



In keeping with my commitment to prioritize understanding and meeting our members' needs, we conducted a survey this fall to check our assumptions against the realities of what you need and want from ACCT.

## Ready to Work

DEAR ACCT MEMBERS,

EVERY NEW YEAR STARTS OFF WITH hopeful anticipation and lofty goals. Our hopes and goals as community college leaders are especially elevated in election years. So much is at stake, and we know our members are feeling it because this year's Community College National Legislative Summit has reached a record-high number of attendees ready to get to work making the case for our institutions. As ACCT's former longtime head of advocacy, I am thrilled by the level of dedication to our institutions and communities.

In the interest of getting an early start to our advocacy this year, I'll ask you to turn first to Vice President for Public Policy Carrie Warick-Smith's column outlining our top legislative asks, which prioritize two bipartisan bills to advance workforce education (p. 10). You can also find our legislative priorities and other resources to help organize your advocacy efforts on the ACCT website at [www.acct.org/events/nls/resources](http://www.acct.org/events/nls/resources).

In keeping with my commitment to prioritize understanding and meeting our members' needs, we conducted a survey this fall to check our assumptions against the realities of what you need and want from ACCT. I'm delighted to report that your feedback was overwhelmingly positive! This is satisfying and encouraging to all of us who dedicate our lives to ACCT's mission. At the same time, we garnered new insights into what matters most to you, and the critical feedback that we did receive is especially useful in recalibrating what we do to provide the greatest value for your membership. Vice President for Membership and Educational Services Robin Matross Helms discusses the survey findings in her Connect column on p. 8, along with what we'll be doing in the coming year to give you more of what you need.

One of the survey's revelations is how valuable *Trustee Quarterly* is to members. This magazine is the primary ACCT touchpoint for many of you, and you find its contents valuable to your roles as college leaders. I think this issue fulfills that expectation, and I would like to highlight Tamar Jacoby's thoughtful and challenging discussion of community college funding (p. 22), as well as an essay by George Boggs and Maria Sheehan on the importance of boards taking active measures to protect the wellbeing of their CEOs (p. 26). As the authors point out, "the most significant investment that a board makes is to hire a CEO," and protecting and preserving your CEO's health is just as important as maintaining your institution's financial stability.

To that point, I'd like to thank ACCT Chair Jay Nardini, who you can get to know in this issue (p. 14), and the rest of the ACCT Board of Directors, for supporting my growth into the role of president and CEO over the past two years. In this new era of the association, our departments are expanding and morphing to meet the needs of our boards and the sector, and it takes thoughtful guidance, investments of trust, and steadfast support to do this work effectively. The care I receive from my board has illuminated how I can better care for our staff and consultants, following the model of strong and faithful leadership. Good boards support their CEOs, and I am privileged to partner in my work with the best — both on ACCT's board and among the community college boards we serve.

**JEE HANG LEE**  
ACCT President and CEO