

2024

ASSOCIATION
OF COMMUNITY
COLLEGE TRUSTEES

CATEGORIES:

TRUSTEE LEADERSHIP

EQUITY

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FACULTY MEMBER

PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to foster the principles and practices of exemplary governance while promoting high quality and affordable higher education, cutting-edge workforce and development training, student success, and the opportunity for all individuals to achieve economic self-sufficiency and security.



C O N T E N T S

- 2 ACCT Leadership Message**
- 4 Awards Program**
- 6 Trustee Leadership Award**
- 8 Equity Award**
- 10 Chief Executive Officer Award**
- 12 Faculty Member Award**
- 14 Professional Board Staff
Member Award**
- 16 2023 Regional Awardees**
- 18 Nominating Process**
- 20 FAQs & Checklist**

DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS:

JUNE 3, 2024

ACCT LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

DEAR VALUED MEMBER,

For decades, ACCT has honored members across the country with awards that highlight their service to their colleges and their communities. This process starts here, with you.

We depend on our members to highlight and nominate the wonderful individuals and the achievements of their peers and their colleges. Winners of the regional awards are automatically nominated for the association awards. The 2023 association award winners are highlighted in this brochure. They represent the best of governing boards, CEOs, equity programs, faculty and professional board members and we are privileged to have them as members.

We hope their stories inspire and encourage you to submit nominations.

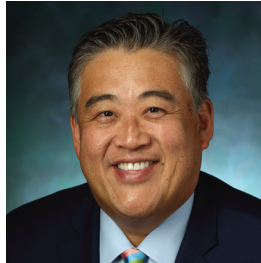
We look forward to celebrating this year's winners in Seattle at the Leadership Congress in October.



JAY NARDINI

Chair, ACCT

Chair, Hawkeye Community
College, Iowa



JEE HANG LEE

President & CEO, ACCT

AWARDS PROGRAM

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.

1 NOMINATION FOR REGIONAL AWARDS

ACCT is opening nominations for the following **Regional Awards**:

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

2 SELECTION AND NOTIFICATION OF THE REGIONAL AWARDS RECIPIENTS

The Regional Awards Committees will select the Regional Awards recipients. Recipients will be notified prior to the 2024 ACCT Leadership Congress so that they can make arrangements to be present to accept their awards whenever possible; everyone who submitted a nomination for an award will be notified of the results prior to the 2024 ACCT Leadership Congress.

3 NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR THE ASSOCIATION AWARDS

Regional Awards recipients are automatically nominated for an Association Award in the same category. The Regional Awards recipients will be the sole nominees for the following **Association Awards**:

- M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award
- Charles Kennedy Equity Award
- Marie Y. Martin Chief Executive Officer Award
- William H. Mearly Faculty Member Award
- Professional Board Staff Member Award

4 SELECTION OF THE ASSOCIATION AWARDS RECIPIENTS

The Association Awards Committee and the Charles Kennedy Equity Award Committee will select the Association Awards recipients. Recipients will not be disclosed until the Awards Gala Banquet.

5

THE REGIONAL AWARDS

ACCT's Regional Awards recipients will be honored during the ACCT Leadership Congress in Seattle, Washington.

6

PRESENTATION OF THE ASSOCIATION AWARDS

All Association Awards recipients will be honored during ACCT's Awards Gala Banquet at the ACCT Leadership Congress in Seattle, Washington.



TRUSTEE LEADERSHIP AWARD

The ACCT Board of Directors annually honors an individual who has made a significant contribution as a lay trustee to promote the community college concept.

The Association Award is named after M. Dale Ensign, one of ACCT's pioneers and the founding chair of the association, who served as a trustee at Northwest Community College in Powell, Wyoming.

ELIGIBILITY

Any trustee or former trustee of an ACCT member two-year postsecondary institution board or state board for two-year postsecondary institutions is eligible to receive this award.

Current members of the ACCT Board of Directors are ineligible to receive the M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award. Past ACCT Board of Directors Executive Committee members are eligible five years after their ACCT Board of Directors term ends.

CRITERIA

- Has the trustee served as an officer of the college's board of trustees?
- In addition to service on the board of trustees, in what capacity has the trustee participated in community life (i.e., civic clubs, public office, etc.)?
- What has the trustee initiated or helped to develop in the area of innovative programs used in two-year postsecondary institutions?
- Has the trustee served on technical or special committees serving two-year postsecondary education?
- How has the trustee been a factor in influencing legislation for two-year postsecondary institutions, and how has the trustee been active in communication and advocacy with state and national legislators?
- What has the trustee contributed overall to the two-year postsecondary concept, and how did this affect the college's total impact on the community, state, or nation?
- How has the trustee provided leadership in helping to solve challenges facing two-year postsecondary education?
- How has the trustee been active in developing, organizing, or supporting state two-year postsecondary associations, and what kind of leadership role has the trustee played in state, regional, or national associations?
- Has the trustee given presentations or published articles on two-year postsecondary education?

2023 M. DALE ENSIGN TRUSTEE LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNER



BAKARI G. LEE, ESQ.

HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, NEW JERSEY

WHAT DOES THE AWARD MEAN TO YOU?

The M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award serves as a capstone for me of 17 years of community college service, and a lifetime of community service lessons instilled in me by my parents who each have built a life of service to their community. My service to Hudson County Community College, the New Jersey Council of County Colleges and ACCT has been extremely rewarding emotionally and professionally. I have learned so much from each organization and gained so many wonderful friends who over the years have become like family, and enjoyed so many experiences that would not have occurred but for this journey, all of this through service to the community college concept. I am truly grateful to ACCT and my colleagues for this award.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER COMMUNITY COLLEGES?

At all times, remain focused on the mission of providing an institution to students that will enable them to uplift and enhance their lives and the lives of their families. If we as trustees keep students front of mind and remain true to our service to them, we will never go wrong.

EQUITY AWARD

This award recognizes exemplary commitment by a governing board or governing board and president of an ACCT member two-year postsecondary institution board or state board for two-year postsecondary institutions to achieve equity in the college's education programs and services and in the administration and delivery of those programs and services.

The award honors the late Charles Kennedy, a trustee of Joliet Junior College in Illinois, who was a founder of the ACCT Minority Affairs Assembly, which became the ACCT Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

ELIGIBILITY

Any governing board or governing board and president of an ACCT member two-year postsecondary institution board or state board for two-year postsecondary institutions is eligible to receive this award.

CRITERIA

Demonstrable evidence of leadership in setting policies that promote and enhance opportunities for institutional diversity, inclusion, and equity for women, persons of color, LGBTQ+ or members of any other underrepresented or underserved population that has occurred within the last five (5) years regarding the following:

- Increases in access by underrepresented or underserved populations and increases in completion of the educational objectives (attainment of a degree, certificate, credential, transfer or gainful employment) of those populations.
- Increases in the institution's workforce and leadership positions by underrepresented or underserved populations.
- Success of the institution's community engagement or outreach efforts in attracting and maintaining the interests of underrepresented or underserved populations regarding the institution.

2023

CHARLES KENNEDY EQUITY AWARD WINNER



KERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

CALIFORNIA

WHAT DOES THE AWARD MEAN TO YOU?

Receiving the Charles Kennedy Equity Award holds profound meaning for the Kern Community College District. This award acknowledges the impactful strides made by our governing board and leadership in advancing equity in our communities and it is a source of pride. It also recognizes a collective success, achieved through the dedication of our entire educational community. National recognition serves to validate our achievements and inspire us for future endeavors. We are steadfast in our commitment to empower every student, regardless of background, to succeed in their educational pursuits. Thank you ACCT for this prestigious award.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER COMMUNITY COLLEGES?

- **Prioritize Equity in Decision-Making:** Make equity a central consideration in all decision-making processes. From policy development to resource allocation, consciously assess and address potential disparities to ensure fairness and inclusivity across operations.
- **Cultivate Inclusive Leadership:** Foster a culture of inclusive leadership within your district. Set the stage for open dialogue, diverse perspectives, and collaboration at all levels. A board that values and actively promotes diversity contributes significantly to achieving equity goals.
- **Celebrate Achievements:** Recognize and celebrate achievements that advance equity. Whether through awards or other forms of acknowledgment, highlighting successes reinforces the importance of the ongoing commitment to create an equitable learning environment.
- **Continually Assess and Improve:** Ask for regular assessment of institutional practices, policies, and outcomes through an equity lens. Use data to inform decisions and track progress in promoting equity.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE AWARD

ACCT annually recognizes the tremendous services of and contributions made by community college chief executive officers.

The Association Award is named in honor of Marie Y. Martin, who served as director of the Community College Unit, U.S. Office of Education, and as a chief executive officer in the Los Angeles Community College District.

ELIGIBILITY

Any chief executive officer (must be currently serving when nomination is submitted) of an ACCT member two-year postsecondary institution board or state board for two-year postsecondary institutions is eligible to receive this award.

CRITERIA

- What has the CEO initiated or helped to develop in the area of innovative programs used in two-year postsecondary institutions?
- How has the CEO served on technical or special committees serving two-year postsecondary education, and what impact did this effort have in the community, state, or nation?
- How has the CEO demonstrated a “caring attitude” toward the board of trustees, administrators, faculty, and students?
- How has the CEO been active in developing, organizing, or supporting state and/or national two-year postsecondary education associations?
- What has the CEO published in the area of two-year postsecondary educational concepts?
- What awards or honors has the CEO received in recognition of leadership in the college, community, or nation?
- What outstanding characteristics of the CEO motivated you to nominate him or her?

2023

MARIE Y. MARTIN CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AWARD WINNER



DR. JO ALICE BLONDIN

CLARK STATE COLLEGE, OHIO

WHAT DOES THE AWARD MEAN TO YOU?

This award is about the unrelenting focus on student success that is championed by the Clark State College Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, and community partners. As President, I am fortunate to lead these efforts, but the award is really a credit to the college and the communities we serve. The honor—really the hard work and collaboration represented by it—accrues to every student who walks across the stage at graduation, and every learner who gains a credential or skill as a result of their experience at Clark State.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER COMMUNITY COLLEGE CEOs?

Always remember that the President should be the “leading learner” at the College. In other words, the President cannot ask others, including the Board of Trustees, to innovate, collaborate, empathize, listen, change, or challenge if they are unwilling to do so or to model the behavior necessary to ensure student and community success. I also think it is essential for any leader to respectfully interrogate traditions and their effectiveness within their organizations, and how traditions can indeed be barriers to student success, or can be remade to enhance student experiences and equity.

FACULTY MEMBER AWARD

ACCT recognizes that the central purpose of our community colleges is teaching and learning. ACCT annually presents its Faculty Member Award to say “thank you” to outstanding faculty members.

The Association Award is named in honor of ACCT’s founding executive director, William H. Meardy, who championed the concept of faculty excellence as the foundation of success in the community college movement.

ELIGIBILITY

Any full-time instructor (must be employed when nomination is submitted) at an ACCT member two-year postsecondary institution or state board for two-year postsecondary institutions is eligible to receive this award.

CRITERIA

- In what ways has this educator demonstrated excellence in teaching?
- What has this educator initiated and helped to develop in the area of innovative programs used in two-year postsecondary institutions?
- How has this educator served on technical or special committees that have positively affected the community, state, or nation?
- How has this educator provided leadership in helping to solve challenges facing two-year postsecondary education?
- How has this educator been active in developing, organizing, or supporting state and/or national two-year postsecondary associations?
- What awards or honors has this educator received in recognition of leadership in the college or community?

2023

WILLIAM H. MEARDY FACULTY AWARD WINNER



DR. CHRISTINE PEGORRARO SCHULL

NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, VIRGINIA

WHAT DOES THE AWARD MEAN TO YOU?

I am stunned and delighted to be the recipient of this award. I would not be here, if not for my incredible students. My early childhood development students represent a vast rich diversity of esteemed and skilled workers in child care, preschool, school age care, family child care, and elementary schools. They are the invisible infrastructure holding up our economy. It is a joy and privilege to work with them.

Every day at NOVA, I am surrounded by examples of excellence in the classroom—from my students and from my faculty/staff colleagues. I cannot imagine a greater honor than a teaching award in this context. This is a highlight of my career. I am so incredibly grateful.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY MEMBERS?

I would advise my peers that by engaging and mentoring students, it will not only change the lives of the individual students we teach, but also their families. We do not always see the impact we have on students until much later. Community colleges create opportunities for vulnerable students. We help with providing everlasting change for our students and their families. Be proud of that. Every year I hear feedback from former students that affirms this. We are vital to creating pathways to stability and success and our relationships with students are truly impactful.

In our role as faculty members, we have endless opportunity to advocate for community college students and for issues relevant to our respective disciplines. I would further encourage that we should always seek out ways to innovate and to build relationships with our students. Most importantly, we should seek every opportunity to elevate their voices.

PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF MEMBER AWARD

The Professional Board Staff Member Award is presented to a board staff member in recognition of exemplary service to a board.

ELIGIBILITY

Any board staff member (i.e., an administrative assistant or executive secretary to the president/superintendent) of an ACCT member two-year postsecondary institution is eligible to receive this award.

Those currently serving as the ACCT Professional Board Staff Network President and Vice President are not eligible to receive this award.

CRITERIA

- In what ways has this staff member demonstrated a service leadership role toward the members of the board of trustees, administrators, faculty, students, and community?
- How does this staff member demonstrate performance in support of the board/CEO team?
- How has this staff member assisted the board/CEO team in developing or initiating innovative projects for your institution?
- What professional development activities at the national and/or state level has this staff member pursued?
- What other continuing education activities has this staff member pursued?
- What recognition has this staff member received for their leadership or involvement in the college or community?
- What outstanding characteristics motivated you to nominate this staff member?

2023

PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF MEMBER AWARD WINNER



PAMELA PAYNE

EL PASO COMMUNITY COLLEGE, TEXAS

WHAT DOES THE AWARD MEAN TO YOU?

I was truly overwhelmed with emotions to be recognized by the Association of Community College Trustees with the Professional Board Staff Member award. Receiving this award is a career milestone that is a highlight of my 38 years at El Paso Community College. It is an honor and privilege to have worked in the role of the Executive Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees for the last 28 years. I am incredibly proud to be a part of this family of educators who are making a difference for our students and our community.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF MEMBERS?

My advice would be to continue to grow professionally and to not be afraid to learn from those around you. I took the opportunity to participate in the Professional Board Staff Network (PBSN) and was surrounded by individuals who provided support services to college presidents and members of the board of trustees at their respective institutions. I stepped out of my comfort zone and became an officer in the organization and learned alongside my peers at community colleges throughout the country. Don't be afraid to take risks, the rewards can be life-changing!

2023 ACCT REGIONAL AWARDEES

TRUSTEE LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS

CENTRAL REGION

Vernon Jung, Jr.
Moraine Park Technical College, Wisconsin

NORTHEAST REGION

Bakari G. Lee, Esq.
Hudson County Community College, New Jersey

PACIFIC REGION

Deborah McCasland
Yavapai College, Arizona

SOUTHERN REGION

Eugene Lamb, Jr.
Tallahassee Community College, Florida

WESTERN REGION

Brian Haggerty
El Paso Community College, Texas

EQUITY AWARD RECIPIENTS

CENTRAL REGION

Cuyahoga Community College
Ohio

PACIFIC REGION

Kern Community College District
California

SOUTHERN REGION

Tri-County Technical College
South Carolina

WESTERN REGION

San Jacinto College District
Texas

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AWARD RECIPIENTS

CENTRAL REGION

Dr. Jo Alice Blondin
Clark State College, Ohio

NORTHEAST REGION

Dr. Belinda S. Miles
SUNY Westchester Community College, New York

PACIFIC REGION

Dr. Frank Chong
Santa Rosa Junior College, California

SOUTHERN REGION

Dr. Forest E. Mahan
Aiken Technical College, South Carolina

WESTERN REGION

Dr. Jesús Roberto Rodríguez
Texas Southmost College, Texas

FACULTY MEMBER AWARD RECIPIENTS

CENTRAL REGION

Dr. Diane Roose
Lansing Community College, Michigan

NORTHEAST REGION

Sherry Heidary
Union College of Union County, New Jersey

PACIFIC REGION

Jerald Monahan
Yavapai College, Arizona

SOUTHERN REGION

Dr. Christine Pergoraro Schull
Northern Virginia Community College, Virginia

WESTERN REGION

Dr. Lauren Gillespie
Central Community College, Nebraska

PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF MEMBER AWARD RECIPIENTS

CENTRAL REGION

Kathy Dimitriou
Henry Ford College, Michigan

NORTHEAST REGION

Dr. Kurt B. Doan
Harford Community College, Maryland

PACIFIC REGION

Rafeeka Kloke
Whatcom Community College, Washington

WESTERN REGION

Pamela Payne
El Paso Community College, Texas

NOMINATING PROCESS

WHO MAY NOMINATE

Regional Awards nominations may be made by a two-year postsecondary institution board, a state board for community colleges, a board of a state trustee association, or a university board of regents that controls the two-year postsecondary institutions in that state. All boards submitting nominations must be ACCT members.

WHO CAN BE NOMINATED

All nominees must be on the board of or employed by an ACCT member institution at the time of nomination. **For more information regarding eligibility, please refer to the FAQs page.**

SELECTION PROCESS

Each awards committee is composed of trustees and presidents from states throughout each region. The ACCT Regional Chair serves as committee chair.

Any awards committee member whose college submitted nomination(s) will refrain from voting within that category.

RULES

Only the **first complete set** of nomination materials received for a nominee will be forwarded to the committee. Only one nomination (nominee) per category will be accepted from any institution board.

PROCEDURE FOR SUBMITTING NOMINATIONS

In order for a nomination to be considered, all of the following items must be included.

The total length must not exceed six pages.

1. A cover letter from the board outlining board support.
2. Answer the questions under the "Criteria" section in the order listed. A response covering each question is required.
3. A nominee's resume of no more than two pages **may** accompany the official nomination (not required); however, a resume will be considered part of the six-page total.
4. A narrative statement **not to exceed 150 words** that explains the nominee's qualifications and is suitable for use in ACCT publicity materials. This is not included in the six-page nomination packet, but it is required for a nomination to be considered.

PHOTOS

No photo is required at the time of submission. If a candidate is selected to receive an ACCT Regional Award, he or she will be required to submit a photograph for ACCT publicity materials.

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATION

ONLINE – Visit www.acct.org/awards and click on the 'Submit a nomination' section to submit a nomination online.

E-MAIL – Download the nomination form at www.acct.org/awards. Submit the complete nomination packet to awards@acct.org. Emailed nominations must be submitted by June 3, 2024.

MAIL – Nominations will also be accepted via mail (return receipt requested). Download the nomination form at www.acct.org/awards. Mail complete nomination packet to: ACCT Awards, 1101 17th Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036. Shipping costs are the responsibility of the sender. Materials must be postmarked by June 3, 2024.

Note: An ACCT staff member will contact you within three business days (not including weekends) of receiving your information. If you do not receive a confirmation within 72 business hours, please contact the ACCT Awards Department at awards@acct.org or call (202) 775-4667.

It is the responsibility of the member institution to ensure that the submitted award nomination is verified.

FAQS + CHECKLIST

FAQs

MAY I NOMINATE SOMEONE WHO WON A REGIONAL AWARD LAST YEAR?

No. Awardees are ineligible for consideration for a period of three years after receiving an award. *In other words, 2023 awardees are not eligible for nomination until the 2027 awards year.*

Additionally, Charles Kennedy Equity awardees are ineligible for consideration for a period of ten years after receiving an award. *In other words, 2023 awardees are not eligible for nomination until the 2034 awards year.*

WHO ELSE IS INELIGIBLE TO BE NOMINATED?

- a. Current ACCT Board of Directors members
- b. Past and present ACCT Board of Directors Executive Committee members*
- c. Current ACCT Professional Board Staff Network President and Vice President
- d. Non-members

** Note: Past ACCT Board of Directors Executive Committee members are eligible five years after their ACCT Board of Directors term ends. In other words, if their term ends in 2023 then they are not eligible until the 2029 awards year for the M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award.*

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE AWARDS PROGRAM?

Visit www.acct.org/awards. The following items are listed there:

- Awards Brochure and Program
- Awards FAQs
- Current and Past Regional and Association Awardees
- Judging Criteria
- Sample Nominations

If you have additional questions about the awards process, please contact the ACCT Awards Department at awards@acct.org or call (202) 775-4667.

CHECKLIST

To ensure that your awards nomination is processed without delay, check off the following items before submitting nominations:

- Packet is NO MORE THAN 6 pages (excluding narrative statement)
- Cover letter of support from the board
- Responses to each criteria question
- Resume (optional; no more than two pages—if included, remember that the resume counts in the six-page limit)
- Narrative statement (no more than 150 words)
- Submit nomination by June 3, 2024 deadline

NOTES

NOTES

ACCT

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NOMINATIONS DUE:

JUNE 3, 2024