

Richard L. Ludwick, MA, JD, DEd

February 4, 2026

Dr. Rick Gallot
President, University of Louisiana System
University of Louisiana at Lafayette Presidential Search
ullpresidentialsearch@ulsystem.edu

Dear Dr. Gallot and Members of the Search Committee:

I'm excited to express my keen interest in the presidency of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Acadian, Carnegie R 1, and with a mandate to drive both academic excellence and economic vitality, this is truly a rare university. Elevating UL Lafayette through strategic vision, transformational leadership, community engagement, and campus unity resonates with the heart of my key leadership strengths. Let's seize this moment!

A distinctive aspect of my background—positioning me uniquely for this role—is my seven years as President of Independent Colleges of Indiana, a statewide association representing more than thirty institutions, including some of America's legendary brands. In that role, I served as its leader—the ambassador of a sector of higher education; I was an advocate, a coalition builder, and a navigator of the political landscape of higher education at the state and national levels. I authored and championed legislation, secured more than \$400 million in state funding through bipartisan coalition building, and engaged state budget committees, the legislature, and the governor's office with a consistent message: independent *and* public higher education serves the entire state. That experience empowers me to deliver an essential attribute as UL Lafayette's next president—move elected officials, policymakers, and the broader public toward bold support for higher education.

At the University of St. Thomas in Houston, I had the privilege of leading a university through seven consecutive years of transformational growth. We doubled undergraduate enrollment, launched and scaled online programs that earned the institution recognition as Houston's number one online university, grew athletics from a small program to a nationally competitive intercollegiate operation with over 400 student-athletes and fifteen

new teams, and raised more than \$120 million in philanthropic support—including the largest gift in the university’s history. We expanded the endowment by 80 percent to \$160 million, opened three new campuses, and turned a university that had been struggling with structural deficits into one that was setting records every single year. The board honored my service with the title President Emeritus. None of that happened because of any single initiative. It happened because we built a culture of collaboration, transparency, and shared governance—and then we executed with relentless focus.

UL Lafayette’s Carnegie R1 designation is a strategic asset I would support. Previously, I have expanded interdisciplinary research, supported faculty development, and promoted data-informed decision-making. I advocate for the integration of research for knowledge *and* applied purposes. I’ve led institutions aligning academic programs with regional economic and workforce needs. My advisory board service at the Texas Medical Center provided insight into high-level research and its leadership issues. At UST, we reformed the Business School with regional industry leaders, expanded nursing education, and launched doctoral programs. I’ve demonstrated the capacity to pursue research distinction and economic relevance simultaneously.

Student success is, in the end, the reason every other priority exists. UL Lafayette’s commitment to retention, completion, and post-graduation outcomes is one I share. At UST, we were recognized as America’s number one private Hispanic Serving Institution and were highlighted by the U.S. Department of Education for student success outcomes. We built pathways for first-generation, nontraditional, and graduate students, invested heavily in career outcomes—achieving placement rates in the upper-nineties—and created a student experience that generated excitement and loyalty. I brought that same energy and intentionality to the enrollment question: we achieved more than 100 percent undergraduate enrollment growth over seven years through strategic marketing, segmented campaigns, and a student-centered model that extended well beyond admissions into the entire arc of a student’s experience. UL Lafayette’s record-setting freshman class and its growing graduate population suggest momentum that is already strong. My role would be to accelerate it.

The Ragin’ Cajuns are more than an athletics program; they are the pulse of campus life and a powerful ambassador for the university across Louisiana and beyond. I understand that viscerally. At UST, athletics was one of the most transformative investments we made—not because of championships alone, though we won plenty—but because athletic

success created a sense of institutional pride, drew prospective students, unified alumni, and built brand recognition in ways that no marketing campaign could replicate. Growing that program from a small operation into a nationally competitive force taught me that the president's role in athletics is not to manage it but to champion it: to ensure it has the resources, the leadership, and the institutional support it needs to thrive. UL Lafayette's ninety-one conference titles and the energy surrounding Cajun Field tell me this is a program that is already thriving. I would be honored to steward it.

UL Lafayette's role as an engine of economic development in Acadiana and across Louisiana is a great attraction for me to this position. Strengthening public-private partnerships, raising the university's role in workforce development, and engaging elected officials and business leaders is not aspirational for me—it is a description of how I have operated throughout my career. At ICI, we built a statewide coalition with business and government that secured unprecedented levels of relevant talent for industry and support for higher education. At UST, we established over 200 regional partnerships, worked directly with the City of Conroe to build a community-facing innovation center, and aligned academic programs with the workforce needs of the Houston metropolitan area. The recruitment of First Solar to the UL Lafayette ecosystem is the kind of milestone that a president in this role should be catalyzing—and it is the kind of partnership that I have built and sustained.

The University's financial complexity and vitality require proven capacity to optimize both for even greater success. My track record of propelling organizations to sustained growth through diversified increases of both revenue and capital aligns with that potential. My financial strategies for sustained growth are solid. I have guided short, mid, and long-term financial plans that erased structural deficits, doubled gross revenue while managing annual budgetary challenges, and amassed significant asset increases. Over my career, I was responsible for the raising of more than \$660 million in philanthropic and governmental support. At UST, we grew the endowment by 80 percent, secured the largest gift and three largest grants in university history, and turned a financially deficient institution into one that was investing and growing simultaneously. We did that not by cutting corners but by building a culture of fiscal accountability, transparent resource allocation, and strategic investment—and by cultivating donor relationships with patience and genuine engagement. UL Lafayette's 64 percent self-generated revenue base and its growing philanthropic portfolio suggest an institution ready to make a bold move. I am ready for it!

Lafayette is more than just a city; it is a culture. Acadiana's music, its food, its language, its deeply held traditions—these are not peripheral to UL Lafayette. They are its identity. The profile calls for a president with a genuine respect for Louisiana's cultural heritage and an enthusiasm for the university's role in preserving and celebrating it. I bring to that aspiration an understanding, from my own roots in rural Indiana and my years living in the South, that culture is not something you manage or market. It is something you inhabit, honor, and allow to shape the way you lead. I grew up in a small community where the rhythms of the land, the bonds between neighbors, and the unspoken expectations of service and reciprocity shaped everything. That sensibility—community as foundation, not as backdrop—is one I will carry into every conversation and every decision at UL Lafayette.

UL Lafayette's shared governance—Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and Student Government Association—builds presidential leadership and trust. I've operated with shared governance, believing the people closest to the work—faculty, staff, students—have unmatched knowledge and perspective.

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette is at a remarkable inflection point. It has just re-earned R1 distinction. It has a student body that is growing, an athletics program that is winning, and a research portfolio that is expanding. What it needs now is a new president who can marshal that momentum and maximize it—with vision, with discipline, with deep respect for the community, and with the kind of relentless, collaborative energy that turns good institutions into great ones. I hope you find in my passion, experience, and drive that leader. I would be truly honored to serve the Ragin' Cajuns, the people of Acadiana, and the state of Louisiana.

With sincere respect and enthusiasm,

Richard

Richard L. Ludwick

Enclosure: Curriculum Vitae

Richard L. Ludwick

MA, JD, DEd

SUMMARY

Accomplished chief executive with proven abilities to lead institutions through transformational change. Demonstrated excellence in graduate program development, fiscal stewardship, enrollment strategy, and community building across multiple traditions and institutional contexts. Deep expertise in statewide higher education policy, bipartisan coalition building, and state-level legislative engagement. Track record of turning institutional challenges into sustained growth. Upon concluding my presidency at the University of St. Thomas, the board honored me with the title President Emeritus.

EDUCATION

Doctor of Education <i>University of Oregon</i>	Master of Arts (Higher Education) <i>Columbia University</i>
Certificate (Mediation) <i>University of Oregon</i>	Doctor of Jurisprudence <i>Indiana University</i>
	Bachelor of Arts (History) <i>University of Evansville</i>

EXECUTIVE EXPERIENCE

President (2017–2024) | President Emeritus (2025–present)

University of St. Thomas, Houston, TX

Catholic university; graduate, undergraduate, and professional programs; ~4,000+ students; 500 employees

Strategic Vision & Research Excellence

- Rallied all stakeholders around a collaborative strategic vision, executing seven consecutive years of record-setting growth
- Eliminated structural deficits, set long-term success trajectory, and increased investments and revenue simultaneously
- Led institutional rebranding and repositioning, creating “neighborhoods” strategy for student attraction and success
- Launched integrated, segmented marketing campaigns; record-setting increases in applications seven consecutive years
- Embodied and championed Basilian charisms as the organizing philosophy of institutional strategy and culture
- Built a collaborative, transparent leadership environment; recruited and coached a superior executive team that exceeded plan goals
- Engineered the Kolbe School of Innovation and Professional Studies, aligning academics with workforce needs, interdisciplinary research and grant funding
- Reformed Business School with input from a blue-ribbon task force of regional business and industry leaders
- Expanded nursing education across three new campuses, launched aster's and doctoral offerings

Student Success, Access & Engagement

- Achieved 100%+ undergraduate enrollment increase to 3,500+ students over seven consecutive years, below national average discount rate, increased net revenue per student

- 100%+ gross revenue growth driven by strategic enrollment and program expansion
- Named America's #1 private Hispanic Serving Institution; highlighted by U.S. Department of Education for student success
- Strengthened student retention, engagement, and holistic support services across all delivery modalities, "high impact practices"
- Started "Rising Stars" internship program, partnership with businesses for workforce alignment, student success, and jobs
- Invested in career outcomes achieving a 97% job rate and record-high employer visits
- Expanded pathways for nontraditional, first-generation, and graduate students through flexible, high-quality programs

Economic Development, Partnerships & Community Impact

- Worked with City of Conroe and established a MAX Center; built 200+ regional partnerships
- Launched highly regarded magazine, popular MAX Studios digital studio, and redesigned website
- Center stage player for marquee events; led public relations "Big Play" implementation
- Managed organizational operations for 500 employees across multiple sites with fiscal accountability
- Increased compensation for faculty and staff to competitive, mission-sustaining levels

Athletics, Foundations & Institutional Advancement

- Grew athletics program: 300 additional student-athletes, 15 new teams, NCAA membership, conference dominance, and national esports championships (4X growth rate)
- Raised over \$120MM in philanthropic support; secured the largest gift and three largest grants in UST history
- Built deep alumni engagement: attendance, giving, and gala success (e.g., \$2.4M Beach Boys Gala)
- Expanded endowment by 80% to \$160MM through disciplined resource allocation, strategic investment, and philanthropic success
- Opened 3 new campuses; positioned a \$55MM residence hall project
- Launched and scaled online university programs; named #1 "online university" in Houston
- Cultivated meaningful relationships with alumni and supporters to advance the university's mission and vision

President (2010–2017)

Independent Colleges of Indiana, Inc.

Statewide association representing 30+ independent colleges and universities; nonprofit advocacy and services organization

- Secured \$540MM+ in funding (philanthropic and governmental) through bipartisan coalition building
- Authored and championed legislation; obtained state aid (#1 in Midwest, \$400M+)
- Big D nexus: engaged state assembly, committees (IN), legislature, and governor's office
- Created statewide Risk Management Association (property & casualty insurance pool)
- Created and managed health benefits consortium; achieved 20% premium savings
- Implemented cloud-based data backup (first of its kind, real-time)
- Launched shared services initiatives and developed \$30MM of value to members annually
- Cultivated grants with Lilly, Kresge, and other foundations
- Achieved sought-after urgency and revivified organizational culture; implemented 2 strategic plans
- Enhanced staff effectiveness ("best it has ever been" per board chair); addressed deferred maintenance
- Negotiated headquarters sale/lease for "tech-forward" center; consolidated accounting and operational tools
- Fiduciary governance: \$120M annually, managed one of America's largest student scholarship programs (\$100MM), securing repeated distinction in public opinion polls

Provost (2008–2010)

St. Gregory's University, Shawnee/Tulsa/Oklahoma City, OK • (closed 2017)

- Planned and reviewed curriculum, catalog, handbook; expanded tenure and faculty workshops
- Led HLC self-study and comprehensive institutional review
- Introduced persistence improvements (to 90%); prototyped group and remote programs
- Managed accreditation request processes; addressed ADA compliance
- Led budget oversight (95% of institution's budget); reversed deficits and grew net tuition revenue

Vice President, Enrollment Management & Student Affairs (2005–2008)

Albany Law School, Albany, NY

- Achieved top 10% in America application increase, raised academic profile of entering class, set school records for minority success and enrollment
- Managed financial aid; structured a \$40 million scholarship initiative at a lower discount rate
- Job outcomes enhanced with virtual programs; achieved 97% student placement
- Launched LEO program and inaugural events; developed ambassador and all-campus initiatives
- Led NY Bar, LSAC, and LGBTQ+ outreach; created welcoming, excellent campus environment

Assistant Dean, Student & Academic Affairs (2003–2005)

University of Florida, Fred G. Levin College of Law, Gainesville, FL

Assistant Dean, Student Affairs (1999 – 2003)

University of Oregon, School of Law, Eugene, OR

Founder, Partner, Attorney (1991–1999)

Ludwick & LaRue, P.C. (f/k/a Benadum, Drumm, & Associates)

- Founder of full-service legal practice: corporate/business, higher education, sports, litigation
- Volunteer work, non-profits, IP, and higher education governance

Assistant Director, Admission (1987–1988)

The American University, Washington, DC

President, Student Association (1984–1986) (two terms)

University of Evansville, Evansville, IN

GIFTS & GRANTS, PHILANTHROPIC RESULTS

- \$660MM raised career total
- Over \$120MM raised at UST; largest gift, two largest family donors, and three largest grants in university history
- \$540MM+ in state and private funding secured at ICI
- Alumni engagement: \$2.4M Beach Boys Gala and sustained giving culture
- UST endowment growth: 80% increase to \$160MM

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS, TEACHING & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Presentations

- Legaus, Bismarck, North Dakota, July 2025, Dinner Address, "Catholic Business."
- Institute for Higher Education Summit, Houston, Texas, November 2024, keynote, "Innovation and Change Imperative."
- Multiple live and recorded appearances on television, radio, podcasts, Instagram, and other media platforms over the last 15 years representing organizations I have served and their missions.
- ASU+SVG Summit, San Diego, California, August 2021, speaker, "Entrepreneurial Innovation, Human Flourishing, and Tomorrow's Education."
- Ludwick, R. (2021, summer). Marvel's Cinematic Universe vs. God's Cinematic Universe, OSVI Talks, <http://osvitalks.com>, (TED style talk on creativity and innovation).

- Council of Independent Colleges, Presidents Institute, Marco Island, Florida, January 2020, Panel Presenter “Disaster Preparedness.”
- National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities State Executives, Summer Conference, Rio Grande, Puerto Rico, August 2016, Panel Presenter “Indiana’s Student Aid Matrix.”
- Indiana Institute of Technology, Cabinet Retreat, Indianapolis, Indiana, July 2016, Public Policy Update.
- Oakland City University, Commencement, Oakland City, Indiana, May 2015, Keynote Address, “Your One Direction.”
- Indiana Institute of Technology, Board of Trustees Retreat, Delray Beach, Florida, February 2013, Keynote Address “The Changing Landscape of Higher Education.”
- Anderson University, Board of Trustees Meeting, Anderson, Indiana, October 2012, “Future Horizons for Higher Education.”
- Independent College Advancement Association, Summer Conference, University of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN, July 2012, “Maximizing Alliances.”
- Council of Independent Colleges State Funds Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, May 2012, “Collaborations: Two Special Opportunities For State Fund Members.”
- Indiana Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, 72nd Annual Conference, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, October 2011, panelist, “Redefining The College Town.”
- American Association of University Professors—Indiana Conference, University of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN, November 2011, “Perspectives: Implications of State Action and Higher Education.”
- Hunter College, New York City Law Forum, New York, NY, November 2008, panelist, “Law Admissions and Disability Issues.”
- New York State College Personnel Association, Annual Conference, Rochester, NY, October 2008, Keynote Address “The Law, Higher Education and You.”
- National Association of Pre-Law Advisors Conference, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, summer 2008, “Welcome Keynote for Sponsored Luncheon.”
- Northeast Black Law Students Association, Conference, Albany, NY, October 2007, “Welcome Address” and “Academic Success.”
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, Region II Annual Conference, Albany, NY, June 2007, “Leadership and Developmental Approaches: The Creation of a Professionalism Center.”
- New York State Bar Association and Law School Admissions Council, Youth Law Day, New York, NY, October 2006, “How Do You Get Into Law School?”
- Association of American Law Schools, Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA, January 2004, “Can We Be Too Accommodating? Probing the Outer Limits of the ADA.”
- Pacific Northwest Conference of Catholic Students, Annual Conference, Silverton, OR, April 2003, “The Ethics of Leadership.”
- Southern Association of College Student Affairs, Annual Conference, Savannah, GA, November 2000, “Technology and the Transition to Graduate and Professional Programs.”
- Abnormal Psychology Section, Ball State University, Muncie, IN, September 1998, “The Law’s Need for Psychology.”
- Phi Kappa Tau, Buckeye North Domain Conference, Otterbein College, Westerville, OH, October 1997, “Risk with Responsibility: A Fraternity’s Perspective.”

Teaching

- Professor (Adjunct), St. Gregory’s University, Shawnee, OK (01/09–05/2010)—Business Law; Criminal Law & Procedure
- Lecturer, University of Florida Levin College of Law (07/2003–07/2005)—Interviewing and Counseling
- Adjunct Professor, Ball State University, Muncie, IN (08/98–05/99)—Political Science 455/555, Administrative Law

Publications

- (2020, June–July). A Bold Vision for American Higher Education: Truth, Innovation, Evangelization. Inside the Vatican. 36–37.
- Ludwick, R. L. (2005). The Role of Legal Counsel in the Decision-Making Process of Presidents at Small, Private Colleges. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon]

ACCREDITATION WORK

- American Bar Association—Institutional liaison (2003–2008)
- Higher Learning Commission (HLC)—Peer Reviewer (2010–2017); Comprehensive evaluation team member
- SACSCOC—On-Site Evaluation Committee Member (2018–2025)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU)
- National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU)
- Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)
- American Council on Education (ACE)
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)
- Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE)
- National Federation of the Blind (NFB)
- American Bar Association (ABA)
- Association of American Law Schools (AALS)—Executive Committee, Pre-Legal Education and Admissions 2007
- Indiana Bar, Member #16117-18

GOVERNING BOARD SERVICE

- Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference, Presidents' Council, Officer, 2018–2024
- Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas, Board of Directors, Officer, Austin, TX, 2017–2024
- Texas Medical Center, Advisory Board, Houston, TX, 2017–2024
- International Council of Universities of Saint Thomas Aquinas, Santiago, Chile, Officer, 2017–2024
- University of St. Thomas, Board of Directors, Houston, 2017–2024
- Saint Mary's Seminary Board, Houston, 2017–2024
- Council of Independent Colleges/FIHE, Advisory Committee, Washington, DC, 2014–2017
- Indiana University, McKinney School of Law, Alumni Board of Directors, Indianapolis, IN, 2012–2017
- Midwestern Higher Education Compact, Commissioner (Indiana), Gubernatorial Appointee, 2012–2017
- The Coalition for College Cost Savings, Chair, Vice Chair, Strategic Planning Committee, Presidential Search Committee, Versailles, KY 2010–2017
- Independent Colleges of Indiana, Inc., Board of Directors, Secretary, Indianapolis, IN, 2010–2017
- National Council of The Phi Kappa Tau Fraternity, General Counsel, Oxford, OH, 1996–2002, 2007–2010
- Indianapolis Resource Center for Independent Living, Board of Directors, Indianapolis, IN, 1995–1996
- Muncie–Center Township Public Library, Board of Trustees, Secretary, 1993–1999
- Syndetica, Inc. f/k/a Cerebral Palsy Association, Board of Directors, Muncie, IN, 1992–1995
- Student Trustees, University of Evansville, IN, 1984–1986

SERVICE (selected)

- Greater Houston Partnership
- Indiana Chamber of Commerce

- Group Bible study, 2004–2013Synde Cerebral Palsy, 1992–1997
- Kids Sports Coach
- Knights of Columbus, Fourth Degree
- Sunrise Rotary Club, Co-founder, Coordinator, 1994-1999
- Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem, 2011

LANGUAGES

- German (conversational—studied at Goethe Institut, Freiburg im Breisgau)
- French (basic)