



C A R E E R O P P O R T U N I T Y

# President

## THE ORME SCHOOL

Orme, Arizona

**Applications due ASAP**

Founded in 1929 as a one-room school on a more than 26,000-acre working ranch 70 miles north of Phoenix, The Orme School today is an independent, college preparatory, boarding and day school serving 120 students in grades 6-12. Bringing together students from diverse geographic, social, and economic backgrounds, Orme aspires to create a close-knit community of teachers and students who share a passion for academic excellence, outdoor adventure, and personal challenge. The nurturing of each student's physical, aesthetic, and spiritual life is emphasized through high expectations and a strong sense of personal and community responsibility. In a natural extension of the core ideals espoused by founding Headmaster Charlie Orme, the school is integrating a Sustainability Studies focus into the academic program and into extracurricular and residential life activities.

Steeped in its Western heritage, the school offers a traditional college preparatory curriculum enriched with a wide variety of athletic, artistic, and outdoor programs. Taking full advantage of its beautiful high desert setting, Orme offers horsemanship and outdoor leadership programs. During a week-long Caravan experience each year, faculty and students strike out for a number of Southwest sites, blending academic learning with opportunities to camp, hike, backpack, climb, and explore. At the annual Fine Arts Festival, faculty join students in workshops led by nationally known artists.

The Orme Little School, originally established to accommodate faculty and staff children, serves students in grades K-5 in a self-contained, one-room schoolhouse setting. For more than 70 years, The Orme Summer Camp has introduced youngsters from across the United States and around the world to ranch life, horseback riding, and a variety of outdoor adventures.

For a variety of reasons – some external, some internal – this wonderful school finds itself in challenging circumstances requiring visionary leadership. In particular, a recent trend of declining enrollment must be reversed quickly to restore Orme to a healthy and sustainable path. The chance to make a transformational impact awaits the next President of Orme, who will take office in July 2010.

### WHO SHOULD APPLY:

The Presidency of The Orme School is truly a unique opportunity. It is not, however, a position for every aspiring school administrator. Orme's circumstances demand an articulate, engaging leader who can offer and implement bold initiatives to move the school forward while honoring a mission and culture that reflects 80 years of successful service to young people. The ideal applicant will excel in the external aspects of school leadership, including admissions and development. In addition, candidates must fully understand and enthusiastically embrace the life style choice implicit in joining this extraordinary educational community and one-of-a-kind campus setting.



***On the web: [www.ormeschool.org](http://www.ormeschool.org)***

## THE ORME SCHOOL AT A GLANCE 2009-10

**Founded:** 1929

**Location:** 26,000-acre working ranch in the Arizona high country

**2009-10 enrollment:** 122

Lower (K-5): 3  
Middle (6-8): 8  
Upper (9-12): 111

Boarding: 98  
Day: 24

**Students of color:** 48%

**Faculty:** 22; 68% with advanced degrees

**Average faculty tenure:** 6 years

**Endowment:** \$64,100

**Indebtedness:** \$2.5 million

**Operating budget:** \$4.6 million

**Total development funds raised, 2008-09:** \$1.4 million

**Parent participation in Annual Giving:** 18%

**2009-2010 tuition:**

Day: \$18,150-\$18,900  
Boarding: \$23,900-\$35,650

**Financial aid, 2009-10:** \$1.2 million

**Students receiving aid:** 41%

**Board of Trustees:** 22

**Accreditation:** Arizona State Committee on Accreditation, North Central Association – College Preparatory

**Member:** National Association of Independent Schools, Arizona Association of Independent Schools, The Association of Boarding Schools, Cum Laude Society, National Honor Society



## MISSION

*In a Southwestern, college-preparatory environment, The Orme School develops sound character, intellectual growth and curiosity, and an appreciation of our diverse cultural heritage and natural environment. The nurturing of each student's physical, aesthetic, and spiritual life is emphasized through high expectations and a strong sense of personal and community responsibility.*

*Established in 1929, the School is located on a 26,000-acre working ranch in the Arizona high country, an area of immensely striking natural beauty. The Orme School mission is based upon the values of Tradition, Excellence, and Character. These values are enmeshed in our boarding school and day school programs for grades K through 12. We are proud that 100 percent of our graduates are accepted to colleges, universities, or junior colleges.*

## SUSTAINABLE ORME

### MISSION AND PURPOSE

*Sustainable Orme begins with learning the value of living off the "interest," not the principal, of all resources; it teaches economic sustainability, models community living, and understands that growth occurs within the limits of the carrying capacity of the environment. At Orme, we endeavor to find the best use of resources while managing our impact on the natural environment.*

*We seek solutions at the local level while valuing cultural diversity. We appreciate the value of energy conservation and so include it in our community practices. We evaluate and choose cost efficient renewable and reliable sources of energy where possible. We integrate natural, human, and economic values into decision-making processes in a thorough, open, and flexible manner. This, in turn, supports the sustainability of other communities and future generations. The Orme community has a shared vision on Service and Sustainability projects, where students are empowered through active learning to create positive environmental change.*



## DEFINING STRENGTHS AND UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES OF THE ORME SCHOOL

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In 1929, Charles H. Orme Sr. and Minna Vrang Orme (who was inducted into the Arizona Women's Hall of Fame in 1989) began a personal adventure that has become the history of The Orme School. They left their dairy farm in Phoenix and bought a ranch in the high desert of central Arizona. The Ormes, both graduates of Stanford University, believed in the necessity of a good education. To educate their three children and those of the ranch employees, they opened a one-room school. From those early days, an Orme education has been based on principles that guide the School today. One in particular states: The best education a child can have is one that stresses a solid academic foundation in a family setting where each student is expected to be an important, contributing member of the community.

Charles H. Orme Jr. was a product of this education. After his graduation with honors from Stanford University, the commitment to his parents' educational values led him back to become Headmaster of Orme in 1945. Under his

loving care and visionary guidance, The Orme School gained a national reputation. To accommodate this growth, the physical plant and the academic program expanded to meet the new dynamics of a vastly increased enrollment. In 1962, the School was incorporated as a not-for-profit institution, and a 28-member Board of Trustees was established. Mr. Orme served as Headmaster until his retirement in 1987. His tenure of 42 years as the academic leader of The Orme School has ensured that the values of hard work, community contribution, and personal responsibility have become a permanent part of the Orme tradition.

The family legacy continues today. Charles' son Paul now serves part-time as the school's President. In the future, he anticipates serving in a more limited role as a liaison with alumni.

### FACULTY AND STAFF

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Throughout its history, Orme has been well served by dedicated faculty and staff members wholly committed to the school's mission and values. Attracted by the unique setting and intimate learning community, well-educated faculty members – including many with doctoral degrees – have delivered a rich college preparatory program that has served generations of Orme graduates well. Virtually every faculty and staff member at Orme has multiple assignments, promoting the close relationships among students and adults that are one hallmark of the Orme experience. The advisee program groups each faculty member with eight students. These groups meet daily for announcements and each Wednesday for dinner in the faculty member's home.

### LOCATION, CAMPUS, AND FACILITIES

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Located in the middle of a 26,000-acre working cattle ranch amid the scenic and culturally rich lands of the American Southwest, the Orme campus is both spectacular and modest. Buildings range from the original schoolhouse built 80 years ago to modern buildings showcasing Western architecture. The Phillips Library contains 20,000 books and 2,400 volumes of bound periodicals, as well as two computer centers. Classrooms include a planetarium, four science labs, a greenhouse, a photography darkroom, a computer center, four art studios, and a music room. The Student Commons has a school store, ping pong and pool tables, video games, and a big-screen satellite television. Other facilities include Founders' Dining Hall, the Old Main Administration Building, the Buck Hart Horsecollar Theater, the Morton Orme Memorial Chapel, the T-Anchor Resource Center, the Lecture Hall, the Burns Health Center, and 17 family-style dormitories. Most faculty members live on campus as well. There is an attractive home for the President.

Athletic facilities include the Willits Gymnasium, a lighted football field, baseball, softball, and soccer fields, a lighted rodeo arena, four tennis courts, an English equestrian arena, an outdoor swimming pool, and 100 miles of wilderness riding trails.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

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A rigorous academic program is the cornerstone of the Orme experience. The school emphasizes personal mastery of fundamental concepts and skills prior to advancing in any discipline. Qualified students may enroll in Honors and Advanced Placement courses. Orme's size provides ample opportunity for flexibility, while small classes offer individualization and more direct involvement with faculty members. The School believes that learning is not confined to the classroom. Thus, Orme takes advantage of its unique setting in the Southwest with frequent trips and many other outdoor educational experiences. Students entering Orme with limited study skills are assigned to a skill-building program.

All of Orme's graduates are college bound: 98 percent enter four-year institutions, and 2 percent enter two-year institutions. Over the past four years, graduates have matriculated at more than 80 colleges and universities throughout the U.S., including Ivy League institutions, small liberal arts colleges, large state universities, and military academies, among others.

For more detailed information about the academic curriculum and Orme's broad array of enrichment activities, visit the school's website: [www.ormeschool.org](http://www.ormeschool.org). A few highlights:

### THE ARTS

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The annual Arts Festival is a highlight of the school year. Each February, nationally respected artists spend one week with Orme students conducting performing and visual arts workshops and directing students in creative arts. The school offers a variety of fine classes in Visual Arts, Music, and Drama; all students are encouraged to explore the arts and humanities as a vital enrichment to their academic experiences.

### ATHLETICS

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Athletics is an integral part of the total Orme program, with faculty members serving as coaches to teams that compete in the Arizona Interscholastic Association. Sports offerings include Baseball, Basketball, Cheer, Cross Country, Football, Soccer, Softball, Tennis, Track, and Volleyball.



### HORSEMANSHIP

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The Orme School Equestrian Program offers opportunities for all student riders, from the most inexperienced through the accomplished equestrian. Beginners are assigned a horse or may bring their own in order to learn all of the basics of horseback riding and horse management. More skilled riders can learn advanced techniques of riding. Lessons and practice are offered in various areas of Western riding: pleasure, roping, reining, barrels and gymkhana games; in English riding: pleasure, jumping, dressage and equitation are offered. All students are offered the opportunity to compete in horse shows, junior rodeos and gymkhanas.

### OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

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For 80 years, outdoor education and challenging adventure have been a key part of the Orme experience. The school is surrounded by open public land and is close to some of most stunning canyon, desert, and mountain country in the world. The goals of the outdoor programs include: fostering leadership and personal responsibility, building confidence, mastering wilderness skills, gaining an intimate knowledge of the remarkable natural environment of the region, and developing an environmental ethic and appreciation for the land.

Caravan is a cherished tradition and an unsurpassed educational experience for Orme students. For eight days in May, half the School takes to the field on a variety of faculty-led trips. Students camp out under the stars amid some of the most spectacular country in the world, getting an intensive exposure to the stunning landscapes, diverse cultures, and rich history of the vast Colorado Plateau province that rises just north of the school. In the process, they learn self reliance, cooperation, respect, and tolerance from personal discovery and direct experience. All students are required to participate at least every other year. Options include canyoneering, backpacking, mountain biking, community service, and vehicle camping in national parks. Orme also offers an Outdoor Adventuring activity weekday afternoons, regular weekend trips, and field trips in courses such as Advanced Earth Science, Environmental Science, and Biology that range from a class period to several days long.

## THE POSITION: PRESIDENT OF THE ORME SCHOOL

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The President of Orme occupies the top administrative position at the school. He or she will be hired, evaluated, and provided with a charge by the school's Board of Trustees. The President will have sole responsibility for hiring and terminating all members of the Orme administration, faculty, and staff.

The primary responsibilities of the President will focus on:

1. Student recruitment, retention, and enrollment management.
2. Annual and capital fundraising.
3. Fiscal management.
4. Board relations.
5. Institutional marketing and public relations.



These responsibilities will entail oversight, direction, evaluation, and/or personal interactions with (in order as above):

1. The Admissions Director.
2. The Development Director.
3. The Business Manager.
4. The Board Chair.
5. The marketing staff.

Also reporting to the President is the Head of School, whose responsibilities focus on the academic program, faculty oversight, and student life.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AWAITING THE NEXT PRESIDENT

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While there is no shortage of pride in or commitment to the Orme experience among members of the school community, Orme has in recent years faced a serious enrollment shortfall that could threaten the school's future. Given the current economic environment and the challenges facing the school, the Board of Trustees recognizes that Orme now needs a full-time President with experience and strong skills in institutional advancement and admissions.

Orme's full enrollment capacity is approximately 200 students. Traditionally, the student body has been diverse – including members of the Orme family, native American students, children from nearby communities and other states, and students from other nations, including Korea, China, Germany, and Turkey, among others. The world economic crisis has impacted enrollment among all these constituencies significantly.

Many of Orme's devoted supporters – including trustees and members of the faculty, staff, and administration – have attempted to confront the enrollment situation. Intensive self-examinations and outside assessments – including a successful reaccreditation process completed last year and a multi-year marketing consultant's study – have produced a full understanding of the hurdles that must be overcome. What is needed now is an energetic, entrepreneurial, and visionary President to provide the leadership necessary to turn the situation around. By offering inspiration, direction, and accountability for the entire Orme community, the next President will have the opportunity to make an important and lasting contribution to a storied educational institution.

Among the key tasks awaiting the next President are the following:

## ADMISSIONS AND MARKETING

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- Lead the admissions staff in enrolling mission-appropriate students:
  - With the guidelines provided by institutional history, the experience of like schools, and the recent marketing consultant’s report, focus the marketing effort on Orme’s enrollment goals, including the role to be played by instruction faculty, alumni, and trustees.
  - With a clear and purposeful plan, address the issues of retention of current students.
  - Play a front-line role in the overall effort as the compelling, enthusiastic, and articulate “face of The Orme School.”

## FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT

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- Support and reinforce the strengths of Orme’s successful development team by providing leadership and playing a personal role in fundraising with current families, alumni, trustees, foundations, and friends of the school:
  - Articulate an urgent and compelling case that is credible and concise, and that will be embraced by all on-campus constituencies.
  - Establish a priority list for fundraising targets.
  - Implement financial systems that are clear, transparent, and readily understood.

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

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- Work with and support the Board of Trustees in its ongoing efforts to develop a long-term financial master plan that addresses important priorities, including
  - Retirement of the debt obligation.
  - The restoration of salary increases, TIAA-CREF contributions, and health benefits that have been suspended as a result of the current operating deficit.
  - Deferred maintenance issues.

## THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

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- Ensure the integrity of the college-preparatory program provided to students:
  - Support the continuous improvement approach to the academic program.
  - Ensure that the instructional program reflects the mission of the school.

## FACULTY AND STAFF

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- Recruit and retain faculty who fully understand the nature of a boarding school commitment and specifically what the Orme version of that commitment entails:
  - Be candid and transparent with faculty about institutional challenges and goals, and impress upon them that they play a vital role in the school’s success.
  - Be mindful that, because the school’s budget is largely tuition-driven, the enrollment decline has resulted in cuts to employee salaries and benefits – affecting both morale and retention. In this environment, efforts to engage and support the faculty and staff are vitally important.

## WHO SHOULD APPLY: QUALITIES & QUALIFICATIONS

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The Board of Trustees is seeking a visionary leader who will embrace Orme's longstanding mission and traditions while taking bold initiatives to move the school forward. The presidency of Orme is a challenging position that offers great potential for personal and professional rewards. The school needs a bold leader who will welcome the opportunity to lead this extraordinary educational community and serve as its passionate and articulate advocate.

### SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

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The ideal candidate will have experience and/or demonstrated skills in:

- Public speaking; serving as the public face of a school or organization.
- Admissions.
- Fundraising.
- Marketing.
- Budgeting.
- Inspiring the faculty, the staff, and the Board.
- Leading diverse constituencies to consensus.
- Following through.
- Negotiating the hurdles involved in balancing valued traditions with the need for change.



### LEADERSHIP STYLE

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- A passionate, energetic, and charismatic leader who, by inclination and skill set, will seek out a high-profile role as the public face of the school.
- A steady leader who blends vision with follow-through and who is able to build consensus and promote teamwork.
- A thoughtful, unifying leader who will partner effectively with the Board while also engaging and supporting the faculty and staff.
- A straightforward leader who communicates openly and honestly; listens well; and encourages divergent thinking and the free exchange of ideas.

### PERSONAL QUALITIES

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- Intelligent.
- Visionary.
- Outgoing and energetic.
- Open-minded and innovative.
- Articulate.
- Entrepreneurial.
- Diplomatic.
- Perseverant.
- Confident and emotionally stable.
- Honest and ethical.
- Fearless.
- Passionate about Orme's unique mission and the lasting benefits it provides to students beyond college preparation.
- Willing to travel on behalf of the school.
- An outdoor enthusiast with an appreciation for the Southwest.



## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

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This is an expedited search for a position to begin in July of 2010. **Interested candidates should submit their materials without delay.** These materials should include the following:

- A cover letter explaining why they are particularly interested in and qualified for this position.
- A current résumé.
- A statement of educational philosophy and/or other supporting material (e.g., articles or speeches) that would be useful to the Search Committee.
- The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of three references. (We will obtain permission from candidates before contacting references.)

This information should be sent to lead consultant Art Merovick via email to:

**[searches@wickenden.com](mailto:searches@wickenden.com)**

## THE PROCESS

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Selected candidates will be invited to interview with the Board Chair and Search Chair. Finalists will be invited to the school (with spouse, if applicable) for a visit and more extensive interviews. Wickenden Associates will keep all applicants informed of their status throughout the process.

Prospective candidates interested in learning more about this opportunity should contact Art Merovick at 805 898 2196.