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Something Everyone Can Agree On

NO MATTER WHAT COMMUNITY college they walk into within the United States, every prospective student has an equal opportunity to access high-quality higher education. Our colleges are an equalizing force throughout the country, from the smallest rural towns to the most bustling metropolitan cities.

This April, ACCT’s member colleges once again made our voices heard and our presences in our communities known as part of our annual Community College Month campaign. At its heart, the campaign facilitates grassroots college promotions. It also serves as the fulcrum upon which member colleges are empowered to raise their voices so that ACCT can amplify them. This year, the governors of Arizona, Illinois, Michigan, and North Carolina issued proclamations declaring April to be Community College Month in their respective states.

Also this year, the Department of Education and other agencies — even the Internal Revenue Service — joined the public campaign at the federal level to bring attention to the value and importance of community colleges. In Congress, Rep. Joe Courtney (D-Conn.) introduced a House resolution to recognize Community College Month, and Rep. Ayana Pressley (D-Mass.) rose on the House floor to celebrate her local Roxbury Community College and Bunker Hill Community College “for the exemplary work that they do for learners from every walk of life and circumstance,” telling Congress that “...they disrupt generational poverty and strengthen our workforce,” and that “Congress must invest

in them like the public good that they are...this month and every month, community colleges are worth the investment.”

To close out the month, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed the bipartisan resolution introduced by Senators Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) and Susan Collins (R-Maine) to formally make April Community College Month.

One of the greatest features of community colleges is that no matter your political and social leanings, everyone can agree to recognize their value and their importance to our communities — because the greatest feature of community colleges is that they level the uneven playing field of life by welcoming and working with every person who wants to pursue higher education and go on to a better life.

For these reasons, we must protect our colleges. We must cherish them, honor them, support them, and promote them all year. April is a great jumpstart to charge up our advocacy. The other 11 months of the year are the best time to capitalize on all the campaign has achieved.

Thank you for your dedication to our nation’s community colleges.

Jay Nardini

Hawkeye Community College, IA