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## From the Chair

# Improving the Lives of Entire Families



THIS PAST OCTOBER, ACCT TOOK A LEAP OF faith as one of the first organizations in the higher education sector to hold a large in-person gathering. When the ACCT Board of Directors and executive leadership made the decision to do this, rest assured, we carefully weighed all options. Ultimately, we decided to get together physically because this association exists to give members what they need, and we know that working together is the lifeblood of this nation's community college governance system. Yes, as with so many others, we adapted admirably well to virtual collaboration, but if there was a safe way to meet in person, we knew that it was time.

There was no guarantee that this would prove to be the right decision — and so we are grateful that it proved to be the right decision.

In this issue of *Trustee Quarterly*, you'll see a recap of the 2021 ACCT Leadership Congress in San Diego. You will also read the results of a new Digital Pulse survey, conducted by Bay View Analytics and Cengage, along with a variety of partners including ACCT, that reveals that while students do want remote-learning options, many also are most comfortable and get the most value out of in-person classes. As we've adapted, we have learned that how we work together is not an all-or-nothing, here or there affair. We can do what is most appropriate and effective for different situations.

As ACCT Chair, I am excited to work with the board and with newly appointed President and CEO Jee Hang Lee to determine how to incorporate online learning as a permanent fixture of ACCT's services to boards while still offering all-important opportunities for face-to-face networking and education.

Jee Hang details some of his plans for online learning in an interview in this issue and a new *In the Know With ACCT* podcast episode. Meanwhile, I encourage you to read the advocacy department of this issue, which is dedicated to the 2022 Community College Federal Legislative Priorities — also known as the "Green Sheet" — that has been a fixture at the Community College National Legislative Summit for decades.

This February, we will resume gathering in person in Washington, D.C., to advocate for our colleges and our students, and these priorities are the standard that we bear as we make our case to our elected officials. I am happy to report that attendance at the 2021 ACCT Leadership Congress was strong, as are our registration numbers for the 2022 National Legislative Summit. This is evidence that community college leaders and our partners are eager to resume face-to-face (or mask-to-mask, as the temporary case may be) relations to continue to advance our membership. I look forward to seeing you and speaking with you early this year and again this October in New York City.

In case no one has done so recently, I sincerely thank you for your commitment to your community college, its students, and your community. Our work as advocates changes lives, so let's keep working together no matter what obstacles are thrown onto our path.

JAMES COOKSEY  
MOBERLY AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, MISSOURI