. Shi, former Furman University President and the namesake of the Institute*

Since the mid-1990s, Furman has made sustainability a strategic institutional priority. Over the last decade, Furman has been recognized as a national leader in higher education in sustainability and has won numerous national and regional awards in recognition of its sustainability efforts and reputation.

Furman University has earned and maintained a Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (“STARS”) Gold rating from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (“AASHE”) since 2015, placing the University among the top ten overall sustainability performers among reporting baccalaureate institutions within the United States. As of January 2022, Furman is the third highest rated baccalaureate institution.

The Shi Institute is housed in a net-zero, LEED-Gold certified building and brings together environmental scientists and economists, urban planners and policy experts, students, faculty, and community members, and sustainability visionaries and elected officials to collaboratively pursue and promote sustainable communities.

The building features many sustainable technologies, including solar thermal and solar electric systems, passive solar design, locally sourced materials, an organic farm, pervious hardscape, and many other sustainable features.

The Shi Institute has a staff of 6 - 8 and helps lead and track the university’s sustainability efforts. It offers a wide array of campus, community, and corporate sustainability programs focused on teaching, research, leadership and sustainable practices.



**Shi Institute’s net-zero, LEED certified building**

### **Furman’s Sustainability Leadership:**

- Furman University has cut its carbon emissions by 43% since the peak in 2009 through a series of large campus energy projects, a transition to more renewable energy sources, and significant efforts to improve energy efficiency.
- Furman has eight LEED certified buildings including **Hipp Hall**, the first LEED certified building in South Carolina.
- In 2013, Furman completed a large geothermal system for all of the upper-class residence buildings. The deep well system uses the consistent temperatures in the ground to exchange heat to and from buildings and has annually reduced the energy usage by 25% per building.
- The campus also features a number of solar installations including:
  - 93KW rooftop array at the Physical Activities Center,
  - Collective 28.4kW arrays at the Shi Institute,
  - 12.8KW panels located next to the Townes Science Center,
  - 13KW system on the roof of the new track and field house and
  - Six acre 7.4MW solar farm across from the campus’s main entrance.
  - The solar farm’s 2,994 panel array is the largest solar project on a South Carolina college campus and has lowered Furman’s energy costs by about 5% since coming online in 2017.



**Furman University’s 7.4MW Solar Farm**

The Shi Institute fills a critical need by applying research on sustainability systems to contemporary problems and developing innovative ways to teach and learn about sustainability. It serves as a conduit between the campus and the community, and acts as a crossroads for convening, connecting, and educating the next generation of leaders.

The Shi Institute has a long tradition of providing applied learning opportunities for undergraduate students that include a robust student fellowship program, home weatherization, applied research activities, and working in the organic garden. The Institute has begun offering learning opportunities and consulting services for businesses, governmental organizations, and non-profits.

# **Executive Director, The Shi Institute for Sustainable Communities**

## **Role Summary:**

The Executive Director of the Shi Institute for Sustainable Communities will provide vision and leadership for the Institute and work collaboratively to guide its strategic direction and coordinate its activities and resources.

The Executive Director oversees the operating budget and grant funds, and is accountable for, staffing, quality of service, and the overall performance of The Shi Institute, with the ultimate goal of financial independence from the University and revenue-generation within 3 years.

As the lead externally facing representative of the Institute, the Executive Director, with support from The Shi Institute staff, will identify and develop outside funding opportunities related to sustainability in conjunction with the Grants Office and Furman faculty by seeking opportunities to expand academic programs that meet the needs of businesses, non-profit organizations, and governmental entities.

## **Primary Responsibilities:**

- Articulates the mission, vision, and strategic plan for The Shi Institute for Sustainable Communities to internal and external stakeholders. In consultation with the President, Provost, Institute staff, and others as appropriate continues to advance the Institute.
- Oversees the operating budget and grant funds, and is accountable for, staffing, quality of service, and the overall performance of The Shi Institute, with the ultimate goal of financial independence from the University and revenue-generation within 3 years.
- Establishes and implements The Shi Institute's goals and priorities to ensure alignment with institutional goals and priorities, including raising the academic profile and prestige of the university.
- Develops and executes short and long-term plans to ensure the financial sustainability of the Institute's activities.
- Champions and leads sustainability efforts on-campus and supports Institute staff who implement and guide sustainability initiatives.
- Serves as an ambassador for Furman in the local Greenville and upstate South Carolina community, and encourages productive sustainability collaborations with nonprofit, government, and private sectors.
- Develops and directs staff in assessment of The Shi Institute programs and is accountable for all assessment and reporting activities related to The Shi Institute.
- Collaborates with the University Communications team on internal and external communications regarding The Shi Institute activities.
- Represents The Shi Institute at official functions, on and off campus.
- Represents The Shi Institute in Academic Affairs division activities and collaborates with the three other Institute Directors (i.e., Riley Institute, Institute for the Advancement of Community Health, Hill Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship).
- With support from The Shi Institute staff, identifies and develops outside funding opportunities related to sustainability in conjunction with the Grants Office and Furman faculty.
- In coordination with The Shi Institute staff, provides support for curricular development and applied research efforts as deemed appropriate.
- Supports The Shi Institute staff who create and sustain learning opportunities for undergraduates.
- Supervises and conducts annual performance reviews for Center Directors and other direct reports.
- Participates in professional development opportunities, on- and off-campus.

## **Reporting Structure:**

Reports to the University Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, **Beth Pontari, Ph.D.**

## **Qualifications:**

- Minimum of 6 - 8 years of relevant professional experience in an externally facing leadership role, preferably at a foundation, educational institution, not-for-profit, consulting or private-sector / corporate environment;
- Subject-matter knowledge across Sustainability Management. Demonstrated experience and knowledge in sustainability best practices, preferably within the external facing segments served by the Shi Institute ;
- Ability to conceptualize, communicate and lead a shared vision in response to needs and opportunities;
- Credibility to effectively represent the public face of an organization; well-developed interpersonal skills; superb oral and written communication skills; ability to present ideas clearly and persuasively to diverse stakeholders and audiences;

- Proven track record in business development and revenue opportunities and, cultivating major gift, government, and foundation support.
- History of strong collaboration, navigating complex issues while actively seeking, building and sustaining effective strategic partnerships both internally and externally;
- Ability to convey Furman’s commitment and significant resources toward sustainability to external stakeholders including, corporations, government entities and non-profits.
- Demonstrated leadership skills, including ability to prioritize and lead multiple projects simultaneously, confidently lead project teams, track progress, manage to project scope and budget, and regularly communicate status to client leadership and team members. Ability to change and shift gears comfortably.
- Financial and business management experience with a P&L, budget of similar size and revenue streams as well as interpreting data / information to support sound decision making;
- Ability to attract, develop and retain staff, maintaining a high level of performance effectively utilizing their talents;
- Experience establishing and maintaining relationships with executives and senior client contacts; expressing sound judgment, diplomacy, and the highest professional ethics and integrity;
- Ability to pursue speaking engagements and thought-leadership activities.

**Educational Requirements:**

- Master’s Degree preferred.

**Compensation:**

- Furman University offers a competitive compensation package commensurate with relevant experience; abundant PTO; healthcare and retirement plans; 401(k) match and ample opportunities for educational advancement and professional development.

**Furman University’s Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives:**

Furman University values all employees without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, disability, military or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status. Furman University strives to create a respectful, equitable, and inclusive culture in which people from all backgrounds can thrive and achieve their fullest potential.

**To express interest in The Shi Institute For Sustainable Communities Executive Director opportunity, please contact either:**

<a href="#">Dawn Dzurilla</a>	<a href="#">Zoë Van Schyndel, CFA</a>
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To learn more about Furman University, please visit: <https://www.furman.edu/>

To learn more about The Shi Institute For Sustainable Communities, please visit:

<https://www.furman.edu/shi-institute/>

**Recent Furman University Sustainability News:**

[NACUBO recognizes Furman for sustainability excellence](#)