

17 October 2024

Dear Hiring Committee:

I hope you and your loved ones have been healthy and well. I am writing to express my strong interest in the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) opening at Michigan Tech. As a child of immigrants and a first-generation college graduate, I began my educational journey from humble beginnings, starting with community college and ultimately earning my MBA from Columbia University – made possible by the G.I. Bill after distinguished service in the US Army. My professional journey spans the full range in higher education across public and private institutions, from budget planning and analysis to institutional effectiveness, from student affairs to enrollment management, from strategic planning to operational excellence, to serving as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Chief Business Officer (CBO). As Michigan Tech's next CFO, I will bring my experience, leadership, credibility, and values, coupled with vision, energy, innovation, and passion. I am inspired by the Portrait of 2045 – to be *a global technological university that inspires students, advances knowledge, and innovates to create a sustainable, just, and prosperous world*, and would relish the opportunity to my talents to meet the goals of Portrait 2035 – *strong partner for change in Michigan*.

Across the nation, higher education is facing a most pivotal moment. I understand the complexity of serving and leading complex organizations and taking on these challenges. I have served at all levels in higher education across public and private institutions, from student affairs to institutional effectiveness, from strategy to organizational building, to CFO and COO roles. Critically, I bring extensive understanding of the economics of institution building, strategic planning, enrollment management, and fostering a community of belonging. I have led organizations from early-stage startups (\$4M) to federal departments with multi-million dollar budgets (\$180M+) to overseeing complex university operations (\$300M+) with substantial endowments and investment portfolios (\$275M). As an executive leader and corporate officer, I work daily in a shared governance structure on the most critical issues, challenges, and opportunities facing the institution. My ability to align resources to university priorities, manage complex priorities, and identify new revenue generation opportunities would align with the needs of Michigan Tech as it navigates strategic growth and innovation.

My leadership, management, and technical skills have been forged in diverse settings around the world—learning and adapting to different cultures and attitudes. I have managed multi-campus operations in regions as challenging as Afghanistan, Liberia, and China, building strategic initiatives from conception, designing and recruiting teams from scratch, re-launching and accrediting a university, executing technical ERP systems implementations, and institutional evaluation and realignment. My experience has provided me world-class training and opportunities to learn what right looks like. My career includes financial and administrative services across R1 research universities and teaching colleges, functional expertise as a US Government Contracting Officer, capital construction as a civil engineer, international operations and logistics in overseas military deployments, multiple technical system implementations under my belt, and consulting on best practices in data governance, HR, and financial management.

Invest in and support the team.

My top priority, my focus, is and will always be on students. An institution must deliver the highest quality and most transformative educational experiences possible to its students. I will be a leader for students. My experience serving in higher education has taught me that we get to be a part of students' lives. I saw this during my time teaching seminars and bridge programs. I see this as I work alongside the Student Government to improve the student experience. I see this as an academic advisor and career mentor for students. I see this as an executive leader whose daily decisions profoundly impact all aspects of a student's journey and life. We have an awesome responsibility to shape an institutional environment to change a student's life. Students first.

The lynchpin of academic excellence is ensuring that faculty are enabled and empowered to do the core work of the institution – *educating students, advancing knowledge, and innovating* – to deliver student success. I will be a leader for faculty. As leaders, we must do everything we can to ensure faculty can deliver their very best to our

students. By delivering the best experiences to our faculty, they will in turn do the same with our students. This is how we create cycles of excellence and high performance. In my current shared governance structure, I collaborate closely with the Academic Senate leadership and my faculty co-chairs to strategically develop programs and offerings to deliver teaching, scholarship, and service. I lead from the front in ensuring my faculty colleagues have a voice, are enabled, and have the best resources available to deliver outcomes that lead to student success.

A university's staff are often the unsung members of the team. Staff members are the tireless professionals who make an organization work. From administrators and accountants to custodians and safety officers, staff are integral to ensuring that we deliver to the community every day. I will be a leader for staff. This is a perspective I embrace with experience and passion, and I have led teams of over 200 staff, providing 24/7 operations and support on our campuses. I am zealous about staff retention to ensure we help build fulfilling careers that matter. I lead professional development and have overhauled employee onboarding and training. I've chaired organizational design committees, continuously assessing, aligning, and allocating our staffing resources to ensure inclusiveness and accessibility. Leading divisions with by far the most unionized staff members, my work with unions is one of the most rewarding parts of my job. I treasure our shared commitment to people.

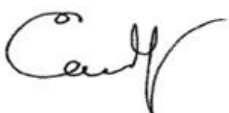
Administrative Excellence.

The position description calls for a CFO who is a highly experienced executive financial and administrative officer who will help fiscally lead the university to achieve the Portrait of Michigan Tech 2035 vision. From financial management to academic support, institution building to development, my robust professional career has proven experience in all the requirements. I am a strategic leader with technical expertise. I move partnerships of faculty and staff in the same direction. I am energetic and passionate. As a servant leader, I build outstanding teams and empower them. I set vision and drive direction. I share and I inform. I drive innovation and I enable ownership of performance. I am proud to have led multiple teams that have accomplished unparalleled objectives. Having spent decades leading large organizations across a diversity of domains, it gives me great joy to build and lead teams that directly contribute to improving the community and our future.

It takes a resourceful leader to marshal resources to expand the pursuit of academic excellence and to address the changing marketplace. I have specific subject matter expertise in enabling innovative strategy and vision, enrollment growth, financial forecasting, budgeting, and ultimately execution. Relevant examples include: leading operational excellence at top universities, developing public-private partnerships for funding, implementation of generative AI tools, modernizing student information systems, over \$400M in capital construction, building grant-funded guided pathway programs, re-aligning benefits and compensation structures, designing and building engaging space for student life, and shepherding public bonds for facilities development. I have managed multi-campus operations in periods of both economic growth and financial constraint—taking initiatives from conception, building departments from scratch, executing strategic plans, guiding change management, and subsequently evaluating and adapting.

Michigan Tech is a special place, and I would be honored for the opportunity to be considered for this role. My background and character are uniquely suited to accomplish this, and my proven experience would serve as an asset to the entire university community – *to prepare students to create the future*. I am confident that my track record in strategic leadership, lessons learned across a diversity of global-reaching organizations, tempered with diplomatic interpersonal skills, make me an ideal candidate to hit the ground running. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Calvin Yu', with a stylized, cursive script.

Calvin Yu