



Chuck Ambrose

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THE LINK VIRTUAL

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OVERVIEW

After 40 years in college presidents' offices—and 23 years as a president himself—Chuck supports educational institutions and their leaders with a student-centered focus, helping them access and utilize new tools to build a sustainable future for higher ed.

Chuck would be the first to tell you that his undergraduate experience changed his life, thanks in part to the personal interest his college's president took in his life and his potential. He graduated knowing the positive impact higher education and its leadership could have on young people, and he chose to dedicate his career to the field. Chuck devoted the next four decades to a variety of colleges and universities, experiencing both public and private institutions of all sizes. His higher ed career culminated in a stint as president of the University of Central Missouri, where he earned the Governor's Economic Development Award for the creation of the Missouri Innovation campus, and then as chancellor of Henderson State University, where he arrived during a severe financial crisis and achieved the largest cost containment in the shortest amount of time for a four-year public university.

Excited about the opportunity to share strategies and offer tangible support to other college and university leaders, Chuck joined Husch Blackwell in 2023. He works with the firm's higher education clients as a consultant, with a focus on policy, strategy, and enhancing institutional performance and outcomes. The author of *Colleges on the Brink: The Case for Financial Exigency*, Chuck knows that the paradigm for higher ed has permanently

Industry

Education

Services

Collegiate Athletics

Higher Education

shifted in recent years and that schools and their leaders are searching for new skills and new tools as they look to build a sustainable, data-driven model for the future.

In Chuck, clients find an active listener who deeply understands their world and empathizes with their challenges. His goal is to support institutions not just in fulfilling their missions but in achieving their performance aspirations, and he partners with schools in asking what's possible...then ensuring they have the support they need to accomplish it.

Experience

- With the Association of Governing Boards, developed the Strategic Governance Model for Student Success. The model was highlighted as a case study in the March/April 2013 issue of *Trusteeship*.
- With rpk Group and Rick Staisloff, developed the Strategic Resource Allocation Model at the University of Central Missouri. The SRAM model produced significant results including a major administrative review process yielding significant costs savings, new budget process, and academic performance portfolio that identified signature programs; eliminated duplication of programs, courses; and sections; flattened administrative overhead; and provided data to restructure the academic administration.
- With Complete College America, Lumina, Strada, and the Governor of Missouri, developed a student success model at the University of Central Missouri. Was a team member of Missouri's first college completion team at the national convening/innovation lab for Complete College. Served as a resource to the Strada Foundation's Completion with a Purpose providing technical assistance to MSI institutions. These student success initiatives moved the University of Central Missouri's completion rates to the highest for any public four-year institution in the state.
- With the support from the Lumina and Kauffman Foundations, created the Missouri Innovation Campus. Driven by a complex set of partnerships with K-12 schools districts, a community college system, a four-year university, and business/industry, students were able to graduate with less costs, half the time, no skills gap, and without student loan debt. This set of partnerships also provided a new \$40 million shared facility in Lees Summit, Missouri. The Governor of Missouri and President Obama called it "a model for the nation."

Experience

- Implemented a financial exigency at Henderson State University (as a tool for transformation) and a cost containment initiative representing the largest reduction in spending (as a percentage of operating funds) in the shortest amount of time for a public four-year university. The initiative is the focus of a Chronicle of Higher Education Newsroom Report "Restructuring a University: How One Institution is Staying Viable."
- With the NCAA, designed and implemented a strategic positioning platform for Division II in 2006 that is still in use by the association today. Served as Chair of the Division II President's Council and member of the Executive Committee and Administrative Council, and currently as a member of the Gender Equity Task Force.
- With the Education Advisory Board, was an earlier adopter, thought partner, and beta for both the Student Success Collaborative and Academic Performance Solutions. These tools utilized our institutional initiatives to build models that evolved into their current products Navigate and Edify.
- With the U.S. Air Force, created a model military/university partnership (the Whiteman Advantage) that was utilized by bases, communities, and institutions across the Air Force's Global Strike Command.
- Partnered with BlueKC to build a new healthcare model that utilizes a data informed and outcome driven series of partnerships between payer, participant, and providers. This model shared data across from BlueKC to a provider network, changed the overall benefit structure for employees, reduced their healthcare costs, and created institutional savings that totaled \$5 million a year or one third of the university's total costs.
- As CEO of Knowledgeworks, utilized two merger/acquisition processes to acquire the Students at the Center Research Collaborative from Jobs for the Future and to transfer the StrivePartnership 501(c)(3) organization to a new Cradle to Career organization in partnership with YMCA of Greater Cincinnati.

Recognition

- Commander's Service Medal, Commander of U.S. Global Strike Command, U.S. Air Force, 2018
- 2018 Honor Flight in the B-2 Bomber – Whiteman Air Force Base and Global Strike Command, the 690th individual to fly in a B-2 Bomber (Spirit # 690), U.S. Air Force
- Governor's Economic Development Advancement Award for Missouri, 2013

Education

- Ed.D., University of Georgia
 - Higher Education Administration
- M.A., University of Louisville
 - Higher Education Administration
- B.A., Furman University
 - Sociology

Community Leadership

- Cradle to Career Cincinnati, Board of Directors, 2020-2021
- Furman University Board of Trustees, 2021-present
- Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce, 2010-2018
- Air Force Global Strike Command Civic Leaders, Emerti Member
- Whiteman Air Force Base Community Council, 2010-2018
- Kansas City Area Development Council, Board Member, 2012-2016



2024 Project Perspectives:
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