

# DR. MELISSA A. JONES

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## TRANSFORMATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION LEADER

Senior academic administrator with more than 20 years of experience improving student outcomes from entry through graduation. Known for building programs that increase retention, strengthen student belonging, and support first-generation and historically underserved populations. Brings a steady record of managing large-scale student services, securing funding, and aligning cross-functional teams around measurable results.

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### Saint Elizabeth University

**Director, Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF)** | August 2023 – Present

- Oversee approximately \$1M in state-funded EOF resources, ensuring full compliance while expanding both summer and academic-year programming.
- Lead all reporting to the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, translating program data into clear outcomes and institutional value.
- Direct the Student Success Center, integrating advising, tutoring, career services, and accessibility support into a coordinated system.
- Work closely with the Registrar, faculty, and retention task forces to strengthen persistence and re-enrollment pathways.
- Analyze student data trends and use findings to inform institutional decision-making and targeted interventions.
- Lead retention-focused initiatives, including early-alert systems, academic progress monitoring, and degree recovery efforts.
- Serve as a consistent point of advocacy for students navigating academic and institutional barriers.

**Adjunct Faculty** | Summer 2017 – Present

- Teach undergraduate and graduate courses in education, policy, and leadership, including history, philosophy, and school finance.
- Deliver instruction across formats (in-person, hybrid, online), adapting content to meet diverse learning needs.
- Provide focused support for first-generation students, particularly in summer bridge and first-year seminar courses.

- Design coursework that strengthens academic confidence, institutional navigation, and long-term persistence.
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### **East Orange School District**

**Assistant Principal / Grant Coordinator / Teacher Leader | 2003 – 2023**

- Supported daily operations of a STEM-focused school serving 600+ students, maintaining a safe and structured learning environment.
  - Led interdisciplinary teams and mentored faculty, strengthening instructional practice and data-informed decision-making.
  - Designed and delivered professional development in curriculum, assessment, and differentiated instruction.
  - Managed grant funding and aligned resources with academic priorities and equity goals.
  - Contributed to curriculum planning and standards alignment across departments.
  - Taught AP U.S. History, World History, and African American History, emphasizing critical thinking and analysis.
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### **LEADERSHIP, PRESENTATIONS & SERVICE**

- Title IX Investigator & Coordinator, Saint Elizabeth University (2024–Present)
  - Middle States Committee Member (2024–2025)
  - Presenter, EOFPANJ Directors' Summit (2025) – Community Partnerships
  - Presenter, 1619 Project (2023) – Race, Medicine, and Health Inequity
  - Presenter, College Board Summer Institute (2021) – Bias in AP
  - Member, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.
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### **EDUCATION**

- Doctor of Education (EdD), Educational Leadership — Caldwell University
  - Master of Science in Education — University of New Haven
  - Bachelor of Arts, Political Science & History — SUNY Albany
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### **TECHNOLOGY & SYSTEMS**

Ellucian, Navigate, Campus Nexus, WaterMark, Moodle, Blackbaud, Raiser's Edge, ADP, Microsoft Office, Google Workspace

