Susan E. Burns

Susan E. Burns is the Vice President for Development and Alumni Affairs and the President of the Wayne State University Foundation.

In 2016, Burns returned to the university where she previously served in various development leadership positions from 2001-2008, including the position she currently holds. She spearheaded the planning and implementation of the university’s first comprehensive capital campaign, Wayne First, and helped complete its second fundraising campaign, Pivotal Moments. The Pivotal Moments campaign surpassed its $750 million goal, reaching $776.5 million when it concluded in October 2018.

Burns previously served as president of the St. John Providence Foundations for more than seven years. In this role, Burns led philanthropy programs across the system of five hospitals. She was recognized with the prestigious Outstanding Fundraising Executive Award by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) – Greater Detroit Chapter in 2010. Before her earlier career at Wayne State University, she led successful development efforts for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Interlochen Center for the Arts, Kendall College of Art and Design, and other organizations.

Burns earned a bachelor’s degree in music management at Wayne State.