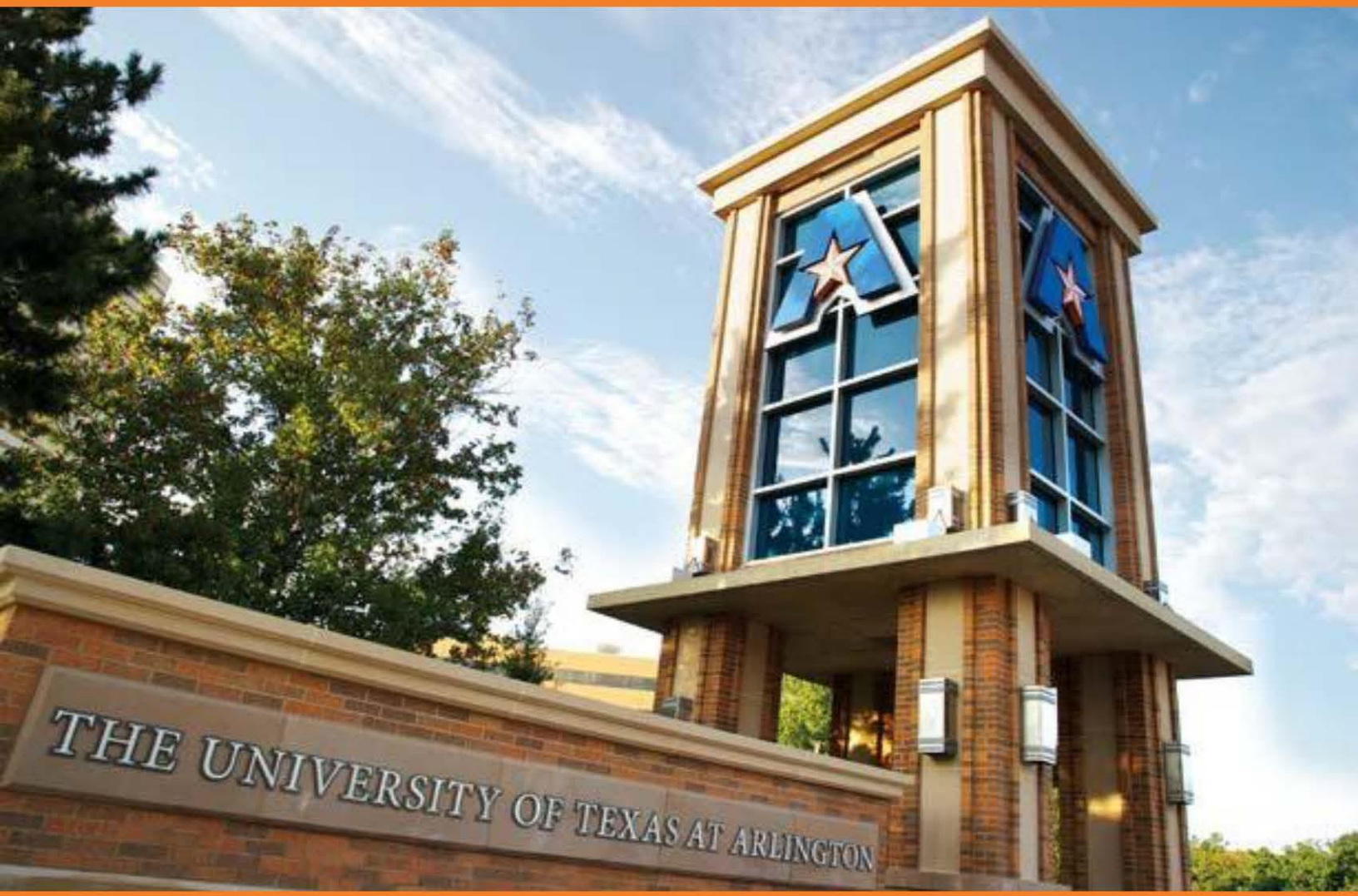




Position Profile



Vice President for Marketing, Messaging and Engagement
May 2022

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Executive Summary

On April 28, 2022, [The University of Texas at Arlington](#) (UTA) welcomed Jennifer Cowley, Ph.D., as its 10th president. President Cowley's goals for UTA include raising its standing on the national stage through inspirational storytelling, promoting a differentiated identity, and increasing audience and community engagement. To achieve these ambitions, the University invites applications, expressions of interest, and nominations of candidates in its search for an inaugural Vice President of Marketing, Messaging, and Engagement to oversee the [communications and marketing team](#). The Vice President will join a growing leadership team that is energized to take the institution to a new level of accomplishment.

The elevation and transformation of UTA's marketing and communications has been identified as a top priority in this next chapter of the University's history. The Vice President will report to President Cowley and serve as a member of her senior staff. The Vice President will lead a centralized division of 30 professionals who are valued as a resource of best practices to divisional partners and will ensure synergistic campaigns and storytelling to best position the University in the eyes of diverse external audiences. The Vice President will effectively communicate the President's vision to key stakeholders internally, regionally, and on a global scale and educate the public on UTA's [mission](#) and contributions to scholarship, research, and access to education, among other successes.

The Vice President will act as the University's official spokesperson, advisor to the president on high-profile issues, and primary contact with major media. Working actively and collaboratively with institutional leaders across campus, the Vice President will advise on the creation of effective communication and marketing plans; of particular importance will be partnerships with the divisions of enrollment, advancement, and athletics, among others designated by the President. The Vice President will also assess, engage, and manage outside vendor partnerships to supplement internal resources as needed.

UTA is in a uniquely strong position and enjoying a number of momentous celebrations and new levels of achievement and stability. UTA is the most diverse university in the UT System and the third most diverse in the nation. It is not only a Carnegie R-1 institution, but is also a Hispanic-Serving Institution, an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution, No. 1 in Texas for degrees awarded to African American students (*Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, 2021), and No. 1 in the nation for veterans and their families (*Military Times*, 2022). UTA has attracted its largest freshman class ever and now supports approximately 48,000 students. Leadership across the University is committed not only to elevating the institution's profile and reputation, but also to ensure access to education and resources for a diverse community locally and abroad.

The successful candidate brings strong and proven strategic leadership and highly developed writing and communication skills essential in interacting with multiple constituent groups. The University seeks a creative, collaborative leader with a hunger to innovate and try new things. The Vice President will be a strategic thinker with broad functional experiences in the areas of brand management and marketing, strategic planning, research, consumer insights, competitive analysis, and advertising.

A bachelor's degree is required and experience covering a range of communications disciplines—including executive communications, public relations, crisis management, and issues management—is highly desirable. Experience in higher education brand marketing and communications is desired but not required for candidates with compelling industry portfolios. The Vice President will be an executive with humility and respect. A courageous and collaborative leader with a record of support and advocacy for individuals from diverse identities, histories, backgrounds, and experiences is paramount.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see Procedure for Candidacy at the end of this profile.

About the University

Located on a 420-acre campus in the heart of the thriving Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington metro area (population 7.6 million), The University of Texas at Arlington is a comprehensive teaching, research, and public service institution dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through scholarship and creative work.



As one of the largest and most diverse universities in Texas, UT Arlington is committed to student access and success and to a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercialization of discoveries by our community of scholars. The University promotes lifelong learning through its academic, continuing education, and experiential learning programs. The faculty, staff, and student community shares diverse cultural values that foster inclusivity and cultivate mutual respect.

Founded in 1895 as a private liberal arts institution, UT Arlington enrolls over 48,000 students and employs nearly 5,000 faculty and staff. The University has the third-most ethnically diverse undergraduate population in the United States (*U.S. News & World Report*, 2022) and is a Hispanic-Serving Institution and an Asian American, Native American, Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (U.S. Department of Education). UTA graduates more African American students at

the undergraduate and master's degree levels than any other Texas university (*Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, 2021).

In addition to nurturing student success, UTA is focused on making an impact through innovative research. Anchored by its five strategic pillars—health and the human condition, sustainable communities, global environmental impact, data-driven discovery, and culture and societal transformations—the University’s research portfolio saw significant growth over the past decade, with expenditures reaching \$125 million in 2021. Faculty work in state-of-the-art facilities to make important breakthroughs in areas such as sustainable infrastructure, healthy aging, high-energy physics, cardiovascular disease, machine-learning systems, and more.

In 2021, UTA’s combination of outstanding academics and innovative research contributed to the University once again receiving Carnegie R-1 “Very High Research Activity” designation and becoming just the fourth university in the state to achieve Texas Tier One status, a milestone of excellence that brings with it access to the state’s National Research University Fund. By providing exceptional educational opportunities and addressing important societal challenges, UT Arlington enhances the quality of life in Texas and beyond.

The government of the University is vested in a nine-member Board of Regents of the UT System, nominated by the governor and approved by the Texas Senate. In addition to its main campus in Arlington, UTA has two facilities in neighboring Fort Worth: a downtown campus called UTA Fort Worth that is tailored for working professionals and a research institute on the banks of the Trinity River that is focused on bridging the gap between academic research and product development.

Notables

- UTA has 16 graduate programs ranked as “Best Graduate Schools” by *U.S. News & World Report* (USNWR, 2023).
- UTA is ranked No. 3 nationally on the *U.S. News & World Report*’s undergraduate diversity index and is ranked No. 26 as a “Top Performer on Social Mobility” (USNWR, 2022).
- UTA is ranked No. 1 for veterans and their families among four-year institutions (*Military Times*, 2020 and 2021).
- UTA alumni occupy leadership positions at many of the 22 Fortune 500 companies headquartered in North Texas.
- UTA’s College of Nursing and Health Innovation is the No. 1 producer of baccalaureate-degreed nurses in Texas.
- UTA and its alumni contribute \$22.2 billion and 216,544 jobs annually to Texas.
- UTA was one of 150 colleges and universities recognized on the Phi Theta Kappa 2021 Transfer Honor Roll. UTA baccalaureate graduates working in Texas earn the highest first-year median wage of all UT System non-medical institutions (UT System *Smartbook*, 2021).



Mission

The University of Texas at Arlington is a comprehensive teaching, research, and public service institution dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through scholarship and creative work. The University is committed to providing access and ensuring student success, and to a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercialization of discoveries by our community of scholars.

The University promotes lifelong learning through its academic, continuing education, and experiential learning programs. The faculty, staff, and student community shares diverse cultural values that foster inclusivity and cultivate mutual respect.

Vision and Values

The University of Texas at Arlington is a pre-eminent urban public research university that inspires bold solutions with global impact through creative scholarship, transformative access, and collaborative learning.

Institutional values are Access and Success, Opportunity and Excellence, Inclusiveness and Diversity, Mavericks and Innovators, and Collegiality and Collaboration.

Academics

UT Arlington offers more than 180 baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degree programs across nine schools and colleges, including the largest nursing college at a public university in the country. Students hail from coast to coast and over 100 countries worldwide, with around 10,000 living on or near campus. Each year, approximately 14,000 graduates join the ranks of UTA alumni, now numbering more than 250,000.

Academic Colleges

- [College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs](#)
- [College of Business](#)
- [College of Education](#)

- [College of Engineering](#)
- [Honors College](#)
- [College of Liberal Arts](#)
- [College of Nursing and Health Innovation](#)
- [College of Science](#)
- [School of Social Work](#)

Accreditation

The University of Texas at Arlington is accredited by the [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges](#) to award baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees. In addition, many of UTA's academic departments and schools have received national accreditation from specific agencies. These accreditations are detailed under the individual listings for departments and schools in the [University Catalog](#)

Leadership: President-Designate Jennifer Cowley

The University of Texas at Arlington is thrilled to welcome Jennifer Cowley, Ph.D. Set to begin her role on April 28, 2022, Dr. Cowley is the first female president in the University's history. Most recently, she served as provost at the University of North Texas (UNT), where she advanced research, fostered student success, and advanced diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Before joining UNT in 2017, Cowley was a member of the faculty at Ohio State University, serving as vice provost for capital planning and regional campuses, associate dean for academic affairs and administration in the College of Engineering, and department chair and professor in city and regional planning.



Cowley grew up in Arlington and is looking forward to returning home to advance UTA as one of the nation's leading research universities.

Arlington

Arlington, Texas, is one of the fastest-growing communities in the nation and largest "mid" city in America. Located between Dallas and Fort Worth in Tarrant County, the city is home to more than 398,000 residents spread across 100 square miles. It is also home to four professional sports teams: the Texas Rangers baseball team, Dallas Cowboys football team, Dallas Jackals rugby team and the Dallas Wings women's NBA basketball team. The Dallas Wings play their home games at UTA's College Park Center while the Rangers and Cowboys facilities are located

just north of campus. There are ample entertainment opportunities with these professional sports teams as well as the amusement park, Six Flags over Texas, in the city of Arlington.

UTA is located near Arlington's city center, an increasingly livable, dynamic environment with new mixed-use housing, entertainment options, workplaces, public facilities, and amenities. Recent development in the downtown core has brought breweries, restaurants, coffee shops, music venues and dozens of small and independent businesses that are creating opportunities and providing goods, services and entertainment for residents and visitors.

Downtown Arlington is developing into a walkable, vibrant, welcoming, diverse, and economically strong urban center -- a place where residents establish a true sense of community. Including the city center, Arlington has 99 square miles that include excelling schools, an award-winning parks system, rich cultural amenities and high-quality, diverse neighborhoods that are among the most affordable in the region. In addition, there are many cultural activities in the Dallas/Fort Worth area one can take advantage of, including arts festivals, museums, operas, symphonies, and more. Below are links to Downtown Arlington, Dallas, and Fort Worth cultural offerings.

<https://downtownarlington.org/visit/downtown-outdoors>

<https://www.fortworth.com/things-to-do/museums-and-galleries/>

<https://www.visitdallas.com/things-to-do/dallas-neighborhoods/central-dallas/downtown.html>

There are two major airports in the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area, in convenient proximity to Arlington: Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and Dallas Love Field Airport.

For more information on the city of Arlington, please visit www.arlingtontx.gov/home. For more information about UTA's regional rankings and tours of the campus, please visit <https://www.uta.edu/admissions/visit>.

Overview

With the arrival of Dr. Jennifer Cowley as its new president and the creation of her strategic vision, UTA is ready to refresh and finely tune its institutional narrative and identity. The inaugural Vice President of Marketing, Messaging, and Engagement will do so by developing strategic messaging and plans focused on relevant solutions across



paid, owned, and earned platforms that deliver results for each client's unique objectives while also remaining consistent with UTA's mission, enduring values, and strategic priorities.

The Vice President will implement a disciplined, consistent, and high-performing program of best practices and staff. In their consulting roles, members of the communications and marketing team will work alongside campus partners to understand their specific target audiences, key differentiators, and goals and to become trusted extensions of their team.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

This moment in UTA's history brings with it a once-in-a-career opportunity for a strategic leader with boundless courage, energy, and imagination. The Vice President will lead the transformation of UTA's marketing and communications team in addressing the following opportunities, listed here in particular order:

Strengthen the University's Brand Position

The incoming Vice President will clarify a persuasive and unified narrative about UTA's impact across all segments of the higher education landscape. The Vice President must ensure a coherent, focused, and aligned campaign with consistent and clear messaging across the entire institution. This plan will guide and prioritize the approach to internal communications, media, and external relations in an effort to increase its earned, versus paid, media activity. In addition, the Vice President will be a skilled leader who uses influence and goodwill to ensure each college and unit is dedicated to following campus-wide marketing and communications policies, procedures, and guidelines in an effort to unify brand, messaging, and visual alignment.

The next Vice President will work to bring a deeper awareness and appreciation for the University's scholarly achievements, research discoveries, excellence in the classroom, and service-oriented commitment to the Arlington community and state of Texas. The Vice President will play a key role in managing the public perception of the University and deploy the resources, staff, and creative energy of the team to highlight the institution's accomplishments and pride points while also addressing public perceptions and answering media inquiries. This dynamic plan must be nimble and responsive to internal and external shifts and be grounded in data-informed analysis and decision-making.

Manage Talent, Infrastructure, and Operations

The University recognizes the value of supporting a strong, strategic, and integrated marketing and communications organization. As part of this commitment, President Cowley has made the decision to separate a centralized University Advancement team under the leadership of two vice presidents: the Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations and the Vice President of Marketing, Messaging, and Engagement.

The latter newly created leadership role will evaluate and design the optimal structure of the organization and clarify expectations, processes and best practices, roles, and functions. The Vice President will identify and harness opportunities for success and improvement through an ambitious agenda with momentum in mind, a spirit of open communication, and an instinct for collaboration.

As industry trends change, the Vice President will be responsible for assessing the staff and operational needs to ensure the division has the resources it needs to advance UTA's mission, vision, and brand. In addition to the 30 full-time staff members, the Vice President will encourage collaboration with the various partners who have communications and marketing duties in the academic and administrative units University-wide. Division liaison relationships should be enhanced to ensure that clients receive expeditious service and detailed work plans outlining key deliverables and high-quality products. The Vice President will measure the effectiveness of team output through analysis of core messaging to market segments and utilize business intelligence and dashboarding. Additionally, the Vice President will be accountable for ensuring the most efficient and effective use of financial resources.

The incoming Vice President will advance an institutional culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion in word, action, and deed. The Vice President will ensure that all voices, perspectives, and experiences are shared and respected. The Vice President will be expected to support processes for the identification, hiring, developing, and retention of diverse staff and foster an inclusive workplace community.

Serve as a Key Strategic Advisor

The Vice President will serve as a strategic advisor to the President and University leadership. The Vice President will be an engaged member of the senior leadership team, contribute to areas outside of their expertise, as appropriate, and be a strong partner and respected colleague. The Vice President will also participate in and play an active role on various committees, with specific emphasis on institutional messaging. Therefore, the Vice President should demonstrate active listening, seeking the broad perspective and needs of the University community whenever possible before making a decision. Furthermore, the Vice President should instill these same principal values across the institution and lead by example with the marketing and communications team.

Manage Media Issues and Inquiries

The Vice President will build trusting relationships with local and national media contacts, anticipate and pursue



opportunities to respond to challenges, and capitalize on earned media to highlight the University's accomplishments. As higher education continues to operate at the center of a wide range of sometimes controversial or difficult public policy, equity, and free speech issues, among others, the Vice President will play a central role in crisis management and leading responses to unanticipated and often very public issues.

Moreover, the Vice President should bring deep experience and strategic perspective in order to provide sound advice to the President and University leaders on managing sensitive public issues in ways that protect the integrity and reputation of the institution. The Vice President must exercise discretion and good judgment in these high-pressure situations, develop and maintain crisis communications plans, and conduct training and exercise those plans regularly as part of proactive response preparation.

Qualifications and Qualities

The University of Texas at Arlington seeks a forward-thinking, self-confident Vice President of Marketing, Messaging, and Engagement who will have a discernible record of success and innovation. They will lead by example, demonstrate sound judgment and a commitment to engaging diverse communities, and have a broad perspective on marketing and communications strategies in the public and private sectors. The Vice President will be a collaborative leader who galvanizes support for the program with internal and external constituents through a compelling articulation of the transformative mission of higher education.

In addition, the next Vice President will possess some or all of the following:

- A bachelor's degree is required. Master's or Doctoral degree is preferred.
- A seasoned senior professional with experience developing integrated plans and programs within complex organizations.
- Previous experience in higher education is not a requirement, but individuals must embrace the mission of the University to appreciate its culture and history, have the ability to understand higher education issues, and possess the desire to become an active member of the University community.
- A strong background utilizing market analysis, quantitative and qualitative research, and complex data-set analysis to inform the development of successful integrated marketing strategies.
- Demonstrated successful track record of driving integrated marketing strategies and programs that utilize digital and direct marketing, SEO/SEM, social media, content marketing, web presence, mobile, channel selection and optimization, creative direction, PR, and earned and paid media.
- Demonstrated acquisition and audience engagement experience with an excellent understanding of how to build relationships between an organization and targeted constituents.

- Successful record of accomplishment leading a collaborative process to develop a strategic brand platform.
- Proven experience and skill in hiring, developing, managing, and supporting a team of dedicated individuals.
- A results-oriented leader with the presence to inspire and the ability to develop a collaborative culture.
- History of strategic and creative thinking, entrepreneurial spirit, and innovative leadership in developing marketing strategies and communications programs that engage a variety of diverse stakeholders.
- Understands the evolving digital marketing and communications landscape.
- A passionate, perceptive, inventive, and energetic leader who can initiate and manage change and be a champion for UTA.
- An effective leader who can build relationships and inspire partnerships with those outside their direct reporting organization.
- The ability to balance short-term objectives and long-term vision and work simultaneously with both.
- An innovative and creative thinker who proactively identifies opportunities and is motivated by challenges.
- Demonstrates the ability to provide an external perspective to the UTA community by having or gaining an understanding of the consumer trends and marketplace demands.
- Expert communications skills, both oral and written.
- Proven experience working with and advising people in high-level positions with public visibility.
- Excellent team player and individual performer.
- Ability to work collaboratively with others.
- Good listener and relationship-builder who will collaborate cross-functionally and work effectively at various levels of the University.
- Confident decision-maker and self-starter with high energy and drive.
- A relentlessly positive attitude, strong character, integrity, and common sense.



Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting UT Arlington in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by July 18, 2022. Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#). Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest will be treated in full confidence. References will not be contacted without prior knowledge and approval of candidates.

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Melissa Fincher and Ashlee Winters Musser
UTAVPMarketing@wittkieffer.com

The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) is committed to providing equal employment and educational opportunities for all qualified persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, disabilities, pregnancy, genetic information, and/or veteran status. Retaliation against persons who oppose a discriminatory practice, file a charge of discrimination, or testify for, assist in, or participate in an investigative proceeding relating to discrimination is prohibited. See the [University of Texas at Arlington's Notice of Non-Discrimination here which includes contact information](#).

Equal Opportunity Statement and Disclaimers

The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. This material has been copied, compiled, or quoted in part from UT Arlington documents and personal interviews and is believed to be reliable. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and factual situations govern.



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