



Assistant Vice President, Benefits & Wellbeing

Position Prospectus

UAB The University of
Alabama at Birmingham.

The Opportunity

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) welcomes inquiries, nominations, and applications for the role of Assistant Vice President, Benefits & Wellbeing (AVPB&W).

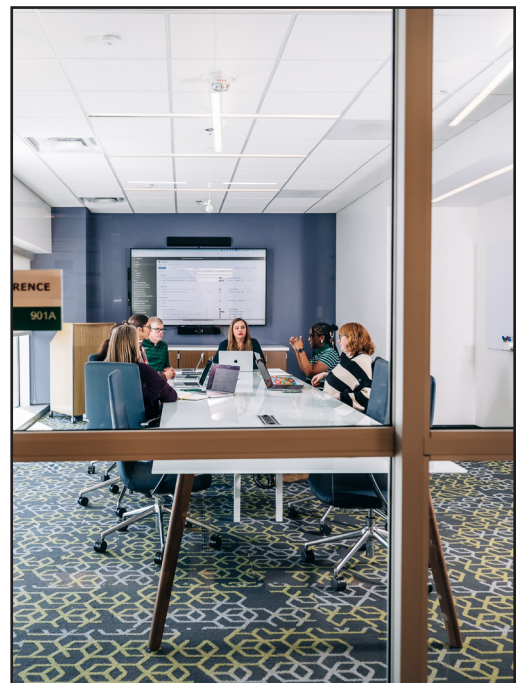
The University of Alabama at Birmingham, a beacon of education, research, and medical excellence, not only operates at the forefront of academic innovation but also stands as the state's largest employer and is hailed as a Best College to Work For, a Best In-State Large Employer, and was selected by Forbes' as America's Number 1 Best Large Employer. Within this dynamic environment, the AVPB&W emerges as a central figure, poised to sculpt the framework of employee support systems across UAB. In addition, the AVPB&W provides strategic oversight and guidance for a 29-member team of specialists that manage Benefits, Wellness, and the Employee Assistance & Counseling Center (EACC). Anchored by the strategic vision of the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO), this role demands a profound understanding of UAB's mission and a commitment to steering the institution's benefits and wellbeing initiatives in alignment with its values.

The AVPB&W must assimilate the intricate relationships that span the University, the UAB Health System, the University of Alabama System, and the nuances of the Teacher's Retirement System. This role demands a leader who can foster unity and cohesiveness — a task requiring both diplomacy and decisiveness — while empowering, inspiring, and maintaining operational excellence without succumbing to the status quo.

The department's long-term vision extends to nurturing team development, succession planning, and carving a strategic future path. The role will be a pivotal component within the organizational hierarchy, reporting directly to the CHRO, acting as a trusted advisor, and interfacing with an intricate web of internal and external stakeholders.

This leader must navigate a complex landscape, one where collaboration and compassion are as vital as strategic acumen. A background steeped in public university or government benefit programs, and a track record of leading complex projects, is essential. The role demands a leader capable of intricate negotiation, one who is unafraid to engage with the political subtleties of large, state-run benefits systems, and who can deliver innovative solutions that are both equitable and competitive.

At its core, success in this role hinges on a delicate balance of attributes: sensitivity to the varied needs of the workforce, strategic communication skills, and a profound understanding of the complexity of a large employer that is both a university and academic medical center. The individual must be both a confidant and a challenger, a visionary and a pragmatist, ready to shepherd UAB through its next chapter of growth and innovation with energy and enthusiasm.



The University

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is part of the University of Alabama System. Since becoming an autonomous campus of the University of Alabama System in 1969, UAB has earned international recognition for its innovative academic programs in a range of disciplines, groundbreaking research and scholarship, and leading-edge patient care. UAB has helped build the future through innovative ideas and initiatives in the classroom, the laboratory, and in the studio and clinic. UAB is in a strong financial position with favorable enrollment trends, aggressive investments in expanding research impact, healthy financial margins, and modest debt.

The total operating budget for UAB in FY25 is \$5,197,600,204, including the University Hospital and Health System Administration. UAB FY24 state educational appropriations totaled \$328,912,180, an increase of 20 percent since 2018. The university has an Aa2 rating from Moody's and an AA+ rating from S&P. View UAB's [Annual Financial Reports](#) and [Budget Summary Books](#).

Vision, Mission & Values

VISION

UAB is a world-class research university and academic health system committed to understanding and improving the human experience.

MISSION

UAB enriches society and improves health and well-being through transformational educational experiences, groundbreaking research, innovation and entrepreneurship, community engagement, and world-class patient care while serving our UAB, local and global communities.

VALUES

UAB Shared Values: We CARE

- **C**ollaborate: Work as a team for the greater good.
- **A**ct with integrity: Be accountable and always do the right thing.
- **R**espect all: Champion diversity and opportunities for all, with civility.
- **E**xcel: Innovate and strive for excellence in everything we do.



Strategic Plan

UAB's strategic plan for 2024-2028, *Forging Ahead*, outlines our mission, vision, values, peers, foundations and pillars, as well as institutional goals, strategies to achieve them, and measurements of success. It also provides a guide and framework for each school, college and unit across the enterprise to update localized strategic plans.

In January 2022, the Strategic Planning Council was launched and charged by President Ray Watts to refresh UAB's 2018-2023 strategic plan, *Forging the Future*. The goal was to guide the institution's continued growth, unprecedented success and positive impact for the next five years, 2024-2028, keeping in mind the importance of the plan's positive impact on the people who make up the UAB community, as well as those in Birmingham, across Alabama and around the world.

Forging Ahead was presented to the campus community on October 25, 2023. The plan is built on the foundations of Financial Sustainability, Diversity, and Environmental Stewardship, with four pillars of focus — Education; Research, Innovation and Economic Development; Community Engagement; and Patient Care.



Research



UAB's robust research enterprise continues the most successful era of extramural research funding in its history. UAB ranks in the top 4 percent among public U.S. universities for NIH awards. UAB annual research expenditures totaled \$780 million in FY23, an 82 percent growth over 10 years. All six UAB health-related schools are top 15 among publics in NIH funding. UAB research encompasses a wide range of disciplines and emerging new fields, and spans the continents in scope: developing revolutionary treatments for the most devastating human diseases, from diabetes to cancer to Alzheimer's disease; pioneering new materials for everything from stronger military gear to bio-coatings for cardiac stents; combating cybercrime perpetrated from computers around the globe in a one-of-a-kind cyber forensics center through collaborations with the FBI, Homeland Security and industry partners such as Facebook and Google; and making significant advances in climatology, marine biology and medicine in the far reaches of Antarctica.

Academics

The university comprises 12 academic units (Schools of Business, Dentistry, Education, Engineering, Graduate School, Health Professions, Medicine, Nursing, Optometry, and Public Health; Honors College; and the College of Arts and Sciences). In fall 2024, UAB welcomed 20,905 enrolled students, seeing a 1.1 percent increase in graduate students and a 3.2 percent increase in doctoral students. Underrepresented groups comprise 55 percent of the student body. UAB was the first academic partner to support the Birmingham Promise scholarship in providing Birmingham City Schools graduates an opportunity to attend the university with a tuition scholarship match and additional academic support.

Academic programs at all levels — undergraduate through postdoctoral — are nationally recognized for exceptional research and service-learning opportunities. Undergraduate programs and the Honors College offer the type of hands-on, closely mentored research experiences found primarily at the graduate level in most universities. In the past few years, UAB has launched new programs in immunology, digital forensics, genetics and genomic sciences, bioinformatics, and cancer biology (B.S.) and neuro-engineering (Ph.D.) that are the first programs of their kind in the nation.

The 2024-2025 Best Global Universities rankings from U.S. News & World Report named UAB in the top 6 percent of global universities, a four-percentage point gain over four years, making it the highest ranked school in Alabama. Twenty-five UAB graduate and specialty programs are ranked in the top 25 (with 10 in the top 10) in U.S. News & World Report Best Graduate School rankings, including the School of Health Professions' Master of Science in Health Administration program, which has been the No. 1 program in the nation since 2019. The Collat School of Business' online Master of Science degree in management information systems received UAB's highest ranking of No. 3 in the 2025 U.S. News & World Report Best Online Programs — marking one of three programs that ranked in the top 25 this year.



Health Sciences & Medical Center

As a nationally and globally competitive academic medical center, UAB provides world-class patient care for the state and region, with roughly 2 million clinical visits annually, and is committed to educating medical professionals and advancing medical science through research. In 2024, UABHS Ascension St. Vincent's officially became UAB St. Vincent's, adding five hospitals and 19 ambulatory facilities to UABHS and increasing access to high-quality, innovative medical care through multiple outlets and health programs. UAB Hospital also has strong ties with other governmental and private nonprofit institutions located within and adjacent to the UAB campus, including Veterans Affairs Medical Center and Children's of Alabama.

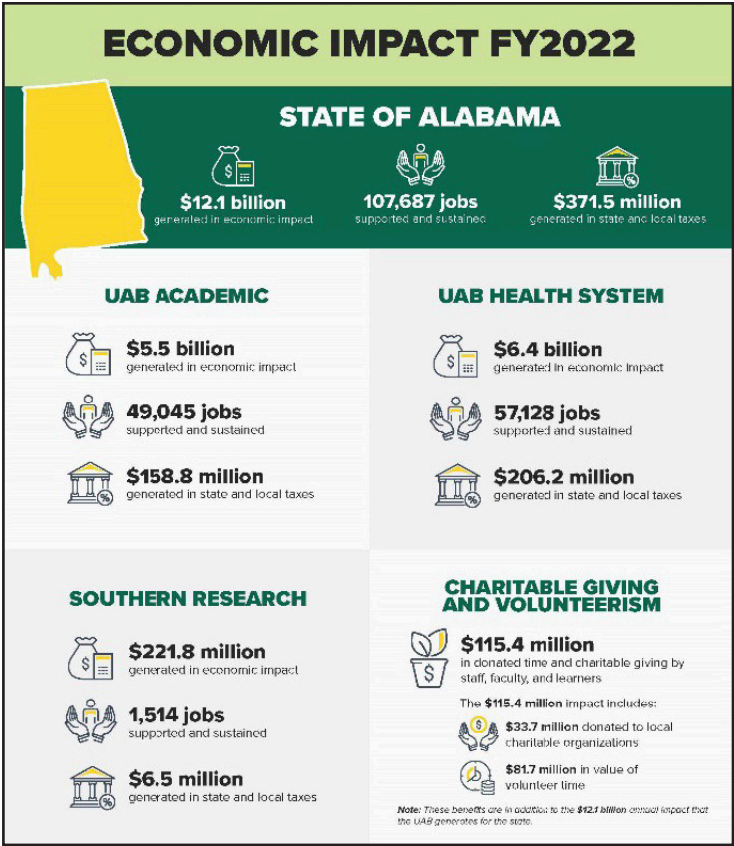
The flagship UAB Hospital is continually ranked the number one hospital in Alabama by U.S. News and World Report. It is also the largest in Alabama and eighth largest in the U.S., with 1,207 beds. UAB Hospital is the state's only Level I Trauma Center accredited by the American College of Surgeons, and is currently undergoing a \$73M expansion to meet the 20 percent volume increase in the past five years. The O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB is the only NCI-designated center in Alabama and is a national leader in driving cancer research, treatment, and training.



Innovation & Economic Impact

Driven by an intensely collaborative and entrepreneurial character, UAB is the economic engine of the region with a statewide economic impact exceeding \$12.1 billion annually. A [report](#) prepared by economic development consulting firm TrippUmbach for FY2022 showed the UAB's annual economic impact in Alabama grew from \$4.6 billion in 2008 and \$7.15 billion in 2016 to \$12.1 billion in 2022 — a 41 percent increase since 2016 and a 163 percent increase since 2008. UAB is Alabama's largest single-site employer, with over 35,000 faculty and staff, and supports more than 107,600 jobs statewide — one of every 20 Alabama jobs. UAB's decades-long partnership with its community and state has led to the economic, cultural, and social renaissance of Birmingham — the state's largest metro area, with a population of 1.1 million — as the city has grown from a primarily steel-based economy to a thriving nexus of R&D, medicine, banking, and other service industries.

The UAB Harbert Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (HIIE) is accelerating commercialization and training tomorrow's entrepreneurs. In FY24, HIIE achieved its tenth straight year with a positive bottom line. In 2024, HIIE generated \$6.5 million in revenues, 124 Intellectual Property Disclosures, 17 U.S. patents, and five startups. UAB continues collaborating with Southern Research, Innovation Depot, the City of Birmingham, Jefferson County Commission, Birmingham Business Alliance, the corporate community, and other partners to foster a robust technology-based economy for the region and state.



Community Impact

In 2019, UAB named Mona Fouad's "Live HealthSmart Alabama" project the winning proposal of the university's first [Grand Challenge](#), a key component of UAB's strategic plan, *Forging the Future*. As the winner, Fouad's team is supported with a five-year, \$5 million award from the university to fund the initial effort to address and improve the state's low health rankings. The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2020 highlighted the impact of UAB on society to build healthier communities, ranking UAB first in the United States and seventh in the world for achieving good health and well-being community outreach. [Live HealthSmart Alabama](#) aims to improve the health outcomes in Alabama by 2030 by addressing changes in policies, neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces. To date, Live HealthSmart Alabama has provided more than 4,200 comprehensive health screenings and served more than 11,900 customers in 40 communities with its Mobile Market.



The employee-led Benevolent Fund has donated more than \$4.95 million in emergency funds to employees in crisis as well as \$44 million to more than 250 local nonprofits. As of 2025, UAB employees and students completed their eighth Habitat for Humanity House, with 3,998 volunteers contributing 18,091 hours of their time. Blazer Pulse, a community service application, has logged over 100,000 hours of service with an estimated economic impact of \$3.6 million.

In December 2020, UAB became the first U.S. university to adopt the Okanagan Charter and to be recognized internationally as a Health Promoting University. UAB's work to promote bee conservation and growth was recognized by being named a Bee Campus USA by Bee City USA.

Additional outreach initiatives include UAB's partnership with the City of Birmingham to create a smoke-free Health District on Birmingham's Southside and a collaboration with Lakeshore Foundation on rehabilitative science research to improve the quality of life for individuals with physically disabling conditions.

Arts



UAB promotes the cultural and artistic vitality of its community and state. The Alys Stephens Center is Birmingham's home for the performing arts, hosting the Alabama Symphony Orchestra, internationally renowned musicians, and performances by UAB's departments of music and theater. The Alys Stephens Center also takes the arts into the community through its ArtPlay and Arts in Medicine — and is the anchor of UAB's Cultural Arts Corridor, which includes the state-of-the-art Abroms-Engel Institute for Visual Arts.

The Location

Birmingham, Alabama

Located in the heart of the Southeast, Birmingham is a short drive from Atlanta, Nashville, New Orleans, Memphis, the Blue Ridge Mountains, and Gulf Coast beaches. Birmingham has been recognized as an "All-American City" by the National Civic League, as one of the top 10 American cities to live and work, one of the top 10 entrepreneurial and job growth hot spots in America and Conde Nast Traveler's pick for one of 22 Best Places to Go in 2022.

Downtown Birmingham has enjoyed a revitalization in recent years, with the development of Railroad Park, an award-winning urban park, and its adjacent Regions Field, home to the minor league Birmingham Barons. The park and stadium projects have kickstarted major growth in surrounding districts, including craft breweries, boutique shops, restaurants, loft and apartment buildings, innovative workspaces, and hotels. Birmingham was selected to serve as the host city of the 2022 World Games. [UAB played a major role](#) in coordinating the spectacular event, providing athletic venues and hosting 3,600 athletes from more than 100 countries.

Birmingham is also a renowned culinary destination, with one of its signature restaurants recently winning two James Beard Foundation awards and many other restaurants named as finalists. There are a host of attractions only a short walk from UAB's campus. The Birmingham Civil Rights District National Monument, composed of sites such as Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, Kelly Ingram Park, and the Civil Rights Institute, is a major destination for visitors from around the world. Birmingham's cultural scene is thriving, with museums, galleries, music and arts festivals, theaters and live music venues, a professional ballet company, a professional opera company, a School of Fine Arts, the Jazz Hall of Fame, the recently restored historic Lyric and Alabama theaters, and UAB's Alys Stephens Performing Arts Center, home of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. Birmingham is in proximity to many state and national parks, lakes, urban greenspaces, and hiking and biking trails. The city has more green space per capita than any other major city in the United States. [Explore Birmingham online](#).



Assistant Vice President, Benefits & Wellbeing

SUMMARY

Under the direction of the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO), provides strategic vision for Benefits and Wellbeing ensuring resources and actions align with UAB's mission, vision and values. Leads the comprehensive planning, evaluation, design and administration of the University benefits and wellbeing policies and programs. Monitors industry trends and best practices in order to provide recommendations for benefits and wellbeing plan improvements. Leads and oversees benefits and wellbeing staff in the execution of operational tasks in support of these policies. Directs compliance efforts including tracking legislative and regulatory changes and modifying plan provisions and administrative procedures to ensure all new and existing laws and regulatory requirements are properly implemented. Recommends and directs the development of communication mechanisms to promulgate new benefits policies and procedures in order to develop a clear understanding of benefits policies and procedures and maintain high motivation and morale among employees. Serves as lead of Benefits and Wellbeing committees within the University and for the University of Alabama System for Executive, Supplemental and Retirement benefits plans. Provides sound advice and guidance to University top management, managers and supervisors to coordinate benefits policy and procedures, resolve benefits problems and maintain consistent applications of benefits practices campus-wide. Coordinates University wellbeing with existing benefits programs to determine outcomes and effectiveness of wellbeing efforts. Coordinates total employee wellbeing across the University including the Employee Assistance & Counseling Center and other associated programs. Manages interactions with the Teachers' Retirement System and benefits plan vendors to ensure all contractual obligations, including performance guarantees and regulatory responsibilities, are fulfilled.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- Leads the comprehensive planning, evaluation, design and administration of the University benefits and wellbeing policies. Evaluates benefits needs and trends to make recommendations that are responsive to the University's business objectives. Directs compliance efforts including tracking legislative and regulatory changes and modifying benefits plan provisions and administrative procedures to ensure all new and existing laws and regulatory requirements are properly implemented.
- Develops, tests and recommends benefits policies, plans and objectives that contribute toward overall effectiveness and efficiency of the University's benefits practices under the guidance of the CHRO. Ensures the University's benefits program is internally equitable and externally competitive in order to attract, retain and develop qualified individuals and maintain overall employee morale and productivity. Monitors campus-wide benefits management effectiveness through formal meetings, personal interactions and computer-based analysis.
- Recommends and directs the development of communication mechanisms to promulgate new benefits policies and procedures in order to develop a clear understanding of benefits policies and procedures and maintain high motivation and morale among employees.
- Provides sound advice and guidance to the University's top management, managers and supervisors for coordinating benefits policy and procedures, resolving benefits problems, and

maintaining consistent applications of benefits practices campus-wide.

- Provides sound advice and assistance to the CHRO and top management regarding new and revised state and federal laws and regulations that affect the University as an employer. Ensures University's human resources benefits policies, procedures and practices are in compliance with new and revised laws and regulations.
- Serves as lead of Benefits and Wellbeing committees for the University and the University of Alabama System for Executive, Supplemental and Retirement benefits plans.
- Provides strategic direction and oversight for the UAB Wellbeing program. Coordinates wellbeing efforts with existing benefits programs to determine outcomes and effectiveness of wellbeing efforts. Ensures programs/services are comprehensive, professional, confidential, promote healthy lifestyles and reduce health care costs.
- Promotes the EACC enterprise-wide and identifies ways to partner with other UAB services.
- Coordinates total employee wellbeing across the University, including the EACC and other associated programs.
- Assists in developing the annual budget for the Department of Human Resource Management as directed by the CHRO. Assists in monitoring actual department results to determine compliance with budget and forecast potential problems. Monitors benefits costs to ensure they remain within budget guidelines.
- Leads, directs and supervises the Benefits and Wellbeing staff; interviews, hires, trains, evaluates, disciplines and discharges departmental staff, as appropriate.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Bachelor's degree in Human Resources or a related field and ten (10) years of related experience required. Work experience may NOT substitute for education requirement.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Approximately three (3) direct reports and approximately twenty-six (26) indirect reports.

DESIRED SKILLS

- Ability to build trust and consensus across diverse internal and external stakeholders
- Demonstrated ability to develop and lead long-term strategies for benefits and wellbeing.
- Skilled in leading cross-functional teams, including HR staff and university-wide stakeholders
- In-depth knowledge of health, retirement, and supplemental benefits.
- Strong understanding of wellbeing program design, including integration with benefits.
- Data-Driven and Results-Oriented
- Experience optimizing benefits service delivery models and digital tools
- Familiarity with public-sector retirement systems, such as TRS (Teachers' Retirement System)

BUDGETARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Management of funds with signatory and/or budget authority.



Applications

LeadExec is partnering with The University of Alabama at Birmingham in this national search.

For inquiries, nominations, applications, and confidential conversations, please contact:



Lisa J. Marks, Founder & CEO

Leyla Kayi, Senior Search Consultant

413-335-6936 | avpbenefitsandwellbeing@leadexec.com

This position is open until filled but only applications received by Thursday, September 4, 2025 can be assured full consideration. Applications should include a detailed letter of interest and a current curriculum vitae/resume.

UAB is an Equal Employment/Equal Educational Opportunity Institution dedicated to providing equal opportunities and equal access to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, sex (including pregnancy), genetic information, age, disability, and veteran's status. As required by Title IX, UAB prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to UAB's Assistant Vice President and Senior Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX notice of nondiscrimination is located at uab.edu/titleix.

