University Prep
Seattle, Washington
Upper School Head
Start Date: July 1, 2020
universityprep.org

Carney Sandoe & Associates
University Prep is an independent school of over 600 students in grades 6-12 located in an urban residential section of Seattle, seeking an Upper School Head to lead students and faculty in grades 9-12, starting July 1, 2020. Guided by its four pillars—depth, relationships, community, and innovation—the school seeks to offer an inspiring education in partnership with students, teachers and families.

Formerly known as University Preparatory Academy, University Prep (or UPrep) is devoted to academic excellence, inspiring students to embrace all aspects of learning and to pursue the best in themselves. The school is a place of great teaching and joyful learning. Extraordinary relationships between students and teachers are a given. Its unique location in North Seattle fosters an educational experience filled with opportunities to engage with the city, as well as enjoy the peaceful setting of the Picardo P-Patch, a neighboring park and urban farm. The school believes that shared values of integrity, respect, and responsibility are essential to accomplish its mission of developing each student’s potential to become an intellectually courageous, socially responsible citizen of the world.

University Prep seeks a community-focused, experienced Upper School leader who is eager to join a collaborative leadership team during a time of transition and renewal at UPrep. With the retirement of the long-serving leader of the Upper School and the arrival of the new Head of School, Ronnie Codrington-Cazeau, in July of 2020, the UPrep leadership team welcomes new perspectives to sustain the current momentum of its Next Generation Learning initiatives and prepare for the work ahead: a new strategic plan, increased enrollment, and the construction of the ULab, a new learning space that will support student-directed learning.

Overview

University Prep, an independent school of over 600 students in grades 6-12 located in an urban residential section of Seattle, is seeking an Upper School Head to lead students and faculty in grades 9-12, starting July 1, 2020. Guided by its four pillars—depth, relationships, community, and innovation—the school seeks to offer an inspiring education in partnership with students, teachers and families.

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Diversity Mission Statement

University Prep’s mission compels us to train and educate the next generation of leaders who will create impact and change in an interdependent, complex, and global community. Our students need to see, hear, and understand the diversity of people, perspectives and points of view around them and the world they will lead in the years ahead. Essential to this proposition is the ability of our students to identify, analyze, and act on issues of equity, justice, and inclusion. Our world demands it.

School History

In 1976, seven enterprising public school teachers in Seattle followed their vision and founded a school designed to truly meet the needs of students and teachers. They focused on a strong academics and arts program, but one with an emphasis on helping students develop their social-emotional skills. Growing slowly over the course of the next 40 years, University Prep went from less than 100 students in grades 7-10 to more than 600 students in grades 6-12 today. The school also went from renting space in Temple Beth Am to acquiring land and operating out of portables to gradually building the beautiful campus it currently occupies in the Wedgwood neighborhood of Seattle. Although the school has come a long way from its origins, its core is very much the same: a school bound together by passionate educators, curious and eager young minds, and a community of families partnering with the faculty and staff to make this a dynamic, impressive educational community.

The biggest changes to the school came in the 1990s with the construction of the new campus, followed by a strategic plan to grow the upper school. In 2000-2001, the school added the Hooper Fine Arts Center. Over the years, University Prep had steadily upgraded the facilities, improved campus technology, added programming, developed scholarships for low-income students, partnered with the Global Online Academy, and made an institutional commitment to diversity.

In 2016–2017, University Prep also advanced its Next Generation Learning initiatives, expanding innovative programming, interdisciplinary work, and student-driven learning opportunities. Recently, the Board of Trustees, faculty, administration, staff, and parents have developed the school’s Strategic Plan 2020: Expanding Our Strengths to Transform the Learning Experience. This broad-based and inclusive plan is meant to sustain University Prep’s core culture and values while further enhancing its strengths to transform the student learning experience over the next five years. Our Faculty, Our Facility, and Our Future (Next Generation Learning) are the pillars of the school’s strategic vision.
THE SCHOOL

UPrep’s goal is to deliver an inspiring educational experience in a true partnership among students, teachers, and families. It brings together a warm and supportive culture with a challenging academic program designed to help every student find his or her identity and develop his or her strengths. In particular, the school today focuses on the acquisition of what it calls Next Generation Learning skills, the exploration of ideas and interests, and student growth as responsible citizens. Here, students become comfortable examining ideas from varied perspectives and creatively solving problems through the lens of multiple disciplines.

As it has from the start, University Prep remains committed to implementing the best current educational practices. It does this through structures and systems that support thoughtful innovation. Teachers lead the school’s Research+Design Teams to build Next Generation Learning Initiatives, attend and present at regional and national conferences to share best practices, and visit schools around the country to learn from peer colleagues and schools. The Instructional Leadership Team, comprising department chairs and the Academic Council, vet and approve new ideas and proposals. The school also involves parents in committee work so that the school will benefit from the parents’ guidance and expertise and take advantage of Seattle as a hub of innovative ideas.

University Prep is also an intentionally diverse and inclusive community committed to social justice. About a third of the students are students of color, and about 30% of the faculty/staff are teachers of color. At all levels and in all areas, the school examines its practices to ensure access, inclusion, and equity in the students’ educational experience. The faculty are also supported in developing their understanding of cultural competency through the SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) program and regular professional development time devoted to this purpose. Meanwhile,
senior administrative leaders and the Board of Trustees work with a nationally recognized leader on diversity initiatives in schools to deepen their understanding of cultural competency and organizational leadership.

The school’s nationally-recognized Individualized Teacher Improvement Program (ITIP), which provides each teacher the opportunity to constantly develop and improve his or her skills, is just one more aspect that helps University Prep stand out as an impressive forward-looking institution.

**Academics**

University Prep has an excellent academic reputation in part because of the ongoing effort to improve the curriculum and the teachers’ skills. The faculty work tirelessly to review and revise the school curriculum. The result is a sophisticated, thoughtful approach to teaching and learning. Every teacher participates in an ongoing, repeated cycle of professional improvement focused on the student’s educational experience. New courses are developed each year, including such titles as Game Design, Social Entrepreneurship, States United, and Science Olympiad.

A major part of the Strategic Plan 2020 focuses on the evolution of teaching and learning at UPrep. The plan specifically calls for the evolution of Next Generation learning to prepare students for a changing world. This includes:

- further implementing a blend of face-to-face and online learning to personalize the educational experience;
- extending and deepening instruction in computer science and computational thinking;
• developing and implementing a social and emotional learning program so students realize their full potential as socially responsible citizens of the world; and
• designing more interdisciplinary learning opportunities to provide research, advocacy and entrepreneurship opportunities.

UPPER SCHOOL

University Prep students pursue a course of study designed for deep inquiry in a remarkably broad range of topics. The curriculum provides many opportunities for advanced study and personal support to help students reach their full potential. Teachers design courses that foster intellectual curiosity, appropriately challenge every student, and build essential skills for academic success. Students receive outstanding preparation for their next steps in life all while developing their interests and pursuing their passions. The Upper School follows a 1:1 laptop program.

The Upper School curriculum is constantly evolving to meet the needs of students. English electives, world and U.S. history, and science courses are updated and revised each year to reflect contemporary themes. The fine arts and physical education are also constantly adapting to new trends in aesthetic expression and social values. In recent years, the school has created new engineering, U.S. history, and interdisciplinary courses so that students may gain new knowledge and skills essential for participation in a modern society.

Required courses provide a common experience that includes research, reading, writing, computation, presentation, role play, and experimentation. In later years, the curriculum broadens until, for Seniors, every course is elective. The elective catalog includes more than 100 courses,
including Big Data and Analytics, Storytelling, Waves and Optics, and Art and Social Change, to name a few.

Students have the option to pursue intensives, three-week terms during which they take one class full-time, earning the same credit as a one semester class. Intensive courses are academic and include student-designed projects, internships and mentorships, day visits to organizations in town, and overnight travel nearby and far away. This type of learning helps students attain the knowledge, skills, and thinking dispositions needed to successfully navigate our rapidly changing world.

Upper School students may also take fully online courses for credit through Global Online Academy, a consortium of 60 leading independent schools in the U.S. and abroad.

ARTS

In the Upper School, students capitalize on the foundation they forged in Middle School to dig deeper and explore further. Faculty support and guide students to examine the arts from varied perspectives and via multiple disciplines. Students’ active participation in drama courses,
instrumental music ensembles, beginning and advanced photography classes, and unique visual arts electives helps prepare them to take risks intellectually, socially, and emotionally.

Students have access to a wide range of fine arts electives taught by talented faculty, many of whom are working professionals in their respective fields. The school offers courses and activities in dance, drama, visual arts, and music (jazz, vocal, and orchestra). UPrep’s orchestra, ensembles, and jazz groups often stand out in competitions. The arts program also offers a strong program in publications. Using state-of-the-art software and professional-grade camera equipment, students learn how to communicate through writing, photography, and graphic design.

ATHLETICS

The Upper School Athletic program is education-based, which allows for students to strive for personal growth. In addition, the athletic experience allows students to work with a diverse group of classmates, and often foster long-lasting friendships on and off the field. The coaching staff promotes balance and supports athletes both in and out of the classroom and focuses on the enduring skills of teamwork, determination, perseverance and healthy competition. Each student is afforded the opportunity to be a member of a team. Last year, over 64% of Upper School students competed on an athletic team.

Sub-varsity teams focus on both team and player development, consistent with the goals and vision for the sport, while varsity teams compete at the League, District, and State-level. Varsity teams strive for excellence under the guidance of the coaching staff and in cooperation with the school’s values of responsibility, integrity, and respect. Students, families and coaches all hold high standards.
for sportsmanship while still being competitive. Upper School teams include cross country, tennis, ultimate frisbee, soccer, volleyball, basketball, baseball, and track and field. Recent accomplishments by University Prep teams include the baseball team being named 2019 WIAA State Champions, girls tennis named as 2019 Emerald City League Champions (for the first time since 1997), and boys tennis receiving a 2019 WIAA Third Place Team Trophy.

**Student Life**

The school day is busy at UPrep, but there are still opportunities outside of class and formal sports for students to enjoy a wide range of activities. UPrep views these extracurriculars as an opportunity for students to engage in leadership and innovation and to connect with the wider community. A number of social activities are planned for students each year, such as overnight hiking trips. But much of the after-school activity is by student choice, including participation in numerous clubs.

In Upper School, clubs reflect a wide range of interests, from social justice to pop culture, hiking to international relations, public speaking to 3D printing. Clubs are entirely student-run, and student leaders work with a faculty advisor to plan club meetings (usually held during Community Time) and activities. New clubs can be proposed by a student at any time, but some longstanding clubs include Mock Trial, the Creative Arts Society, Opera Club, Gender and Sexuality Alliance, Tailgate Club, National Honor Society, Students of Service, Women in Science, and Umbrella (the affinity group for students of color). UPrep has an active community service program in both the Middle and Upper Schools. The Upper School Community Service program specifically asks students to engage with organizations in greater Seattle whose primary purpose or activity is community service. Several times a year, Upper School Service Days find faculty and staff spending a full day volunteering around Seattle with more
than 30 different organizations. Students must complete 20 hours of service each year.

Global Link is the school’s signature global education program. Through immersion-based travel, students learn to observe without judgment, confront values different from their own, and observe the customs of a different place. The goal is for students to build their capacity to develop relationships and cultivate and sustain meaningful global connections. Recent destinations have included Botswana, India, Lithuania, Nepal, Japan, Samoa, and Taiwan. In 2019, UPrep began to integrate Global Link with subject-based academic study and UPrep’s new intensive terms, allowing students to earn subject area credit for many Global Link courses.

Upper School sophomores and juniors interested in pursuing education opportunities beyond UPrep can also receive credit toward graduation through semester- or year-long accredited study abroad or internationally-focused programs.

**CAMPUS**

The current home of University Prep in Northeast Seattle was constructed in the early 1990s. This campus in the Wedgwood neighborhood includes four main buildings: the three-story classroom and administrative building (including a library, cafeteria, and meeting spaces), a classroom building, a gymnasium, and the fine arts center, which features a proscenium theater known as Founder’s Hall as well as art and practice rooms. The adjacent Dahl Playfield is used for sports and other activities.
Seattle, Washington

Seattle today is a world-class, thriving West Coast city surrounded by mountains, lakes, and the Puget Sound. A progressive city, Seattle offers a welcoming environment for all. Its many neighborhoods each have a unique characteristic and identity, and among them are some of the most diverse neighborhoods in the country, particularly in Central, South, and Southeast Seattle.

Today, Seattle is one of the world’s most important high-tech centers — home to Microsoft, Amazon, and other corporations — and is a center for aircraft technology thanks to the Boeing Corporation. The stream of new software, biotechnology, and Internet companies led to an economic revival, which increased the city’s population by almost 50,000 between 1990 and 2000. The region has been growing steadily ever since. The current population of Seattle is around 725,000, with more than three million people living in the greater Seattle area.

While an impressive high-tech city, Seattle is also a fabulous place to unplug and get outdoors year-round. The city offers easy access to the Cascade Mountains and the Olympic National Park with one of the world’s more impressive temperate rainforests. The Puget Sound is a sailing paradise teeming with wildlife. Of course, the region is also well known for its food culture. The city is home to Starbucks, the fabulous Public Market, an amazing variety of restaurants, and more microbrews and coffee shops than one can count.

The city is also a wonderful cultural center. Seattle is famous for its contribution to contemporary music — from Jimi Hendrix to Pearl Jam and Nirvana. It is home to the Seattle Symphony, the Seattle Opera, the Pacific Northwest Ballet, the Seattle Art Museum, and the Museum of Pop Culture. The city is also home to a number of excellent institutions of higher education, including the University of Washington (close to the University Prep campus) and Seattle University. Professional sports teams include the Seattle Mariners, the Seahawks, and the Sounders.
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Build Community During Leadership Transition
The Upper School Head will nurture a sense of community and esprit de corps as a visible presence in the life of the Upper School and delight in knowing, supporting, and celebrating the challenges and achievements of the faculty and students.

Partner with Administrative Team
The Upper School Head will partner with the leadership team to clarify, communicate, and implement strategic priorities and strengthen the overall program. Committed to collaboration, the USH will value authentic and rigorous debate, welcome a diversity of perspectives, and support the working norms of the team.

Manage Distributed Leadership
University Prep has embraced distributed leadership and asks faculty and staff to participate on committees that shape program and culture. The Upper School Head will support the work of committees by clarifying and communicating decision-making and implementation processes, will mentor teacher leaders by delegating responsibilities and providing opportunities for leadership and professional growth, and will optimize communication so that all key constituents understand the how and why of the direction of the Upper School.

Shape and Implement Innovative Curriculum
Over the last few years, UPrep has introduced a new schedule and launched twice-yearly Intensives, providing students with more opportunities for experiential learning and immersion in subjects that inspire their passions. The school has strengthened its already-strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and the social-emotional well-being of its students. The USH will assess and
refine these programs and advance other initiatives that strengthen and deepen the student learning experience.

**Connect Work Across Divisions**

The USH will work closely with the administrative team to improve programmatic integrity, giving particular attention to orientation for new students and families and the transition from Middle to Upper School.

**Support Teacher Professional Growth**

UPrep ensures continued faculty growth through a thorough approach to faculty evaluation and professional development. The Upper School Head will continue to play an important leadership role in the ongoing professional development of the Upper School faculty.

**Desired Qualities and Qualifications**

The next Upper School Head at University Prep will be:

- A community-builder and skilled communicator who loves working with high school students and teachers.
- An experienced classroom educator whose vision for Upper School education meshes well with the forward-looking teachers and administrators at UPrep.
- An approachable leader who is transparent in communication and has an open-door policy.
- A champion of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- A systems-thinker who will amplify existing programmatic strengths.
• A collaborative, inclusive, and process-oriented leader who will work alongside the Upper School faculty and the senior administrative team to further strengthen the Upper School and UPrep as a whole.
• A leader who encourages risk-taking by adults and children and rejoices in the lessons that can be learned from making mistakes.
• As the school manages leadership transition at both the Head of School and Upper School level, comfortableness with ambiguity and a sense of humor are essential.

**TO APPLY**

Interested and qualified candidates should submit electronically in one email and as separate documents (preferably PDFs) the following materials:

• A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
• A current résumé;
• A statement of educational philosophy and practice;
• A list of five professional references with name, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate’s permission) to:

**Bob Fricker**  
Practice Group Leader,  
Domestic Heads of School Practice  
bob.fricker@carneysandoe.com

**Karen Whitaker**  
Search Consultant  
karen.whitaker@carneysandoe.com