

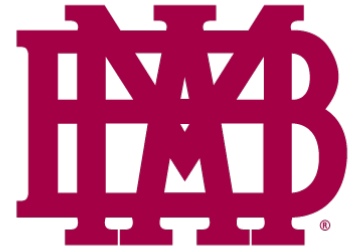
CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER SEARCH

MONTGOMERY BELL ACADEMY

Nashville, Tennessee

montgomerybell.edu

Start Date: July 2026



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission

Montgomery Bell Academy offers young men an exemplary college preparatory experience in an inclusive community, assisting them to be “gentlemen, scholars, and athletes” and young men of wisdom and moral integrity who will make significant contributions to society.

Motto

Strength Through Knowledge

At a Glance



Established
1867



Enrollment
850



Total faculty
110



Endowment
\$150M



Students of color
17%



Financial aid awarded
\$3.3M



Faculty with
advanced degrees
70%



Campus size
45+ acres Main Campus
200+ acres Long Mountain
Campus

Zip codes represented: 50

Faculty of color: 15%

Student/teacher ratio: 8:1

Students receiving aid: 20%

Annual (MBA) Fund: \$4.25M

Annual operating budget: \$39M

Clubs and extracurriculars: 80+

Varsity sports: 17



Overview

Founded in 1867, Montgomery Bell Academy (MBA) is the oldest independent school for boys in Tennessee, serving grades 7-12. MBA offers young men an exemplary college preparatory experience, assisting them to be “gentlemen, scholars, and athletes” and young men of wisdom and moral integrity who will make significant contributions to society. By the time they graduate, students possess critical life skills and a deep understanding of themselves, fully equipped to emerge as leaders in a fast-changing, global society. Montgomery Bell provides a classical education taught in a modern and innovative way that not only instills an intellectual drive in students but also builds life-long traits of empathy, resiliency, honesty, courage, and humility.

MBA seeks an experienced and mission-aligned fundraising professional to serve as the school’s next Chief Advancement Officer (CAO). The appointee will provide clear and creative vision, inspirational leadership, and strategic direction for all aspects of MBA’s advancement program. Reporting to the Head of School, the Chief Advancement Officer will serve on the senior administrative team and help develop institutional priorities and strategies.

The ideal candidate will direct a comprehensive advancement team focused on cultivating, engaging, and stewarding all stakeholders of the MBA community. They will work in close partnership with the Directors of Communications and Admissions to ensure that all constituent interactions are well-coordinated and strategically represent the school’s identity and brand. The Chief Advancement Officer will combine strategic insight with strong relationship-building skills to foster collaboration across the entire MBA community, ensuring that culture, mission, and values remain at the heart of all advancement efforts.

Additionally, the Chief Advancement Officer will serve as a welcoming ambassador for MBA and will be a student-centered colleague who embraces the school’s mission of Gentleman, Scholar, Athlete. All MBA faculty and staff members are expected to guide the boys in pursuing academic excellence and in the importance of kindness, humility, respect, integrity, and perseverance as part of developing a twenty-first century gentleman.



School History

MBA was founded in 1867 by the President of the University of Nashville, John Berrien Lindsley, thanks to the generous donation from the late Montgomery Bell, a Pennsylvanian who came to Tennessee in the early 1800s. When Bell died without heirs in 1855, he left a donation to the University of Nashville for the “education of children not less than ten or more than fourteen years old who are not able to support and educate themselves and whose parents are not able to do so,” and thus Montgomery Bell Academy was born.

Over the past 158 years, MBA has grown tremendously from a two-room school with 26 scholars to 800+ students, three spacious campus locations, and international exchange programs that span the globe. While the school has evolved over the last century, its mission remains the same: to nurture in each MBA student a lifelong commitment to moral integrity and to make significant contributions to society.

The School

The school’s legacy is summed up in its ideal, “Gentleman, Scholar, Athlete.” To accomplish this, the dedicated faculty and staff provide a classical education in a single-sex setting where young men develop strong friendships and the intellectual rigor to thrive in a challenging environment. As Middle Tennessee’s only boys’ school, MBA is a place where a boy’s academic, extracurricular, and emotional needs remain the priority.

The teachers and administrators at MBA are some of the finest educators in the country, and while different teaching styles and pedagogies are employed, a common denominator among all of MBA’s faculty is their fierce dedication to the emotional and intellectual development of each student. Teachers strive to create a collaborative, inclusive environment where young men attain essential foundational skills and competencies while also igniting new passions and interests. The faculty embody the integrity and work ethic MBA expects from its students with seventy percent having earned master’s degrees or higher and twenty-one percent having earned doctorates. Intentional instruction is provided in small class sizes. The arduous work and intellectual rigor yield results: ninety percent of students score three or higher on Advanced Placement exams and the School often leads the state in the number of students with National Merit recognition.



MBA provides a welcoming environment where each student feels valued and respected. Students enjoy extracurricular offerings that forge deep friendships. While MBA students are as diverse as the 50 zip codes from which they come, what they share is a bond in brotherhood linked with a lifelong pursuit of excellence.

MBA benefits from a highly active and supportive network of almost 11,000 alumni who have become leaders within the community, the country, and throughout the world. The school also enjoys a dedicated Board of Trustees committed to maintaining a superior college preparatory education for young men.

Montgomery Bell Academy is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and accredited by the Southern Association of Independent Schools and Cognia.

Nashville, Tennessee

Nashville is a thriving, vibrant city. Over the last decade, Tennessee's capital city has grown rapidly. With a foundation built on music, creative energy fills the city – and not just country music. Artists in every genre, from bluegrass to gospel and everything in between, come to Nashville to create, record, and perform. For fine arts enthusiasts, Nashville showcases a performing arts center, a world-renowned symphony, nationally recognized art museums, and an impressive botanical garden.

With an educational foundation that draws students and professionals from all over the country, Nashville earned the reputation as the “Athens of the South,” a name given to the city filled with educational institutions and classical architecture. Nashville is home to nearly two dozen distinguished universities and colleges, including Vanderbilt University, Fisk University, Tennessee State University, Belmont University, Lipscomb University, and Meharry Medical College. The legacy of higher learning draws people to Nashville to pursue academic degrees and medical training — and the city's welcoming environment often inspires people to make Nashville home long term.



As an international healthcare and technology hub, Nashville also draws both industry giants and start-up entrepreneurs energized to build something great. A buzzing food scene boasts restaurants run by James Beard award-winning chefs and food truck masterpieces – with cuisine of all kinds. Nashville is home to the largest population of Kurdish people in the country.

Sports give Nashvillians much to cheer about as the home of Tennessee Titans football, Nashville Predators hockey, Nashville SC soccer, and the Nashville Sounds minor-league baseball. The city also offers plenty of places to be active, with more than 10,000 acres and greenspaces across the city. With a burgeoning population of two million people, the city remains a small town at heart known best for its creativity, educational foundation, and strength of community.

Campus

MBA's beautiful main campus includes historical buildings and many green spaces in the center of Nashville. The campus consists of eight academic and administrative buildings, a 200,000 square foot, state-of-the-art Wellness Center, and numerous on-campus athletic facilities. Approximately two miles from the main campus is an additional 10 acres of playing fields in the Sylvan Park area.

Just 90 miles from Nashville is MBA's Long Mountain Campus. Long Mountain is home to various ropes course elements, beginning with the Low Ropes Course, which includes a Spider Web, Trust Fall, High Beam, and several other challenges. MBA has also constructed a High Ropes Course, which includes two Ziplines, an Odyssey Course, Giant Swing, Crate Stack, and a Pamper Pole. In 2011, MBA built an observatory with a twenty-four-inch telescope. The clear mountain air and distance from cities make Long Mountain an ideal place for stargazing. In 2020, the campus was expanded to include a pavilion, cabins, and yurts. The pavilion provides an open-air court that is an ideal setting for games, speakers, workshops, and gatherings. Each year, the Montgomery Bell Academy faculty and student body journey to the facility to hold the school's annual Leadership Retreat.



Opportunities and Challenges

The next Chief Advancement Officer will join a mission-driven school community with a robust history of philanthropic support and deep pride in its history and values. The school's engaged parents, loyal alumni, and dedicated faculty, staff, and trustees provide a community-wide network of relationships that the CAO can nurture and expand. With more than 40% alumni participation and remarkable multigenerational ties, MBA's established culture of giving offers a solid foundation for continued philanthropic growth. Building on the longstanding belief in the ideal "gentleman, scholar, athlete," the incoming leader will shape a comprehensive advancement strategy that aligns with MBA's next phase of institutional growth.

The Chief Advancement Officer will provide strategic vision and experienced leadership for the Advancement Office. The Chief Advancement Officer will build a cohesive team environment through mentorship, feedback and collaboration. Ensuring industry best practices and providing hands-on leadership will help support and elevate the performance of an already high-functioning team and program.

Finally, the role presents an opportunity to evaluate and implement enhancements to MBA's advancement operations while preserving its rich traditions and supportive community. The Chief Advancement Officer will balance meaningful personal engagement with industry best practices—leveraging data, systems, and metrics to enhance donor engagement while preserving the warmth and authenticity that define the MBA community. An energized, visible leader who thrives on school-wide involvement and values personal relationships will find this an exceptional opportunity to make a lasting institutional impact.

Responsibilities

Leadership & Management

- Provide vision, strategic direction, and oversight for all aspects of the School's Advancement Office, implementing a fundraising program designed to support the mission and strategic initiatives of the school.
- Supervise, mentor, evaluate and provide feedback for the Advancement team, fostering professional growth, collaboration, and accountability.



- Serve as a key member of the senior administrative team, contributing to MBA's overall strategic planning and institutional priorities.
- Represent the School's mission, values, and strategic goals to both internal and external communities.

Fundraising Strategy

- Oversee all planning and strategy of a comprehensive fundraising program that includes any upcoming capital campaigns, annual giving, planned giving, alumni engagement, data management, events, and special projects.
- Cultivate, solicit, and steward relationships with major donors, alumni, parents, and community partners to maximize philanthropic support.
- Lead the design and successful execution of future major fundraising initiatives, including capital and endowment campaigns.
- Develop and execute both short and long-term advancement plans to achieve annually established goals and program objectives.

Board & Executive Partnership

- Serve as a thought partner and advisor to the Head of School on advancement strategy, donor engagement, and public representation.
- Support the philanthropic work of the Board of Trustees and its committees, providing research, strategy, and materials to assist in donor outreach and stewardship.
- Prepare and present data-driven reports and fundraising analyses to the Head of School and Board of Trustees to inform strategic decision-making.

Community Engagement

- Continue to strengthen a culture of philanthropy among current parents, parents of alumni, alumni, trustees, and friends of MBA.
- Strengthen a robust alumni engagement program, increasing participation and support for annual giving and campaign initiatives.
- Build meaningful relationships across the school community to inspire a shared understanding of philanthropy's role in sustaining excellence at MBA.
- Collaborate with the Director of Marketing and Strategic Communications to develop and implement a strategic communications and marketing plan for the advancement program that articulates the MBA's mission and institutional priorities.



- Engage parents, alumni, and parents of alumni in meaningful, ongoing relationships that enhance their connection to MBA.

Collaboration & Data-Driven Practice

- Partner closely with the Director of Admissions and Financial Aid, CFO, and other senior administrators to align advancement efforts with institutional priorities.
- Ensure accurate and timely gift processing, acknowledgment, and data management across all advancement functions.
- Implement data-informed prospect research and database integrity to ensure accurate donor information and effective pipeline management.

Qualifications and Personal Attributes

- Minimum of ten years of increasing responsibility in educational fundraising;
- Proven track record of fundraising success;
- Experience related to structuring and managing a capital campaign;
- Experience identifying, cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major donors capable of making gifts at the five-, six-, and seven-figure levels.
- Familiarity and comfort working with varying constituencies;
- Familiarity with advancement best practices, preferably in an independent school;
- Superlative written and speaking skills and the ability to inspire others;
- Utmost integrity, humility, and desire to serve the School community;
- Ability to balance multiple priorities in a complex environment;
- Extreme discretion, attention to detail, and commitment to excellence;
- Deep appreciation and understanding of MBA's mission and values;
- Excellent leadership skills, including at least five years of previous work experience successfully managing employees;
- Ability to supervise and motivate a department while working to build on the skills and strengths of direct reports
- Deep grounding in all aspects of development work including annual giving, capital campaigns, major gifts, prospect research, alumni relations, communications, and special events;
- Successful fundraising experience with cultivating, engaging, and expanding donor relationships with a wide variety of donors
- Ability to work effectively with all constituent groups—teachers, parents, students, alumni, and administrative teams;
- Agility, influence, negotiation, and strong judgment and decision-making skills.

Learn More

[Click here](#) to learn more about Montgomery Bell Academy.



To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position
- A current résumé
- List of five professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission)

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