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FALL 2021

QUARTERLY

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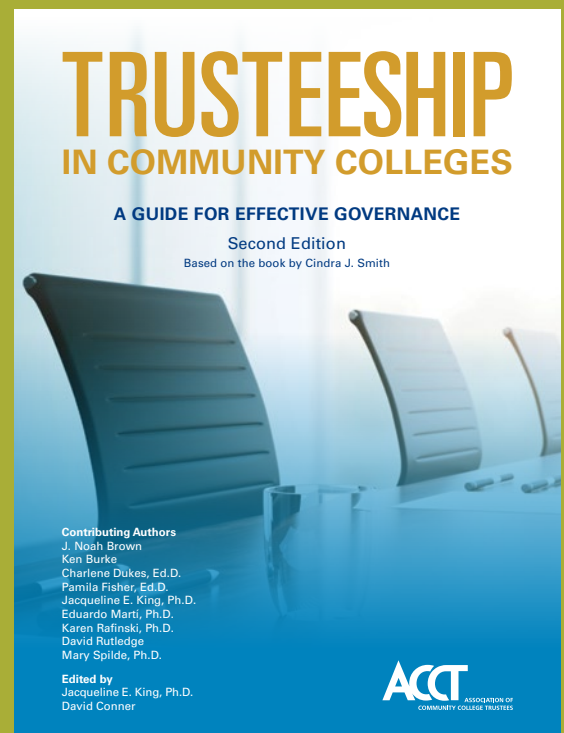
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ACCT's cornerstone governance handbook has been thoroughly revised, updated, and expanded. The new second edition gives a comprehensive overview of foundational concepts of community college governance, more advanced considerations for navigating challenging situations, and information to help community college trustees understand the higher education landscape and, in particular, the community college sector, including the values of educational access and student success.

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From the Chair

Changes from Within, Continuity from Within



OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS, WE HAVE been confronted by so many external pressures that it's been easy to overlook events that have nothing to do with a pandemic, societal unrest, or a sudden conversion to online learning. Two years ago, ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown announced his plans to retire after 25 years of service to the association and 16 years as our chief executive. Since then, throughout all the changes, the board conducted an exhaustive national search for his successor — and we found the perfect candidate had been sitting down the hall all the while. In November, ACCT Senior Vice President Jee Hang Lee will become the fifth president and CEO of the

Association of Community College Trustees.

To say that Noah will be missed is an understatement. For many ACCT board members and community college leaders and for most of ACCT's staff, he is the only ACCT chief executive they have known. His unique vision has cultivated remarkable growth that never veered from the association's mission, and his one-of-a-kind convivial good humor cannot be replaced. But as a trustee who has served Mohawk Valley Community College for over four decades, and as an ACCT Board of Directors member who once left and later came back, I know that serving our institutions is a difficult habit to break, and I suspect Noah will remain a guiding light in the community college sector. He will always be an honored ACCT family member.

The decision of the ACCT Board to appoint Jee Hang Lee as Noah's successor was carefully considered. Ultimately, in addition to serving as a linchpin to the association's programs, services, and operations, Jee Hang is also universally understood to be visionary in his own right, particularly with respect to federal community college advocacy and research into unmet student needs. These are not only valuable facets to the association, but vital ones that reside at the very core of who and what we are as an organization.

Just as Noah's term as president and CEO will end this fall, so will my term as ACCT board chair. I will remain on the board for one more year as immediate past chair and look forward to working with this association as a living, breathing organism that exists to help others. While ACCT may change in some ways under new executive leadership, I know that we've selected a leader who, like Noah, embraces our mission, our vision, and our values and will work tirelessly to empower community college leaders to do the best they can for their students.

DAVID MATHIS

TRUSTEE, MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

FALL 2021

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Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions and values of the Association of Community College Trustees.

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From the President & CEO

It's Been My Pleasure



IT IS WITH MIXED EMOTIONS THAT I WRITE THIS, my final letter, for *Trustee Quarterly*. The final 17 months of my presidency were not what I expected, nor anticipated back in 2019 when I made the decision to step down. Our democracy has been tested, first by a pandemic, then the resultant economic recession, followed by civil strife and demands for justice and an end to racism and persecution of people of color.

The Association does not exist in a vacuum; it is not an elite organization ringed by the Washington Beltway and insulated from the events and everyday lives of people in tens of thousands of communities across the land. No, the ACCT team and I exist at

the very intersection of all things and bear witness to the events — good and bad — that affect our students, our colleges, and our communities. Despite the pandemic and having to work virtually for most of the past 15 months, we continued to stay close to our membership and to reinvent both ourselves and the Association to rise to a higher level of service.

Winston Churchill opined after the catastrophe that was Dunkirk in 1940 that “this was their finest hour,” a clarion signal that Britain would triumph over adversity. While I by no means suggest that the pandemic is equatable to the Second World War, it nonetheless tested our resolve and challenged us to rethink serving the membership and distill the very essence of ACCT’s mission and purpose. As I look back to the events that were unfolding in March 2020, I can say without hesitation that we at ACCT experienced our “finest hour.” We more than survived — we thrived.

Just flip through the pages of this edition of *Trustee Quarterly*. An interview with the new U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, a lifelong educator and administrator, the importance of nondegree credentials, fostering the entrepreneurial mindset, resetting transfer, and the “making of a community college trustee” — these articles bear witness to an Association that has continued to be both relevant and instructive to the membership, despite countless obstacles thrown in front of us.

As I prepare to hand the leadership off to your new president and CEO, I do so with the confidence and evidence of an association that has never been stronger in my 25 years of service to you and to ACCT. We are financially secure, acknowledged as a policy and thought leader, respected by our peers, and yes, somewhat the envy of others for our productivity and innovation.

It has been my honor to have traveled this road with you, particularly during my 16 years as your president and CEO — a tenure I never imagined and never once took for granted. Service is both a calling and a solemn obligation that falls to too few in this world. I have been privileged to serve you and the millions of students who rely on your colleges as gateways to the American Dream. I will forever cherish my time with you and look forward with great anticipation to the future of the Association and the community college movement.

Please stay safe, and thank you for your service and for having placed your faith in ACCT.

J. NOAH BROWN
ACCT PRESIDENT AND CEO

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ACCT Board of Directors Appoints New President and CEO

Jee Hang Lee has served ACCT for 15 years.



The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Board of Directors is pleased to announce that it has chosen **Jee Hang Lee** to serve as the new President and CEO of ACCT after a lengthy search for a successor to its current, long-serving President and CEO **J. Noah Brown**.

Lee's presidency will become effective on November 1, 2021. He is ACCT's current Senior Vice President and has been with ACCT for 15 years, having served previously as Vice President for Public Policy and External Relations. He holds a master's degree in political management from The George Washington University and a bachelor's degree in political science and philosophy from Boston University.

"The ACCT Board is delighted to have selected Jee Hang Lee to continue and enhance the job J. Noah Brown has done in elevating the voice of community colleges and their boards as we navigate the challenges of the future with regard to student success, workforce development, and diversity, equity, and inclusion," says ACCT Chair **David Mathis**, trustee at Mohawk Valley Community College. "We are grateful for the outpouring of interest in the position and commend the many applicants who applied for the position for their interest in ACCT."

NEWS



ACCT Regional Awardees Announced



ACCT is pleased to announce the recipients of its annual Regional Awards for community college trustees, equity programs, chief executive officers, faculty members, and professional board staff members. The 2021 ACCT Awards program is sponsored by Edamerica, an ACCT Corporate Council member that provides solutions that support community colleges' missions to serve students.

ACCT's Regional Awards recognize the tremendous contributions made by community colleges and their leaders to meet the needs of their communities. The awards will be presented during the 2021 ACCT Leadership Congress on October 15 in San Diego, California.

"Community colleges and their leaders have been vital to our country's educational infrastructure and our workforce for over a century," says ACCT Chair and Mohawk Valley Community College Trustee David Mathis. "This year, perhaps more than ever before, community college leaders have proved themselves to be essential community service providers and educators in the face of unprecedented challenges and adversity."

"ACCT is proud to shine a spotlight on some of the nation's best public servants and professionals through our regional awards program," says ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown. "The 2021 awardees reflect the extraordinary commitments and accomplishments of the people who dedicate their lives to helping students succeed. Congratulations to all of this year's awards recipients."

Regional ACCT Awards were announced, one region per day, from July 26 – 30 via ACCT's Twitter account (@CCTrustees).

The full list of awardees follows.

2021 Trustee Leadership Award Recipients

CENTRAL REGION: Thomas Milligan, Edison State Community College, Ohio
NORTHEAST REGION: Victor Richel, Union County College, N.J.
WESTERN REGION: Gigi Edwards Bryant, Austin Community College District, Texas
PACIFIC REGION: Demion Clinco, Pima Community College District, Ariz.
SOUTHERN REGION: George Little, Sandhills Community College, N.C.

2021 Equity Award Recipients

CENTRAL REGION: Madison Area Technical College, Wisc.
NORTHEAST REGION: Hudson County Community College, N.J.
WESTERN REGION: Austin Community College District, Texas
PACIFIC REGION: Mt. Hood Community College, Ore.
SOUTHERN REGION: Atlanta Technical College, Georgia

2021 Chief Executive Officer Award Recipients

CENTRAL REGION: David H. Devier, Glen Oaks Community College, Mich.
NORTHEAST REGION: Murray K. Hoy, Wor-Wic Community College, Md.
WESTERN REGION: Juan Mejia, Tyler Junior College, Texas
PACIFIC REGION: Lisa Rhine, Yavapai College, Ariz.
SOUTHERN REGION: Monty Sullivan, Louisiana Community & Technical College System, La.

2021 Faculty Member Award Recipients

CENTRAL REGION: Kenneth Walz, Madison Area Technical College, Wisc.
NORTHEAST REGION: Debonair Oates-Primus, Community College of Philadelphia, Pa.
PACIFIC REGION: Mays Imad, Pima Community College District, Ariz.
SOUTHERN REGION: Eric Goff, Midlands Technical College, S.C.

2021 Professional Board Staff Member Award Recipients

CENTRAL REGION: Rebecca McNulty, Southcentral Kentucky Community & Technical College, Ky.
NORTHEAST REGION: Cynthia Gruskos, Brookdale Community College, N.J.
PACIFIC REGION: Margaret Lamb, San Diego Community College District, Calif.
SOUTHERN REGION: Sara Kleinpeter, Louisiana Community & Technical College System, La.

New ACCT Paper Assesses Value of Community College Short-Term Credentials

Report recommends policy changes to reflect true student needs.

ACCT published a new report in July that assesses short-term community college credential program outcomes in three states, with support from the ECMC Foundation. In addition to finding that many employer-aligned short-term programs can lead to increased wages and a higher quality of life for students who complete them, *The Value of Community College Short-Term Credentials* reviews existing published literature and offers recommendations to help modernize the nation's federal postsecondary policies to reflect the true needs of today's students.

"A major limitation of assessing the value of short-term credentials offered by community colleges is a lack of publicly available data on students' academic success and employment outcomes," says ACCT President and CEO **J. Noah Brown**.

"Prior studies on these programs typically assess data of all short-term credentials across higher education, which limits the ability to identify specifically how community college students fare. This report aims to begin to fill this gap."

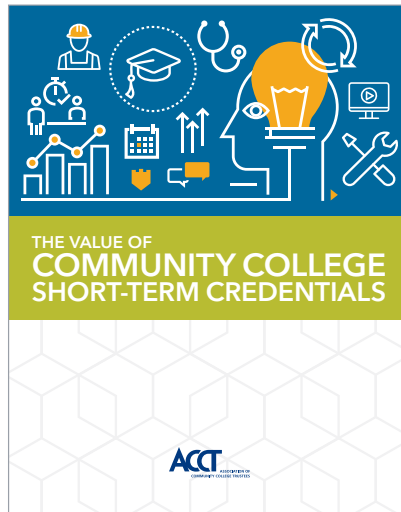
"We are pleased to see ACCT's evaluation culminate in this final report," says **Peter Taylor**, EMC Foundation president. "It is our hope that these findings better inform a quality debate on the topic of Short Term Pell, a decision that may have a significant impact on low-income learners, learners of color, and adult learners."

For this study, ACCT collected data from three statewide community college systems: **Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), North Carolina Community Colleges (NCCC), and the Virginia Community College System (VCCS)**. In addition to quantitative data analysis, ACCT interviewed leaders from each college system to gain insights on program characteristics, implementation, and strategies to connect students to careers in their fields of study.

In addition to finding that many community college short-term credentialing programs lead to higher wages and an improved quality of life, the research combined with existing literature revealed several needs for which the authors offered recommendations, including:

- **Expand Pell Grant eligibility to short-term education and training programs by:**
 - Lowering the clock-hour threshold for Pell Grant eligibility;
 - Ensuring short-term programs lead to recognized postsecondary credentials; and
 - Ensuring short-term programs can articulate to longer-term educational pathways.
- **Support student success during and after program participation by:**
 - Funding community college and business partnerships; and
 - Expanding basic needs services for students in short-term programs.
- **Improve data infrastructure to connect students' academic and employment outcomes.**

Download the report at www.acct.org.



LET THE LAW WORK FOR YOU

Timing is everything when it comes to advocacy, but not everyone has time to pay attention to pending legislation day in and day out.

ACCT's Latest Action in Washington (LAW) Alerts do the work for you.

Since 2008, nearly 1,900 people have signed up to receive ACCT's LAW Alert emails — brief summaries of legislative actions emailed to subscribers as legislation happens, giving community college trustees, presidents, and other leaders and advocates time to contact their representatives and exert influence before it's too late.

Please encourage your fellow trustees, presidents, and colleagues to stay up to date about legislation that affects their community colleges by joining the LAW E-Alert network. To join, simply email publicpolicy@acct.org with "LAW Alert" in the subject of the email.

For more information about ACCT's advocacy services, visit www.acct.org/advocacy.

Model Standards of Good Practice for Trustee Boards

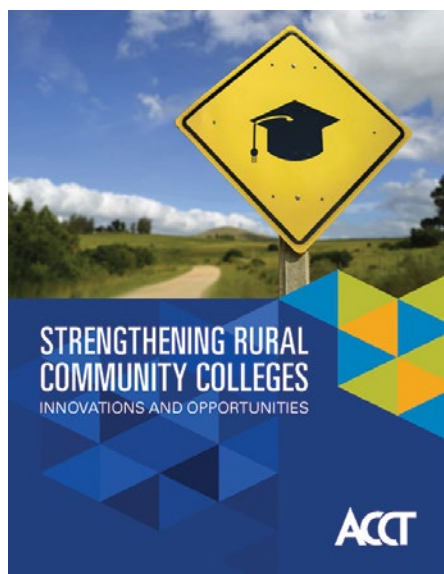
In Support of Effective Community College Governance, the Board Believes:

- That it derives its authority from the community and that it must always act as an advocate on behalf of the entire community;
- That it must clearly define and articulate its role;
- That it is responsible for creating and maintaining a spirit of true cooperation and a mutually supportive relationship with its CEO;
- That it always strives to differentiate between external and internal processes in the exercise of its authority;
- That its trustee members should engage in a regular and ongoing process of in-service training and continuous improvement;
- That its trustee members come to each meeting prepared and ready to debate issues fully and openly;
- That its trustee members vote their conscience and support the decision or policy made;
- That its behavior, and that of its members, exemplify ethical behavior and conduct that is above reproach;
- That it endeavors to remain always accountable to the community;
- That it honestly debates the issues affecting its community and speaks with one voice once a decision or policy is made.

**The term "board" refers to a community college board of trustees or appropriate governing authority.*

ACCT Expands Initiative to Strengthen America's Rural Community Colleges

Next phase of project to establish a nationwide network, offer technical support for federal funding opportunities.



In June, ACCT announced its commitment to continue and expand the work of its Strengthening Rural Community Colleges research and awareness-building initiative. The study will be funded by a 17-month, \$245,681 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

"ACCT is grateful to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for investing in this initiative, which is vital to the success and well-being of community college students throughout the rural United States," says ACCT Chair **David Mathis**, a trustee at Mohawk Valley Community College. "Many rural community colleges are linchpins in sustaining the vitality of their communities, providing educational and vocational training opportunities

that cannot be sourced anywhere else. They empower students in rural communities with bright financial futures, and they supply area businesses with a well-educated and technically advanced workforce."

"This project will build on ACCT's prior work through the Strengthening Rural Community Colleges report that engaged rural community college presidents and trustees to gather information about the challenges faced by these institutions," says ACCT President and CEO **J. Noah Brown**. "One of the findings of this work was that rural colleges did not feel that they had a way to connect with one another to share ideas and discuss issues. They also expressed concern over the many barriers to accessing federal grant funding."

The project will encompass three components:

1. Convening rural community college leaders to establish a new nationwide network;
2. Providing technical support, assistance, and information to rural colleges that seek funding; and
3. Providing other information relevant to rural ACCT member community colleges via a dedicated website, which will also be made available to higher education stakeholders and state and federal policymakers.

"Based on our intensive research into the needs of rural community colleges over the past 18 months, we know that America's rural community colleges and their students have needs that are not currently being met, says ACCT Senior Vice President **Jee Hang Lee**, who serves as the project lead. "The next phase of our holistic Strengthening Rural Community Colleges initiative will engage a minimum of 55 colleges, including at least five tribal colleges, to ensure broad geographic and cultural representation of rural community colleges. ACCT will work with these colleges as well as partners and affiliates to ensure that rural interests are understood at the federal level and met to the greatest extent possible."

To learn more about the rural colleges initiative, visit <https://rural.acct.org>.

ACCT Joins National Governors Association in State Equitable Recovery Coalition

Group established to help states advance inclusive economic growth.

In June, ACCT joined The National Governors Association's (NGA) new State Equitable Recovery Coalition. The Coalition is a partnership of national organizations established to build on existing efforts to drive equitable economic recovery championed by the governors of states and territories.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a major economic toll on communities throughout the country," says ACCT President and CEO **J. Noah Brown**. "Community colleges throughout the country are well positioned to help their local workforces rebound strongly in the wake of the historic past year. We look forward to joining forces with other national organizations through the State Equitable Recovery Coalition to ensure that economic recovery is inclusive and robust across the United States."

The coalition will complement existing networks that NGA and other organizations are working with to take advantage of shared expertise to help drive a sustainable, equitable recovery from the economic disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, while leveraging the opportunity to address workforce, education, public services, and racial and economic justice.

The State Equitable Recovery Coalition, in partnership with Education Strategy Group (ESG) and supported by the Siemens Foundation, will build on these initiatives and others to connect strategically to maximize networks, expertise, and resources on behalf of the governors of states and territories and the workers they represent.

The coalition will provide technical support to help advance governors' community and economic recovery goals over a period of a year. In addition to NGA and ESG, 16 organizations have joined the coalition: ACCT, Advance CTE, the American Public Human Services Association, Ascend at the Aspen Institute, the Center for Law and Social Policy, the Coalition on Adult Basic Education, Goodwill Industries International, the Institute for Women's Policy Research, JFF, the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, the National Association of Workforce Boards, the National Skills Coalition, the National Urban League, New America, the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, and UnidosUS.

The NGA Center for Best Practices also will host a series of action labs for governors' staff and state teams that focus on intersectional issues with the common goal of increasing economic opportunity for low-income students and workers, particularly Black, Latinx, and Indigenous communities and women, while achieving racial equity in access, success, and outcomes in postsecondary education and workforce development programs. These action labs will be focused on tangible steps states can take to advance these goals.

Visit the NGA website at NGA.org for more information about the coalition.

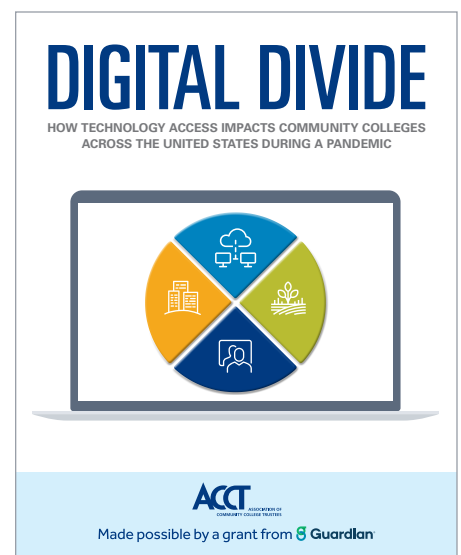
New ACCT Paper Investigates the Digital Divide at Community Colleges

Digital Divide: How Technology Access Impacts Community Colleges Across the United States During a Pandemic examines the current state of the digital divide in the United States and how it is affecting community college students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leaders at community colleges in Spokane, Washington, Los Angeles, California, and on the Navajo Reservation were interviewed to show what the digital divide looks like in an urban, a suburban, and a rural community and how it is affecting each college's students. While all colleges are faced with different circumstances, similarities emerge as the digital divide impacts students across the country.

The paper also looks at how the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act impacted the digital divide within the community college sector.

Download the report at ACCT.org.





Should Earnings Matter in College Programs?

Eligibility requirements in short-term Pell proposals may require institutions to examine their programs.

By Jee Hang Lee

ONE OF THE TOP LEGISLATIVE priorities over the last several years for community colleges has been the creation of Pell Grant eligibility for short-term programs. The signature legislation for community colleges has been the JOBS Act, sponsored by Sens. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio), which would create Pell Grant eligibility for programs between 150-600 clock hours and shorter than 15 weeks. The JOBS Act has garnered substantial bipartisan support, but while other bipartisan legislation such as Second Chance Pell for incarcerated students has been passed, advocates have been unsuccessful in getting the bill across the finish line.

The workforce is ever changing, and colleges are working to meet the demand in the field. But according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there is a shortage of over 7 million qualified individuals for the current workforce needs. Community colleges and employers want to create multiple onramps for numerous positions and occupations. It is also clear that students — especially adult and returning students — favor a shorter time frame for training and education. Short-term Pell Grants would provide the necessary resources for students to defray the cost of attending these programs.

But the detractors of short-term Pell Grants cite a number of concerns about earnings, racial and gender equity, and lack of advancement beyond the initial program as the rationale for their opposition. There are broader concerns about the participation of for-profit colleges and federal student loans,



but the JOBS Act limits participation to public and private colleges and does not allow federal student loans for these short-term programs. But the concerns, especially around earnings, has led to a push to include an earnings test on the latest iteration of the JOBS Act. While there are a number of requirements, the earnings test would be a major change to federal policy. Even during the process of regulating gainful-employment programs, the program measurements were tied around loan debt and earnings, not just earnings.

In preparation for consideration in the infrastructure bill, Sens. Kaine and Portman negotiated changes to the JOBS Act to incorporate an earnings test as part of the criteria for program eligibility. Each program must show that their students received a minimum 20 percent median earnings increase within six months of having completed the program, as compared with their earnings six months prior to beginning the program. The inclusion of the earnings measure will likely limit some program eligibility and also slow the expansion of some programs and fields.

College leaders should read one of ACCT's latest reports, *The Value of Community College Short Term Credentials*, which profiles the data of three community college systems' short-term programs. There were substantial differences in earnings in short-term programs based not just upon occupations, but also around programs in which the student demographics were either predominantly male or predominantly female. These data are highly informative and will help guide

In preparation for passage of the JOBS Act language, colleges should work with their states to ensure that earnings data for all possible students becomes accessible. These data will be crucial to allowing colleges to offer these short-term programs.

colleges if we are successful in getting short-term Pell enacted. While programs may achieve the 20 percent median earnings metric, colleges will also need to ascertain whether certain programs should be offered by their institutions. The data in the report highlighted some programs that did increase earnings, but the earnings of other programs remained below poverty-level income for families.

While the JOBS Act was not included in the infrastructure package, community college advocates are working to include the language into another must-pass legislation, such as an appropriations bill. There is pessimism that Congress

will work on a comprehensive rewrite of the Higher Education Act (HEA) during this session of Congress; therefore, there is a move to try and pass pieces of legislation in other larger legislative vehicles.

In preparation for passage of the JOBS Act language, colleges should work with their states to ensure that earnings data for all possible students becomes accessible. These data will be crucial to allowing colleges to offer these short-term programs. Community colleges support the College Transparency Act, which will increase the amount of data the Department of Education can collect, potentially alleviating the need to rely continually on states for this type of information. The College Transparency Act also has strong bipartisan support.

Make your voice heard on this important topic by visiting with your members of Congress and talking about this or other key issues. Request a meeting virtually or in person with your legislator. For virtual and other meeting tips, visit www.acct.org/product/advocacy-toolkits. To stay up to date on key legislative items, sign up for ACCT's Latest Action in Washington alerts by emailing publicpolicy@acct.org.



ACCT Senior Vice President Jee Hang Lee can be reached at jblee@acct.org.

NPR EDUCATION REPORTER LENDS INSIGHTS TO GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

BY DAVID CONNER

Elissa Nadworny discussed enrollment, nontraditional students, and how to work with the media.

TRUSTEES HAVE “AN INCREDIBLE POWER,” National Public Radio (NPR) reporter and editor Elissa Nadworny said. “Being able to shape a community college in a community is...an incredible thing.”

Nadworny covers higher education for NPR, leading the NPR Ed team's multiplatform storytelling, which incorporates radio, print, comics, photojournalism, and video in the coverage of education. On August 5, she presented to the 2021 Governance Leadership Institute for New Trustees alongside ACCT Senior Vice President Jee Hang Lee. The two-day educational event emphasizes governance practices as well as provides an overview of trends to help new governing board members navigate their new role on a community college board.

Lee and Nadworny discussed developments that have surfaced in national education reporting over the past year, followed by a question-and-answer session that offered tips to help community college leaders work with the news media.

Eye on Enrollments

While enrollment declines are a hot topic in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, colleges have experienced enrollment declines for more than a decade, Nadworny said. Twenty years ago, U.S. birth rates began to decline; as a result, since 2011, "we've seen a decline in college enrollment across sectors — so nobody is 'bucking the trend,'" she said. Still, enrollments did fall sharply during the pandemic: prior to 2020, there was a decline of about 100,000 students across all sectors; following the pandemic, there was an unprecedented decline of about 700,000 higher education students.

Lee noted that 2019 and 2020 birthrates were the lowest in the U.S. since the 1970s, "and future enrollments will decline even further as a result of decreasing population size" — and so strategies to increase enrollments need to be long-term strategies, not only focused on pandemic recovery.

"I've visited colleges that have seen 20 percent declines in enrollment," Nadworny said. "We don't know what the numbers will be for fall. What are some of the strategies to cope?" Her reporting has revealed an "obvious" focus on recruiting more students, but also less obvious approaches, including "strengthening connections between high schools and community colleges...throughout the country," and waiving application fees for students who've stopped out or dropped out.

"I've talked with some schools that have offered free retakes," she said, allowing students to retake a class they failed or dropped out of for free, while enrolling as usual for new classes. She noted that Valencia College in Orlando, Florida, employed this new model and "their enrollment numbers have not taken as big a hit as some others." Sometimes, she said, "students just need an acknowledgment of how difficult their experiences are. For a professor, a barrier can seem so small, but for a student, it can be the end of a college journey."

Following Nontraditional Students

"People we think are going to college are not necessarily the people in college," Nadworny said. "We have a skewed view of who is in college. One in five students has kids while pursuing a degree. Childcare and flexible class schedules are paramount. Students are working." She emphasized that many "legislatures don't know this," and that those legislatures make funding allocation decisions based on outmoded understandings of who community college students are and what they need.

Nadworny sees a potential solution to the enrollment problem in the nontraditional nature of community college students — particularly older adults and returning students. "There's real potential for colleges to pursue these students," she said, noting the importance of educational pathways.

"I'm seeing more focus on the path toward a degree," she said. "It can be helpful to outline what are the actual courses in what order and how to graduate" — listing the required classes to graduate and ensuring that those courses are available when the student needs to take them. One example that has surfaced in her reporting is Shasta College in Redding, California, which "chose three or four program offerings, but guaranteed that those classes would be sequenced so that students will have a degree within two years," she said.

ACCT's own research has been looking into these and other student concerns, including food and housing insecurity, that have bubbled up to receive more national attention since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. "Traveling the country this year," Nadworny said, "housing just came up far more than I expected as an issue students are facing."

On Working with the News Media

"Reporters like scenes and stories," Nadworny said as a first rule of thumb when pitching stories to news producers, editors, and reporters. Some attendees expressed concerns about reporters digging for stories that they can present as salacious.

"The best weapon you have for reporters," said Nadworny, "is to share students and their experiences. Give them more access than you think you'd want to give them" and emphasize "positive stories you'd like to see covered." Though it may seem counterintuitive, she said, the more access colleges can offer to their students, the more likely a reporter will detail positive aspects of their journeys. One participant said that Nadworny had once called him "digging for a story," and that within five minutes of answering questions transparently, "you decided there was no story there."

Nadworny said that it's important to realize that journalists are individuals and to develop relationships with them. "It can be tempting to put everybody in a media bucket in today's climate," she said, "but get to know the person. We're often just trying to figure something out. You can help us understand if there's a story or if there's not a story. You can say, 'I want this to be off the record' or 'I want to talk to you on background,' especially if you have a relationship with a reporter. I would never put something on the air that we agree is off the record. That would be my reputation."

Jee Hang Lee emphasized that "if it's a college matter," then trustees should "follow protocols." Trustees should be familiar with their boards' policies on who is authorized to speak to the news media on behalf of their colleges. In many cases, "the reporter should probably be speaking with the college president or chief information officer," Lee said.

Elissa Nadworny can be found online at [Twitter.com/ElissaNadworny](https://twitter.com/ElissaNadworny). Her reporting can be found at <https://www.npr.org/people/378865949/elissa-nadworny>.



DR. MIGUEL A. CARDONA

The U.S. Secretary of Education discusses the vital role community colleges play – and what he’s learned from visiting their campuses.

BY DAVID CONNER



“WE CAN’T AFFORD NOT TO INVEST IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES,” Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, who is the nation’s 12th Secretary of Education, said in March. In our exclusive interview, the former public school educator and administrator talks about where community colleges fit in the overall education landscape, how the federal government can help to close the digital divide, states’ divestments in community colleges, and much more.

“THE DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF STATE DISINVESTMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION DURING THE GREAT RECESSION ARE STILL WITH US, DRIVING UP PRICES AND HOLDING BACK COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY.”

Tell us a little bit about your background. What experiences ultimately led you to your current office as U.S. Secretary of Education?

It has been a privilege to devote my professional life to education, and my calling was shaped first by my family. My grandfather, who cut sugar cane in Puerto Rico, came to the mainland United States to provide additional opportunities for his children and future generations. While my parents didn't have the chance to attend college, they deeply valued education and taught us the importance of continuous learning and community service. My brother became a police officer. My sister is a social worker. I became a fourth-grade teacher, an elementary school principal, a school district administrator, and then had the honor of serving as Connecticut's commissioner of education. In every role, I cared most about ensuring that all students had opportunities to be successful and reach their potential.

Great teachers and schools set me on this path. One of those teachers was Mr. O'Neil, who taught art classes. He was a dynamic educator, a rare man of color leading a diverse classroom of second graders. I now know he was a pioneer: we have so few male educators of color teaching in our public schools.

As a nation, we must do everything possible to ensure that our children can be taught by diverse teachers. Teachers like Mr. O'Neil change students' lives, and those students then change the world. As Secretary, I'm laser-focused on ensuring that educators and students, especially those historically furthest from educational opportunity and those most affected by COVID-19, receive the resources and support they need to succeed. This means making equity the core of everything we do at the Education Department, and ensuring that the unprecedented funding available through President Biden's Build Back Better plan is used to recover from the pandemic, reinvest in our students, and reimagine our education system so it truly, and finally, serves all students well.

How do you think community colleges fit within the higher education sector and within public education in the United States overall?

Community colleges serve vital roles as entrances to higher education and points of return for lifelong learning. I've seen firsthand how community colleges transform lives and help people achieve their goals — from short-term credentials that give students a quick, powerful boost back into the labor market, to

associate degrees that launch students in careers or on trajectories towards a bachelor's degree and beyond.

Students of all ages and from all walks of life, seeking all kinds of careers and opportunities, enroll in community colleges. Many are balancing work, family, and school, and community colleges also connect them with childcare, food pantries, and other resources that help them keep going. Community colleges are true workhorses of higher education.

The pandemic changed how community and technical colleges serve their students, with distance and hybrid learning expected to become a mainstay due to popular demand and being able to serve many students more conveniently. However, many community college students continue to be at a disadvantage due to a lack of access to the technology needed for distance learning. What role can the federal government play in resolving the digital divide?

Before the pandemic, millions of Americans lacked access to reliable, high-speed internet and technology. When community colleges shifted online nearly overnight, those disparities were magnified. Some students resorted to extraordinary measures — driving to an area with better connectivity to take classes in their cars or submitting homework from their phones — to keep learning.

We must do better by them. A great first step was the Emergency Broadband Benefit that Congress created in response to the pandemic, which allows Pell Grant recipients to qualify for subsidies to afford high-speed internet. And I think Congress realizes that when the pandemic ends, the need for internet access won't. Closing the digital divide remains a critical role for the federal government. That's why the President has called for an infrastructure investment to ensure broadband reaches 100 percent of Americans.

In addition to the pandemic, the past year has brought not only increased national attention but also actions toward improving diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the United States. We at ACCT see every day how vitally important open-access community colleges are to leveling the educational playing field that leads to better-paying jobs and economic mobility. What more do you think federal agencies can do to support community college-based programs and services that advance social and economic equity?

Community colleges do incredible work in opening their doors to students from all walks of life and all backgrounds, and providing them with the skills to thrive in college and careers. At the Department, we are working to make sure those high-quality programs that lead to good jobs can serve students effectively. That means making sure students can afford to enroll, through our proposal to provide two years of free tuition for all community college students. But we also need to make sure those students are supported all the way through earning their degrees and finding well-paid jobs. For instance, we proposed a landmark \$62 billion program designed to take strategies we know help low-income students succeed and expand the use of those practices.

In a June 16 statement on the Department of Education's budget request, you emphasized supports for community colleges as a means by which to make higher education more affordable and accessible. What programs merit additional investments, and why are they important?

Supporting students is essential, and the Biden Administration has a wide range of proposals to do that. We also need to support institutions so they can better serve students, so we've proposed an increase of nearly \$250 million in programs that support Minority-Serving Institutions and other under-resourced institutions serving low-income students.

With additional funds for institutional capacity building, community colleges can do more to promote student success. We've also proposed investing \$12 billion over five years in community college infrastructure and technology to update existing campuses and expand access to community colleges in hard-to-reach areas of the country.

You've expressed support for the College Promise movement to make community college tuition free for all students. Do you think the College Promise movement can become as much a part of our national culture as free public K-12 schools? How do you think universal access to two years of higher education would change communities and the country as a whole?

The College Promise movement is taking hold in our nation's culture. At community colleges across the country, I've heard how transformative it would be for *them*, as well as life-changing for millions more students, to have free tuition available nationally. Students enrolling today would be far more likely to afford the experience, and better able to stay in school to earn their degree or credential. But think of this investment's impact on equity for those who *aren't* enrolling today — those who currently feel higher education is out of reach. This is how we build back better — with a more inclusive economy and a stronger workforce than ever before.

Since taking office as Secretary of Education, you've visited a number of community college campuses. What do you hear from people on these campuses, and what stands

out to you most from the visits you've made so far? Has anything you've heard significantly influenced any of the work being done by the Department of Education?

Community colleges are doing incredible things at one of the most challenging times imaginable for school administrators, faculty, and staff. I've visited campuses that are combining hands-on training in automotive repair with a high-quality childcare center that helps student parents attend classes and complete their studies. I've seen institutions wiping clean the balances students owed them, establishing effective pathways into well-paying jobs in their communities, and preparing the essential workers who are carrying our nation through this pandemic.

I was honored to visit a Tribal college, chartered by the Tohono O'odham Nation to meet the education and career needs of its students and also strengthen and advance Native students' grounding in culture, language, values, and traditions. I carry all these stories with me, and these students' voices inform everything we're doing to help colleges to access pandemic relief funds, students to graduate with the help of Pell Grants and other aid, and borrowers to manage their loans through a time of economic crisis.

Many states divested in community and technical colleges during the Great Recession and have not restored funding in the decade that has passed. Do you think that states should invest greater resources in community and technical colleges? If so, what do you think is the most compelling and convincing case for doing so?

The devastating effects of state disinvestment in higher education during the Great Recession are still with us, driving up prices and holding back college affordability. While it's good news to see 18 states have recovered their investments in higher education from pre-recession levels, too many others haven't.

As many states face continued budget uncertainty, we must be on alert for another round of budget cuts. State funding for community colleges matters for the entire state and its residents, not just those who are enrolled. A well-educated workforce drives a stronger economy. Community colleges produce the workers who take care of our children, take our vital signs at an annual check-up, fix our computers, and nurse our elderly parents. They enroll our high schoolers to offer college credit, and their graduates go on to four-year colleges and beyond. We can't afford not to invest in community colleges.



David Conner is ACCT director of strategic communications. He can be reached at dconner@acct.org.

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LESSONS LEARNED

**What the past year can — and can't — tell us about
the future of emergency aid.**

BY DAVID HELENE

OVER THE PAST EIGHTEEN MONTHS, COMMUNITY COLLEGES have received tens of billions in much-needed investment from the federal government's Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF), creating a singular and unprecedented opportunity to address students' financial hardships and basic needs.

While for many institutions HEERF presented the first encounter with emergency aid, community colleges have long been employing such programs to support students around their basic needs and are extremely familiar with the task at hand.

In many ways, the federal government's acknowledgement of the need for emergency aid — and the inclusion of emergency funding in the various stimulus bills — can largely be attributed to the research and practice in the community college realm over the past decade, which has led the way in developing and disseminating best practices for distributing funds to students.

But despite community colleges' experience with emergency aid distribution, many institutions have struggled to effectively administer HEERF emergency aid. The sheer volume of dollars, the stop-start nature of federal guidance, and restrictions to

awarding only Title IV students in HEERF I, among other challenges, have created material capacity constraints and understandable fears around compliance. Those challenges have, in turn, led institutions in many cases to optimize for minimizing administrative burden at the expense of student success. As a result, according to the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice, only 32% of students experiencing basic needs insecurity have actually received emergency aid, and students on average have had to wait 13 days for funding.

At a macro level, despite the fact that emergency aid supply has matched demand for perhaps the first (and only) time, dollars are also doing out slowly in aggregate. As of June 30 in Washington state, for example, HEERF I emergency aid funds had yet to be exhausted (more than one year after the state received them from the federal government), and not a single community college in the state had distributed 50% of its student portion of HEERF II. Unfortunately, Washington's experience is far from the exception.

What barriers have stood in the way of distributing aid more

effectively — and how can institutions learn from the best practices of their peers to help more students receive the funding support they need?

Overcoming Challenges

What we've learned from our work with community colleges is that in many cases, the greatest barrier to effective distribution of emergency aid is internal infrastructure. Overnight, institutions have been expected to service huge amounts of federal aid funding (in some cases, tens of millions) without the corresponding resources to support the administration of these dollars. As a result, many have reasonably resorted to heuristics to meet compliance standards, such as awarding \$0 expected family contribution (EFC) students only or distributing equal awards to all students, as the staffing required to oversee an equitable and fast-moving application program would otherwise prove too costly.

Such methodologies are entirely understandable as a way of providing some kind of defensible benchmark for aid distribution. But they often fail to capture the real-time financial conditions of students and prioritize need accordingly. EFC by definition is a lagging metric and has been shown to omit critical financial information, such as household debt, which is disproportionately borne by Black families. Just as important, an EFC-based calculation by definition omits non-Title IV students including DACA students and undocumented students, who have been found to endure material additional financial burdens — even though those students are explicitly meant to be served under HEERF III.

Scaling What Works

Despite the challenges of distributing aid, many community colleges have been able to stay true to an equity-centered approach to serve all students quickly and effectively.

Consider the case of Dallas College, which worked quickly in the wake of the CARES Act to ensure all students would have access to funding. Dallas College created a single application through Edquity that enabled approved Title IV students to receive CARES Act funds, and approved non-Title IV students to receive philanthropic dollars. The platform created a system whereby students were not stigmatized, othered, or forced to jump through hoops in the aid application process. All received uniform communication. And all were funded in an average of 48 hours. Since last June, Dallas College has processed over 20,000 applications for emergency aid in this way, and has since opened up federal funds to all students as encouraged under HEERF III.

The experience of Dallas College suggests a number of different best practices for distribution of HEERF funds, including:

- **Make communications and eligibility universal:** When funding is widely available, clear and broad communication to the entire student body can ensure that as many students

as possible understand how to confirm eligibility and apply for aid. Institutions like Pierce College are using this approach to reach the greatest number of students as quickly as possible, and then deploying technology to help them rapidly prioritize need and distribute funds accordingly.

- **Increase award amounts:** Historical emergency aid often was less than \$500 on average, but HEERF has allowed for larger award amounts. Dallas College has provided larger awards targeted to the issues students are experiencing, particularly when students experience more than one issue at a time, which is the case for over 70% of student applicants.
- **Prioritize need, access, and speed of service:** Programs should be student-centered by allowing all students to indicate possible financial hardships and should prioritize getting these dollars out to students in 24-48 hours.

A growing body of research suggests that such an approach can yield material outcomes around completion. Compton College, for instance, found that when it prioritized speed and equity in its awarding process, students who received emergency aid graduated at twice the rate as those not served; and San Diego Community College District has seen the use of aid distribution platforms narrow equity gaps in the demographics of its awards.

What's Next?

While these are no doubt best practices, what's particularly tricky is that institutions may have to rethink — and partially unlearn — them when resources prove to be scarcer as we reach the "HEERF cliff." When institutions are no longer drawing down federal funds for emergency aid, distribution will require even more targeted needs assessments and prioritization of need, as block grants will no longer be feasible. And it will require more coordinated interaction with other supports like emergency rental assistance, SNAP, and other benefits to ensure collective resources are going the farthest to meet student needs — and for the students who need it most.

Understanding the resource shortfall that's to come, it's extra critical for us to get the process right now — and continue to prove out the efficacy and equity of these cash assistance programs. As we've seen this past year, if community colleges lead the way on student success, federal and state governments will have a north star that can help policymakers make better-informed decisions about the investments students need most.



David Helene is founder and chief executive officer of Edquity.

THE INDISPENSABLE INSTITUTION

Taking the Measure of Community College Workforce Education

BY TAMAR JACOBY

A new survey fielded by Opportunity America, Lumina Foundation, and Wilder Research explores how community and technical colleges are innovating to keep up with a changing workplace.

This infographic is a sampling of the study's top findings.

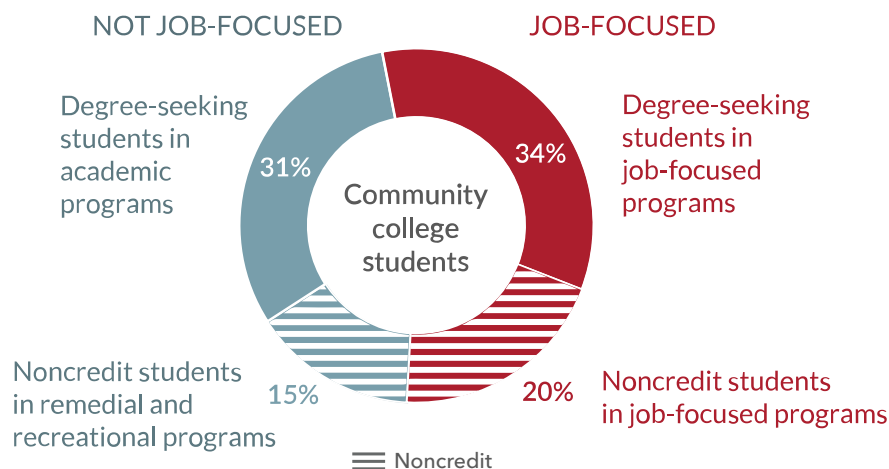
For more information and the full survey results, please visit <https://opportunityamericaonline.org/ccsurvey/>.

Community colleges educate more learners each year than coding boot camps, government job training, and apprenticeship programs combined.



Source: Course Report, *2020 Coding Bootcamp Market Size Study*; US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, "PY 2019 WIOA National Performance Summary"; US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, "Registered Apprenticeship National Results, FY2019"; and Opportunity America's calculation based on Opportunity America community college survey and American Association of Community Colleges, "Fast Facts 2021." All data are for 2019.

Students come to community college pursuing a variety of goals. Some seek traditional academic credentials, others do not.



Source: Opportunity America community college survey and Opportunity America's calculation based on National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, "Fall 2019 Current Term Enrollment Estimates."

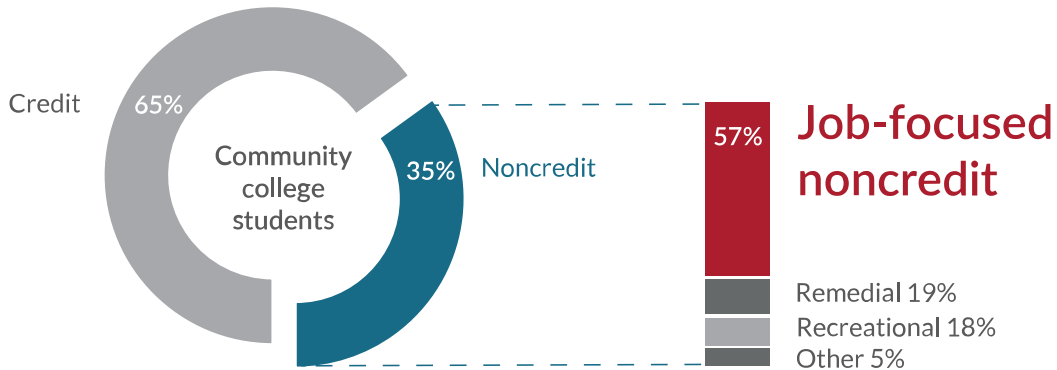
Sometimes called the 'hidden college,' the noncredit division is often invisible to the public and policymakers.

3.7 million

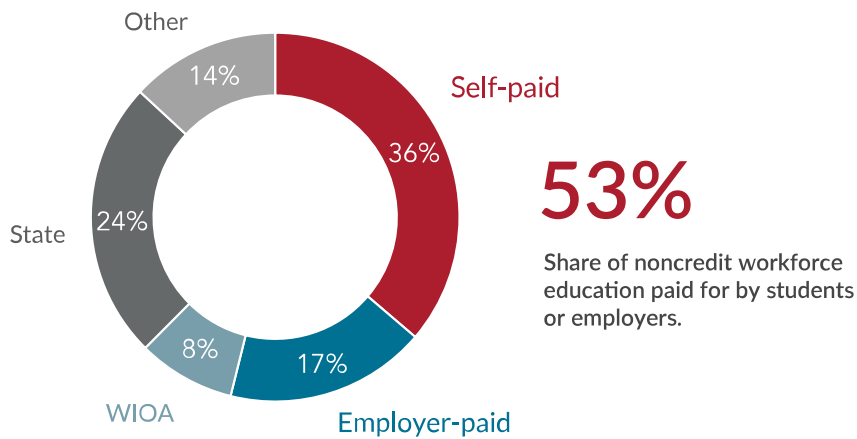
Estimated number of students enrolled in noncredit programs — learners who are not included in federal education data

Source: Opportunity America community college survey and Opportunity America's calculations based on American Association of Community Colleges, "Fast Facts 2021," and National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, "Fall 2019 Current Term Enrollment Estimates."

The noncredit division's signature strength is workforce education.



Who pays for noncredit workforce education?



About the survey: Opportunity America invited administrators from 1,259 public two-year institutions to participate in the study. The survey was in the field from October 2020 through March 2021. More than 600 colleges answered at least one question and 477 provided more robust responses, for a 38 percent response rate. Except where noted, all the figures presented here are based on the results of the Opportunity America community college survey.



Tamar Jacoby is president of Opportunity America.

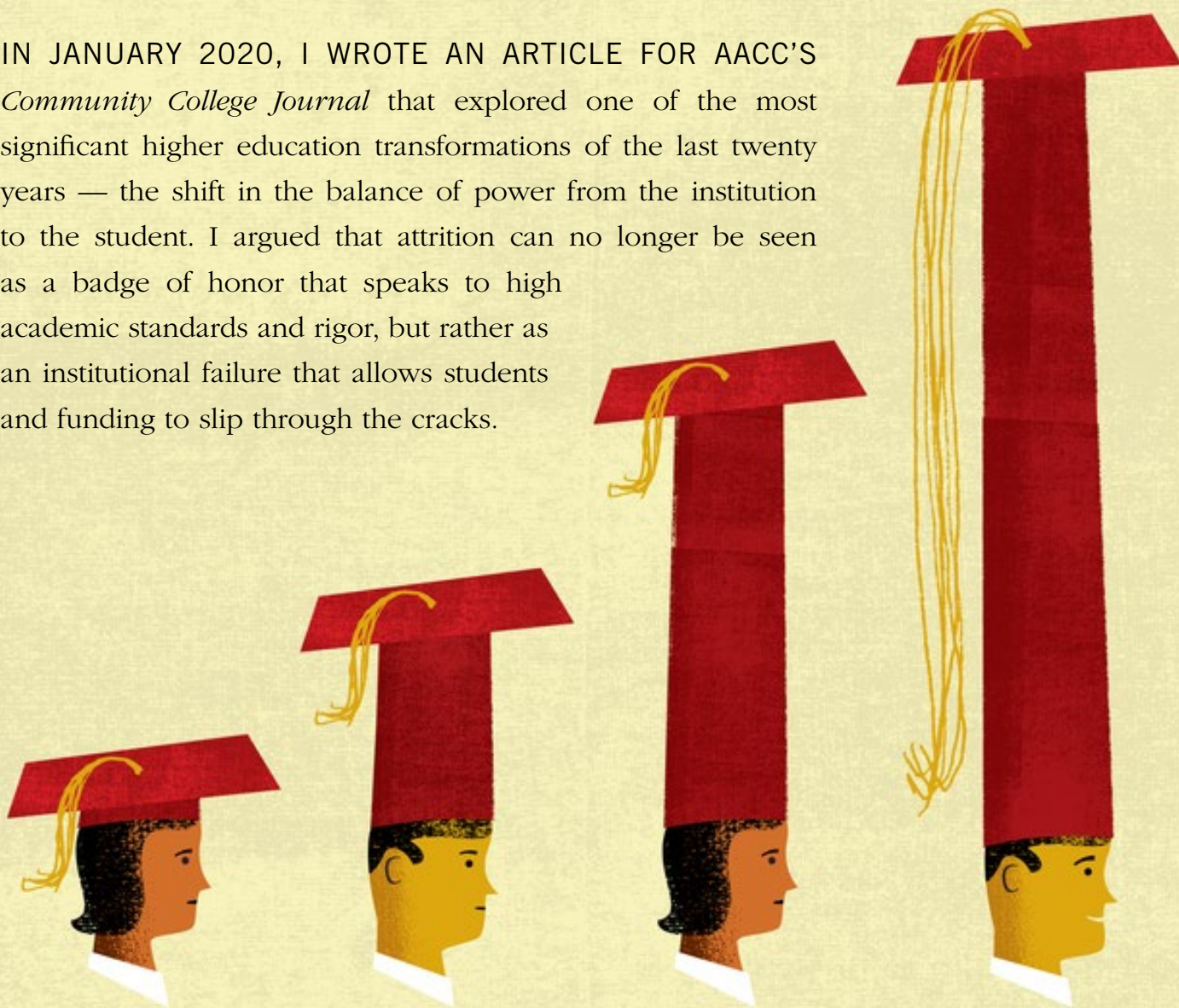


WANT TO IMPROVE GRADUATION RATES? MAKE IT EASIER TO GRADUATE

Automatically awarding degrees shifts the balance from institutions to students in ways that benefit both.

BY MARCIA DANIEL

IN JANUARY 2020, I WROTE AN ARTICLE FOR AACC'S *Community College Journal* that explored one of the most significant higher education transformations of the last twenty years — the shift in the balance of power from the institution to the student. I argued that attrition can no longer be seen as a badge of honor that speaks to high academic standards and rigor, but rather as an institutional failure that allows students and funding to slip through the cracks.



I also argued that community colleges are especially well positioned to leverage this new dynamic, because they have always strived to create the more nurturing atmosphere that today's students desire. There were already myriad examples of innovative steps community colleges had taken to better serve students who have different goals, want a different experience, and require different levels of support.

Here in 2021, we have yet another example of a technology-based initiative that is yielding big results in these critical areas — and it comes at a time when such reforms are essential in reversing the diminished enrollments that accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic. Why? Because it's a change that will see more students cross the stage with degrees and certificates in hand — and ultimately convince more people that there's something to be gained from investments in higher education.

Eliminating the Final Hurdle to Graduation and Completion

In the spring of 2019, California's Allan Hancock College had made great strides in improving its graduation and completion rates. With the state board's Student-Centered Funding Formula in place, the college had committed to improving outcomes by doubling down on its advising and student services programs. As a result, it had increased the number of degrees and certificates awarded each year by about 30 percent since 2011.

Still, there was a need to do even better. When examining the biggest impediments to graduation and completion, an often-overlooked area for improvement revealed itself: the longstanding practice of forcing students to submit an official petition to receive a degree or certificate. It turns out that many students didn't know that this requirement existed. Some didn't even know when they had accrued enough credits to fulfill it.

Hancock College implemented a system to remove this administrative task from students' shoulders and put it on the institution. Even better, it did so without adversely impacting the advisors, counselors, and degree evaluators who had found their rhythm and were already making big gains. By leveraging the data already in its enterprise resource planning (ERP) and student information systems (SIS), it automated the petition process and is already seeing staggering results.

470 Degrees Automatically Awarded in Year One

In Fall 2019, Hancock College began sending auto-generated alerts to students when they were nearing completion of a degree or certificate. It began offering students the option to opt out if that outcome is not part of their academic plan. And it began proactively awarding degrees and certificates to eligible students, and even sending an electronic version of their diploma that can be shared with prospective employers or on social media profiles.

By Summer 2020, 470 degrees and certificates had been automatically awarded to students who may never have received

them otherwise. Nearly 60 percent of those awards went to Latinx students at a time when equity is paramount. All in all, these figures contributed to a 20 percent completion increase year-over-year and a nearly 50 percent increase since 2011.

"The results speak for themselves," says Dr. Kevin Walthers, president of Allan Hancock College. "Where eight years ago we were graduating, on average, around 740 students per year, today we are graduating 1,300 students per year; more than a third of them through the auto-award process."

Once the program is expanded to include to external credits from the military and other institutions, these figures are expected to climb even higher.

"We were missing those students who didn't understand the process or didn't realize they'd earned a credential," continues Walthers. "Now those students are receiving the benefits of their hard work — and you can't overstate the impacts on equity, on first-generation students, and on our local economy. When our graduates earn on average \$9,200 more than their peers with just a high school diploma, that's another \$15 million in wages for our community each year."

A Template for Success

Dr. Walthers hits the nail on the head at a time when the six-year completion rate for students starting in fall 2012 was just 40 percent; at a time when those figures drop to 35.7 percent and 27.5 percent for Latinx and black students, respectively; and at a time when state funding for community colleges is increasingly tied to improved graduation rates and their associated economic impacts.

But where programs like these might have the greatest impact of all is in the community college enrollment declines we've seen since the pandemic began. Those declines are further evidence that the balance of power has indeed shifted — and that institutions need students just as badly as students need institutions (if not more).

As such, it is incumbent on community colleges to engage students in new ways, support students in new ways, and do more to clear the path to academic success and all it brings. By eliminating an outdated barrier to graduation and completion, Allan Hancock College and other institutions like it are doing just that. In the process, they are showing people everywhere that they are just as committed to student success as the students themselves.



Marcia Daniel is chief client officer for Ferrilli, a higher education technology and consulting services provider and a member of the ACCT Corporate Council.

FOSTERING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

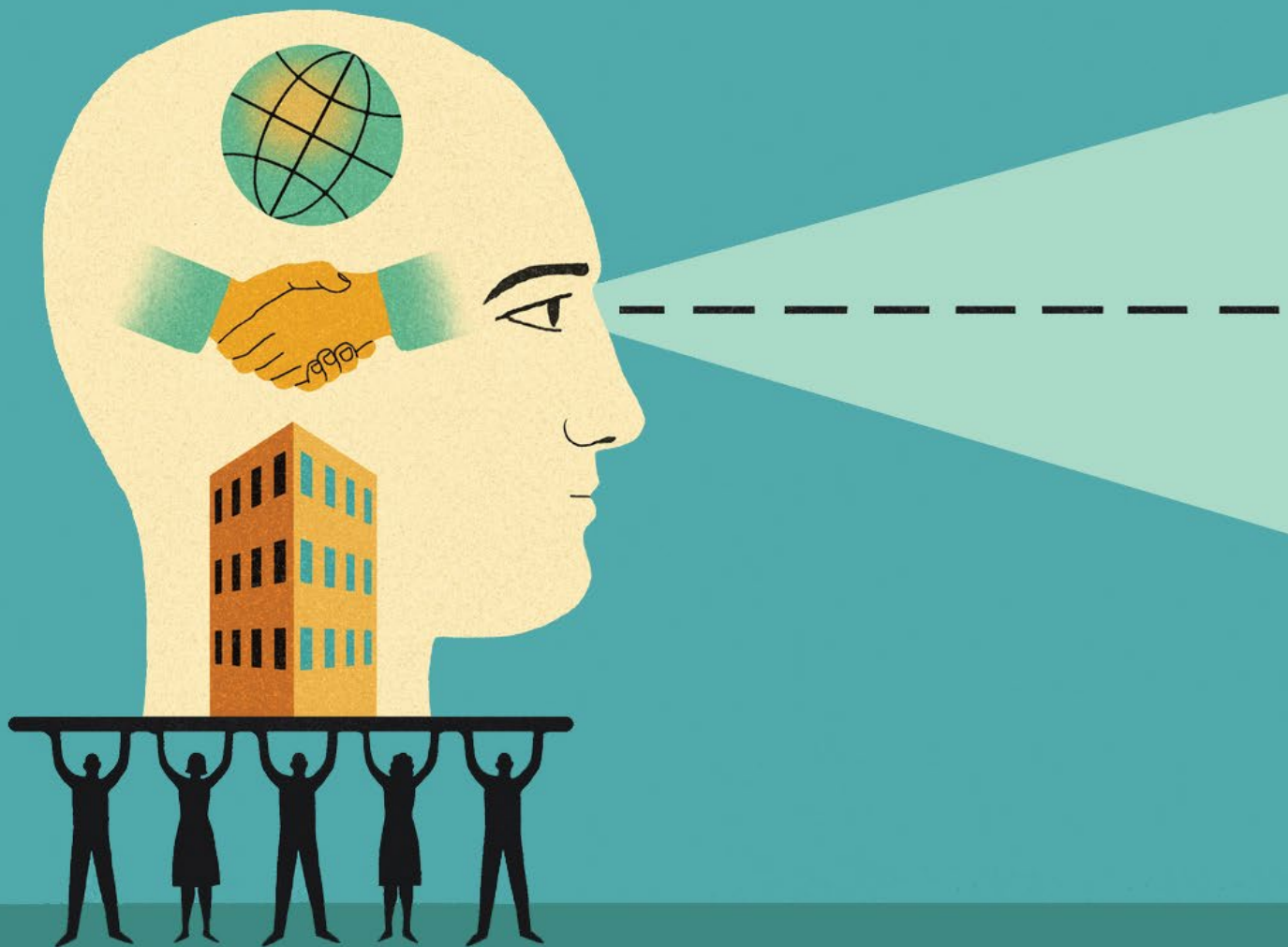
Programs and new ways of thinking will help community college leaders and students better navigate post-pandemic challenges.

BY REBECCA CORBIN

WITH THE RETURN TO SOME PRE-PANDEMIC NORMALCY, OUR next question becomes: *How will we recover from the economic and social damage the pandemic has caused?*

Entrepreneurial skills help individuals identify and solve problems. They help people to think creatively and constantly innovate. They teach us that failure is not a bad thing; rather, it's a learning opportunity. Entrepreneurial skills will be vital in helping us rebound economically and for approaching equity in the world

of business. By making an entrepreneurial mindset a part of all that a community college does, your institution's leadership — and your students — will be more likely to thrive in the post-pandemic world. This is already apparent in the way students and colleges demonstrated resilience in the face of all the uncertainty of the past year and a half. This ability to pivot, fail, and learn are the hallmarks of entrepreneurship, and they will be the guideposts to recovery.



Encouraging Entrepreneurial Experiences

A growing number of students in community colleges across the country are participating in programs that encourage entrepreneurial thinking, such as “Pitch for the Trades,” sponsored by the Philip E. & Carole R. Ratcliffe Foundation in partnership with the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE).

Student teams compete for prize money to launch, scale, or support new skilled trade entrepreneurial projects. Some examples include:

- A group of students from City College of San Francisco won \$32,000 for their Innovation and Incubator Hub that provides space for students to brainstorm new ideas and solutions for the trades.
- Washtenaw Community College in Michigan was awarded \$23,000 for its HVAC Partnership Pipeline project that prepares graduates of its HVAC program for business ownership.
- Catawba Valley Community College in North Carolina benefited from a \$25,000 award to launch a first-of-its-kind collaboration between a local farm and the college. The initiatives span horticulture technology, hospitality and tourism, and beverage production, and include entrepreneurial practicums to introduce students to employment opportunities and business startup essentials.

Opportunities for Scaling

Similarly, the Everyday Entrepreneur Venture Fund (EEVF) enables community college students studying entrepreneurship to explore how to build sustainable funds to support local startups and scale-ups that might otherwise lack access to traditional funding. This program builds on the work of Chip and Stuart Weismiller, who invested \$1 million in 2019 towards the program’s proof of concept in four community colleges before joining forces with NACCE to pilot the program for scale and expansion.

The second phase of the EEVF program, announced in mid-2020, includes five additional community colleges. To date, more than 50 businesses have been established through the EEVF program with \$600,000 expended through student grants or loans. In 2021, NACCE will add more than 30 new colleges to the EEVF program, leading to the launch of more than 100 new businesses by year end.

Colleges Flexing Their Entrepreneurial Mindset

In addition to helping students build entrepreneurship skills, colleges themselves have benefited from these skills. Hard-hit by the economic effects of the pandemic, many community and technical colleges demonstrated the power of entrepreneurial thinking through their resiliency and ability to pivot in astounding ways to survive and even flourish. For instance:

- In 2020, Dabney S. Lancaster Community College (DLCC) President John Rainone and his team raised approximately

\$1 million to acquire and develop the college’s new workforce and entrepreneurship center that will open in 2022. Through the new center, entrepreneurially minded students can take advantage of expanded workforce development offerings through partnerships with local employers in manufacturing, apprenticeships, unmanned systems technology, and the arts.

- When most colleges were pulling back on new offerings, San Diego College of Continuing Education (SDCCE) launched the ICOM Academy (Interactive Competency-based Online Microcredentialing) last fall. The new, fully online educational program provides adult learners with fast, free, flexible job training and extensive career placement services. Certificate programs are offered online, and synchronous instruction makes these programs unique from those that provide little instructor interaction and peer-to-peer collaboration. Students can choose from a wide array of training subjects, including cyber threat and security, programming, and health care coordination, to name a few.
- Houston Community College’s (HCC) entrepreneurial initiatives have grown significantly and continued to expand last year. “We have graduated more than 800 small businesses that have grown their organizations and hired new employees,” said Chief Entrepreneurial Officer of HCC’s Center for Entrepreneurship Maya Durnovo. “The cumulative impact is \$518 million in contracts and \$597 million in financing. Since 2013, we have served 400 minority small businesses and created 1,331 new jobs.”

Benefits of an Entrepreneurial Mindset

Studies have confirmed the benefits of entrepreneurial thinking, such as preparing students for an uncertain future and helping develop creativity and collaboration skills. An entrepreneurial mindset also helps students handle changes happening in technology, business, and society in general. These skills include problem solving, teamwork, and empathy, as well as learning to accept failure as part of the growth process.

In the dedication of NACCE’s new book, *Impact ED: How Community College Entrepreneurship Creates Equity and Prosperity*, the co-authors summarize the entrepreneurial opportunity: “Educational innovators throughout the world inspire students to take risks while embracing and learning from failure in pursuit of their dreams. We believe that achieving equity is possible and that our economy can recover with a community focus on learning, entrepreneurial mindset, and action.”



Rebecca Corbin, Ed.D., is president and CEO of the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE).

THE TRANSFER 'RESET'

WE NEED TO RESET TRANSFER TO MEET THE NEEDS/
DEMANDS OF TODAY'S LEARNERS — AND TOMORROW'S —
WHO ARE SEEKING TO RECEIVE CREDIT FOR LEARNING,
WORK AND LIVED EXPERIENCES ALONG THE ENTIRETY
OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL PATH.

BY THE TACKLING TRANSFER POLICY ADVISORY BOARD

COUNTLESS STUDENTS WOULD AGREE: TRANSFER DOES NOT WORK. Despite sustained efforts to fix transfer over the past several decades, the current system continues to produce dismal, inequitable outcomes and unnecessary roadblocks that thwart students' educational goals.

As members of the Tackling Transfer Policy Advisory Board, we are excited to release a set of recommendations for systems change, with an emphasis on state, system, and federal policies, designed to challenge the status quo, dismantle inequitable transfer policies, and build a new approach. Our goal is to center students and the recognition of their learning as they transfer across institutions and move through their varied lived, work, and learning experiences beyond high school.

TOGETHER WE MUST EXPAND OUR COLLECTIVE SENSE OF URGENCY AND OWNERSHIP FOR TRANSFER STUDENT SUCCESS. WE AIM TO CREATE AND CULTIVATE A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRANSFER STUDENT SUCCESS THAT TRANSCENDS THE CONFINES OF ORGANIZATIONAL BOUNDARIES AND JOB TITLES.

We feel great urgency. Contrary to popular perception, today's students — more than one-third of whom are 25 or older and 40 percent of whom attend part-time — juggle their studies with work, caregiving, and other commitments. More than a third of students transfer to another institution — and of those, 45 percent transfer more than once. But most transfer students face long odds of achieving their goals, and student outcomes are highly inequitable by race and income. The COVID-19 global pandemic has additionally complicated their already complex lives, disrupting educational plans, ushering in ever-changing logistics of program delivery and casting a wide net of generalized uncertainty and upheaval.

We need to reset transfer to meet the needs/demands of today's learners — and tomorrow's — who are seeking to receive credit for learning, work, and lived experiences along the entirety of their educational path. A good first step would be to broaden our collective thinking to recognize that we are doing nearly all students a disservice by not recognizing the knowledge and skills they transfer in from a host of settings, even if they don't change institutions.

In addition, we offer concrete recommendations for state, system, and federal policies. Most transfer policies in place now focus on mapping out pathways, policies that are useful building blocks but nonetheless wholly insufficient on their own. Our policy framework addresses critical dimensions of transfer reform, filling gaps in areas where we currently see very little transfer policy, such as accountability, financial supports for institutions, and financial aid for students. For example:

- **Transparency and political will to change:** States should set, measure, and publicly report progress in achieving data-driven goals for transfer student success — disaggregated by at least race/ethnicity, Pell recipient status, and program of study — through a public dashboard that includes specific targets for closing equity gaps in the two- and four-year sectors, and develop new metrics that focus on the institutions' role and responsibility for transfer student success and support.
- **Financial incentives for institutions:** We call on states and systems to create financial incentives for institutions. Effective student success efforts require time and money, and at this time we see little evidence of states and systems investing in incentives designed to support transfer and recognition of learning.

- **Financial aid:** We recommend that state and institutional leaders designate a subset of state and institutional aid specifically designed for transfer students and that federal actors double the Pell Grant to provide more purchasing power for students experiencing wealth and income disparities.
- **Accreditation review:** Accreditation's role is critical but not widely understood. A study examining how well the accreditation process encourages greater credit applicability and recognition of learning would help to define how to move forward together.
- **Technology:** States, systems, and national actors must accelerate efforts to develop technology systems that facilitate statewide digital transcript exchange, course evaluation, and degree auditing processes across the higher education ecosystem, and empower learners with electronic access to their lifelong learning records.

To ensure these policy changes are undergirded by the political will for change, and attention to solid implementation, we paired our policy recommendations with a set of stakeholder engagement strategies as well.

Together we must expand our collective sense of urgency and ownership for transfer student success. We aim to create and cultivate a sense of responsibility for transfer student success that transcends the confines of organizational boundaries and job titles.

We aim to reset transfer.

The Tackling Transfer Policy Advisory Board includes Marty J. Alvarado, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office; Cheryl Hyman, Arizona State University; Ron Anderson, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities; Shirleatha Lee, University of South Carolina Upstate; William R. Crowe, Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas, Austin; Sharon Morrissey, Virginia Community College System; John Fink, Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University; Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education; Maria Hesse, Arizona State University; Jessie Ryan, Campaign for College Opportunity; Shanna Smith Jaggars, The Ohio State University; and Chris Soto, Connecticut State Department of Education.

THE MAKING OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEE: CHAPTER SIX

ZOOM FATIGUE AND POST-COVID CHALLENGES RAISE TENSIONS.

BY EDUARDO MARTI

PAM SCHIER WAS TIRED OF ZOOM MEETINGS. THE DECISION TO RESTORE in-person classes was a welcomed relief. Everything was almost normal again.

When a crisis is finally over, an assessment of the damage done usually takes place. As the chair of the human resources committee, Schier was concerned with the impact remote learning had on the quality of instruction delivered at Filmore Community College. She had tried to place herself in the faculty's shoes. She became convinced that, while the quality of the course content delivery could have been preserved, the role of the faculty member as a mentor and an advisor had been severely impacted by remote learning. This question weighed heavily on her mind because the completion rate at FCCC was low to begin with, and now it could be even lower. The human cost of the crisis could be even more significant.

Schier decided to speak to the chair of the board, Chuck Frazier,

and the president of the College, Al Pendleton. Following protocol, she called Frazier first.

"Good morning, Chuck," she said. "This is Pam Schier. How are you doing this lovely June morning?"

"I'm well, Pam," Frazier said, a bit irritated as she interrupted his morning exercise routine, which as a 78-year-old he followed religiously. "To what do I owe the honor of this call?"

"Well, I've been increasingly concerned about the impact that the COVID-19 crisis has had on our college," she said. "Not only have enrollments declined, but I'm sure that the graduation and retention rates will be affected. Luckily, the CARES Act and Coronavirus Response Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act have stabilized our finances, but we still must be concerned with the impact of the epidemic on our students. I think we need to formulate a plan to assess the damage and to help our faculty navigate through the lingering effects of the crisis."

Not quite convinced of the urgency of the matter but being respectful to a fellow trustee, Frazier responded, “Why don’t I call for a meeting with the president and we can discuss where we are and what are our next steps?”

“That would be great,” Schier said. They hung up, and she returned to her computer to prepare for yet another Zoom meeting about her insurance business. People had become accustomed to the convenience of working from home, and she needed to be sensitive to the needs of her employees as they could easily switch companies. So, as much as she hates Zoom meetings, she continued to hold her management team meeting in this venue.

The following morning, Schier received a phone call from President Pendleton’s office. The assistant called to inquire about her availability to attend a Zoom meeting with President Pendleton and Frazier at 2 p.m. Another consequence of technology is that meetings do not need much lead time, she thought to herself. “Sure, I can make myself available,” she said. “Thank you and please send me the link.”

The meeting was productive in that President Pendleton appeared to have taken into consideration the need to assess the impact of the crisis. He welcomed both Schier and Frazier and was happy to discuss the college’s reaction to the crisis and the plans for the fall semester. He indicated that a crisis intervention team composed of Robert Jones, vice president for academic affairs, Judith Marshall, also a vice president for academic affairs, and Steve Hoffman, director of institutional research, had been formed. He charged the team to determine how the crisis had affected student retention, to organize a Post-COVID Counseling Center (PCCC) and to reinforce the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning’s efforts to assist faculty re-entry into the “post-COVID work space.”

“Excellent,” said Frazier. “It is important that we inform the board at the next meeting about the administration’s plans.”

“I have a few questions, Al,” Schier interjected. “First, how firm are the plans? Was there any consultation with the college community, or is this already in place? While reporting to the full board of trustees makes sense, I think we should have a facilitated retreat to fine tune the recommendations of the staff.” Schier was a bit out of sorts due to the firmness of the plan without input from the main constituencies of the college. She told herself that this is one of those moments when the trustees must rein in the administration from getting too ahead of itself. After all, collegial governance is needed most during a crisis, she thought to herself.

“I thought you would be pleased with our initiative,” President Pendleton said. There was a prolonged silence. Finally, Frazier broke the ice.

“Look Al, we are not trying to micromanage the situation,” he said. “I don’t want to speak for you, Pam, but I think that you feel the need for greater transparency and consultation before the crisis management team begins to implement its charge.” Schier could

tell that he had interjected to defuse the tension. He continued, “We can dedicate a portion of our scheduled August retreat to receive a report as to how the college responded to the crisis. But I don’t want to delay the implementation of the administration’s plan until then. Can you live with that?”

Schier took a deep breath and responded. “I guess I can,” she said. “I just want to reiterate my disappointment about the way you went ahead and created the crisis management team without consultation with members of the board. The least you could have done was to discuss it with Frazier before proceeding.”

“I’m sorry you feel this way, Pam, but I thought that the management of the post-COVID situation was well within my prerogative as the president of the institution,” President Pendleton said. “I fully intended to inform the board at our next meeting. I did not inform Frazier or any other member of the board because of the need for expediency.”

After President Pendleton left the videoconference, Schier said to Frazier, “Don’t get me wrong, I am the CEO of my insurance firm and I know that in times of crisis, it’s natural for a leader to take charge. I still feel that Al jumped the gun on this one. It reminds me of Alexander Haig during the attempted assassination of President Reagan and how he insisted that he was in charge.”

Questions for the Board:

1. Was Schier wrong to call for this meeting?
2. What could President Pendleton have done to assuage Schier’s concerns during the meeting? Should he have done anything prior to the meeting that could have prevented her frustrations?
3. Did the board chair handle the disagreement in the correct manner? What would you have wanted the board to do in this situation?
4. Was it appropriate for Schier to have disclosed her disappointment with President Pendleton, or would it have been better for her to keep her concerns to herself and follow the board chair’s lead?
5. Do you think Schier and Frazier’s frustrations with videoconferencing and being interrupted while working at home might have affected the dynamics of their conversations? What can college leaders do to encourage effective and congenial communications as these modes of communication continue into the new academic year?



Eduardo Marti, Ph.D., is a trustee at Teachers College at Columbia University and former president of Queensborough Community College (CUNY), Corning Community College (SUNY), and Tompkins Cortland Community College (SUNY). He also authored a chapter of the second edition of Trusteeship in Community Colleges: A Guide for Effective Governance (2020), available at acct.org/publications.

GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR NEW TRUSTEES

As part of ACCT's ongoing commitment to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion through governance, the association convened its first-ever Virtual Diversity Institute this June 22 and 29. The event explored developing an equity mindset, missing minority enrollments, board policies and practices that work, the role of boards and CEOs, how to use benchmarks and metrics effectively, creating actionable steps for forward momentum, and more.

In total, 87 community college trustees, presidents, diversity officers, and others from 21 states participated in the inaugural online event.

Presenters included Prince George's Community College President Emeritus **Dr. Charlene Dukes**; University of Illinois Professor and Director of the Office for Community College Research and Leadership **Dr. Eboni Zamani-Gallaher**; Fresno City College Director of Student Equity & Success **Dr. Ray Ramirez**; Hudson County Community College Trustee **Pamela Gardner**; Hudson County

Community College Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion **Yeurys Pujols**; Hudson County Community College President **Chris Reber**; Hudson County Community College Assistant Professor and Member of President's Advisory Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion **Eric Adamson**; Hudson County Community College Student Alumni Representative **Koral Booth**; Trident Technical College Board Chair and ACCT Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Chair **Yvonne Barnes**; and ACCT President and CEO **J. Noah Brown**.

"I found the sessions to be rich in information, details, explanations and data! I will use all that I learned about equity mindedness and the equity-consciousness approach to make changes with our student organizations and honor societies, and most importantly, diverse and inclusive programming."

For more information about ACCT Governance Leadership Institutes, visit acctgli.org.



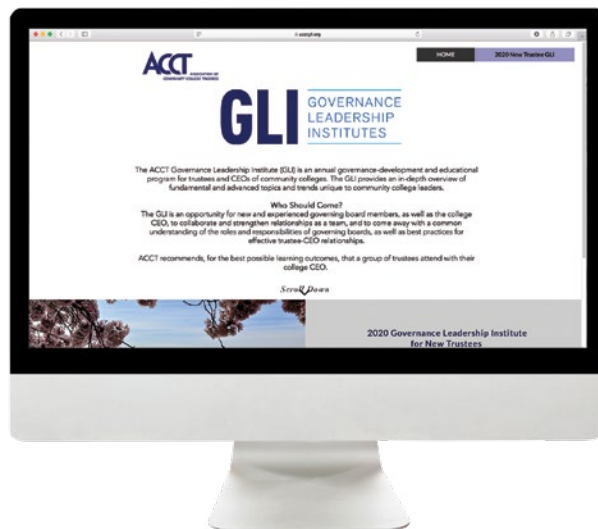
GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR NEW TRUSTEES

The pandemic made travel challenging in 2021, but it hasn't stopped communities from electing or appointing new trustees—and it hasn't changed the need for those new trustees to learn the principles of effective governance.

This August 3 – 5, 70 new community college trustees and their presidents from 18 states and as far away as the Northern Marianas Islands participated in the second annual virtual Governance Leadership Institute.

Traditionally, the institute takes place over two and a half days in Washington, D.C., featuring a combination of educational lectures and group discussion. This year, those elements were adapted to an online format, divided into two one-hour segments for four days:

- Day One: Governance 101 — Roles and Responsibilities, Importance of Board/CEO Relations and Best Practices of High-Functioning Boards presented by **Dr. Shouan Pan** and **Roberto Zárate**; and Parliamentary Procedures and Roberts' Rules of Order presented by **Connie Deford**
- Day Two: Governance 102 — Policymaking, Fiduciary Responsibilities, and Financial Oversight and Board Ethics & Code of Conduct presented by and **Dr. Eduardo Marti** and **Linda Wah**



- Day Three: Advocacy and the Students We Serve presented by **Jee Hang Lee** and **Dr. Beverly Walker-Griffea**; and Current Trends and Issues Facing Our Colleges presented by **Jee Hang Lee** and NPR's **Elissa Nadworny**

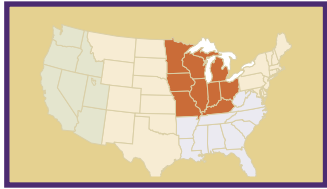
Each day, deeply experienced experts presented on the day's topics for one hour, followed by group discussions of case studies and other topics.

Nearly all participants indicated that they would be interested in further online trustee education.

For more information about ACCT Governance Leadership Institutes, visit acctgli.org.



Around the Regions



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**CENTRAL
 REGION**
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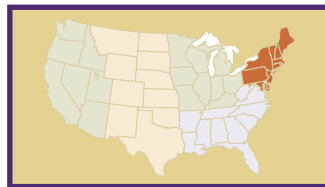
The **Indiana** Department of Workforce Development and Ivy Tech Community College announced an initiative that will give high school and community college students access to cloud computing courses and certifications. Ivy Tech says the initiative will train, upskill, and certify at least 5,000 Hoosiers over the next two years to qualify for cloud computing jobs in their communities in collaboration with Amazon Web Services.

A new round of workforce training agreements between businesses and Northeast **Iowa** Community College (NICC) will help employers remain competitive and hire new skilled employees in the next year. As part of the 260E Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training program, the agreements will offset training costs for businesses seeking to upskill their workforce. Training can include skills such as welding, industrial maintenance, heavy equipment operation, workplace safety and computer skills, as well as human resources, management, and leadership training.

Lorain County Community

College (LCCC), Sinclair Community College, and Clark State Community College in **Ohio** have partnered with global aerospace and defense contractor ARCTOS Technology Solutions to develop smart manufacturing technologies and training programs for students, educators, and employers. The project is funded through the Air Force Research Lab. It builds on existing smart manufacturing initiatives led by LCCC in collaboration with industry, economic, and workforce development leaders.

Clark State College and Sinclair Community College in western Ohio established baccalaureate programs built on the strengths of their associate degree programs. Academic leaders of the two colleges say they are collaborating to serve their students and address local workforce needs.



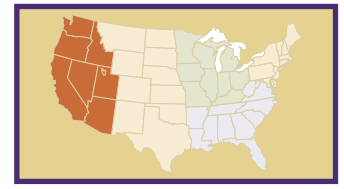
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**NORTHEAST
 REGION**
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Morris County, **New Jersey**, announced major expansions of programs at both Morris County Vocational School and the County College of Morris (CCM). The Morris County Vocational School will expand

by 30 percent with the creation of a new Career Technical Education Center, which will be built at CCM. The center will add 500 students to the Morris County Vocational School District enrollment, exposing career-focused and college-bound high school students to the type of specialized skills that will lead them to successful futures.

Atlantic Cape Community College will receive \$3 million to start a safety training program for offshore wind projects as the winner of the New Jersey Offshore Wind Safety Training Challenge. "Offshore wind is an exciting industry that will open doors for thousands of New Jerseyans, and we are thrilled to play a part in preparing students and workers to participate in this exciting new industry at our Worthington Atlantic City Campus," Atlantic Cape President Barbara Gaba told the *Press of Atlantic City*.

Vermonters whose employment has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic can again take a free class or training through the **Vermont** State Colleges System (VSCS) this fall. The Vermont State Colleges — Castleton University, Community College of Vermont, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College — are offering numerous training options at all four institutions across many high-demand industries and via online and in-person formats.



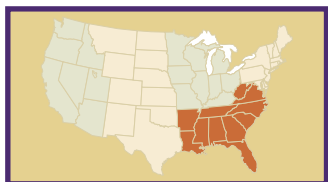
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**PACIFIC
 REGION**
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California community colleges will get \$100 million to help homeless and food insecure students as part of a \$47.1 billion higher education spending plan that Gov. Gavin Newsom signed this summer. The community college funding for students in need will support meal donation programs, food pantries, CalFresh enrollment, and other nutrition assistance programs. It also will help colleges offer on- and off-campus housing resources.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley, the chancellor of California's 116 community colleges, began an unpaid adviser position in the Biden administration during a four-month paid sabbatical from the community college system this summer. Oakley will spend his time away from the system on a temporary assignment as a higher education adviser to U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. Oakley is expected to return to his position as chancellor in late November.

Almost 2,000 recipients, the most ever, received **Hawai'i** Promise scholarship aid from

the University of Hawai'i's seven community colleges for the 2020-21 academic year. Nearly \$3 million was awarded, with an average of \$1,551 given to 1,900 recipients who qualified for resident tuition and demonstrated financial need. Students are first awarded Pell grants, UH scholarships, and private scholarships before being awarded a Hawai'i Promise scholarship for unmet direct costs such as tuition, fees, books, supplies, and local transportation. A high percentage of recipients are underrepresented students.



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**SOUTHERN
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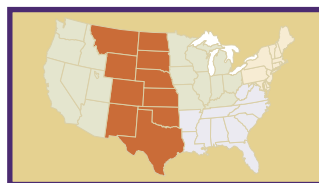
Wayne Community College in **North Carolina** is set to become the second community college in the country to launch an artificial intelligence program for students. Program leaders hope the cutting-edge track will help WCC students and the Goldsboro community capitalize on the state's burgeoning tech boom.

Duke Energy has awarded \$615,000 in grants to 19 workforce development and education programs in North Carolina to help job seekers and students prepare for employment, particularly in the energy sector. The grants support innovative workforce education and training initiatives at community colleges, historically black colleges and universities, and nonprofits across the state. These grants are part of Duke Energy's ongoing commitment to workforce development, which has totaled \$6.3 million over the last five years.

Tri-County Technical College and Clemson University will work with school districts in Oconee County and Anderson County, **South Carolina**, to make education degrees less expensive and take less time to complete. Almost 700 certified teaching and service positions were vacant across the state at the start of last school year, a 26 percent increase from the previous year, according to a report by the state's Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement.

Northern **Virginia** Community College (NOVA) is accepting applications for a new information technology (IT) apprenticeship program created with AT&T and the

Virginia Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI). The program offers NOVA students IT training and on-the-job experience with AT&T and seeks to create a larger pool of talent to meet the needs of federal customers in the national security sector.



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**WESTERN
 REGION**
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Johnson County Community College is one of more than two dozen schools and colleges awarding the **Kansas** Promise Scholarship to qualified students. This scholarship program offers Kansans opportunities to launch a career, gain new skills, or advance in a current position — all while avoiding student loan debt. In exchange, students agree to live and work in Kansas for two years after completing their program of study.

The Rural Community College Alliance (RCCA), Greater Texas Foundation (GTF), and Economic Mobility Systems (EMS) at the

Commit Partnership launched a collaborative program to produce stronger and more equitable college and workforce outcomes for rural Texas students in August. Funded by a three-year, \$3.1 million grant from GTF, the Rural College Promise program will involve three community colleges — Grayson College, Tyler Junior College, and North Central Texas College — and the rural counties they serve across north and east Texas. Supporting partners also include the National College Promise Campaign and Phi Theta Kappa.

The U.S. Dept. of Education awarded Lone Star College in **Texas** \$2.07 million under the CARES Act through the Institutional Resilience and Expanded Postsecondary Opportunity (IREPO) grant program to address the greatest unmet needs related to the pandemic. These resources enable institutions to resume or enhance in-person and online operations and implement COVID-19 mitigation strategies.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed a bill allowing community colleges to offer up to five four-year bachelor's degree programs. The College of the Mainland announced that its first four-year program will be for students working to get their bachelor's degree in nursing.

Around the Regions provides an opportunity to share what's happening in the states and around the regions. This section focuses on state legislative and budgetary issues, economic development, and finance. Please e-mail items from press releases or newsletters to ACCT at jbray@acct.org.

Legal Issues Impacting Community Colleges

Recent rulings and guidance involve student athlete compensation, LGBT rights, COVID-19 vaccinations, and student online speech.

By Ira Michael Shepard, ACCT General Counsel

THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF recent legal developments important to decisionmakers in the higher education and community college community.

U.S. Supreme Court rules against NCAA in antitrust lawsuit, opening the path to greater compensation for student athletes. On June 21, 2021, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the NCAA in a landmark antitrust lawsuit, reversing prior precedent and opening the door for colleges and universities to provide “educational benefits” to athletes which were previously barred or limited by NCAA rules. In a unanimous decision written by Justice Neil Gorsuch, the Supreme Court affirmed the lower court of appeals decision of the Ninth Circuit that the court should apply a “rule of reason” analysis to future disputes brought by student athletes.

The *National Collegiate Athletic Association v. Alston* decision opened the door to payment of educational benefits such as reimbursement for computers, musical instruments, free tutoring, internship stipends, and cash academic achievement awards. While the decision was narrowly focused on educational benefits, commentators have concluded that it could make a difference down the road for student athletes trying to profit off their names, images, and likenesses (NIL). Nearly 20 states have passed laws in the past two years allowing student athletes to earn money from third parties for NIL despite the NCAA's conflicting “amateurism rules.”

U.S. Supreme Court to decide

whether emotional distress damages are compensable to disability plaintiffs under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to decide whether emotional distress damages are available to discrimination victims under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

and under the ADA to resolve a split in the Federal Appeals Court Circuits on this issue (*Cummings v. Premier Rehab PLLC*, U.S. No. 20-219 cert granted, 7/2/21). The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, covering Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, recently ruled that emotional distress damages are not available to disability discrimination victims, reasoning that these damages



“Remind me again—what do I usually promise you so you’ll take on extra work?”

are not available in contract claims, which are akin to discrimination claims under the statutes.

The Fifth Circuit decision is at odds with an Eleventh Circuit decision (covering Alabama, Georgia, and Florida) holding that emotional distress damages are frequently suffered by victims of discrimination and therefore are foreseeable by employers covered by these statutes.

The Supreme Court will address the conflict between the circuits on this issue in its next term. We will follow the Supreme Court's action on this issue in the future and report on the ultimate resolution.

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) opposes religious class action challenging LGBT rights.

The EEOC has opposed a class action suit filed in federal court in Texas attempting to exempt “all employers” from complying with federal LGBT protections if they have religious or non-religious objections to “homosexual or transgender behavior” (*U.S. Pastor Council v. EEOC*, N.D. Tex., opp. to class certification). The EEOC is arguing that such a case is not suitable for class status as each case is different and must be decided on a case-by-case basis. In its earlier ruling in favor of LGBT protections under Title VII in the *Bostock v. Clayton County* case, the Supreme Court left open whether religion can be used to bypass discrimination laws.

EEOC guidance affirms that employers can offer vaccine incentives to employees. The EEOC issued guidance indicating that employers may offer bonuses and other incentives to encourage employees to get the COVID-19 vaccine. The Commission concluded that “Federal Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws do not prevent or limit employers from offering incentives to employees to voluntarily provide documentation or other confirmation of vaccination obtained from a third party in the community such as a pharmacy, personal health care provider, or public clinic.” However, employers that administer vaccines to their employees must ensure that the incentives are not coercive, according to the guidance.

The EEOC also pointed out that vaccinations require employees to answer pre-vaccination disability-related screening questions. The EEOC further concluded that a very large incentive could make employees feel pressured to disclose protected medical information. The EEOC emphasized that employers must keep worker vaccination information confidential if they choose to obtain it to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Supreme Court hears oral arguments in “angry cheerleader” case, with First Amendment ramifications for higher ed. The U. S. Supreme Court recently heard

oral arguments in a pending case over whether a school district may discipline students for social media posts under the First Amendment. Although the case arose in the K-12 school district context, the ruling may have First Amendment application to public community colleges and their ability to restrict student online speech.

The case stems from an incident in which a high school sophomore was disciplined after she shared a picture of herself on the Snapchat social media network with her middle finger raised and the accompanying caption, “F— School, f— softball, f— cheer, f— everything.” The cheerleading coach heard about the post and suspended the student from the junior varsity team for the entire year. The student's parents then filed a First Amendment lawsuit which recently made it to the Supreme Court for argument. We will also follow this case and report on the result.



Ira Michael Shepard is Of Counsel with the law firm of Saul Ewing, LLP, in Washington, D.C., and ACCT's General Counsel.

Executive Searches

The staff and consultants of the Association of Community College Trustees are pleased to have assisted in the search for the following community college executive officers.



Riverside Community College District, California

Tammy Few

Vice Chancellor, Human Resources and Employee Relations



Chippewa Valley Technical College, Wisconsin

Dr. Sunem Beaton-Garcia

President

“Dr. Sunem Beaton-Garcia is a dynamic, engaging, and thoughtful leader with a proven track record. She will greatly benefit CVTC

throughout this current period of transition and into the future.”

—Paul Bauer, District Board Chair, Chippewa Valley Technical College



Delta College, Michigan

Dr. Michael Gavin

President

“The board is pleased to welcome Dr. Gavin as Delta College’s next president. The search process brought forward a diverse field of extremely accomplished candidates. Dr. Gavin

brings an exemplary record of achievement and leadership in higher education and a dedication to making the most of the opportunities that lie ahead for Delta. I am confident he will be an outstanding leader for years to come.”

—Michael Nash, Board Chair, Delta College



Dutchess Community College, SUNY, New York

Dr. Peter Grant Jordan

President

“Dr. Peter Jordan’s appointment is the culmination of a comprehensive national search process to recruit a leader who will listen to all our key campus constituencies, build a vision of what that will look like — and then, to also create it. Dr. Jordan has been at the forefront of anticipating such changes in his last role. We are fortunate to have his experience at this challenging but potentially transformative juncture.”

—Michael Dupree, Board Chair, Dutchess Community College, SUNY

Executive Searches

The staff and consultants of the Association of Community College Trustees are pleased to have assisted in the search for the following community college executive officers.



York Technical College, South Carolina

Dr. Stacey Moore

President

“Dr. Stacey Moore’s enthusiastic focus on student success and her commitment to continuing the great work of the college will serve

the college and the community well. We welcome Dr. Moore’s leadership as we enter the next chapter of York Technical College’s history.”

—*Geri Rucker, York Commission for Technical Education Chair, and Chair, Presidential Search Committee, York Technical College*



Santiago Canyon College, Rancho Santiago Community College District, California

Dr. Pamela Ralston

President

“Dr. Pamela Ralston has a great breadth and depth of experience in higher education that includes

teaching, learning, development of academic and career technical education programs, creation of career pathways, and fostering student success. Her energy and vision support the great efforts that her predecessors have founded, and she will lead Santiago Canyon College to new and exciting directions.”

—*Marvin Martinez, Chancellor, Rancho Santiago Community College District*



San Bernardino Community College District, California

Diana Rodriguez

Chancellor

“The decision to hire Diana Rodriguez will shape the future of our district, which is one of the area’s largest employers and an economic engine

for the Inland area. We have seen her excellence demonstrated as president of San Bernardino Valley College, and she has proven herself the right leader at the right time.”

—*Dr. Anne Viricel, Board Chair, San Bernardino Community College District*



Rio Salado College, Maricopa Community Colleges, Arizona

Kate Smith

President

“Kate Smith’s exceptional leadership as Rio Salado’s Interim President exemplified dedication to our community college mission in

developing the student experience and the success of our community. We are extremely pleased to have Ms. Smith continue to lead Rio Salado.”

—*Dr. Steven R. Gonzales, Interim Chancellor, Maricopa Community Colleges*

Executive Searches

The staff and consultants of the Association of Community College Trustees are pleased to have assisted in the search for the following community college executive officers.



South Texas College, Texas

Dr. Ricardo Solis

President

“The board is confident that we have found a visionary leader in Dr. Ricardo Solis, whose work will further elevate this great institution while staying true to our mission

of access and success. We look forward to building a strong collaboration that will transcend any challenges and cement the legacy of South Texas College as a transformational agent for our region.”

—Rose Benavidez, Board Chair, South Texas College

RETREATS & WORKSHOPS

Thank you to the following colleges who have used ACCT to facilitate a board retreat, board self-assessment or CEO evaluation, or other board education service in recent months. We appreciate your trusting ACCT to assist you with your board development needs.

- Aims Community College, Colo.
- Atlantic Cape Community College, N.J.
- Community College of Beaver County, Penn.
- Garden City Community College, Kans.
- Hudson County Community College, N.J.
- Independence Community College, Kans.
- Klamath Community College, Ore.
- Los Angeles Community College District, Calif.
- Montgomery County Community College, Penn.
- Mount San Jacinto College, Calif.
- North Carolina Association of Community College Trustees, N.C.
- Ohlone College, Calif.
- Sheridan College, Wyo.
- South Arkansas Community College, Ark.
- South Puget Community College, Wash.
- Springfield Tech Community College, Mass.
- Western Dakota Tech, S.D.
- Wisconsin Technical College District Boards Association, Wisc.
- Yavapai College, Ariz.

5 KEYS

TO A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION YEAR

AN ACCT GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARDS AND CEOS

With over 50 percent of current college CEOs expected to retire within the next few years, boards are seeking new ways to connect the hiring and onboarding processes to ensure the new CEO's effectiveness and longevity. The first year often sets the stage for the CEO's success, and this new publication from ACCT outlines key first-year strategies for the board and new president.

Download the report at www.acct.org.



A Lifetime of Appreciation

ACCT LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

Community college trustees give a lot of themselves — time, energy, wisdom — and ask for little or nothing in return. The gift of an ACCT Lifetime Membership is a way to thank trustees for everything they do, and to empower them to keep doing it for as long as they choose.

A lifetime membership is a perfect way to...

- Recognize outstanding trustees whose dedication to your college has made a difference and set an example.
- Thank outgoing members for their service.
- Remain involved with your peers and make a tax-deductible donation to your national association by purchasing a Lifetime Membership for yourself.



7 REASONS TO BESTOW A LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

- 1 Giving outstanding and retiring board members a Lifetime Membership to ACCT is a way to thank them for their service, recognize them among their peers, and ensure their ongoing interest in your college.
- 2 Lifetime Members receive complimentary registration to all ACCT meetings, including the Annual Leadership Congress and the National Legislative Summit, after retiring from their local boards.
- 3 Lifetime Members receive all of ACCT's award-winning publications, including *Trustee Quarterly* magazine and *Advisor*.
- 4 Lifetime Members are recognized publicly in *Trustee Quarterly*, on the ACCT Web site, and elsewhere.
- 5 The Lifetime Membership program supports and promotes ACCT's continuing trustee education and professional development.
- 6 Colleges that purchase Lifetime Memberships can deduct the expense from taxes to the fullest extent allowed by law.
- 7 It's just a nice thing to do — and haven't your most exceptional trustees earned it?

For more information and to submit an application, go to www.acct.org/membership/lifetime or contact ACCT's Member Services at 202.775.4667 or acctinfo@acct.org.



INTERFACE

A PUBLICATION OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF NETWORK IN COOPERATION WITH THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES

PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF NETWORK 2021 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Find us on Facebook:
ACCT Professional Board Staff Network

PBSN Website:
www.acct.org/professional-board-staff-network



See You in Sunny San Diego!

By Jeannie Moton
Portland Community College

SOON ACCT AND PBSN WILL BE CONVERGING UPON SAN DIEGO!

As an assistant to a community college board of directors or a chancellor/president, you are a member of the Professional Board Staff Network (PBSN). Your membership in PBSN is automatic once you identify your role with ACCT. The PBSN gets together in community at the annual ACCT Leadership Congress hosted by ACCT, to be held this year in San Diego.

While we are still living in uncertain times, one thing is certain — connecting will be exciting and a welcome encounter! First and foremost, we want to assure attendees that we are planning a safe and sensible conference. We want everyone to feel comfortable attending our sessions. Your PBSN Leadership Team has been busy for the past few months planning a thoughtful and meaningful gathering for us all. We are taking our lead from ACCT and will be moving forward with planning an in-person gathering, with the ability to pivot to remote if the need arises. We are also making a few changes this year to accommodate for physical distancing at our gatherings.

On the afternoon of Wednesday, October 13, we will host a meet and greet. This is a casual gathering for folks arriving to town a little early. We are being thoughtful about the location and hope to find a venue that will accommodate us coming together to visit with each other safely. The meet and greet is a pre-conference gathering to get to know your PBSN leadership and to meet others in the group. It is a great opportunity to learn about the group, to meet new folks, or to reconnect with old friends.

During each ACCT Leadership Congress, PBSN hosts an informational workshop for the membership. This year's workshop will be held on Thursday, October 14, from 2-5 p.m. We have a great topic this year: succession planning. While our roles at our institutions vary, in most cases we are usually the only ones at our colleges who do what we do. We will explore this topic in more detail and offer tips for having a succession plan in place. We will, as usual, have our traditional roundtables conversations, although they will look different this year.

On Friday, October 15, at 9 a.m., we will hold the annual PBSN Business Meeting. We have a lot to consider for the meeting, including a review of our bylaws and proposed changes. Current officers will ascend into their new roles, with elections taking place for vacant positions. Please consider getting involved with PBSN and running for one of the vacant positions or a Regional Member at Large.

While travel plans may look uncertain for us all, it will be great to be able to gather in person. If it comes to not being able to gather in person, we will make the most of meeting remotely.

Serving as your president for the past two years during these unprecedented times has been a true learning experience. I am thankful for my executive committee and all of their support. Having their support to help organize and plan our sessions has made my two-year term sail by. I am looking forward to turning the presidency over to Benita Duncan from Lansing Community College. I know that with her at the helm, next year will be amazing. I look forward to supporting her as your 2021-2022 PBSN President.

Please travel safely and be sure to connect when you are in San Diego!

Election of Board and Diversity Committee Members

Elections for ACCT Regional Directors and Diversity Committee Members will be held at the Regional Caucuses and Meetings on Thursday, October 14, from 2-3:30 p.m. during the ACCT Leadership Congress in San Diego. Elections for Directors-at-large will be held on Friday, October 15, from 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., during the ACCT Senate Meeting.

2022 Candidates For The ACCT Board Of Directors

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

(1) Three-Year Term in Each Region
(1) One-Year Partial Term and (1) Two-Year Partial Term in the Pacific Region

The following is the slate of nominees received as of July 1, 2021:

Central Region – **Maureen Dunne***
College of DuPage, IL

Northeast Region – **Marsha Suggs Smith***
Montgomery College, MD

Pacific Region – **Richard Fukutaki***
Bellevue College, WA

Pacific Region One-Year Partial Term
Diane Noriega*
Mt. Hood Community College, OR

Pacific Region Two-Year Partial Term
Linda Wah*
Pasadena Area Community College District, CA

Southern Region – **Ed Dalrymple***
Central Piedmont Community College, NC

Western Region – **Dan Mims***
San Jacinto College District, TX

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE

(3) Three-Year Terms
(1) One-Year Partial Term

The following is the slate of nominees received as of July 1, 2021.

Carol Del Carlo*
Nevada System of Higher Education, NV

Blake Eisenhart
Bucks County Community College, PA

Fritz Larsen*
Black Hawk College, IL

Vivian Malauulu
Long Beach City College, CA

Jermaine Reed
Metropolitan Community College, NC

Kenneth Sadler*
Forsyth Technical Community College, NC

Pretta VanDible Stallworth*
Houston Community College System, TX

**Received support of their respective Nominating Committees.*

Note: Nominations will be accepted from the floor for all elections. Also, Rosaelena O'Neil from Northern Virginia Community College in Virginia completed her term on her college board. As of August 6, 2021, she has resigned from the ACCT Board of Directors.

2022 Candidates for the ACCT Diversity, Equity, And Inclusion Committee

(1) Two-Year Term in Each Region
(1) One-Year Partial Term in the Southern Region

Following is the slate of nominees:

CENTRAL REGION
No Nominees

NORTHEAST REGION
Anthony Colon*
Mohawk Valley Community College, NY

PACIFIC REGION
Deborah Ikeda*
State Center Community College District, CA

SOUTHERN REGION

Tina Royal*
Davidson-Davie Community College, NC

One-Year Partial Term
Keyatta Priester
Aiken Technical College, SC

WESTERN REGION
Belen Robles*
El Paso Community College, TX

Candidates with an asterisk received the support of their respective Regional Nominating Committees.

Note: Nominations will be accepted from the floor for all elections. Also, Marc Wiley from Prairie State College in Illinois resigned from his college board.

Elections of Regional Nominating Committee Members

Regional nominating committee elections will take place during the 2021 ACCT Leadership Congress Regional Caucuses and Meetings on Thursday, October 14, from 2-3:30 p.m. Based on the ACCT Regional Nominating Committee structure, each committee consists of five members elected for two-year staggered term. No more than one member shall be from the same state. The following seats need to be filled for the 2022 – 2023 term:

CENTRAL REGION

Three (3) seats are available to members from the following states: *Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, and Ohio.*

Chery Tefer (MN) and John Wyatt (WI) will continue to serve in 2022.

NORTHEAST REGION

Three (3) seats are available to members from the following states/territories: *District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, and Pennsylvania.*

Cordell Hunter (MD) and BJ Ayars (NJ) will continue to serve through 2022.

PACIFIC REGION

Two (2) seats will be available to members from the following states/territories: *Alaska, American Samoa, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Marshall Islands, and Republic of Palau.*

Mohamed Alyajouri (OR), Doug Mah (WA), and Linda Thor (AZ) will continue to serve through 2022.

SOUTHERN REGION

Three (3) seats will be available to members from the following states/territories: *Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Bermuda, and British Virgin Islands.*

Betty Holness (FL) and Helen Rosemond-Saunders (SC) will continue to serve through 2022.

WESTERN REGION

One (1) seat will be available to members from the following states: *Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming.*

K. Paul Holt (TX), Arlen Leiker (KS), Ernie Mehl (NE), and Roberta Scott (NM) will continue to serve in 2022.

Engage Your Board. Advance Your College.

ACCT Board Services provide opportunities to strengthen the unique role of board members and to develop an effective board.

Services Include

- Retreats
- Board self-assessment
- Presidential evaluations
- Succession planning
- Institutional leadership analysis
- Board policy review
- Mediation and conflict resolution

Call to learn more about ways to engage your board and make use of each trustee's skills and expertise.

Contact:

Colleen Allen
Director of Retreats and Evaluation Services
callen@acct.org

202-775-6490 | www.acct.org/services



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Community College National Legislative Summit



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