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Spring Forward with ACCT Connect!

Made by and for ACCT members, the new online learning and networking platform will build connections and empower community college leaders.

BY ROBIN MATROSS HELMS

SPRING HAS OFFICIALLY SPRUNG HERE IN WASHINGTON — the sun is strong, the cherry trees blossomed gloriously, and everything is getting greener by the minute. There's a new energy in the air, and it feels like a time for leaning into growth, connection, and forward momentum.

On this note, ACCT Connect, our new online learning and networking platform, has launched! We are grateful to those of you who have participated in demos and discussions of the platform at the ACCT



Leadership Congress, the Community College National Legislative Summit, and in other venues over the last few months. Your feedback has been great, and all the ideas about for how to maximize the effectiveness of the platform illustrate the power of collective thinking and creativity, which is at the very heart of ACCT Connect itself.

Also in the vein of energy and growth, in February we were thrilled to welcome Kielo Savilaakso, our new Director for Member Engagement, to the ACCT team. Kielo brings deep expertise with member engagement and building online communities, and she will lead the growth and development of ACCT Connect going forward. You'll have a chance to meet her online soon and in person at upcoming ACCT events. Most immediately, she'll be available to answer any questions and help you get oriented on ACCT Connect once it's launched.

As a reminder, all ACCT members have access to the full ACCT Connect platform as part of your membership — including our cornerstone online Governance 101 course, a resource library, and networking spaces. We are proud to offer these resources to you with no additional fee as part of our mission to promote effective trusteeship and elevate our community and institutions.

Why ACCT Connect?

ACCT members are passionate about their work. We see your dedication and enthusiasm throughout the year at ACCT conferences, Governance Leadership Institutes, board retreats, and other events.

ACCT Connect is a way for our members to access resources and tap each other's expertise in a virtual environment year-round. Our goal is to build connections and empower our members to effectively fulfill

their roles, serve their institutions, support the community college sector, and advance student success.

As you explore the space, you'll see there are a few things that make ACCT Connect different from other online learning platforms and social media networks:

- **It's ours, and it's made for you.** ACCT Connect is built for and by ACCT members. As we grow this community together, we will tap your expertise to create exclusive content, deeper conversations, richer polls, and online events.
- **There are many ways to add more voices to the conversation.** Whether posting a question or discussion topic, commenting on an existing thread, sharing articles and resources, or creating a poll, you'll be able to find other ACCT members with similar interests, shared challenges, and additional expertise.
- **We can bring together content and community.** We are continually adding and updating resources to our space, including online courses. Your comments, reflections, and additions to content will amplify their value and help others gather fresh ideas and new practices to inform their work.

What to expect when you join

We want your engagement on the platform to be time well spent. ACCT Connect is designed to help you:

- Access exclusive resources, content, and conversations you can't find anywhere else.
- Meet people who share your interests and challenges, and who care about the same topics.
- Make better, more well-informed decisions about the things that are most important in your role.

- Trade stories, experiences, and ideas around our shared mission.
- Find a little inspiration, thought-provoking conversations, and expert perspective each and every day.

To make this a reality, we're going to need your help. Every time you contribute a story, experience, or idea, you're building a knowledge base that every community member can tap into to inform their practice. We are looking forward to engaging in this important work together, and we can't wait to see your contributions.

Let's go!

Invitations to join ACCT Connect were sent to our full membership in early May. If you didn't receive one, please let us know at acctinfo@acct.org and we'll send one right away.

In the expansive spirit of springtime, we hope you'll dive right in and give it a go. We'll do everything to make it as easy as possible, including a welcome checklist that will take you through the process of creating your profile and getting oriented. And there's an app! Our goal is to keep you connected in whatever ways are most convenient for you.

Enjoy the spring sunshine and growth, and we look forward to seeing you on ACCT Connect very soon.



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