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# Trustee

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QUARTERLY



## Generational Change

Rose Benavidez has broken barriers as ACCT's first Latina Chair and continues a legacy of leadership.

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Our Legacies of Learning and Leadership

I AM A PROUD MEXICAN-AMERICAN who was born and raised in a small border town, part of the culturally rich Rio Grande Valley, in deep south Texas. I am the daughter of migrant farmworkers who were the children of migrants, who understood that education is the key to success.

I was touched to learn, this past October, that many of you knew my father, as he was also a community college trustee and a member of ACCT. To say I am proud to be the living legacy of his pathway and accomplishments would be an understatement. I am certain he could have never known that he would become a member of a higher education governing board, when at the tender age of 18 and with little guidance and few expectations, he registered in a technical college. He enrolled so that he could gain a skill that would allow him to support his family, as so many of our institutions' students do. Shortly thereafter, he came to a crossroads when a freak welding accident left him with a life-changing choice: a life of disability checks or full paid tuition to complete his bachelor's degree. He chose the latter and became the first and only in his family at age 34 to graduate with a degree — a degree in education.

My mother left high school during her junior year and earned a GED a year later. She, too, knew the inherent power of education and chose to work as a teacher's aide for over 20 years. After 15 years of night school, she became one of only two in her family to graduate with a bachelor's degree at age 47.

My grandfather, who received his GED in his late 50s, would often remind us that he "rode in the back of a pickup truck so that [we] could ride in the front of an airplane." Each of them, like you, in their own way determined to be agents of transformational and generational change.

It is important that you know this history not only to share the legacy of my family, but to remind you that countless students at our colleges are living future legacies for their families. I tell these stories to underscore that we all share a similar history, founded in hope and dreams, that can only be realized through hard work and education.

I am sure we can agree that in today's global economy where knowledge is power, excellence in education is not just a mere advantage, but a fundamental necessity. In this country, we are not short of hope and dreams; the proof is in the millions who are attending and the tens of millions more who have graduated from our institutions. As community college leaders and public servants, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that opportunity is made available to everyone who needs or seeks it out.

As we govern our institutions, I'd ask all trustees to remember that the work we do is not for recognition but for realization. It is a reminder that our responsibility in public service is simply to effect progress, to work to make people's lives better, to work to make our communities better, and to work to make this world better.

Together we can and will continue to transform the lives of every young girl and boy who dare to pursue their dreams by nurturing that seed of hope that serves both as our anchor and their sail. That is our charge and our blessing. I thank you for joining me in this endeavor.

De todo corazón mil gracias,

**Rose Benavidez**  
South Texas College

# Trustee

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*Ira Michael Shepard*

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I'm pleased and, if I may say, proud to look back at what we have accomplished over the past year, and to look forward toward more groundbreaking developments on the horizon for your association.

## Moving Forward

DEAR ACCT MEMBERS,

I'M PLEASED AND, IF I MAY SAY, PROUD to look back at what we have accomplished over the past year, and to look forward toward more groundbreaking developments on the horizon for your association.

If you weren't able to participate in the senate meeting during ACCT Leadership Congress this past fall, then you may not have seen our annual State of the Association report — *Forward*. The report highlights just some of our achievements over the past fiscal year, from First Lady Jill Biden, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona, and Labor Secretary Marty Walsh headlining the 2022 Community College National Legislative Summit and major legislative “wins” for community colleges to the launch of the ACCT Center for Policy and Practice; visits to an unprecedented number of member colleges; diversity, equity, and inclusion advancements, and more. If you haven't reviewed it, I encourage you to check it out on the “About Us” page of ACCT.org.

I mention last year's accomplishments because I am excited as I look forward to the coming year — my second full year as ACCT's president and CEO.

Before doing anything else, please read our cover story on ACCT Board Chair Rose Benavidez, a trustee from South Texas College. Her story, which is also her family's story, and

similar to the stories of so many of our students, reflects both an outstanding legacy and our forward momentum. And her story is also the story of all our members, as Rose has deep ties to her community and to her community college, and as she says, her commitment is moving us forward.

In this issue of *Trustee Quarterly*, you will notice a new feature: a column called “Connect,” written by our recently installed (but already very accomplished!) Vice President for Membership and Educational Services, Robin Matross Helms. Robin has joined ACCT to strengthen connections with our members — with you — and I urge you to read her column and to get to know her as we work together to advance the association's work and your work as a community college trustee.

Please take time to read through this new issue of *Trustee Quarterly*. The articles were selected to help you stay up to date about what's happening at ACCT and where we are headed next, to make you a better board member for your college, to update you on important news from within the sector, and to enlist your support as an advocate for your college and for all community colleges throughout the country. We're moving forward together.

**JEE HANG LEE**  
*ACCT President and CEO*

# NEWS & NOTES

## ACCT Partnership for Skills-Based Hiring

IN DECEMBER, ACCT ANNOUNCED THE launch of a partnership pilot program that focuses on increasing the effectiveness of skills-based hiring. Lumina Foundation generously supports this work with a \$350,000 grant.

The pilot partnership includes ACCT, **Opportunity@Work**, the **State of Maryland**, select employers in identified sectors, and four Maryland community colleges. The pilot will demonstrate the effectiveness of skills-based hiring by designing and/or enhancing existing training programs at the four community colleges around the essential skills most needed for specific occupations, creating a pipeline of skilled and career-ready job candidates for open roles.

“Community colleges already play an important role in workforce development across the country,” said ACCT President and CEO **Jee Hang Lee**. “This project will develop a roadmap for institutions nationwide to standardize their process for helping employers to identify the specific skills needed for high-demand jobs in their region.”

The impetus for this project is the partnership between Opportunity@Work and the State of Maryland. In March, the partnership launched a multi-pronged, first-in-the-nation effort to formally eliminate bachelor’s degree requirements from thousands of state jobs, opening equitable access for the overlooked talent category of STARS — workers who are Skilled Through Alternative Routes. There are over 70 million workers in the U.S. today — and more than 1.3 million in Maryland — who obtain skills through alternative routes such as community college, military service, boot camps, and workforce training programs rather than through a bachelor’s degree program and are being screened out from jobs. Nearly half of these STARS have the skills to thrive in higher-wage, in-demand roles that pay up to 50% more on average. To ensure everyone has access to a

good job and the opportunity to achieve greater economic mobility, employers must intentionally include STARS in their talent acquisition strategy. As part of these efforts, the pilot aims to utilize and streamline this process to improve partnerships between community colleges and local employers.

“We believe that a four-year degree cannot be the only path to success,” said Opportunity@Work Chief Customer Officer **Bridgette Gray**. “Employers shouldn’t limit a candidate’s opportunities and in effect pull up a drawbridge by requiring degrees rather than considering other qualifications. Improving partnerships between community colleges and business will ensure that training programs deliver the necessary skills that employers are looking for and a way to enhance them as those needs change.”

“Meeting Lumina’s goal — to have 60 percent of working-age adults obtain a high-quality credential or degree by 2025 — makes it crucial to have equitable access to career pathways through multiple channels,” says Lumina Strategy Director of Employer-Aligned Programs **Kermit Kaleba**. “This new project’s focus on skills-based hiring provides yet another pathway for students to expand their access to high-earnings jobs through post-high school training.”

The four Maryland colleges participating in the pilot program are:

- **Carroll Community College**
- **Community College of Baltimore County**
- **Frederick Community College**
- **Howard Community College**



For more information about this initiative, visit [ACCT.org](https://www.acct.org) or contact Steve Jurch at [sjurch@acct.org](mailto:sjurch@acct.org).

## 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 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.*

# 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](mailto: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](http://www.acct.org/advocacy).

## ACCT Association Awards Winners

ACCT announced the recipients of its annual Association Awards for community college trustees, equity programs, chief executive officers, faculty members, and professional board staff members during the ACCT Awards Gala at the ACCT Leadership Congress convened in October in New York City. Awardees were announced live during the gala on ACCT's Twitter (@CCTrustees). For photos and videos of the Association and Regional Awards, visit [www.acct.org/awards](http://www.acct.org/awards).



**2022 M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award**  
**Deborah Ikeda**  
State Center Community College District, Calif.



**2022 Marie Y. Martin Chief Executive Award**  
**Christine Johnson**  
Community Colleges of Spokane, Wash.



**2022 Charles Kennedy Equity Award**  
**Community College of Baltimore County, Md.**  
*(Award presented to college board and CEO)*



**2022 William H. Meardy Faculty Member Award**  
**Patricia Maloney-Titland**  
Rockland Community College, N.Y.



**2022 ACCT Professional Board Staff Member Award**  
**Mary Lou Hernandez**  
Central Arizona College, Arizona



For more information about the ACCT Awards program, contact [awards@acct.org](mailto:awards@acct.org).

## New Statewide ACCT Governance Leadership Institutes

GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTES (GLIS) ARE THE primary way for community college trustees and CEOs to learn about how to govern colleges effectively, from the basics to advanced topics. Over the past decade, thousands of trustees and hundreds of CEOs have benefited from the education and team building provided by ACCT GLIs.

Following several years of requests, ACCT this fall piloted specialized GLIs tailored to the needs of community colleges across entire states. In November, we convened two bespoke GLIs for colleges in Nebraska and New Jersey, followed by a state-specific GLI for Illinois trustees and CEOs in December.

As with all GLIs, these institutes offered in-depth overviews of the roles and responsibilities of members of a public governing board and the college administration, the board-CEO relationship, parliamentary procedures, and other governance fundamentals. The statewide GLIs also offer the advantage of gathering college leaders to learn about and explore state laws or statutes and other specific considerations that affect how they govern their colleges.

“Gathering college leaders from throughout the country to learn about and discuss the roles, responsibilities, and limitations of board governance offers a lot of unique learning opportunities,” says ACCT Vice President for Membership and Educational Services Robin Matross Helms. “State-based governance institutes also offer their own unique opportunities. Both models can be an ideal way to advance any college board’s practical knowledge and all-important peer-to-peer networking. We’re excited to continue to evolve ACCT’s GLIs to best meet the needs of all of our members.”



To inquire about state-based Governance Leadership Institutes, contact [rhelms@acct.org](mailto:rhelms@acct.org).

## 2022 M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award Winner

**Deborah Ikeda**  
State Center Community College District, Calif.

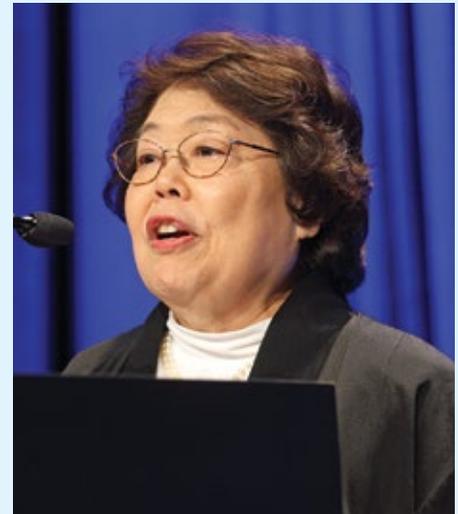
### What does the award mean to you?

I was humbled and honored to receive the M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award because it shines a light on the work the State Center Community College District and the California Community College Trustees have done in advocating community college educational opportunities for all.

### What advice would you offer to other community college trustees?

Trustees are people who are used to taking charge and taking action, but as a trustee your role is to provide guidance through policy and trust in the administration you hire to promote your policies and bring the transformative vision you desire as a board. We all seek the same goal, and that is to provide the necessary support for each student to succeed.

YOU could be the next M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award winner! Visit [ACCT.org/awards](https://www.acct.org/awards) to learn more about the 2023 awards program or to nominate outstanding board members.



Learn more about the 2023 awards program at [ACCT.org/awards](https://www.acct.org/awards)



## Now Connecting You

BY ROBIN MATROSS HELMS

ONE OF MY FAVORITE MOMENTS FROM MY FIRST SIX MONTHS at ACCT took place during the Friday evening gala at our 2022 ACCT Leadership Congress in New York. The dinner and awards presentations had gone off without a hitch, and I was taking a little breather on the balcony of the ballroom. As I was reflecting on the conference and watching award winners and their colleagues take photos and enjoy their celebration, the DJ turned on the speakers and announced that the dance floor was open.

Kool & the Gang's "Celebration" flooded the room, and the ACCT membership responded! The dance floor was immediately packed, and for the rest of the evening, all of us in the ballroom enjoyed the music, the energy, and each other's company. This celebration was the culmination of a great week of community, collegueship, and mutual learning, which in my time at ACCT so far, I have come to realize are the cornerstones of our organization and membership.



Looking forward, as we set intentions – individually and organizationally – for 2023, the word that is top of mind for me is “connect.” This has been a theme throughout my own career, and I am excited to carry the concept forward in both familiar and new directions at ACCT.

Looking forward, as we set intentions – individually and organizationally – for 2023, the word that is top of mind for me is “connect.” This has been a theme throughout my own career, and I am excited to carry the concept forward in both familiar and new directions at ACCT.

Global learning and international education are my area of academic expertise, and program implementation in this field has been a focus throughout much of my career until now. By creating study abroad and exchange programs, facilitating international student enrollment in the U.S., and producing comparative research on critical topics in education, I have sought to build connections and relationships that are the foundation of global understanding and ultimately, a more peaceful world. (More on what this means for community colleges in a future column in *Trustee Quarterly!*)

Having made my professional home in the higher education association space – most recently, I spent 10 years at the American Council on Education – I have developed a deep appreciation for the convening and connecting power of these types of organizations, and of the roles they play in identifying collective priorities, furthering good practice, and spurring innovation. The energy and sense of shared purpose I’ve seen among ACCT members is unmatched in my experience, and I am excited to build on existing connections and further amplify the excellent work of this special community.

So what does it mean to “connect” ACCT in 2023?

First, it’s about **connecting our members to each other**. At the ACCT Leadership Congress,

our Governance Leadership Institutes, and other events I’ve helped to implement so far, I have been struck by both the depth of expertise in the room and the willingness of our members to candidly share strategies, challenges, and opportunities. In the coming year, you’ll see an amplified emphasis on interactive learning in our in-person programs, and additional spotlighting of innovative practice in boardrooms and at institutions. And in the spring, look for the debut of **ACCT Connect**, our new online learning and networking platform available exclusively to ACCT members.

Second, we’re focusing on **connecting our members to the information you need to be great trustees**. We are building ACCT Connect as a hub of practical information, for new and seasoned trustees alike. Our first online course, Governance 101, is almost ready for launch, and we expect it will become the go-to resource for board members who want to brush up on their governance knowledge, and the starting point for new trustees as they begin their leadership journeys. Later this year, look for a newly redesigned ACCT website, where resources and research on critical topics will be available to the broader higher education community. And the latest season of our *In the Know* podcast is about to launch, featuring insights from members, our board, staff, and experts in the field on a wide range of topics – interesting conversations with interesting people in a portable format.

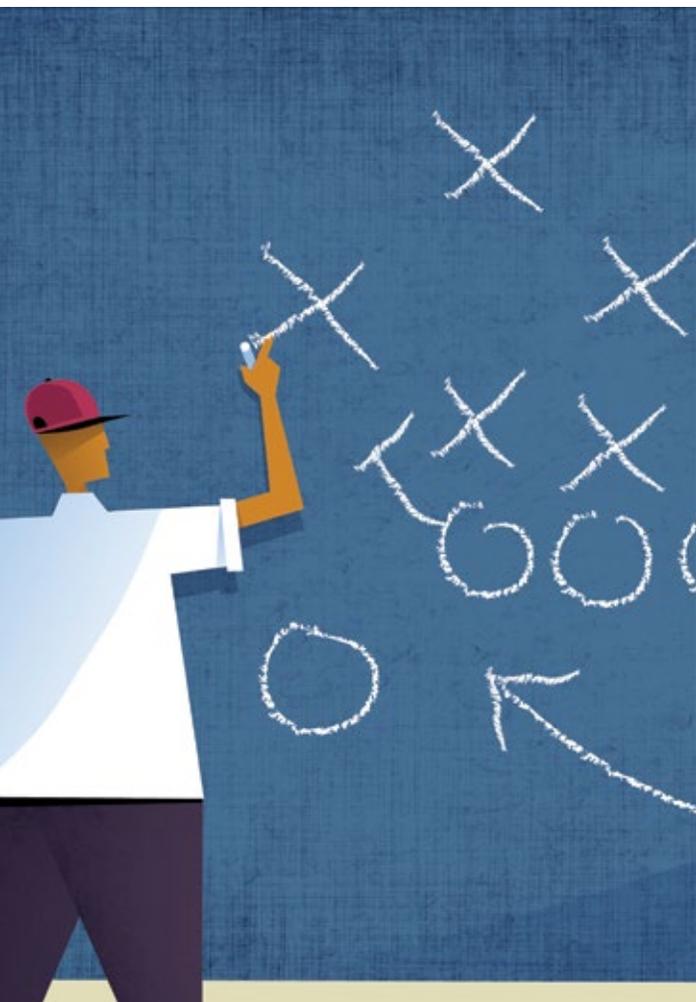
Third, look for additional opportunities to **connect with ACCT leaders and staff**. Complementing our president’s visits to

member institutions throughout the country to get to know you and your communities, we’re continuing to build our expertise and capacity to provide targeted services to your boards and campuses through board retreats and evaluations. We plan to stick with our members over time, though a suite of services to help institutions and boards prepare for and manage transitions, and navigate the ups and downs of community college governance.

Finally, on a personal note, I look forward to continuing to connect with and get to know all of you. I am grateful for the warm welcome I have received so far, and I have already learned a tremendous amount about community colleges and governance from ACCT staff, our board, and our members. We’ll have many opportunities to connect in person and virtually at meetings and events in the coming months, and you’ll hear more about my background and our work in subsequent columns. But also never hesitate to pick up the phone or drop me an email to let me know what’s on your mind. The more points of connection we find, the stronger we and our institutions will be. Best wishes for a great start to 2023!



*Robin Matross Helms is ACCT’s vice president for membership and educational services. She can be reached at [rhelms@acct.org](mailto:rhelms@acct.org).*



What should community college leaders do plan ahead? Build relationships with elected officials early and nurture them often. This election is the first following the 2020 Census and realignment of seats. Each campus should be sure it knows the elected officials from all of the Congressional districts from which it draws students, or at least its local students.

## 118<sup>th</sup> Congress: Prepare for Offense and Defense in the Years Ahead

Community colleges must prepare for two distinct types of negotiations with lawmakers.

BY CARRIE WARICK-SMITH

**I**N FOOTBALL, YOU FREQUENTLY HEAR THE CLAIM THAT “defense wins championships.” However, the military adage focuses on offense, with the idea that “the best defense is a good offense.” As community colleges consider their advocacy work for the 118th Congress, it’s going to be very important to consider both.

The metaphor should not be taken too far. Community colleges are not under attack or trying to win a game. But there are two very distinct types of negotiations coming over the next two years. One, what we’ll call the “offense,” involves issues where there is likely bipartisanship and a real opportunity to make progress for campuses and students. The other, what is likened here to “defense,” are those where promises made in the early days of this Congress could undo advancements made over the past several years.

### **Offense: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act**

The House Education and Workforce Committee and the Senate Health Education Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee oversee both education and workforce bills in their respective chambers. Key laws include the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEA) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA). While partisan HEA reauthorization bills are anticipated this year, particularly in the House, it is unlikely that they will gain traction. The real opportunity for bipartisan agreement and progress is for WIOA.

In the House Education and Workforce Committee, the two leads stay the same while switching roles as chair and ranking member with the change in majority in the House. They are longtime committee heads Representative Virginia Foxx (R-NC) and Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA). In 2021, Reps. Foxx and Scott held three bipartisan hearings and several talks around reauthorizing WIOA. While ultimately then-Chair Scott introduced a bill on his own, WIOA was the area where the

Think beyond just education and appropriations. Consider Agriculture for the Farm Bill, Judiciary for immigration issues, or Ways and Means or Tax for issues related to higher education tax credits and taxability for the Pell Grant.

most progress was made and generally where it seems there could be the possibility for agreement during the 118th Congress.

At the time of the release of Rep. Scott's bill, Rep. Foxx released a statement committing to "working toward substantive reforms for America's workforce development system." She added, "I believe it is critical that a WIOA reauthorization increase employer involvement and empower both states and communities to ensure their workers have the skills they need for successful and rewarding careers."

#### Offense: Farm Bill

The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, more commonly known as the Farm Bill, has been passed nearly every five years since its creation in 1933. Unlike several education bills, the supports for farmers and for the country's food safety net programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), motivate both sides of the aisle to come together every five years to reauthorize the Farm Bill on time.

The current iteration of the Farm Bill expires on September 30, 2023. Given its timeline and history, the Farm Bill is one of the best opportunities for community colleges to successfully advance priorities during 2023. There are two key components to this front: SNAP and rural community college agricultural programs.

For SNAP, the safety net that provides food security to millions of individuals each year, there are both access and eligibility challenges. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) estimated in December of 2018 that 3.3 million college students are eligible for SNAP benefits but fewer than half receive them. The reauthorization of the Farm Bill provides an opportunity to both increase the percentage of eligible students receiving SNAP and room to examine the student eligibility criteria, which are different from those for non-students, to help ensure all students with food insecurity receive the support they need.

The second portion of the Farm Bill where community colleges could see benefit is for those schools with agriculture programs, particularly in rural settings. As agriculture becomes more technologically advanced in both its processes and equipment, there is need for farm workers with training beyond what can be learned on site. One example includes technicians to repair farm equipment. The need for this type of agriculture program is only increasing, and the Farm Bill is an ideal place for rural community colleges to receive the funding necessary to support the start-up or expansion of these programs.

#### Defense: Appropriations and "Cut-as-you-go"

In order to secure the House speakership, Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) cut several deals with the conservative holdouts who forced the speaker election to stretch over four days and a historic 15 rounds of voting. Two of those affect federal spending and could cause community colleges to be in the position of defending key programs that are crucial to colleges and to students.

One promise is to freeze spending at FY 2022 levels. Whether or not defense (as in national defense, not the sports metaphor) spending will be included in these freezes is unknown. But under this agreement, programs important to community colleges at best would not see a decrease in funding levels.

Additionally, Speaker McCarthy agreed to the "cut-as-you-go" rule. This means any legislation that increases mandatory spending over five or ten years is not able to be considered.

#### Planning Ahead

What should community college leaders do plan ahead? Build relationships with elected officials early and nurture them often. This election is the first following the 2020 Census and realignment of seats. Each campus should be sure it knows the elected officials from all of the Congressional districts from which it draws students, or at least its local students.

Further, examine the committee assignments of the delegation to see where there are places that campus interests align. Think beyond just education and appropriations. Consider Agriculture for the Farm Bill, Judiciary for immigration issues, or Ways and Means or Tax for issues related to higher education tax credits and taxability for the Pell Grant.

And stay in touch with the work of ACCT. Check out the blog at [now.acct.org](http://now.acct.org) and sign up for the Latest Action in Washington weekly newsletter by emailing [publicpolicy@acct.org](mailto:publicpolicy@acct.org).



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# THE FUTURE OF COLLEGE PROMISE

Nearly 400 state and local programs have flourished as federal advocacy continues.

By Rosario Durán

**E**IGHT YEARS AGO, THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION PUT forth the America's College Promise proposal, which reignited interest in making a two-year community college education an extension of the American public K-12 school system. This proposal would allow students to acquire the skills and knowledge they need to jumpstart their careers without having to take on decades of debt. By making education more accessible to all, the proposal sought to help the American workforce meet the demands of a growing global economy.

That same year, the Tennessee Promise program was enacted, and it became the first state in the country to offer students two years of community or technical college tuition-free. To help build national momentum for the proposal, former U.S. Under Secretary of Education Martha J. Kanter founded the College Promise Campaign shortly afterward. Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA) and Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) introduced the America's College Promise Act of 2015 to move the effort forward at a federal level.

The America's College Promise Act has been reintroduced in every Congress since, with Senators Baldwin and Patty Murray (D-WA) and Representatives Scott and Andy Levin (D-MI) introducing the latest iteration in 2021. Most recently, President Joe Biden made headlines when he included free community college in his landmark Build Back Better agenda — though the provision ultimately failed to gain adequate support.

Outside the halls of Congress, the majority of Americans agree with the ideas behind College Promise. A recent May 2021 Morning Consult survey found that 59% of Americans favor tuition-free community college. Employers report a growing demand for "middle skills" workers, with jobs available to be filled but no qualified employees to fill them. Many higher education and thought leaders, including the Pew Research Center, have stated that College Promise would help fix the skills gap.

We can see the growing popularity of College Promise programs reflected in the significant increase of such programs at the state and local level throughout the country, despite the absence of a federal program. Currently, there are 393 programs nationwide, which includes 33 states plus Washington, D.C. with statewide programs. New Mexico recently established the most extensive tuition-free scholarship program in the country. Only two holdout states, Idaho and Mississippi, do not have any type of promise program.

The future of the program looks bright, as we are closer to fulfilling America's College Promise than ever before. As we continue our advocacy for a federal-level College Promise program, ACCT encourages community college boards, CEOs, and other leaders to learn about the College Promise movement and to consider whether a promise program is right for your students. ACCT, in partnership with the Campaign and with the American Association of Community Colleges, created a College Promise Campaign toolkit for community college board members and presidents who are interested in advancing the movement.

To learn more about different program designs and a wide variety of funding models, answer some of the most asked questions, and see additional resources, visit our College Promise page at [www.acct.org/page/college-promise-resources](http://www.acct.org/page/college-promise-resources).



*Rosario Durán is the Senior Government Relations Associate at ACCT.*

# ACCT STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2026



**Delivering on the promises of open access and  
the value of higher education.**

For 50 years, ACCT has focused on empowering community and state leaders who govern our nation's public community and technical colleges. ACCT has continuously met the in-service education, support, and advocacy needs of more than 6,000 appointed and elected trustees who oversee 1,108 community, technical, and tribal colleges.

We understand the importance of community college governance to the wellbeing of higher education and the specific role of our sector in advancing socioeconomic equality. Everything we do is dedicated to supporting the needs of community college governing boards so that they can continue to support their institutions' efforts in making the best-quality higher education available to the greatest number of students possible, regardless of income or any other classification.

To further the association's progress toward these values, the ACCT Board of Directors has developed the following **select strategic goals** that will guide our work from 2023 through 2026:

## **STRATEGIC GOALS**

**Goal: Develop innovative ways to engage and educate our members and advocate for our colleges.**

Develop innovative ways to educate community college trustees about their roles, responsibilities, and limitations and advocate for ACCT member community colleges.

1. Develop an online learning system through which to provide on-demand, virtual learning opportunities on board governance and advocacy.
2. Track, develop, and disseminate innovative strategies that maximize student success through the new ACCT Center for Policy & Practice.
3. Employ new technologies to improve member engagement and deliver useful content in more effective and convenient ways.

**Goal: Continue to educate, promote, and improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in our institutions.**

1. Systematically evaluate and improve equality and equity in community colleges, their boards, and at ACCT with the guidance of the ACCT Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee.
2. Research diversity, equity, and inclusion education needs, challenges, and opportunities at institutions.
3. Identify populations or themes that need special attention and create ad-hoc programs and services to address these needs.
4. Advocate equity-focused community college student success goals in federal and state legislation.
5. Spotlight diversity, equity, and inclusion achievements at partner colleges on a continuous basis.



# Generational Change

Rose Benavidez has broken barriers as ACCT's first Latina Chair and continues a legacy of leadership.



BY MARK TONER

**T**HE DAUGHTER OF MIGRANT FARMWORKERS FROM the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, Rose Benavidez has shattered barriers as the first Latina to serve as ACCT Chair. At the same time, the South Texas College trustee has followed in the footsteps of her parents, who found in education a way to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty — and who, like their daughter, paid it forward through lifetimes of service educating others.

“To know my story, you must first know theirs,” Benavidez said during the 2022 ACCT Leadership Congress in New York City. “They each knew that without education, success could not be attained.”

As ACCT Chair, Benavidez stresses the importance of infusing that same sense of mission and purpose in trustees across the country. “We come across these individuals in our work every day,” she said. “For every one of us who has been fortunate to have support, there are countless others who remain on the brink, waiting for the opportunity that our work and our colleges can provide.”

Located along the Rio Grande in deep south Texas, Starr County has the highest percentage of Hispanic residents of any county in the United States, according to the Census Bureau. Historically plagued by high levels of unemployment and intergenerational poverty, many of its residents were migrant farmworkers. It's also where the Benavidez family story — and its contributions to the community along the U.S.-Mexico border — begins.

Benavidez's parents — Mexican-American migrant workers who were themselves the children of migrants — married young. At 18, her father, Manuel Benavidez, attended technical school to gain a family-supporting skill. But early in his career, a freak welding accident left him with a choice that would change the trajectory of his life and his family.

Following the accident, Manuel was given the option of collecting a lifetime of disability checks or pursuing a college education. He ultimately received his bachelor's degree in education at the age of 34 —



Rose Benavidez joined the South Texas College Board in 2009. The college has seen tremendous growth, adding bachelor's degree and dual enrollment programs.

the first in his family to receive a college degree — and began work as a migrant coordinator with the local K-12 school district.

“He was all about saying that we had this luxury, this gift — how do we use it to help other people?” Benavidez says.

Her mother had left high school as a junior without earning a diploma; she forced herself to return and earn her GED a year later. For the next two decades, she worked as a teacher’s aide, but “refused to give up on her education,” Benavidez says. At 47, after attending night school for 15 years, she became the second in the family to graduate from college.

As a result, for Benavidez, “it was clear that it wasn’t about whether I was going to college, but what college I would go to,” she says. She and her four siblings all went on to receive degrees and credentials; Benavidez would ultimately become the first in her family to receive a graduate degree.

Education proved a family legacy that transcended generations. Benavidez’s grandfather went back to school to earn his GED as he approached 60. He would often remind her and her siblings that he “rode in the back of a pickup truck so we could ride in the front of an airplane,” she says.

After graduating from high school at 17, Benavidez attended University of Texas–Pan American in the evenings, working during the day to support her studies. Majoring in political science, Benavidez initially planned to go on to law school, but a summer internship at the Starr County Industrial Foundation, a nonprofit economic development organization, turned into an offer to lead the foundation.

“My world was all about government and what I was going to do as a lawyer, but I was able to transfer those skills into a field that while male-dominated was one I would learn to excel in,” she says. During her time as president of the foundation, Starr County has seen \$3.5 billion in investments in the commercial, industrial, and renewable energy fields. Unemployment, which had been higher than 60 percent in past decades, fell to single digits before the pandemic hit.

For her work, Benavidez has been honored on the Rio Grande

Valley Walk of Fame. She is a recipient of the State of Texas Women of Distinction Award from the Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce and was named a Woman of Distinction by the Rio Grande Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

The foundation also provided Benavidez with the opportunity to work closely with her father, who was then serving as an administrator for the school district and as a trustee at South Texas College, which he had played a significant role in founding.

In the 1990s, Manuel was involved in state politics and “vocal about the need to improve higher education in the community,” she says. At the time, Starr County and the Rio Grande Valley were the only region of Texas without a college of its own, an area home to more than 600,000 people with the nearest institution an hour’s drive away.

Legislation that created South Texas College as the state’s 50th community college was signed into law by then-Governor Anne Richards in 1993. Manuel was appointed a founding trustee of the college by Richards and subsequently elected twice to six-year terms.

As Benavidez began her economic development career years later, her father was focused on establishing the county’s first early college high school. “That was one of the first policy experiences I had,” she says. “We worked together to bring that to fruition.” And when her father passed away at the age of 57, the intergenerational cycle would continue.

Benavidez was tapped to fill her father’s vacancy on the STC board in 2009 and easily won election that November.

“I went into that service as a way to finish off some of the projects we were working on together,” she says. “I had some semblance of what it meant, but it wasn’t until I was knee-deep that I realized what lifting people out of poverty really meant.”

Benavidez also quickly saw the connections between her work in economic development and her role as a trustee. “There was such commonality between the work I was doing and the college’s ultimate goal of creating a labor force that was skill ready,” she says. “My profession has given me context to what jobs are available, and where



Benavidez at the 2022 Community College National Legislative Summit with Education Secretary Miguel Cardona, left, and receiving the gavel from former ACCT Chair James Cooksey, right.



they are going to be available today and 5 to 10 years down the line... It gave me the right footing to push the envelope and ensure we were aligning training to occupations that were viable in the region and created real job opportunities.”

STC has experienced tremendous growth since its inception, adding bachelor’s degree programs and pathways for transfer to partner universities. More recently, the college has added dual-enrollment programs to area high schools that have helped reduce remediation rates for incoming students from 30 percent to the single digits. Almost 70 percent of students now go on to receive some type of postsecondary credential or degree, and through early college and dual enrollment programs, many graduate with associate degrees prior to receiving their high school diploma. In 2017, STC became the first college in the nation to graduate high school seniors with an associate degree in nursing.

Benavidez served as STC Board Chair during its 2013 bond and maintenance tax election, which passed easily. “This community has always been supportive of our taxing initiatives because they have witnessed the opportunities that have been created for our residents and their children,” Benavidez says. “It’s a stark reminder of how important education is in this community.”

It’s also a sign of how the community has been transformed by the college, Benavidez says. “When families once sat in dining rooms, the conversations for the vast majority weren’t about where they were going to college — it was where to work to help the family,” she says. “That poverty-driven cycle has changed significantly since the creation of STC. We’ve shifted to a community with a college-going culture that now has access to higher education right in its backyard.”

Benavidez’s first experience with ACCT came early. As an STC trustee, Manuel brought her to an association meeting in Washington, D.C. at a young age. Named a Regional Trustee of the Year and an ACCT Lifetime Member, Manuel later served as chair of ACCT’s Diversity Committee (now Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion), another path his daughter would ultimately follow.

Benavidez was first elected to the ACCT Board of Directors in 2017, representing the western region. “When I first became part of the board, I learned that my dad was part of the initial effort to promote passage of the DREAM Act when he was chair of the Diversity Committee,” she says. “It is an incredible feeling to know that years later, we are now working with the Administration and have taken that idea and moved it closer to becoming a reality.”

Along with serving as chair of ACCT’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, Benavidez also served as president of the National Association of Latino Community College Trustees before being elected ACCT Chair in 2023 — “due in large part to the sheer will of the many Latinas who came before me,” she said upon accepting the gavel in New York last fall. “It’s not about proving ourselves, but improving everything around us.”

In that spirit, Benavidez is focused as ACCT Chair on infusing governance with a true “duty of care.”

“We want this to be about service to others and how it translates to those we serve,” she says. “For me, this is about shining a light on the value of ACCT and the work it has been doing for over 50 years, quietly but very impactfully.”

“As we continue to seek ways to expand our efforts, the reality is that our success can only be measured by the success of others,” she adds. “Together, and in the most simple and brilliant ways, we can and will continue to transform the lives of every young girl and boy who dares to dream by nurturing that seed of hope that serves as both our anchor and their sail.”

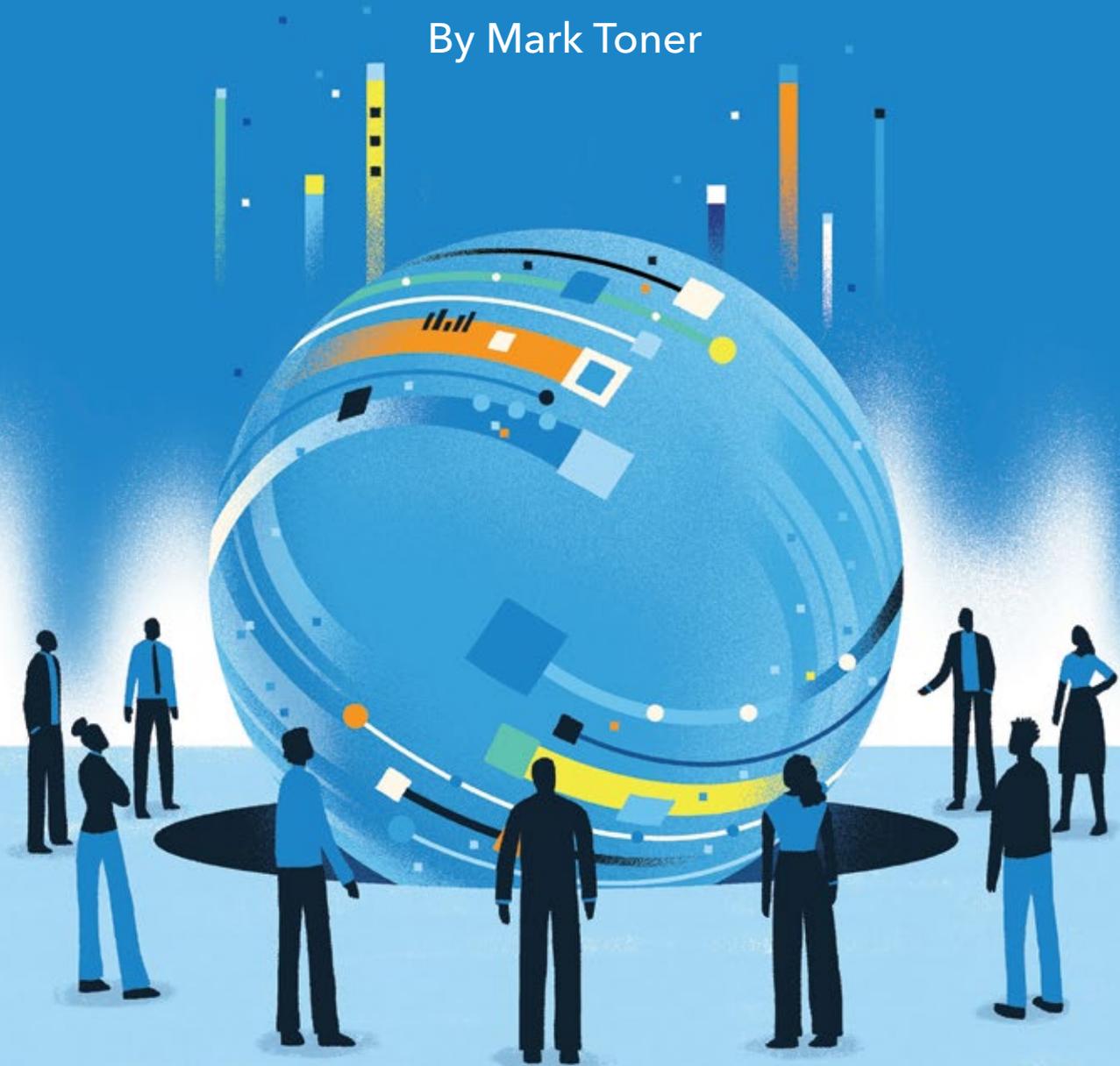


Mark Toner is an editor for Trustee Quarterly.

# A WORLD IN THE MAKING

The 2022 ACCT Congress focused on supporting students and their families amid systemic change.

By Mark Toner





Clockwise from left: Aysha E. Schomburg; Arthur Levine; the 2022 ACCT Leadership Congress hosted 1,900 community college leaders; James Cooksey, M. Dale Ensign, and Jee Hang Lee

WITH NEARLY TWICE AS MANY ATTENDEES AS ACCT’s first post-pandemic convening in San Diego, last October’s Community College Leadership Congress signaled a much-welcomed return to normalcy. But speakers cautioned the nearly 2,000 community college trustees, leaders, and advocates who came to New York City that new challenges have changed the landscape for community colleges and their students forever.

The pandemic “revealed a world in the making,” higher education scholar Arthur Levine told Congress attendees. Amid enrollments which have not bounced back from pandemic lows, new challenges including increased competition from online providers, demand for “just-in-time” on-demand learning, and the precedent of other industries “undone by digital technology” are increasing the risk of creating “two systems of higher education — one for the wealthy, one for the less wealthy, and a loss of all common learning in a country that’s deeply divided,” said Levine, author of *The Great Upheaval: Higher Education’s Past, Present, and Uncertain Future*.

“We have a daunting challenge... We can’t turn our backs on it, or the change will occur anyway,” said Levine, a distinguished scholar of higher education at New York University. “The people in this room can shape the future of community colleges, or their future will be shaped in spite of this.”

More than 100 sessions throughout the event focused on helping community college leaders navigate the changing landscape. “It’s about setting a new bar for where we are headed in higher education,” said Daisy Gonzales, Ph.D., interim chancellor of California Community Colleges and commissioner of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). “It means that business as usual can no longer be the story.”

### Improving the Lives of Entire Families

With the theme “Improving the Lives of Entire Families,” the 2022 Congress focused on supporting students in new ways. Keynote speaker Aysha E. Schomburg, J.D., urged community college leaders not to shy away from one particular word.

“When you are doing the work we do of supporting vulnerable families, love is the most professional word,” said Schomburg, associate commissioner of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Children’s Bureau.

Schomburg focused on the nation’s more than 400,000 foster children, of whom just 7 percent receive a degree or credential by the time they turn 21, but she and other speakers reinforced the importance of addressing the needs of all of community colleges’ diverse student populations.

“As community college leaders, you know as well as I do what our institutions do for our communities,” said 2022 ACCT Chair James Cooksey, trustee at Moberly Area Community College in Missouri.

Sessions focused on the needs of student parents, rural students, those facing housing and food insecurity and mental health challenges, and those returning to society after incarceration. The pandemic “finally gave us a moment to... actually be intentional about how to address these issues more systemically for all of our students,” said Eileen Stempel, a professor at the UCLA School of Education who led a discussion with trustees from the Rancho Santiago Community College District. “[It] took away the shame for the students — everyone’s struggling with the same things — and gave a really clear and moral challenge to our colleges.”

Attendees also explored equity issues, including at the Improving Educational Outcomes for Men of Color Symposium sponsored by the Kresge Foundation (see box, p. 21) and sessions throughout the event. “The silver lining with the pandemic and national events and unrest is that it forced us to look at this. Our students and employees told us we needed to do this,” said Rachel Desmarais, president of Vance-Granville Community College in North Carolina, whose board led a multi-year process to center the college’s mission and vision in equity.

Trustees and staff from the Los Angeles Community College District discussed the district’s student bill of rights for LGBTQIA+ students — the first of its kind on a community college campus. “We took a bold step in protecting our students’ rights,” said LACCD Trustee David Vela.

CREDIT: ILLUSTRATION BY MATT CHINWORTH



2021-22 Phi Theta Kappa International President Tala Alahmar, left; student trustees

## Bringing Students Back

Congress attendees also learned about several initiatives to bring students back to college following the pandemic enrollment dip. Lumina Foundation's Million Dollar Community College Challenge surfaced strategies to reach out to students who are increasingly not choosing between colleges, but between college and no college. "It's really important to lead with what's excellent about the campus, what's excellent about the students," said Lumina strategy officer Mary Laphen Pope.

In a similar vein, student leaders from Phi Theta Kappa showcased CCsmart (ccsmart.org), a campaign which has yielded 9.5 million impressions and a 30-second spot on ESPN, as a way of addressing the stigma that persists around community colleges. The goal is to "show the positive so everybody can make an informed choice," said Macomb Community College student Brooke Jankowsky, PTK Division III student vice president.

In North Carolina, the NC Reconnect statewide initiative is seeking to increase the number of 25-44 year olds with postsecondary credentials to 2 million by 2030. "We did not sit back as an institution and wait for students to come to us," said Laura Leatherwood, president of Blue Ridge Community College, which saw dramatic increases in adult learner enrollment after the college shifted outreach and support to adult learners and the region's growing Hispanic population. "That is an old model and that is not going to work."

In the light of the so-called "Great Resignation," community college leaders also were encouraged to focus on attracting and retaining employees. Education has emerged as one of the top fields affected by workplace departures, said CampusWorks Senior Vice President Keith Myers. With a potential recession looming, "we might find ourselves with a lot more students and a lot less staff to support them," he cautioned.

Trustees also were urged to focus on another growing need: building a bench of younger adults to serve on community college

boards, many of whom are socially aware and engaged but may not see the connection with trusteeship, Austin Fohnagy, a trustee at Lane Community College in Oregon, told attendees. "The best way to ask someone is to understand what they value, why they value it, and then relate it to how higher education has a role in it," he said.

## Leadership Imperatives

A panel of higher education accreditors urged community college leaders to cut through a "cacophony of noise" to ensure "that community colleges are on the path to help America get to where it needs to be," said Sonny Ramaswamy, Ph.D., president of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

Nowhere will that be more important than in advocacy. With the Congress scheduled just weeks before November's midterm elections, public policy experts from ACCT and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACCT) stressed that opportunities will emerge to seek bipartisan support in areas including workforce, taxation, human services, and rural areas in the years ahead (see p. 10).

"As we look at the agenda for the 118th Congress, we're looking for opportunities to creatively support our colleges and students," said Carrie Warick-Smith, ACCT vice president of public policy. "Community colleges have broad bipartisan support — the two parties don't always select the same topics, but everyone... understands they're very locally and regionally focused and support their constituents."

Levine added that leaders also must focus on what makes their institutions distinct. "Community colleges have to be inextricably entwined in their communities," he said. "I can't think of a better group of people than the people sitting in this room to make that new future a reality."

"Our time is really now," agreed State University of New York Vice Chancellor Johanna Duncan-Poitier. "Community colleges are being recognized as the leaders they have always been."



Clockwise from left: Accreditation panel; Rose Benavidez presents Cooksey with gavel; Lynn Tincher-Ladner; ACCT Vice Chair Tim Hardy, former ACCT board member Dennis Troy, and former ACCT Chair David Mathis; new ACCT Board members Nan Gomez-Heitzeberg, Zaida Hernandez-Irrison, and Sheila Ireland take oath of office.

## Looking Ahead

As the 2022 Congress drew to a close, closing keynote speaker Tala Alahmar, 2021-22 PTK international president, shared her story of coming to the United States from war-torn Syria and finding purpose at Oakland Community College. “It’s because of people like you I am able to stand here today,” she said.

South Texas College trustee Rose Benavidez accepted the association’s leadership gavel, becoming the first Latina to serve as ACCT Chair. Benavidez credited her migrant-worker parents, the first in her family to receive college degrees, for setting her on a path towards both education and service (see p. 14). She called on her fellow trustees to focus on their roles “not for recognition, but realization.”

“It is a reminder that our responsibility in public service is simply

to effect change to make people’s lives better, make communities better, make this world better,” Benavidez said. “There is proof in the thousands who are attending and the thousands more who have graduated our institutions. In this room, we accept it is incumbent on us to ensure that opportunity is made available for everyone who needs or seeks it out.”



Mark Toner is an editor for Trustee Quarterly.

## Improving Educational Outcomes for Men of Color

During a special pre-Congress symposium, more than 100 community college leaders participated in an “intentional conversation” about men of color in community colleges and discussed strategies to increase enrollment, retention, and success.

“Our priority must be eliminating barriers in higher education and setting up students for success,” said ACCT Chair James Cooksey. “This has been on the minds of leaders with increasing urgency.”

Sponsored by the Kresge Foundation, the Improving Educational Outcomes for Men of Color Symposium featured a framework for college leaders to support men of color attending their institutions developed by Dr. Frank Harris III and Dr. J. Luke Wood, co-directors of the Community College Equity Assessment Lab at San Diego State University. ACCT also released a research brief detailing the framework, which is available at [www.acct.org/page/improving-educational-outcomes-men-color-symposium](http://www.acct.org/page/improving-educational-outcomes-men-color-symposium).

“I challenge each and every one of you as tough leaders and mentors to find solutions on how to support our young men along their educational journeys,” U.S. Rep. Adriano Espaillat (D-N.Y.), the first Dominican American to be elected to Congress, told attendees. “It is upon each and every one of us to ensure they succeed.”

The needs are great, particularly following the disproportionate

impact of the pandemic. Equity gaps across all student groups are highest for men of color, more than half of whom stop out of college, according to Wood. These results, he said, are the results of not “disparities in students, families, and communities, but our ability to serve them... [We] oftentimes find systemic barriers in place that are producing these systematic outcomes.”

Noting the impact of an institutional climate and culture in which students feel cared about in mitigating external barriers, Wood added that “we have more power in our hands than we realize to change the outcomes that we see.”

Three students shared their experiences at New York community colleges. Borough of Manhattan Community College Bilal Sani explained that the college’s motto – start here, go anywhere – spoke to him. “I wanted to go to a place where I knew I could receive a good education, but also where I could continue. I didn’t want to have a ceiling over my head. I wanted to make sure that I could do what I’ve truly wanted to do with my future.”

Harris stressed the importance of doing “a handful of things deeply, meaningfully, and institutionally than a lot in a shallow way,” and left attendees with a key takeaway: “Listen to the students,” he said. “They provide depth and context to things we know have always been important, but they help us to understand the why.”

# Are College Trustees Hiring Effective Presidents?

Strategies to help college boards select exceptional leaders.

By Joshua Wyner



## At a time when the community college presidency is increasingly difficult — suggesting that expertise may require more time on the job — presidencies are getting shorter. What can be done to reverse this trend?

**O**UR NATION IS EXPERIENCING A GENERATIONAL SHIFT in the college presidency. Before the pandemic, presidential tenure was rapidly decreasing, from an average of 8.5 years in 2016 to 6.5 years in 2016, a trend echoed in research specifically on turnover at community colleges. And late last year, researchers reported that increasing numbers of presidents across higher education are leaving during their first term, including many in their first year.

I worry that trustees — who select the majority of community college presidents nationally — may not be ready to pick the right leaders. Today's presidents face challenges far more consuming than those of even five or ten years ago: campuses increasingly threatened by uncivil political strife, dangerously low public support for higher education, steadily declining enrollments, and of course, the fallout from COVID-19.

Incoming presidents — hundreds of them every year — will enter stormy seas, trying to stay afloat while at the same time fulfilling their colleges' critical mission of developing the talented students their communities need to fuel a fast-changing workplace and solve increasingly complex problems.

At a time when the community college presidency is increasingly difficult — suggesting that expertise may require more time on the job — presidencies are getting shorter. What can be done to reverse this trend? How can our nation ensure that boards are prepared to hire excellent presidents with whom they can effectively collaborate over the long term? Here are a few ideas:

**Strengthen trustee selection.** Too often, trustees are appointed — or encouraged to run for elected office — because of their generalized commitment to a college or to the person who selected them. Governors, local officials, and others selecting trustees should focus on appointing trustees with relevant knowledge and attributes. Here are a few to prioritize:

- A genuine belief in community colleges (and higher education) as essential to the future strength of our country
- An understanding of coming changes in the workplace, demography, and enrollment patterns
- A healthy skepticism as to whether the educational experiences their college offered in the past are adequate to develop the talents of an increasingly diverse populace for a rapidly changing world.

When boards are made up of trustees who have those attributes when they begin their service, they will be more likely to select and support effective presidents.

**Engage boards deeply.** Too many boards spend inadequate time on issues related to core mission — including excellence and equity in student success — and too much on everything else, including budgets, buildings, and operations. That means that trustees may not understand fully strategic matters when, often suddenly, they must pick a new president. Every sitting president should increase their efforts to engage the board on strategic matters such as:

- Why the college's mission is so important to students, the community, and the nation
- What core reforms the college is pursuing to attain better and more equitable student outcomes
- What metrics will be monitored to assess progress and to hold the president accountable

By helping focus board meeting agendas, committee structures, and deliberations on answering those questions, sitting presidents can ensure that trustees know what they must when the time comes to pick and support a strong successor.

**Train boards on presidential hiring.** In most cases, a president's resignation is soon followed by appointment of a search committee and retention of a search firm. But too few boards provide either the committee or firm with clear direction on what they're looking for in the next president. In a changing world, this may be very different from the one that just left. Not surprisingly, boards are often dissatisfied with the candidates that emerge from the search process. The Aspen Institute has conducted research on how to hire an effective community college president, and (for the reasons mentioned above) it starts with trustees understanding the college's strategic direction and reform strategies. Only then can boards gain clarity on the specific qualities needed in a future president and then inform everyone involved in recruiting and interviewing candidates what to prioritize. States should invest in training boards on effective presidential hiring and how to work effectively with new presidents.

Over the past 20 years, many community college leaders have done impressive work increasing college graduation rates. They have been supported and critiqued by talented higher education reformers — within and outside government — in ways that have advanced needed reforms. It is time for them — and everyone in our country working to improve community college education — to lean into the critical need to strengthen board appointments, engagement, and professional development.

This sounds like inside baseball, but it isn't. The next wave of presidential retirements is starting now. Whether trustees hire exceptional leaders will dictate no less than the capacity of community colleges to develop the talent needed to drive our nation's economic future and help solve the complex challenges of our time.



Joshua Wyner is founder and executive director of the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program, and author of a book on community colleges, *What Excellent Community Colleges Do* (Harvard Education Press, 2014).

# CHILDCARE ACCESS MEANS Parents in School Programs and Experiences

Community college leaders reflect on their experiences as childcare grant recipients.

By Sean Robins

ONE IN FIVE UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE STUDENTS today is a parent, yet they are 10 times less likely to graduate. Many institutions of higher education are challenged with supporting students that need childcare to stay engaged with their education. When looking at rural institutions, there are usually one or two individuals, or a small team wearing multiple hats, tasked with supporting students through the institution's student services department.

The Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program supports the participation of low-income parents in postsecondary education through the provision of campus-based childcare services. Funds are used to support or establish campus-based childcare programs primarily serving the needs of low-income students enrolled in institutions of higher education. Grants may be used for before- and after-school services. Grants may also be used to serve the childcare needs of the community served by the institution. For rural communities, a community college's campus-based childcare center is often the only available

childcare in the area. Therefore, the services that they provide not only support the institution and students enrolled, but the community overall.

The needs are great. Many childcare centers across the U.S. lost a significant portion of their staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many are diligently working to keep their doors open and provide these essential services to their communities. Childcare and early childhood education are pivotal wraparound services that allow institutions to recruit and retain student parents so they are able to obtain the necessary certification or degree to set them and their families up in family sustaining jobs.

ACCT recently hosted an online Peer Learning Network Discussion that included Central Arizona College, Grays Harbor College in Washington, Highland Community College in Illinois, Lake Tahoe Community College in California, Lakeshore Technical College in Wisconsin, Mount Wachusett Community College in Massachusetts, and Wor-Wic Community College in Maryland. Here, we feature insights from these institutions and reflections on their experiences as CCAMPIS recipients.



## Lessons Learned and Suggestions to Improve the CCAMPIS Application Process

CCAMPIS grant recipients from the network discussed lessons learned from the grant experience, including the importance of networking with other CCAMPIS peers, being able to pivot when needed to adapt to changing circumstances, and modeling campus-based childcare programs on other successful programs. The opportunity to gain experience from others who are or were previous CCAMPIS recipients allows institutions to share knowledge and resources on how to complete the grant application and set up their campus-based childcare programs.

A key lesson learned during the COVID-19 pandemic was to be ready to pivot and adapt to an ever-changing environment, as the pandemic required institutions and childcare centers to shift quickly given the circumstances. CCAMPIS grant recipients should ensure that they are staying in touch with their grant officers if or when changes need to occur. Also, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, many childcare centers closed, and institutions that were CCAMPIS grant recipients had to reevaluate their sliding fee scales for campus-based childcare. Some rural institutions also indicated that they encountered challenges in spending the CCAMPIS grant funds throughout the pandemic after closing and shifting their operations. Currently, institutions are eligible to apply for up to 3 percent of program funding in comparison to 1 percent previously. This is made possible in part by the additional funding that was provided to education programs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The rural institutions attending our PLN discussion stressed that when an institution is creating campus-based childcare, it should not try to reinvent the wheel. There are plenty of successful childcare and campus-based childcare programs on which new programs can be modeled. This can help support the development of the institution's sliding fee scale to support students who have the highest need and limited means.

There are many challenges that rural community colleges face providing childcare. The institutions during this PLN discussion indicated that one of the initial challenges during the application process was gathering data on student parents at their institutions. Many did not have the data readily available to understand the scope of their student population. While each institution echoed that they were able to learn more about their students throughout this process, having data on which students are enrolled is essential to providing needed wraparound services.

Completing the CCAMPIS application can be an arduous process for the limited funding made available, especially for rural community colleges with limited staff. For rural community colleges, the CCAMPIS application process feels like "keeping your head above water" due to the length of the application, participants said. One rural community college estimated that 240 administrative hours were dedicated to completing the CCAMPIS application. For rural institutions that do not have dedicated staff grant writers, this is a heavy burden. To improve the CCAMPIS application, recognizing the challenges faced by rural communities related to staffing and funding will allow for necessary improvements.

An additional recommendation to improve CCAMPIS is to potentially expand the use of funds outside of specifically accredited programs. Greater transparency will also allow potential grant awardees to have a better understanding of CCAMPIS. Many speakers said that watching

the Campus-Based Childcare webinar that the ACCT Center for Policy and Practice held in November 2022 helped them navigate the process. The webinar helps answer many questions about CCAMPIS, and even institutions which already receive CCAMPIS funding stated that they were able to learn more about the program.

To help improve CCAMPIS and childcare, participating institutions indicated the need for systematic change, including providing additional support for the accreditation process and the current low wages within the childcare and early childhood education field. Providing additional support for the accreditation process can ensure that childcare centers are meeting the necessary standards for quality childcare. Also, institutions must continue to bring awareness around the community service that is childcare and the professionals that work in the field. Many of these individuals are from low-income, underrepresented, and first-generation backgrounds, and wages often are not family sustaining.

## Central Arizona College

Central Arizona College, located in Coolidge, Arizona, has been serving students since 1967. The county that the college serves is one of the state's most economically deprived, and Arizona ranks 45th nationwide in the overall well-being of children and 46th in providing supportive communities that nurture families and children. These were among the reasons why Central Arizona College decided to apply for CCAMPIS. The average age of the college's students is around 27, and 64% of students are eligible for Pell Grants.

As of September 30, 2022, Central Arizona College had completed its final year of four-year CCAMPIS funding. The college had two priorities for the CCAMPIS grant: (1) provide tuition subsidies for on campus childcare, and (2) provide family engagement opportunities that would assist parents. Since accreditation is a requirement for the CCAMPIS grant, Central Arizona worked with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). There were on-campus childcare centers at two of the college's five campuses, staffed by contract providers. Unfortunately, since the COVID-19 pandemic, Central Arizona is down to only one childcare center, which is on the main campus.

The CCAMPIS grant allowed the institution to discover more about its students and their needs. This data allowed Central Arizona College to inform its practices and services and improve the quality of strategies supporting students. Additionally, it helped focus the institution in maintaining quality markers for early childhood and childcare in the state.

After the COVID-19 pandemic started, the institution ended up having to pay for staff salaries, which was not initially part of the plan. The college was able to hire a coordinator that supported the centers' accreditation, but because it used a contracted provider there were some barriers. Since the coordinator was not a part of the campus, the needs of the students were not understood the way an on-campus staff member would, which made it difficult to implement some of the strategies that college leaders were hoping to put forth. The college's provider is a nonprofit organization, and the grant funding for CCAMPIS is not enough to support the holistic approach needed to implement all the services that will best serve students and families while maintaining quality, college leaders said.

## Grays Harbor College

Grays Harbor College, located in Aberdeen, Washington, serves a district that is 97% rural. An outside vendor operates the institution's campus-based childcare, where the college subsidizes childcare for students. The college leverages its in-house grant writer to support grant applications. The sliding fee scale at the college would have individuals pay some portion of the childcare if they did not qualify for the program. However, due to the need for childcare and the number of individuals that applied for funding, the institution did not have to implement the sliding fee scale.

In preparing for the grant application, the college focused on finding data that demonstrated the need for childcare. What the institution found was that there was a greater need for childcare around the proximity of the institution. Overall, college leaders said that while receiving a CCAMPIS grant can really help the institution, losing out on a potential opportunity in the following grant cycle can be very disappointing. A lesson learned from Grays Harbor College is to be explicit in responding to every prompt in the CCAMPIS grant application.

## Highland Community College

Highland Community College, located in the northwest corner of Illinois, is in a rural district which spans four counties. Over the last decade, the region's population has declined. Like other rural community colleges, access to childcare is a regional economic challenge.

As a small institution, Highland has the flexibility to try new approaches to working through various challenges. Highland has a longstanding 50-year partnership agreement with the YMCA, which is located on its campus. Over the last 20 years, Highland has developed a childcare facility which is located next to a shared YMCA and academic building. This facility is fully operated by the YMCA and houses the institution's early childhood education program. It includes observation rooms which allow ECE students to observe and work directly within the facility.

Although Highland Community College does not have a dedicated grant writer on campus, its leaders were able to learn about the CCAMPIS opportunity from Illinois Senator Tammy Duckworth during a roundtable and shortly after gathered the data needed to submit its application. Highland Community College received its CCAMPIS grant not long before the COVID-19 pandemic began, which had a large impact on the institution just as Highland was beginning to spread awareness of its campus based childcare program.

Through the partnership with the YMCA, hours were extended, allowing evening nursing students to take advantage of campus-based childcare. However, as Highland Community College is working to rebuild its enrollment by attracting students that either stopped out or did not continue with enrollment during the pandemic, the institution's daycare has been unable to scale up its employment to pre-pandemic levels, limiting the number of students that can be served.

## Lake Tahoe Community College

Lake Tahoe Community College (LTCC), located in South Lake Tahoe, California, provides campus-based childcare through its Child Development Center (CDC). The LTCC CDC serves a maximum of 46 children – six

infants, 10 toddlers, and 30 preschoolers. The childcare for LTCC students and low-income families is offered at low to no cost while offering full and half-day options, which makes it more flexible for families. Additionally, the LTCC CDC provides hands-on employment experience for students pursuing Early Childhood Education and flexible on-campus jobs for any student interested in working with children.

While the LTCC CDC is more expensive than other providers in the area, students pay less for infant and toddler care and have priority access to those spots. The center established a sliding fee scale where community members are charged the most, followed by LTCC employees, and then students who are charged the lowest amount. Fees have not risen since LTCC has been a CCAMPIS recipient. Additionally, LTCC is a recipient of two California state grants which also help the institution to support low-income students, resulting in student parents paying low or no fees at the center.

In preparation for submitting its CCAMPIS application, LTCC hired a grant writer and interviewed the LTCC CDC staff, college leadership, and student services personnel to gain a better understanding of where the institution's services stood. Following these conversations, LTCC developed a plan to implement evening childcare to provide a new option for student parents who worked different shifts in various service industries.

Throughout the CCAMPIS application and implementation process, LTCC learned that plans do not always work out. For example, when campuses shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the college's plans to offer evening campus-based childcare never took off. Therefore, midway through the grant period, LTCC reached out to its grant officer to shift this goal to allocating more funds for the daytime teaching staff where there was a higher need, allowing the college to serve additional students who were on the waitlist. LTCC recommends that colleges should adjust as needed and be willing to identify how they can best serve students, even if those needs shift. Additionally, utilizing funds to staff centers when students need childcare most and recalibrating student fees for CCAMPIS eligible students can ensure successful implementation, LTCC leaders said.

## Lakeshore Technical College

Lakeshore Technical College is located along the coast of Lake Michigan in Cleveland, Wisconsin, serving four counties. The college serves about 9,000 students (2,500 degree seeking), of whom 85% are part-time. Many students do not complete the FAFSA, which presented a challenge for the institution, as it was only able to apply for a \$30,000 CCAMPIS grant representing 1% of an institution's Pell Grant recipients. The college has found that it has far greater needs than what the CCAMPIS grant covers, and there are more students that need support. About 40% of the student body are student parents, and the college's students tend to be low-income.

Lakeshore Technical College provides childcare through its on campus childcare center. The center serves those 2-12 years old, but primarily serves as a preschool. The childcare center accepts full and part time children and accommodates drop-ins if space is available. It is only open in the day and not available in the summer.

Through the CCAMPIS grant application and implementation, the institution began to understand its student population even more. When

To help improve CCAMPIS and childcare, participating institutions indicated the need for systematic change, including providing additional support for the accreditation process and the current low wages within the childcare and early childhood education field.

applying for the CCAMPIS grant, Lakeshore Technical College was able to leverage its network to receive grant writing guidance from other CCAMPIS recipients at other institutions. A lesson learned was that requiring a semester of college completion to be eligible for CCAMPIS and even a nominal fee for childcare created barriers to college entry and completion. Therefore, Lakeshore shifted to ensure that individuals with a zero Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) pay nothing. The college also now requires students to have only one month of academic progress to be eligible for childcare.

### Mount Wachusett Community College

Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC), located in Gardner, Massachusetts, enrolls approximately 4,000 students and has been a CCAMPIS recipient for 16 years — representing four different grant cycles. MWCC serves about 29 towns and has recently been seeing more students coming from Boston and the Worcester area to enroll in the institution's selective health and nursing programs. MWCC's campus-based childcare is provided through the on campus childcare center and facilitated by an outside organization. The childcare center has two preschool classrooms and serves 39 children of preschool age from 2.9 to five years old.

MWCC has a grant development professional who led and facilitated its team through a 10-month grant development writing process for its CCAMPIS grant. The student services team at MWCC supports the CCAMPIS implementation, as the institution knows that it has to look after both the student parent and the child. From the implementation of the CCAMPIS grant, the institution has worked with both its on-campus preschool and off-campus providers, including before and after school programs.

Like other rural institutions, MWCC has also been able to learn more about its student population through CCAMPIS. MWCC leveraged the Family Friendly Campus Toolkit, which gave staff more insights about the college's student parents and their needs. Through this toolkit and survey, MWCC learned that student parents wanted a place on campus that they could gather with other student parents, which led to MWCC creating its Family Resource Center and recently launching a Child Watch Program. Through this program, federal work study students who are early childhood education majors are able to staff the program. One of the lessons learned is to make sure that an institution is spending the funds in a way that ensures students are enrolling, persisting, and graduating.

### Wor-Wic Community College

Wor-Wic Community College, located on Maryland's Eastern Shore in Salisbury, Maryland, serves three rural counties and enrolls 3,662 credit

student and 2,983 non-credit students. Its student population consists of 83% part-time students, and the college has the highest percentage of Pell Grant recipient students of the 16 community colleges in the state of Maryland. Wor-Wic Community College's Child Development Center opened in 2006 and is a Maryland EXCELS Level 5 childcare facility, which is the highest level in Maryland. The center serves children ages 2-5 years old and can support up to 79 children. Additionally, the center provides pre-kindergarten for ages 3 and 4, as well as a summer program known as Camp Jordan for ages 5-12. Wor-Wic Community College also leverages the Child Development Center for its early childcare and education programs and allows students to gain experience through clinical rotations.

Wor-Wic Community College has been a CCAMPIS grant recipient for two grant cycles. A focus within the CCAMPIS grant application and implementation was to view this grant not only as a way to support childcare on campus, but also to help retain students and help them continue their education through graduation. The design of Wor-Wic Community College's CCAMPIS program includes a part-time CCAMPIS advisor, costs to pursue national accreditation, workshop materials, travel, and parent packs. Due to the initial funding which was based on 1% of Pell funds, the campus-based childcare program was small and did not serve many students. As a result, there were challenges in finding an employee who was willing to work 12 hours per week to help staff the campus-based childcare. An additional challenge that Wor-Wic Community College faced was the process for obtaining national accreditation throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. While the institution's Child Development Center has the advantage of being located on campus and has the support to understand the accreditation process, many local providers of childcare in the area do not have this capacity nor understanding of the accreditation process.

This is an abridged version of a more extensive article published in ACCT's online publication ACCT NOW. Please visit [NOW.ACCT.org](http://NOW.ACCT.org) to learn more about how colleges across the country are attracting and retaining more students through supporting student parents.



Sean Robins is the policy associate leading the Strengthening Rural Community Colleges Initiative to convene rural community college leaders while providing technical support, assistance, and resources on federal policy and advocacy. Learn more at [www.acct.org/page/strengthening-rural-community-colleges](http://www.acct.org/page/strengthening-rural-community-colleges).

# AROUND THE REGIONS

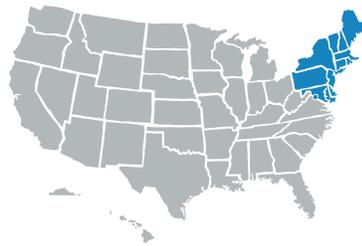


## CENTRAL REGION

Noting that the majority of neurodivergent students begin higher education at community colleges, the **Illinois** Community College Trustees Association adopted a neurodiversity inclusion statement to serve as guidance for its member colleges and trustees around the state of Illinois. ICCTA is the first state education advocacy association to adopt such a statement to influence policy.

For the first time in more than a decade, **Iowa's** 15 community colleges saw a collective bump in credit-seeking students, with jointly enrolled high school students driving the gains. In 2021-22, 50,082 high school students enrolled in one or more community college courses — representing a 6 percent increase over the prior year and amounting to 43 percent of the campuses' total combined enrollment.

Enrollment across the **Wisconsin** Technical College System grew by more than 10 percent during the 2021-22 academic year. The increase follows a double-digit enrollment decline driven by the COVID-19 pandemic and marks the largest gains for the system in at least a decade. All of the state's 16 technical colleges saw enrollment gains during the 2021-22 school year.



## NORTHEAST REGION

**Maryland's** dual enrollment program now has free tuition for students in the state looking to take classes at their local community colleges. An average of 7 percent of the state's high school students participate in dual enrollment programs.

**Massachusetts** Gov. Maura Healey proposed a program called MassReconnect — modeled by Michigan and Tennessee — that would allow residents 25 and over who haven't yet gotten a college degree to pursue a community college certificate or degree for free. Senate leader Karen Spilka announced that the Senate will go further, introducing a plan to make community college free for all students, regardless of age.

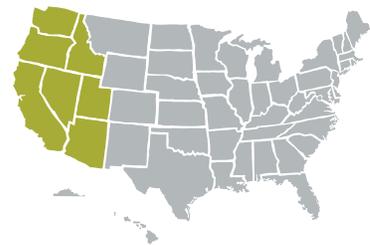
An expansion of the partnership between Manchester Community College and the **New Hampshire** Department of Health and Human Services will allow students who receive SNAP food assistance to take free courses for high-demand industries like cybersecurity, health care, and carpentry.

The **New Jersey** Council for the Humanities (NJCH) has received a \$339,000 grant from the New Jersey Civic Information Consortium to fund the development of a statewide grassroots journalism training program with community colleges around New Jersey.

Niagara County Community College hosted the first State University of **New York** Cannabis Conference on Jan. 10. The conference, co-organized by the SUNY, SUNY Erie and Genesee and Jamestown community colleges, covered an array of

topics from the “seed to sale” lifespan in the cannabis business.

Montgomery County Community College in **Pennsylvania** has joined Credential As You Go, an initiative to recognize skills through a nationally recognized incremental credentialing system. One of the initial microcredential badges the college is planning for this spring addresses financial literacy for students.



## PACIFIC REGION

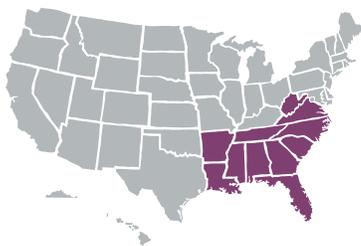
Funding for **California** schools and community colleges will fall next year for the first time in a decade, under the first pass at the 2023-24 state budget, which Gov. Gavin Newsom released in early January. Funding for Proposition 98 in 2023-24 would be \$1.5 billion less than appropriated last year.

Two pieces of legislation signed recently by California Gov. Gavin Newsom aim to increase graduation or transfer rates and cancel student debt for students at the state's community colleges. One is AB 1958, which allows colleges to use extra funds to offer debt cancellation to encourage students to enroll or re-enroll at community colleges. The other is AB 1705, which will require high school transcript data to be used as the primary means of determining the placement of students in transfer-level math and English courses instead of placement tests.

The first cohort of **Oregon** students has begun courses in Yakima Valley College's Bachelor of Applied Science in Agricultural Sciences program, which is designed for working adults with experience in industries

such as fruit production, hops farming, and wineries. Classes are either fully online or have lab sessions that meet once or twice a week in the evenings to accommodate work schedules.

Centralia College in **Washington** began offering four-year degrees 10 years ago and is nearing 500 graduates, the result of the 2005 passage of House Bill 1794 giving the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) authority over the first pilot programs offering baccalaureate pathways at community colleges. In 2012, SBCTC got full approval to oversee applied bachelor's degrees offered by a community and technical college.



## SOUTHERN REGION

Every community or technical college in **Alabama** now offers at least one paid state-registered apprenticeship for students to explore careers in several different trades and industries, the result of a partnership between the state community college system and the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship.

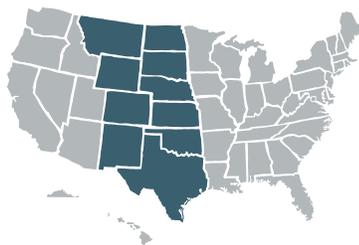
The **North Carolina** Board of Community Colleges has approved just over \$15 million in funding to support life science programs in ten schools. With growing numbers of biosciences companies locating to or expanding in the state, the funding from the federal Build Back Better Regional Challenge Grant will bolster the life sciences industry by preparing a talent pool from across the state while expanding opportunities for underserved communities.

The United States Golf Association

partnered with Sandhills Community College in North Carolina to create the USGA Greenkeeper Apprenticeship Program (GAP), a 12 month registered program offered through ApprenticeshipNC.

A study by the **Virginia** Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission recommends that community colleges and K-12 school divisions eliminate tuition and fees for dual enrollment courses provided on high school campuses. About 42% of school divisions charge their students tuition to take these courses.

The Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation awarded \$125,000 to the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education to help students obtain the resources they need as they continue their education through Single Stop. According to the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), Single Stop has already been used by over 9,700 community college students across the state, connecting them to over \$21 million in benefits.



## WESTERN REGION

**Colorado** community colleges more than doubled their graduation rates from 2015 to 2020 by focusing on student support in and out of the classroom, according to a study. The Colorado Community College System's graduation rates rose to 31% from 15% five years earlier, according to the report by Complete College America.

Graduation rates improved among students from all backgrounds, including Black and Hispanic students.

Southeast Community College in **Nebraska** will more than double its sports offerings beginning next fall. SCC will add esports, women's golf, rodeo, trapshooting, men's and women's tennis, men's and women's track and field, men's volleyball, and men's and women's wrestling.

A performance-driven funding formula for **Texas** community college districts will be considered by the 88th Texas Legislature. Proposed by the Texas Commission on Community College Finance (TCCCF), the new formula would be the first time that the funding process has changed in almost 50 years if approved.

JPMorgan Chase committed \$3.3 million toward a disaster resilience and workforce collaborative led by Houston Community College (HCC) in Texas. The collaborative unites 17 local community partners to offer resiliency career training. HCC will lead the collaborative and provide the curriculum and offer new certificates and credentials in resiliency-related fields, including clean energy, disaster response, resilient jobs, utilities, trades, and manufacturing.

The **Wyoming** Community College Commission asked state lawmakers to fund the Wyoming's Tomorrow Scholarship Program. Gov. Mark Gordon recommended \$35 million go toward the program in his 2023-24 supplemental budget. Wyoming's Tomorrow Scholarship was signed into law by Gordon following the 2022 budget session, with a \$10 million appropriation to the endowment fund from the Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account.

*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 [acctinfo@acct.org](mailto:acctinfo@acct.org).*

# APRIL IS COMMUNITY COLLEGE MONTH START PLANNING NOW!

[www.acct.org/ccmonth](http://www.acct.org/ccmonth)



COMMUNITY COLLEGE MONTH IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY to demonstrate the vital importance of your college, and to make an undeniable case for why your college deserves greater public support. The earlier you start planning, the more you'll accomplish.

Last year was our most successful #CCMonth campaign ever.

Last April, the national #CCmonth campaign coordinated by ACCT encouraged advocates throughout the country to communicate the importance of our communities' colleges through social media and local press outlets. Thanks to your efforts, we saw more online activity than ever. According to social media analytics service Keyhole, these messages reached more than 5.5 million individuals and were seen over 12 million times in April alone.

Our goal this year? To get even more messaging out throughout the month so that more people will see, hear, and feel the positive impacts of community colleges on students and our communities.

## HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT THIS APRIL:

- Write an op-ed for your local newspaper.
- Create images, podcasts, and videos to share across social media.
- Pass a resolution at your March or April board meeting.
- Send out a press release letting the world know about your commitment.
- Talk to your elected officials about the importance of community colleges.
- Get your students involved in the movement. Last year's #CCMonth campaign created millions of impressions on TikTok – most of them by students! Keep the momentum and tell your students to let the TikTokverse know that *smart students go to community colleges*.
- Spread the word to your community!

## #CCMONTH ACTION STEPS TO TAKE RIGHT NOW

1. Pledge to participate in #CCMonth. Go to [www.acct.org/ccmonth](http://www.acct.org/ccmonth) to take the pledge, and we will send you updates leading up to April and throughout the month. Be sure to share this link with your colleagues, your college's communications department, and any other community members who will play a role in doing #CCMonth outreach.
2. Download the #CCMonth toolkit and logo at [www.acct.org/ccmonth](http://www.acct.org/ccmonth).
3. Share the toolkit with your college's CEO, board, communications department, and any others who will play a role during #CCMonth outreach.
4. Determine how your college will participate in April.
5. Make sure you are following @CCTrustees on Twitter – this is the hub of our #CCMonth activity. Also be sure you're following us on Facebook ([facebook.com/CCTrustees](https://facebook.com/CCTrustees)) and LinkedIn ([www.linkedin.com/company/association-of-community-college-trustees](https://www.linkedin.com/company/association-of-community-college-trustees)).
6. Schedule your #CCMonth communications throughout April. (Important: Make sure to coordinate your individual outreach with that of the college to make sure everyone is on the same page and sending consistent messages out into the world!)
7. Plan to send a summary of your campaign and results to ACCT Director of Strategic Communications David Conner at [dconner@acct.org](mailto:dconner@acct.org). We want to see the fruits of your labor and showcase the most successful outreach efforts!

## Keep an eye out for ACCT's announcement of a new student-designed #CCMonth logo in March!

Collaborate with your college's communications department to get started on your campaigns. Download the Community College Month toolkit for more ideas and inspiration.

# 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](http://www.acct.org/membership/lifetime) or contact ACCT's Member Services at 202.775.4667 or [acctinfo@acct.org](mailto:acctinfo@acct.org).



# 2023 ACCT GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE: STRENGTHENING THE LEADERSHIP TEAM OF THE BOARD

MARCH 22-24, 2023 | NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

## Who should attend?

The objective of the 2023 GLI is to strengthen the **leadership team of the board**. ACCT is recommending that the board chair, vice chair, and college CEO attend this Institute as a team.

## TOPICS

- Best Practices of Highly Effective Boards
- The Role of the Board Chair
- How to Build a Strong Relationship Between the CEO and the Board
- The Chair's Role During a Crisis
- Succession Planning for the Board – Choosing Your Next Chair



REGISTER TODAY AT [ACCTGLI.ORG](https://acctgli.org).



Hosted by





## Legal Issues Impacting Community Colleges

Recent rulings and guidance involve affirmative action, access to restrooms, paid-leave benefits, labor rights of student athletes, and social justice advocacy demonstrations.

BY IRA MICHAEL SHEPARD, ACCT GENERAL COUNSEL

It is important to note that the NLRB generally does not have jurisdiction over individual community colleges that are operated as part of a state or local governmental entity. However, NLRB's decisions are often followed or adapted by applicable state or local boards with jurisdiction over community colleges.

**T**HE FOLLOWING CASES AND/OR LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS ARE OF IMPORTANCE to the day-to-day administration of local community college policies and procedures.

**Supreme Court hears oral arguments over the continuation of affirmative action in college admissions.** The U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments on October 31, 2022, in *Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) v. Harvard* and *SFFA v. University of North Carolina*.

The first major Supreme Court decision involving affirmative action in college admissions occurred over 40 years ago in 1978, in *University of California v. Bakke*. In *Bakke*, a divided Supreme Court approved the University of California's affirmative action plan, with four justices ruling in favor of the plan and four justices ruling that the affirmative action plan violated the Constitution. The remaining solo opinion of Justice Lewis Powell, coupled with the four votes in favor of affirmative action, became the precedent. Justice Powell concluded that a race-conscious admissions program could theoretically satisfy constitutional strict scrutiny by being narrowly tailored to promote a diverse student body.



"Going into work when everyone is on vacation is my kind of getaway."

In 2003, a majority of the Supreme Court endorsed Justice Powell's solo opinion in *Grutter v. Bollinger*. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor added in the majority opinion that the court expects that such policies will no longer be necessary in 25 years.

Last October, the Supreme Court set aside two hours to hear oral arguments in two lawsuits brought in 2022 by the SFFA, an anti-affirmative action group, against Harvard University and the University of North Carolina. The SFFA wants the Supreme Court to overturn Justice Powell's solo opinion in the *Bakke* case and end consideration of race in college admissions. The group argues, among other things, that current affirmative action policies routinely discriminate against Asian Americans who do not receive racial preferences. Both colleges deny that affirmative action policies discriminate against Asian Americans.

To complicate matters further, both cases were initially coupled for oral argument but then uncoupled and heard separately because the newest justice, Ketanji Brown Jackson, recused herself from hearing the Harvard case because of past work on Harvard's board of overseers.

**Sharply divided U.S. court of appeals rules that separating bathrooms by biological sex does not violate the U.S. Constitution or Title IX, rejecting a transgender student's claim of discrimination.**

The full 11th Circuit Court of Appeals (covering Florida, Alabama, and Georgia) recently held in a sharply divided decision of seven to four that separating school bathrooms by biological sex is constitutional and does not violate Title IX. The majority decision is subject to multiple different dissents. (*Adams v. School Board of St. Johns County, Florida*; 11th Cir. No. 18-13592, 12/30/22.) The case involved a St. Johns County, Florida, School Board, which restricted bathroom use by biological sex, not allowing students who identified as a sex different from their biological sex to use the bathroom of their choice.

The majority decision rejected the transgender plaintiff's reliance on the Supreme Court decision in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, which held that under federal job-discrimination law, sex discrimination includes bias based on gender identity or sexual orientation. The majority decision pointed out that a school setting "is not the workplace" and that *Bostock* expressly decided not to tackle the issue of sex-segregated locker rooms or bathrooms. The majority concluded that the U.S. has a long history of separating sexes when it comes to the use of public bathrooms and such sex-based classifications have never necessarily violated the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment. It is likely that other circuits may decide this issue differently, setting up an ultimate decision by the U.S. Supreme Court.

**California joins the growing list of states expanding paid leave benefits.** California's recent enactment of paid leave protections requiring employers to provide employees with paid leave to care for individuals who are not legal relatives joins the growing list of states regulating this area of employee benefits. So far, 11 states and the District of Columbia have enacted paid leave programs. Five of those states (Colorado, Connecticut, New Jersey, Oregon, and Washington) allow employees to use those benefits to take care of non-relatives designated as "akin to family."

Nationwide, this is leading to a unique patchwork of requirements depending on where an employee is employed. Research should be conducted in your local jurisdiction to guide your institution on the breadth and application of possible city and/or state requirements. In addition, remote work in another state may introduce complications to enforcement,

such as determining what states' laws apply. In these circumstances, counsel should be consulted.

**Several colleges file an appeal of a federal court decision to allow student athletes to proceed to trial over whether they are employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).** A federal district court trial judge recently ruled that student athletes are employees under FLSA and are therefore entitled to minimum wage and overtime payments. The judge used the same multi-factor approach used in cases involving unpaid interns who have successfully sued and been ruled entitled to pursue a claim of minimum wage and overtime payments. (*Johnson v. NCAA*; E.D. Pa. No. 19-cv-19350, 9/29/21.)

A group of institutions including Cornell, Fordham, Villanova, Lafayette College, and Sacred Heart University have asked the eastern district of Pennsylvania judge to allow an immediate appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the third circuit. They want to ask the third circuit to decide: 1) Are student athletes ever employees of the schools for which they compete? and 2) If so, under what circumstances are student athletes considered employees of their schools? We will continue to monitor developments in this case.

**National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) general counsel states that political and social justice advocacy in "Black Lives Matter" demonstrations and demonstrations opposing crackdowns on undocumented workers are protected concerted activity under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA).** The NLRB general counsel stated in a webinar hosted by Cornell University that Black Lives Matter protests and demonstrations against crackdowns on undocumented workers are protected under the NLRA federal labor law as protected concerted activity. The general counsel referred to the case the NLRB brought against Home Depot in Minneapolis because it disciplined workers who refused to cease displaying political messages on their aprons at work, including an employee who was terminated for displaying a "BLM" slogan. The NLRB in that case also accused Home Depot of unlawfully threatening employees with unspecified consequences if they engaged in group activities regarding racial harassment.

Home Depot has denied any violation of the NLRA and in a statement said it does not tolerate workplace harassment, takes these matters seriously, and is committed to diversity and respect. Home Depot takes the position that it has every right to refuse to allow its employees to engage in conduct which will spark conflict and possibly confuse customers. It added it has a right to refrain from allowing its employees to engage in speech in this way while serving customers.

It is important to note that the NLRB generally does not have jurisdiction over individual community colleges that are operated as part of a state or local governmental entity. However, NLRB's decisions are often followed or adapted by applicable state or local boards with jurisdiction over community colleges.



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

# EXECUTIVE SEARCH

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.



CLOVIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE, STATE CENTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

## DR. KIM ARMSTRONG

President

“As Chancellor, I know Dr. Armstrong was absolutely the right and the best choice for Clovis Community College. She has the relevant background, strong academic administration skills, and a solid vision to lead Clovis forward and to ensure a continued state and national prominence as an institution dedicated to educational excellence, access, equity, and social mobility.”

— DR. CAROLE GOLDSMITH

CHANCELLOR, STATE CENTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

SOUTHEAST NEW MEXICO COLLEGE, NEW MEXICO

## DR. KEVIN BEARDMORE

President

“I’m pleased to announce Dr. Kevin Beardmore as the inaugural president of Southeast New Mexico College. Dr. Beardmore brings extensive experience in community college leadership. We are excited about SENMC’s future with Dr. Beardmore at the helm.”

— DR. NED ELKINS

SOUTHEAST NEW MEXICO COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



SOUTH MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE,  
MARICOPA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT, ARIZONA

## DR. RICHARD DANIEL

President

“Dr. Daniel’s extensive background in higher education impressed system, college, and community stakeholder groups. His passion and advocacy for education of all levels will support our diverse student population. I am proud to welcome him to Maricopa and look forward to working together to advance the mission of SMCC.”

— DR. STEVEN R. GONZALES

CHANCELLOR, MARICOPA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

# EXECUTIVE SEARCH

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.

HALIFAX COMMUNITY COLLEGE, NORTH CAROLINA

**DR. PATRENA ELLIOTT**

President



“Dr. Elliott is highly qualified for the position and has the unique qualities that will serve her and the college well as we enter the next chapter of Halifax Community College’s history.”

— **DR. MICHAEL WILLIAMS**

*CHAIRMAN, HALIFAX COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES*



COCONINO COMMUNITY COLLEGE, ARIZONA

**DR. ERIC HEISER**

President

“After a national search with more than 50 applicants, the District Governing Board is excited to announce the selection of Dr. Heiser as Coconino Community College’s next president. The college, through strong past leadership and community support as expressed by the passage of a primary tax reset, is positioned to leap forward in serving the residents of Coconino County, from workforce training and associate degrees to pathways to baccalaureates. We are confident that Dr. Heiser has the leadership experience and enthusiasm to advance Coconino Community College as we enter our next chapter.”

— **DR. NAT WHITE**

*CHAIR, COCONINO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD*

BELLINGHAM TECHNICAL COLLEGE, WASHINGTON

**DR. JAMES LEMEROND**

President



“While the job of choosing the president is the sole responsibility of the Board of Trustees, the real work in evaluating the candidates, selecting the finalists, and providing valuable feedback was performed by the BTC community. Trustees wish to thank the members of the Presidential Search Advisory Committee, employees, students, and community members for their participation at the campus forums, feedback on the candidates, and commitment to the hiring process. Together, we recognize that Dr. Lemerond understands the college’s needs, mission, and vision, and is the best choice to lead BTC forward.”

— **RICK KAISER**

*CHAIR, BELLINGHAM TECHNICAL COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES*

# EXECUTIVE SEARCH

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.



OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE, NEW JERSEY

## DR. PAMELA MONACO

President

"A passionate advocate for community colleges, Dr. Monaco believes that education transforms lives, and she has consistently demonstrated her commitment to removing the barriers that stand in the way of student success. The Board is confident that Dr. Monaco will be a dynamic and proactive leader at OCC, one who shares our values and goals for the future and whose strategic vision and collaborative spirit will position the college to thrive and excel in the years ahead."

— JERRY J. DASTI

CHAIR, OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

## LOUISIANA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM



## DR. JAYDA SPILLERS

Chancellor, Northwest Louisiana Technical Community College



## MR. QUINTIN TAYLOR

Chancellor, River Parishes Community College

"On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, I want to congratulate Dr. Jayda Spillers and Mr. Quintin Taylor on their selection as the newest chancellors in the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. We were impressed with the overall pool of candidates and each finalist across both searches. Mr. Taylor has led RPCC on an interim basis for the past six months and provided the college with great leadership and a vision for the college's future. Dr. Spillers most recently served as Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs at Northwest Louisiana Technical Community College for 18 months and showed tremendous leadership. We believe Dr. Spillers and Mr. Taylor are perfect fits for NLCC and RPCC."

— TIM HARDY

LCTCS BOARD SUPERVISOR AND CHAIR OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEES

# RETREATS AND WORKSHOPS

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

Alvin Community College, Texas

Atlantic Cape Community College,  
New Jersey

Central Arizona College, Arizona

Chaffey College, California

College of Lake County, Illinois

College of Southern Maryland

Dallas College, Texas

Dutchess Community College, New York

H. Lavity Stoutt Community College,  
British Virgin Islands

Hudson County Community College,  
New Jersey

Monroe Community College, Michigan

Monroe Community College, State  
University of New York (SUNY)

Nevada System of Higher Education

New Mexico Junior College

North Idaho College

Northwestern Michigan College

Northern Virginia Community College

Pima Community College  
District, Arizona

Quinsigamond Community  
College, Massachusetts

Roxbury Community College,  
Massachusetts

Sheridan College, Wyoming

Tarrant County College, Texas

Illinois Community College Trustee  
Association (College of DuPage, College  
of Lake County, Harper College, Heartland  
Community College, Joliet Junior College,  
Kaskaskia College, Kishwaukee College,  
Lewis and Clark Community College,  
Morton College, Oakton Community  
College, Parkland College, Sauk Valley  
Community College, Southwestern Illinois  
College, Triton College)

Nebraska Community College  
Association (Central Community  
College, Mid-Plains Community College,  
Northeast Community College, Southeast  
Community College, Western Nebraska  
Community College)

New Jersey Council of County Colleges  
(Atlantic Cape Community College,  
Brookdale Community College, Camden  
County College, Essex County College,  
Mercer County Community College,  
Middlesex College, Ocean County  
College, Raritan Valley Community  
College, Salem Community College)



Find out more about board retreats and workshops  
at [www.acct.org/page/board-retreats-workshops](http://www.acct.org/page/board-retreats-workshops)  
[boardservices@acct.org](mailto:boardservices@acct.org)

# 2023

## ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES

### REGIONAL AWARDS

Trustee Leadership  
Equity  
Chief Executive Officer  
Faculty Member  
Professional Board Staff Member

### ASSOCIATION AWARDS

M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership  
Charles Kennedy Equity  
Marie Y. Martin CEO  
William H. Meardy Faculty Member  
Professional Board Staff Member

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[WWW.ACCT.ORG](http://WWW.ACCT.ORG)

ACCT's awards program is designed to recognize and honor outstanding community college trustees, equity programs, presidents, faculty members, and professional board staff members at regional and national levels. In order to be considered for an Association Award, you must first submit a nomination at the regional level.

The Awards committees will select and notify the Awards recipients prior to the ACCT Leadership Congress. ACCT's Awards recipients will be honored at the 2023 ACCT Leadership Congress this October in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Visit [www.acct.org](http://www.acct.org) for specific nomination criteria and to submit nominations online.

Call 202.775.4667 with any questions.

All nominations must be received by **June 5, 2023**.

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**NOMINATIONS DUE** **5** **2023**  
**JUNE**



# interface

## A NOTE OF APPRECIATION

Dear PBSN Members,

On behalf of ACCT's board, staff and membership, please accept our sincere appreciation for the work you do as liaisons to your college boards.

We understand that your positions require you to wear many hats and not just to be able to do but be the best at carrying out a broad variety of responsibilities.

We know that you are committed to your institutions' missions of offering access to high-quality higher education to all students, and to empowering your students to advance in this world. Your commitment and your work are central to our collaborative work to change lives for the better.

All of us at ACCT are grateful for everything you do.

ACCT will be launching some exciting new services in the coming year, including new ways to connect our entire membership, and we hope to expand and deepen our relationship with professional board staff members as we move forward together. You are vital to the work this association does, and we hope we are valuable assets in your work as well. Reach out to any of us anytime and let us know how we can help.



## Dear CEOs and Trustees: Your Leadership is Showing

BY LARISA PFEIFFER  
PBSN PRESIDENT

**W**ELCOME TO THE NEW YEAR! A SPECIAL GREETING TO THE NEW CEOs and trustees who have entered the ACCT studio of community college governance: you are among a talented membership of leadership artists.

Through art we can see how different periods of history were influenced by the advances of society and technology. Community colleges are no different. We have entered a transition period that demands a new type of leadership navigation and style.

The landscape includes a prominent CEO base entering retirement age, an inadequate pipeline of successors to fill those vacancies with the skills and paths we are accustomed to, and technological and societal changes that are disrupting decades of behaviors we have become dependent upon in higher education.

The horizon is starting to take shape as we discuss how will we maintain our legitimacy under the confluences of a demographic drought, declining enrollment, uncertain funding models, and the unspoken fear that new artists are entering the market who will dismiss us as the masters — we can see they are thirsty to assign us to our place in history while they form a new period of knowledge and skill sharing for their vision of a new and unexplored world.

*continued on page 42*



Learn more at [www.acct.org/page/professional-board-staff-network](http://www.acct.org/page/professional-board-staff-network).



*continued from page 41*

This situates our rising leaders at an interesting intersection of career decision making — do they focus their careers on the minimalism movement of community colleges, still heavily focused on literalism, or do they join their contemporaries and take part in a movement that is just beginning to form and hints at creating a new identity for knowledge and learning post K-12?

That is a lot to think about and, let's be honest, it's a little intimidating — which is why we need organizations like ACCT to help us continue to understand where we are now, where we are heading, and how to develop and grow trustees to navigate this period. Regardless of the new artistic movement in town, community colleges are critical for a healthy and fair society that includes a middle class and socioeconomic advancement.

The Professional Board Staff Network (PBSN) is a very good example of a subset of community college professionals who are in extreme flux. There is a lot of turnover in positions, which creates opportunities to understand the talent needed to meet modern governance needs. PBSN was created as a professional affinity group for the staff who accompanied leaders to the annual ACCT conference, the staff who managed meeting materials, and who made travel arrangements in a very manual world. The early members of PBSN had very similar duties and came together to learn how to better serve their CEOs and trustees. They developed and shared new ideas and systems that helped advance to their work and created efficiencies for their leaders.

Today, the membership of PBSN includes artists who reflect the leadership they serve. We have artists whose work represents the early period of symbolism, with roles designed for information sharing and recordkeeping, which is the cornerstone of effective office management — they decide what you are eating for lunch. Pay attention to them.

We have Renaissance artists, a period known for enlightenment and literacy advancement — they are devoted to the teams they serve, they assist in retreats, and they manage collegewide celebrations as their leaders pull them into the Rococo period of playfulness. These are the energetic and informed team parents — they influence culture. Pay attention to them.

We have professional staff who are in the Bauhaus movement — they are art in everyday life, they sit on cabinet-level teams, they set agendas, and they strategize with CEOs and leadership teams. They are the leaders who other leaders come to for advice on how to navigate their responsibilities and priorities — these are professionals that are

organizationally influential. The CEO who creates space for this staff member is confident and a futurist. Pay attention to them.

We have artists that fall between Abstract Impressionism, the action painters, and Contemporary Art, the art of today that no one quite understands or fully appreciates yet — the highly educated with doctoral degrees (education, philosophy, jurisprudence) who are advisors and confidants, who have the same view as the CEO of the institution, and who support trustees to ensure the CEO is empowered to lead the organization. These staff members are in a position very similar to the government and military approach to leadership succession planning, empowered to assist leaders to meet the strategies and initiatives of the CEO. They understand the role of the CEO, and they work tirelessly to ensure the success of the CEO.

The military develops these professionals for higher levels of service. Community colleges use these roles largely to supplement leadership gaps. Creative CEOs begin to lift and pull professionals from across the organization into this role. We see evidence this is happening in very advanced leadership systems — these artists are now in or moving into associate vice president, vice president, and CEO roles.

Do you recognize the pipeline in your own studio that is poised and ready to take on new roles and responsibilities? These artists may not even realize they fit into the succession pipeline, because by and large these are professionals who are committed to the mission and to ensuring that other leaders succeed — traits of servant leadership. Pay attention to the CEOs and trustees with these staff members — they are the captains of industry.

Your leadership is showing in how you support all of these professional staff members. Are they involved with PBSN? Do they attend the ACCT Leadership Congress and the Community College National Legislative Summit? Are you aware that the ACCT PBSN network is valuable tool in ensuring your CEO as well as trustees are properly supported? PBSN offers leadership and network opportunities for staff professionals. These are solitary roles in most organizations that require high levels of confidentiality and discretion (if it is true that the loneliest job in the organization is the CEO, then certainly the second loneliest job is the staff person supporting the CEO).

PBSN has four regional officers and an executive committee that support and inform members across the 1,100 community colleges that ACCT brings together. PBSN members attend the conference



for the same reason you do — to learn from each other, to obtain new ideas, to grow their networks, and to make a difference. Talk to your staff professional and find ways to make the PBSN network part of their professional development plan.

I want to acknowledge and thank the CEOs and trustees from the following institutions who have encouraged their staff members to embrace the PBSN opportunity. Your leadership is showing.

**College of Southern Maryland, MD** – Larisa Pfeiffer, Chief of Staff and President of PBSN

**Brookdale Community College, NJ** – Cynthia Gruskos, Senior Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees and Vice President of PBSN

**Ohlone College, CA** – Shelby Foster, Assistant to the President/ Board of Trustees and Secretary of PBSN

**Yavapai College, AZ** – Yvonne Sandoval, Executive Assistant to the President/District Governing Board and Communications Coordinator of PBSN

**Edison State Community College, OH** – Heather Lanham, Senior Executive Assistant to the President/ Secretary of the Board of Trustees and Central Region Representative of PBSN

**Halifax Community College, NC** – Lisa Barkley, Executive Assistant to the President/ Board of Trustees and Southern Region Representative/Member-At-Large of PBSN

**Yosemite Community College District, CA** – Graciela Molina, Executive Assistant Office of the Chancellor and Pacific Region Representative of PBSN

**Montgomery College, MD** – Dr. Michelle Scott, Special Assistant to the President for Board Operations and Northeast Region Representative of PBSN

**Lansing Community College, MI** – Benita Duncan, Executive Assistant & Liaison to the Board of Trustees and immediate past president of PBSN

*Larisa Pfeiffer is a doctoral candidate at Ferris State University in the Ed.D. program for community college leadership. Her community college professional background includes: Business and Information Technology Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, Adjunct Faculty, Senior Executive Associate to the President and Board of Trustees, and Chief of Staff for the College of Southern Maryland. Her doctorate work is focused on the onboarding of trustees to ensure successful understanding and demonstration of their fiduciary responsibilities. She has been actively involved with PBSN for the last four years.*



2023 Professional Board Staff Network

## 2023 ELECTION RESULTS

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### Chair

**Rose Benavidez**

*South Texas College, TX*

#### Chair-Elect

**Jay Nardini**

*Hawkeye Community College, IA*

#### Vice Chair

**Tim Hardy**

*Louisiana Community & Technical College System, LA*

#### Secretary-Treasurer

**Richard Fukutaki**

*Bellevue College, WA*

#### Immediate Past Chair

**James Cooksey**

*Moberly Area Community College, MO*

### REGIONAL CHAIRS

#### Central Regional Chair

**John Lukas**

*Lakeshore Technical College, WI*

#### Northeast Regional Chair

**Sheetal Ranjan**

*Bergen Community College, NJ*

#### Pacific Regional Chair

**Gilbert Wong**

*Foothill-De Anza Community College District, CA*

#### Southern Regional Chair

**Yvonne Barnes**

*Trident Technical College, SC*

#### Western Regional Chair

**Dan Mims**

*San Jacinto College District, TX*

### REGIONAL DIRECTORS

(Three-year terms except where noted)

#### Central Region

**Jay Nardini**

*Hawkeye Community College, IA*

#### Northeast Region

**Sheila Ireland**

*Community College of Philadelphia, PA*

2-year Partial Term

#### Anthony Colón

*Mohawk Valley Community College, NY*

#### Pacific Region

**Diane Noriega**

*Mt. Hood Community College, OR*

1-year Partial Term

#### Oscar Valladares

*Rio Hondo College, CA*

#### Southern Region

**Yvonne Barnes**

*Trident Technical College, SC*

#### Western Region

**Steven Anderson**

*Northeast Community College, NE*

### DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

(Three-year terms except where noted)

#### Nan Gomez-Heitzeberg

*Kern Community College District, CA*

#### Jermaine Reed

*Metropolitan Community College, MO*

#### Arturo Reyes

*Mott Community College, MI*

### APPOINTED BOARD MEMBERS

#### Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee Chair

**Zaida Hernandez-Irisson**

*Gateway Technical College, WI*

#### Bonnie Soria Najera

*El Paso Community College, TX*

### ACCT DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

(Two-year terms except where noted)

#### Central Region

**Zaida Hernandez-Irisson**

*Gateway Technical College, WI*

#### Northeast Region

**Pamela Gardner**

*Hudson County Community College, NJ*

#### Pacific Region

**Sharmila Swenson**

*Highline College, WA*

#### Southern Region

**Keyatta Priestler**

*Aiken Technical College, SC*

#### Western Region

**Linda Hoskins Sutton**

*Kansas City Kansas Community College, KS*

### RETIRING ACCT BOARD MEMBERS

#### Judy Chen Haggerty

*Mt. San Antonio College, CA*

#### Tamela Cullens

*South Florida State College, FL*

#### David Mathis

*Mohawk Valley Community College, NY*

#### Marsha Suggs Smith

*Montgomery College, MD*

#### Linda Wah

*Pasadena Area Community College, CA*



## ACCT DEADLINES

- ▶ ACCT Awards Nominations  
*June 5, 2023*
- ▶ Director-at-Large Candidate Nominations  
*July 1, 2023*
- ▶ Amendments to ACCT Bylaws  
*July 1, 2023*
- ▶ Submitting Resolutions  
*July 1, 2023*

# 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

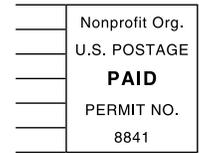
- Retreats
- Board self-assessment
- Presidential evaluations
- Succession planning
- Institutional leadership analysis
- Board policy review
- Mediation and conflict resolution

**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](http://www.acct.org/services)



[www.acct.org](http://www.acct.org) 110117th Street NW  
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202.775.4667  
866.895.2228

# ACCT LEADERSHIP CONGRESS

OCTOBER 9-12, 2023



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