DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Committing to work for the change we seek. Plus, a checklist and implementation guide for community college boards.
With over 50 percent of current college CEOs expected to retire within the next few years, boards are seeking new ways to connect the hiring and onboarding processes to ensure the new CEO’s effectiveness and longevity. The first year often sets the stage for the CEO’s success, and this new publication from ACCT outlines key first-year strategies for the board and new president.

Download the report at www.acct.org.
From the Chair

Adjusting Our 2020 Vision

IN 2017, THE ACCT BOARD OF DIRECTORS endorsed a three-year 2020 Vision for the Association of Community College Trustees and our members. We identified two clear goals: first, to advance student success and completion strategies and, second, to prepare trustees for the evolution of the community college. Guided by these parameters, the association designed initiatives to advance progress toward better futures for both our member institutions and their students. I am deeply proud of the work that has been accomplished during my year as chair of this uniquely important and influential national association on behalf of and in concert with our members. However, as we do this work, we also move through history in the making — and, as we all now know far too well, that means that some events are beyond our control.

The term “2020” is synonymous with ideal, clear vision. While that may be the case in the field of ophthalmology, the year 2020 proved to be the exception to that rule. Who predicted the truly historic events of this year? Despite all our efforts to be forward-thinking and to prepare, we did not see the COVID-19 pandemic coming our way, staying so long, nor changing the ways each of us lives our day-to-day lives. Living in Minneapolis and working with ACCT, headquartered in Washington, D.C., the social upheaval that broke out this spring affected me personally in a profound and deep way. More pertinently, it has impacted our college communities at every single level; and most importantly, it has especially stressed our students — many of whom were already pushing against numerous challenges they faced before this spring.

As we are three-quarters of the way through the most tumultuous year of many of our lives, I first want to express gratitude on behalf of our association for your commitment to the community college mission and to keeping your fiduciary commitments to your boards and the communities they represent when so many of us were subsumed by personal concerns.

I also want to thank you for your ongoing partnership with ACCT, and for joining us in advocating at the federal and state levels for funding that is so desperately needed to weather this crisis.

I want to congratulate you on your exceptional, dedicated leadership as members of the governing boards of your colleges, showing through this work that your efforts have the power to transform lives, especially now during this most challenging of times.

I also want to thank you for your ongoing partnership with ACCT, and for joining us in advocating at the federal and state levels for funding that is so desperately needed to weather this crisis.

I want to congratulate you on your exceptional, dedicated leadership as members of the governing boards of your colleges, showing through this work that your efforts have the power to transform lives, especially now during this most challenging of times.

I want to reaffirm the commitment of this association to continue to dedicate its time and treasure to serving the needs of our member institutions and to advocating for and securing the necessary resources for our students to achieve the success they deserve.

I cannot pretend to have a crystal-clear 2020 vision of the immediate future. I can promise you, however, that this association, just like our member colleges, is canny, determined, experienced, and nimble, with a strong heart and a fiercely determined staff ready to work with you and for you to see us through to a better tomorrow. You have my word on it. And you have my deep respect and appreciation.

DAWN ERLANDSON
TRUSTEE, MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
A Year of Challenges Inspires Greater Leadership

ONE YEAR AGO, AT THE 50TH ANNUAL ACCT Leadership Congress in San Francisco, we looked back at 50 years of history and attempted to focus on the future and what opportunities existed for the sector. While the year that followed has been full of surprises — most especially the COVID-19 pandemic — we stayed focused on our priorities and continued uninterrupted to meet the challenges that will define 2020 as year unlike any other for more than a generation.

Among ACCT’s priority values, diversity, equity, and inclusion are primary. These concerns lie at the very heart of the community college mission of equal access to high-quality higher education for all people. During the most trying times of the COVID-19 pandemic, protests erupted throughout the United States, propelling issues of racial justice and fairness to the forefront of our national conversation and identity in ways not seen since the 1960s. This issue of Trustee Quarterly addresses these issues head on. Jim Reed, the executive director of the Illinois Community College Trustees Association, reflects on his life in the context of these recent events on page 22. I hope that you will read his thoughtful essay, and then very carefully read the ACCT Board of Directors’ commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion that follows. While we have issued many statements in support of diversity, equity, and inclusion, this is a renewed commitment to working toward real action in these areas in meaningful ways. Following this statement is the diversity, equity, and inclusion implementation guide developed by the ACCT Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to help boards pursue and achieve these goals at your colleges.

COVID-19. What can be said about it? We have seen our colleges move from in-person instruction to wholesale online learning, almost overnight. Our boards too, had to adjust their business to an online platform, all while confronting volatile enrollments and declining revenues. On page 33, Pamila Fisher discusses effective board practices that have arisen in the wake of COVID-19. And on page 31, Eduardo Marti introduces a new chapter in his serial case study, “The Making of a Community College Trustee,” to dramatize the roles that trustees play in navigating campus disruptions. While this case study addresses First Amendment concerns, its lessons can be applied to many different challenges.

There’s a lot more information packed into these pages, but I’d like to draw your attention to one more feature: the 2020 ACCT Awards. It needn’t be said again that 2020 has challenged us like no year before it. We know how hard you have worked this year, and our Awards Committee had quite a challenge identifying people and institutions worthy of national recognition this year because, honestly, all of you are worthy of national recognition for your heroic efforts. Please do read through the pages dedicated to our esteemed awardees and appreciate the work that they did — as well as the work that you do. We’ve seen true heroism throughout our membership this year. But we shouldn’t be surprised by this. It’s been our story all along.
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CREDIT: COVER ILLUSTRATION BY JING JING TSONG
New Paper: Five Keys to a Successful Community College CEO Transition Year

The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) released a white paper this summer detailing *Five Keys to a Successful Transition Year* for newly hired community college chief executive officers. “The first year often sets the stage for the CEO’s success. With over 50 percent of community college CEOs expected to retire within the next few years, boards are seeking new ways to connect the hiring and onboarding processes to ensure the new CEO’s effectiveness and longevity,” said ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown.

The CEO search process involves more than recruiting candidates and placement, said ACCT Vice President for Search Services Julie Golder. “A comprehensive CEO search doesn’t begin with placing employment ads, and it doesn’t end with the appointment of a president,” Golder said. “Once the appointment is made, we recommend a five-step process to support and assist a successful transition.”

*Five Keys to a Successful Transition Year* was researched and written by ACCT Search Consultant and former Seattle Colleges Chancellor Dr. Jill Wakefield. “We are grateful for Dr. Wakefield’s insights from the field and her dynamic understanding of the college CEO transition process,” said Golder. ACCT Director for Retreat and Evaluation Services Colleen Allen and ACCT Search Services Associates Alexis Victor and Cathy Gray provided additional support for the paper.

Some of the recommended activities, such as conducting a retreat with the board and the current CEO, are not intuitive to all boards, Allen said. And yet, she said, “the board-CEO partnership is critical to the CEO’s success. A retreat held within the first two months provides an opportunity for board members and the CEO to get to know each other, discuss working relationships, review communication protocols, and clarify how they will approach major decisions.”

“We hope that this paper will serve as a practical guide for ACCT member colleges that use ACCT searches, but also for anyone who has a greater interest in understanding the community college executive search and onboarding process,” said Golder.

ACCT Searches has over 40 years of experience as the only national nonprofit organization dedicated to providing services exclusively to community college governing boards. The organization has successfully completed over 500 CEO searches, ranging from campus presidents to state-system presidents.
New Report Details Community College Strategies to Support Students’ Financial Wellness

Community college students face a number of financial decisions and obligations along the path to degree completion. *Bridging Financial Wellness and Student Success: Effective Models for Community Colleges* demonstrates holistic supports for financial aid and education that can fortify students’ success during and after completion of college.

The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), with support from The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America, today released a white paper detailing how community colleges can support students’ financial wellness by providing access to holistic financial aid and financial education support services. “A student’s financial wellness and literacy are key to their success while enrolled and after graduation,” said ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown. “The current coronavirus crisis has emphasized the importance of ensuring students’ financial well-being as current and former students struggle to navigate the turbulent financial waters before them. Community college and government leaders have an opportunity to ensure that students have access to sufficient financial resources and are well-equipped to make educational decisions.”

Community college students’ significant financial obligations include academic expenses such as tuition and fees, as well as living expenses that may include housing, food, transportation, and childcare. Yet many students need better access to aid and educational resources and may be at risk of dropping out of college in their absence. Colleges serve a key role in ensuring that students have access to necessary federal, state, and institutional aid and providing clear, timely information to support their financial decision-making. As an example of an effective community college model for supporting students’ financial wellness, this report details the Guardian Money Management for Life program and analyzes the outcomes of students who participate in the program at three community colleges: The University of the District of Columbia Community College; Berkshire Community College (Mass.); and Capital Community College (Conn.).

For major takeaways from the report, see p. 10.

“We want students to be prepared by having a financial plan that not only creates a roadmap for short-term and long-term goals, but also equips them with the ability to withstand unexpected emergencies,” said Veena Jayadeva, director of corporate social responsibility at Guardian Life. “Our focus on financial empowerment integrates our philanthropic investments into 10 community colleges across the country, allowing us to work in lockstep with administrators to help students with their overall financial health.”

*Download the report at www.acct.org.*

ACCT Partners with Community College Baccalaureate Association

In recognition of the power of the baccalaureate degree to improve the quality of life for those individuals and their families who achieve the degree, the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) and the Community College Baccalaureate Association (CCBA) recently formalized a collaboration that will further promote better access to the baccalaureate degree, as well as support and benefit both organizations.

“We believe this strategic partnership marks the beginning of a long and productive relationship and the start of an important chapter for both organizations,” CCBA President Dr. Angela Kersenbrock says. “Together, the CCBA and ACCT can serve as an even more powerful voice as we promote affordable access to community college baccalaureate degrees as a means of closing the nation’s racial, ethnic, and economic gaps.”

“Community college governing boards understand that students attend their institutions to secure the best-quality higher education they can get for a fee that is fair and not beyond their means,” says ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown. “When community colleges are able to offer baccalaureate degrees, they meet both their students’ and their communities’ needs for well-educated, well-qualified workers. As the nationwide representative of community college governing boards, ACCT is excited to partner with CCBA to advance the community college baccalaureate movement.”
Trusteeship in Community Colleges — Revised & Expanded

Second edition of go-to community college governance handbook available this fall.

Since 2000, Trusteeship in Community Colleges: A Guide for Effective Governance has been ACCT’s best-selling, most comprehensive practical guide for community college trustees. This October, the association is proud to introduce a thoroughly revised, updated, and expanded second edition that addresses foundational concepts of community college governance, more advanced considerations for navigating challenging situations, and information to help community college trustees understand the higher education landscape and, in particular, the community college sector, including the values of educational access and student success.

Chapters include:
- The Evolution of Community Colleges and Governance
- The Board and Its Governing Functions
- The Board’s Role in Setting and Using Policy
- Board Accountability and Advocacy
- The Board and the Chief Executive
- Best Practices for Governing Boards
- The Board’s Role in Planning and Monitoring
- The Board’s Role in Student Success

ACCT’s cornerstone reference book for community college board members was developed with the insights of an esteemed team of co-authors, including:
- J. Noah Brown, ACCT President and CEO; author, First in the World: Community Colleges and America’s Future (2012)
- Ken Burke, former trustee, St. Petersburg College, Florida; former chair, ACCT Board of Directors
- Pamila Fisher, Ed.D., former chancellor of Yosemite Community College District, California; former interim chancellor, City Colleges of San Francisco, California; ACCT consultant
- Jacqueline E. King, Ph.D., former director of higher education for the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium; founder, American Council on Education Center for Policy Analysis; former associate director for policy analysis at the College Board
- Eduardo Marti, Ph.D., former president, City University of New York’s Queensborough Community College; former president, State University of New York’s Corning Community College and Tompkins Courtland Community College; trustee, Columbia University Teachers College; and co-author, America’s Broken Promise: Bridging the Community College Achievement Gap (2016)
Timing is everything when it comes to advocacy, but not everyone has time to pay attention to pending legislation day in and day out.

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

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

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

For more information about ACCT’s advocacy services, visit www.acct.org/advocacy.
A LONGSTANDING SYSTEMATIC EQUITY problem within higher education is the funding disparities between community colleges and four-year public institutions. This disparity has widened because of the pandemic, and the ramifications of pending state budget cuts could further expand funding inequities.

We have to shift the paradigm around the students we serve in order for community colleges to receive the aid necessary to support them. One of the major elements that keeps the funding status quo in place focuses on the use of full-time equivalent (1 FTE= 15 credits) student enrollment as a mechanism for aid distribution — a measure which excludes the many community college students who take fewer than 15 credits per semester.

Legislators must be pushed to stop using FTE because it strongly discriminates against our students and our institutions, and instead focus on actual student headcounts. While FTE serves a role in determining costs for instruction, it does not properly document the true costs for the academic support, counseling, and other student support services being provided by our institutions to each enrolled human being, not just each FTE.

FTEs and Federal Coronavirus Funding

When Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, it provided funds to institutions based on a 75 percent Pell Grant FTE and 25 percent FTE formula. This resulted in community colleges receiving just 27.4 percent of the funds allocated to higher education institutions. In academic year 2018-19, public two-year
community colleges and technical institutions educated 2,291,577 grant recipients. When applying an FTE calculation instead of actual headcount, the 2,291,577 Pell Grant students become only 1,078,127 FTEs, a loss of 53 percent.

Even though community college undergraduates represent over 40 percent of all undergraduate students, the use of FTE as the funding determiner undercuts aid to community colleges and their students. The CARES Act this year provided resources to colleges that in turn needed to distribute 50 percent of their allocation to students in the form of emergency aid. Effectively, our neediest students received fewer emergency aid dollars because they were not full-time — even with the same or, in many cases, greater financial need as students enrolled full time at four-year institutions.

In subsequent stimulus legislation, community colleges have made significant progress in highlighting the massive funding inequity when FTE is used in the distribution formula. In the House-passed Democratic stimulus bill, the HEROES Act, the new stimulus funding program for public higher education would distribute funds based upon headcount. Senate Democrats also introduced a stimulus bill that would distribute aid to colleges based upon headcount. Senate Republicans introduced their own education stimulus bill, which still maintains FTE but moved its formula to 90 percent Pell Grant FTE and 10 percent FTE. If the next stimulus bill went to this 90/10 FTE allocation formula, it would increase the community college allocation by a couple of percentage points. This is certainly progress, but we will continue to fight to ensure that headcount is the determinant in any final stimulus legislation.

The community college sector has to start pushing back on the notion of using FTE as the standard by which aid is provided to colleges and students. In many instances, two or three community college students add up to a single FTE. Community colleges do not serve half or a quarter of a student; each student deserves and receives equal shares of student services regardless of how many classes they take at any given time.

If we are able to change the discourse around this significant funding issue, then our colleges will finally start to receive the critical resources to serve our students. Over the past decade, ACCT has worked to bring awareness to the nonacademic student barriers to college, including housing insecurity, food insecurity, and mental health. The FTE funding standard presents another barrier by underfunding community colleges, which in turn short-changes our students. Without additional resources, we will not be able to fully serve our students and support their college success.

For additional information about community college stimulus priorities, visit www.acct.org/advocacy.

It is vital that trustees and college leaders continue to push for community college priorities. Make your voice heard by reaching out to your member of Congress and talking about these key issues. Request a call or videoconference with your legislator and talk about the pressing issues important to your institution. To keep updated on key legislative items, sign up for the Latest Action in Washington alerts by emailing publicpolicy@acct.org.

ACCT Senior Vice President Jee Hang Lee can be reached at jhlee@acct.org.
BRIDGING FINANCIAL WELLNESS AND STUDENT SUCCESS

COMMUNITY COLLEGES CAN MEET STUDENTS’ FINANCIAL NEEDS WITH IMPROVED FINANCIAL AID AND EDUCATION.

BY ALLISON BEER
COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS FACE A NUMBER OF financial decisions and obligations along the path to degree completion. Students must secure resources to pay for college expenses, including their tuition, fees, and basic living necessities. Central to this is students’ abilities to access financial aid resources including federal, state, and institutional aid. Colleges also play a role in providing clear and timely financial education to ensure students are aware of available resources and have a strong foundation in personal financial management. The need to ensure students’ financial wellness has been elevated by the current coronavirus pandemic, which has resulted in unforeseen financial hardship for students experiencing health and economic emergencies.

ACCT’s recent report, Bridging Financial Wellness and Student Success: Effective Models for Community Colleges, analyzes existing research on students’ financial wellness, with the goal to demonstrate how holistic supports for financial aid and education can positively impact student success. The following are highlights from the report:

Community college students’ expenses often exceed available grant aid.

Community college tuition is known for being relatively affordable; however, the cost of tuition and living expenses is typically greater than the amount of grant aid students receive and their available resources for paying out of pocket. According to College Board researchers, community college students spend approximately $14,700 per year, on average, on room and board, books and supplies, transportation, and other living expenses. However, other research suggests that many community college students likely spend more than this amount on living expenses, especially those who are independent and those who are financially responsible for a family. According to data from the U.S. Department of Education 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), nearly three-quarters have unmet financial need to pay for expenses, as measured by the difference between their expected family contribution as calculated by the federal Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and their awarded grant aid. Sufficient federal and state financial aid resources are necessary to meet students’ financial needs. Colleges can also support students with financial aid interventions such as emergency grant aid, institutional balance forgiveness, and improved information.

Financial literacy can be a critical topic for students seeking to navigate the complex nature of college financing and personal expenses, but it is not a replacement for financial aid resources.

Financial education combined with sufficient aid can help empower students to make complex financial decisions associated with attending college. Recommendations by the U.S. Financial Literacy and Education Commission (FLEC) and the U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau emphasize that financial education must provide students with clear, timely, and targeted information. To provide relevant financial education, community colleges must consider the varied skill sets and knowledge among their students.

While recent high school graduates may benefit from financial education on foundational skills such as budgeting and saving, older students who have gained basic skills through life experiences are more likely to benefit from courses that address complex financial situations, such as managing family finances while attending college. Overall, community college students’ self-reported knowledge of financial management demonstrates opportunity for improvement, especially in comparison to their peers in the four-year university sectors.

The report highlights the Guardian Money Management for Life (MMFL) Program as an example of a personal finance course that has expanded to a financial empowerment model to provide students with holistic support services.

The program began as a free, credit-bearing personal finance course, focusing on basic financial management topics such as budgeting, tax filing, and setting financial goals. Among students who participated in the course from 2015 to 2019, 75 percent report having a better understanding of personal financial management. Recognizing that when students’ basic financial needs are met, they are more likely to succeed academically, several MMFL partner colleges have expanded to a holistic financial wellness model. The report includes profiles of three such colleges: The University of the District of Columbia Community College in Washington, D.C.; Berkshire Community College in Massachusetts; and Capital Community College in Connecticut. These colleges have expanded services to include personal financial and career coaching, referrals to community-based organizations, and financial aid interventions, and all are moving towards developing or expanding one-stop financial empowerment centers where students receive resources for financial education, aid, and career development.

The full report can be downloaded from www.acct.org/term/reports-and-white-papers.

Allison Beer is the senior policy analyst for ACCT. She can be reached at abeer@acct.org.
The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) is pleased to announce the recipients of its annual Regional Awards for community college trustees, equity programs, chief executive officers, faculty members, and professional board staff members. The 2020 ACCT Awards program is sponsored by Edamerica, an ACCT Corporate Council member that exists to provide solutions that support community colleges’ missions to serve students.

ACCT’s Regional Awards recognize the tremendous contributions made by community colleges and their leaders to meet the needs of their communities. The Regional Awards will be presented during the 2020 ACCT Leadership Congress on October 7, to be convened online.

“Community colleges and their leaders have been vital to our country’s educational infrastructure and our workforce for over a century,” said ACCT Chair and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Trustee Dawn Erlandson. “This year, perhaps more than ever before, community college leaders have proved themselves to be essential community service providers and educators in the face of unprecedented challenges and adversity.”

“ACCT is proud to shine a spotlight on some of the nation’s best public servants and professionals through our regional awards program,” said ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown. “The 2020 awardees reflect the extraordinary commitments and accomplishments of the people who dedicate their lives to helping students succeed. Congratulations to all of this year’s awards recipients.”

Regional ACCT Awards were announced, one region per day, from August 3-7 via ACCT’s Twitter account. Follow us @CCTrustees.

Individuals and colleges recognized at the regional level will contend for the national-level recognition of the following national-level ACCT Association Awards:

- 2020 M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award;
- 2020 Charles Kennedy Equity Award;
- 2020 Marie Y. Martin Chief Executive Officer Award;
- 2020 William H. Meardy Faculty Member Award; and
- 2020 ACCT Professional Board Staff Member Award.

One outstanding award recipient in each category will be announced virtually during the Annual ACCT Association Awards presentation on Thursday, October 8, from 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m., in conjunction with the 2020 ACCT Leadership Congress.
2020 ACCT REGIONAL TRUSTEE LEADERSHIP AWARDEES and NOMINEES FOR THE 2020 M. DALE ENSIGN 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.

Awardees

CENTRAL REGION
Carla Hedtke
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Wisconsin

NORTHEAST REGION
Felix "Phil" Linfante
Warren County Community College, New Jersey

PACIFIC REGION
Vivian Malauulu
Long Beach City College, California

SOUTHERN REGION
John Powell
Tri-County Technical College, South Carolina

WESTERN REGION
Lydia Santibañez
Temple College, Texas

TRUSTEE LEADERSHIP CENTRAL REGION AWARD RECIPIENT
Carla Hedtke
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Wisconsin

During her years as a trustee, Hedtke has led the college to offer more pathways to student success in rural communities, which has contributed to the college being honored by the Lumina Foundation, Achieving the Dream, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, National Science Foundation, American Association of Community Colleges, and more.

TRUSTEE LEADERSHIP NORTHEAST REGION AWARD RECIPIENT
Felix "Phil" Linfante
Warren County Community College, New Jersey

Felix "Phil" Linfante’s dedication and service to community colleges truly make him a stalwart supporter of his community, according to his college. He has served as a board of trustees chair and member since 2013, been the chair of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, has 30-plus years of teaching and administrative experience at a community college, and has been involved with ACCT on multiple levels over the past several years. His college says that “his commitment is unabashedly right on.” Fellow trustees, administrators, staff, and students appreciate everything that Linfante brings to the forefront, as well as his wry sense of humor.

TRUSTEE LEADERSHIP PACIFIC REGION AWARD RECIPIENT
Vivian Malauulu
Long Beach City College, California

Vivian Malauulu is the first Latina elected to the Long Beach City College board of trustees and serves as the board president. Additionally, she is a career educator who taught inner-city public high school and college for more than 20 years. Moreover, she also served as a freelance journalist in print, radio, and TV.

Malauulu is also member of Local 13 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, where she has manned a variety of marine cargo jobs at the ports of both Long Beach and Los Angeles for the past two decades. Rank and file members have elected her to serve in numerous positions, up to her current role as a titled officer overseeing the membership’s pension and welfare benefits. She is the first woman to hold that office in the union’s 81-year history.
TRUSTEE LEADERSHIP SOUTHERN REGION AWARD RECIPIENT

John Powell
Tri-County Technical College, South Carolina

John Powell is a champion and role model for technical college education. A graduate of Tri-County and the second alumnus in the college’s history to serve on its governing board, Powell unselfishly gives his time, efforts, and expertise to support initiatives that promote student success. He is the recipient of the 2020 South Carolina Association of Technical College Commissioners Leadership Award. A founder and longtime member of the college’s Business Technology Advisory Committee, he provides input into the curriculum to ensure relevancy in today’s ever-changing work environment. A longtime activist in his community, Powell helped to establish a Backpack Lunch program to combat child poverty, a domestic violence shelter, and a homeless shelter in his community. In 2012, the Oconee Chamber honored him with the Duke Energy Citizenship and Service Award.

TRUSTEE LEADERSHIP WESTERN REGION AWARD RECIPIENT

Lydia Santibañez
Temple College, Texas

According to those at her college, Lydia Santibañez is an exemplary leader and advocate for student success. For three decades, she has served as a trustee and demonstrated her commitment through active participation in the community, and as a state and national officer. Santibañez has lived a lifetime of service for others, as this important award symbolizes. She has tirelessly advocated for students and the mission of community colleges. She has trained future board members and has successfully secured national funding to scale statewide student success training for trustees. Santibañez has committed her talents and time to advancing the work of community colleges. Temple College calls her “a faithful trustee who does everything in her power to support students, the community, and the college she loves. She exemplifies what it means to be a public servant, a college ambassador, and a trustee.”

2020 ACCT REGIONAL EQUITY Awardees and Nominees for the 2020 Charles Kennedy 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 Association 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.

Awardees

CENTRAL REGION
Illinois Central College, Illinois

NORTHEAST REGION
Union County College, New Jersey

PACIFIC REGION
Tacoma Community College, Washington

SOUTHERN REGION
Seminole State College of Florida, Florida

CENTRAL REGION EQUITY AWARD RECIPIENT

Illinois Central College, Illinois

Illinois Central College (ICC) has worked tirelessly over the past several years to assure equity within its learning environment and workforce. Lead by the institution’s first female president, Sheila Quirk-Bailey, ICC is an active member of Achieving the Dream, a comprehensive non-governmental reform movement for student success. ICC is working closely with
its regional partners to improve postsecondary attainment, whereby at least 60 percent of adults in the region will have a credential beyond high school by 2025. Individuals of color and other underrepresented populations are targeted for opportunity in new programs including the college’s Workforce Equity Initiative, Solar Workforce Training Program, Highway Construction Careers, and successful bridge programs.

ICC has an inclusive president’s cabinet and active initiatives for diversifying its workforce. Its Peoria Summit on Racial Justice and Equity launched the beginning of college and community-wide dialogue for addressing the issues of racial and ethnic disparities.

**NORTHEAST REGION EQUITY AWARD RECIPIENT**

Union County College, New Jersey

Since the inception of the Operation Graduation initiative, Union County College (UCC) has seen graduation rates more than quintuple in 10 years. The college’s full-time graduation rate reached an all-time high in 2019 (for the 2016 cohort), at 33.04 percent, as compared with the college’s 5.9 percent graduation rate in 2009. While the overall graduation rate began to increase, the graduation rate for African American males remained stagnant. This was concerning to the boards of trustees and governors and to UCC President Margaret McMenamin. In response to the low graduation rate, the Project Achievement initiative was born. Project Achievement combines dynamic advising with a programming component to not only help students with selecting classes, but also to engage and ensure the success of African American male students. In 2013, the 2010 cohort graduation rate for African American males was 5.8 percent; in 2019, the graduation rate was 25.42 percent, more than quadrupling the African American male graduation rate.

**PACIFIC REGION EQUITY AWARD RECIPIENT**

Tacoma Community College, Washington

Tacoma Community College recognizes the critical role of policies and practices in helping its institution to achieve equity. Doing so, the college says, helps to make the invisible visible. In addition to reviewing all its policies over the next year, campus members have also begun reviewing all college practices from an equity lens. The college’s commitment to creating and adhering to equitable policies and practices has prepared the institution for its response during the COVID-19 outbreak. As a result of being at the epicenter of this pandemic when it first arrived in the United States, the college’s leadership was forced to consider how operations would impact the campus community earlier than most states. Under the leadership of the college’s president, the college’s extended leadership team met frequently and consistently challenged one another to consider how their decisions impacted students, and especially the most vulnerable. Tacoma Community College and the board of trustees were recently awarded the Equity Award by the Washington State Association of College Trustees.
SOUTHERN REGION EQUITY AWARD RECIPIENT
Seminole State College of Florida, Florida

Seminole State College of Florida (SSC) extends its diversity commitments to the strategic pursuit of inclusion and equity in a culture of engagement and success. SSC’s leadership creates an environment of affordable excellence with a commitment to equity in educational outcomes, academic rigor, and timely student completion. The board of trustees and the president infuse those concepts into the culture at the policy level. Board members bring relevant professional experiences to their roles; among the college board members are school board members, county commissioners, and experienced governmental affairs leaders who promote equity-minded policies, including curriculum supporting nimble realignment in concert with state-level goals for the Florida workforce. The college is also focused on and supports the curricular framework with benchmarked, regionally competitive employee wages and programs to develop diversity in promotional pools. Success for the college’s diverse students is demonstrated by consistent recognition as Jack Kent Cooke Scholars, state-leading pass rates on professional credentialing exams, and outstanding performance as transfer students.

Awardees
CENTRAL REGION
Betty Young
Hocking College, Ohio

NORTHEAST REGION
Margaret M. McMenamin
Union County College, New Jersey

PACIFIC REGION
Sunita Cooke
MiraCosta College District, California

SOUTHERN REGION
Victoria Seals
Atlanta Technical College, Georgia

WESTERN REGION
Jeremy McMillen
Grayson College, Texas

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER CENTRAL REGION AWARD RECIPIENT
Betty Young
Hocking College, Ohio

Betty Young is a success story of Ohio’s higher education system. Starting college as a 28-year-old single parent, she credits the two-year college as the open door to a bridge out of poverty. She has dedicated her life to assuring others have the same and greater opportunity for economic prosperity, including increasing campus diversity by 19 percent in five years.

Young has served on multiple national and state boards and organizations promoting education and economic development. She is a serial entrepreneur who teaches entrepreneurship and promotes small business development through her roles as a community leader, attorney, and college president. She is known for innovative business models transforming colleges, all-inclusive college pricing, live learning labs that serve as entrepreneurial ventures, guaranteed education, and more. She has worked on international educational programs in Jamaica, Bahamas, China, Qatar, Mexico, Austria, and India.

2020 ACCT REGIONAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AWARDEES and NOMINEES FOR THE 2020 MARIE Y. MARTIN CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER 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.
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER NORTHEAST REGION AWARD RECIPIENT
Margaret M. McMenamin
Union County College, New Jersey

Since becoming the first female president of Union County College in July 2010, Margaret M. McMenamin set forth an aggressive agenda centering on improving student success outcomes. She revitalized student services, strengthened advising, partnered with faculty to improve teaching and learning, and engaged the entire campus community in renewing its collective commitment to student success. During her tenure, the college has quintupled its Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) graduation rate. This past year and for the first time, Union County College was named one of the top 150 community colleges in the U.S. by the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER PACIFIC REGION AWARD RECIPIENT
Sunita Cooke
MiraCosta College District, California

Sunita Cooke has been the superintendent/president of MiraCosta College for the past five years. In that time, she has led a systematic, data-driven approach to improving student outcomes, including all but eliminating pre-transfer level math and English courses, which had high dropout rates, with no reduction in transfer level math and English success rates. This led MiraCosta College to be designated as an Achieving the Dream Leader College in 2019. Cooke is also recognized as a national, statewide, and regional leader in workforce development. She led the California Community Colleges’ Board of Governors Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and Strong Economy. This led to regional consortia being established to address workforce needs, specifically aimed at creating middle skill level curricula to address workforce shortfalls and to improve the earning potential of local residents.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER SOUTHERN REGION AWARD RECIPIENT
Victoria Seals
Atlanta Technical College, Georgia

Victoria Seals’ leadership as CEO of Atlanta Technical College is encapsulated in this quote from John Quincy Adams: “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.”

When Seals came to Atlanta Technical College as president in December 2016, she made it clear that her vision for the college is “excellence.” The college says that she demonstrates excellence in her work as college president and as a community advocate for her students, faculty, and residents and businesses of her service area.

Seals’ work has a positive impact on the college community and, most specifically, its students. This impact will be felt for generations as she is innovative, committed, and determined to be a catalyst for technical education and technical college students.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER WESTERN REGION AWARD RECIPIENT
Jeremy McMillen
Grayson College, Texas

Jeremy McMillen has dedicated his entire career in higher education to community college enhancement and advocacy because he believes, he says, in the community college’s mission to provide an avenue of postsecondary education for any student who wishes to pursue this goal.

McMillen’s colleagues at Grayson College describe him as an innovative, driven, communicative, and forward-thinking leader in higher education. During his presidency, the mission and focus of the college is driven by student success. McMillen is a strong partner in the community and is well respected by local, state, and federal officials, all while being an avid promoter and communicator of the goals and needs of community colleges and students.

This has been a challenging year for Grayson College, having experienced a cybersecurity breach in January and the COVID-19 shutdown in March, and McMillen’s team credits his leadership with the determination and resilience to move onward.
2020 ACCT REGIONAL FACULTY MEMBER Awardees and Nominees for the 2020 William H. Meardy 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.

Awardees

CENTRAL REGION
John Tenuto
College of Lake County, Illinois

NORTHEAST REGION
Laurie Riccadonna
Hudson County Community College, New Jersey

PACIFIC REGION
Latoya Reid
Tacoma Community College, Washington

SOUTHERN REGION
Robert Gilmer
Midlands Technical College, South Carolina

WESTERN REGION
Kathy Harrison
Mid-Plains Community College, Nebraska

FACULTY MEMBER CENTRAL REGION AWARD RECIPIENT

John Tenuto
College of Lake County, Illinois

Since joining the College of Lake County (CLC) in 1998, John Tenuto has been nominated 10 times for CLC’s Outstanding Faculty Member Award – and won four times. This year, he received the Illinois Community College Trustees’ 2020 Outstanding Full-Time Faculty Member Award.

To reach new generations, Tenuto continuously ‘reboots’ his classes each semester. He uses popular-culture examples from films, television shows, video games, and music to allow students to see themselves represented in his lectures. He also incorporates ancestry research so students can find a personal connection to the course material.

Tenuto has given dozens of public presentations and interviews on the sociology of Star Trek. His research has been featured on WGN News, Al Jazeera USA News, BBC Radio, Wired Magazine, Chicago Sun-Times, USA Today, and Netflix’s The Toys that Made Us. He was named one of Star Trek’s most influential fans by New York Magazine’s Vulture.com website.

FACULTY MEMBER NORTHEAST REGION AWARD RECIPIENT

Laurie Riccadonna
Hudson County Community College, New Jersey

Laurie Riccadonna is an internationally recognized artist, respected and beloved member of the New Jersey/New York arts community, dedicated educator, and the force behind the establishment and growth of the Hudson County Community College (HCCC) Fine Arts program. She began her teaching career at HCCC, initiating the college’s first two arts courses. In the 17 years since, she has been instrumental in expanding the college’s arts programs to include the associate in fine arts degrees with options in studio arts and computer arts. She utilizes her significant connections in the arts community to provide students with opportunities and experiences to increase their knowledge and skills and help cultivate their careers. In promoting HCCC arts programs, she has championed the college and enriched the community’s cultural life. Ricadonna’s talent and passion, as well as her commitment to her students, craft, and HCCC have earned the respect of everyone.
FACULTY MEMBER PACIFIC REGION AWARD RECIPIENT

Latoya Reid
Tacoma Community College, Washington

Latoya Reid is an instructor for developmental and college-level English at Tacoma Community College (TCC). Nearly 70 percent of community college students start their academic pathways in developmental English, and the percentage is even higher among students of color and students from economically challenged households. She mentors and informally advises students from various backgrounds, including students of color, students who identify as LGBTQ+, students who are returning citizens, first-generation college students, socio-economically disadvantaged students, and students who learned the importance of intersectionality in her classroom.

Additionally, Reid serves on countless task forces, committees, councils, and statewide initiatives. She consistently challenges herself and others to consider equity and inclusion in these spaces. She intentionally uses her position and perspective to advocate for systematically non-dominant populations.

FACULTY MEMBER SOUTHERN REGION AWARD RECIPIENT

Robert Gilmer
Midlands Technical College, South Carolina

An exceptional faculty member at Midlands Technical College for nearly a decade, Robert Gilmer has always put his students and the importance of higher education first. His passion for improving the educational foundation and leaving it better than he found it has put not only his students but also the college as a whole at an advantage on numerous occasions. His commitment to reaching students through a variety of teaching formats that best fit with their individual needs is a model that faculty members across the college respect. Gilmer has consistently used his experience with technology to break down barriers that those attending a two-year institution typically face to help make postsecondary education a more accessible and equal opportunity.

FACULTY MEMBER WESTERN REGION AWARD RECIPIENT

Kathy Harrison
Mid-Plains Community College, Nebraska

Kathy Harrison always puts her students first. That’s because teaching isn’t just a job for her, her college says; it’s an opportunity to make an impact on someone’s future.

Under her leadership, the Mid-Plains Community College nursing department has implemented success coaching, test taking strategies, and Health Education Systems Incorporated (HESI) preparation and remediation assignments.

The development and coordination of a paramedic-to-associate-degree-nursing bridge program, a concept-based nursing curriculum, an online course for contact hours for IV therapy, and the expansion of nursing courses at Mid-Plains Community College’s campuses are just some of the many projects she has taken on.

Harrison exhibits passion and commitment to those she serves as well as to the field of higher education. This is why, her college argues, she is more than deserving of this award.

2020 ACCT REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF MEMBER Awardees and Nominees for the 2020 Association 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.

Awardees

CENTRAL REGION
Stephen Williams
North Central State College, Ohio

NORTHEAST REGION
Jaime M. Segal
Union County College, New Jersey

PACIFIC REGION
April Sandoval
Coconino Community College, Arizona
**PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF CENTRAL REGION AWARD RECIPIENT**

**Stephen Williams**  
North Central State College, Ohio

Stephen Williams has served North Central State College for twenty years, with fifteen of those years in direct service to the President and the Board of Trustees. He is committed, responsible, and maintains a professional and positive “can do” attitude that puts others at ease. He exemplifies a high level of interpersonal skills in his dealing with people, while maintaining the confidentiality and professional etiquette required of his many roles at the college.

Williams designed the institution’s policy review process and works closely with all areas of the institution to keep it up to date. Whether connecting students to necessary resources, helping colleagues through matters of policy and protocol, or advising the president and board of trustees on matters of policy governance and compliance, he manages the fine line of duty to the president, the board, and the college community with utmost courtesy and respect to all.

**PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF NORTHEAST REGION AWARD RECIPIENT**

**Jaime M. Segal**  
Union County College, New Jersey

Since 2017, Jaime M. Segal has served as board secretary and executive director of college relations at Union County College. She serves as the college’s spokeswoman and is also designated as the college’s records custodian. Segal is responsible for the compilation, organization, and distribution of board materials for the college’s board of trustees and board of governors. Under her guidance, she also ensures compliance with state and federal law as well as board bylaws. Segal manages the college’s government and community relations, plans and executes special events on campus, and directs marketing initiatives. She also supervises written and creative content disseminated by the college, including press releases, advertisements, promotional items, and other written materials.

**PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF PACIFIC REGION AWARD RECIPIENT**

**April Sandoval**  
Coconino Community College, Arizona

April Sandoval joined Coconino Community College (CCC) as assistant to the president and district governing board in 2016. Prior to that, she worked for Northern Arizona University and the WHEEL Council, a non-profit organization focusing on substance abuse and HIV prevention. Sandoval is a CCC success story. She completed her associate degree at CCC after previously dropping out of college twice. Sandoval is a Phi Theta Kappa alumnus and was a member of the All-Arizona Academic Team. She went on to earn two bachelor’s degrees and a master’s degree, and she credits her success in her education and career to the foundation she received at CCC. Sandoval daily demonstrates the value of a community college education and is so grateful to have the chance to pay forward some of the opportunities she was given.
IN JUNE, I ATTENDED A RALLY IN DOWNTOWN SPRINGFIELD sponsored by the Young Activist division of the Springfield, Illinois, chapter of Black Lives Matter. It was an opportunity for people to express their frustration and anger peacefully yet forcefully over the senseless murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officers. As an African American man, I knew my 17-year-old daughter had every intention of participating, and while I fully supported her doing that, I must admit I had concerns about safety. However, once I arrived at the foot of the Lincoln statue, I felt relieved and at peace. In sharp contrast to what we had seen in other parts of the country, it was calming to be in an environment where our young people could practice their civil rights. I have great respect for the 17-year-old and 15-year-old women who organized the event. They and the hundreds in attendance are the future leaders of this movement, and we will all be well served.

Standing there listening to the stories and commentary, I thought about my own encounter with the Minneapolis police back in the late 1980s while I was a law student at Hamline University. Some friends were visiting, and we went to downtown Minneapolis for lunch. I am from the Chicago area and was not familiar with the streets in the City of Minneapolis. I made a wrong turn onto a one-way street. A short time after that, I heard police sirens and was approached by two officers. They informed me that I was going the wrong way down a one-way street. I explained I was new to the area and had not seen signs indicating it was a one-way. After looking at my driver’s license and registration, they asked me and my two friends, young white women, to step out of the car. The officers asked my friends if they were okay, indicating to me they thought my friends might be in some kind of “danger.” It was a strange question I have never forgotten. The officers proceeded to check the glove compartment and asked me to open the trunk of my car. At this point, I was annoyed but my parents had taught me to be polite to police officers. I expressed that I did not know what they were looking for and that I was a law student at Hamline. They soon ended the useless exercise and let us go without a ticket. During the rally, I realized that but for the grace of God, I could have been George Floyd.

Several other thoughts came to mind as I stood in the crowd. First, that I and people like me who have had unjust encounters with law enforcement have an obligation to STAND UP and tell our stories. The only way change happens is when people talk about the ways in which they have been mistreated because of their race. Secondly, those in power and in positions of leadership need to WAKE UP to the realities of the laws that are in place. Lawmakers must know that unless they change the policies that protect racist officers from prosecution, there will be more killings and the public outcry will rise to a feverish pitch. Lastly, and hopefully most inspiring, our younger generations must RISE UP and take charge of this country. That will happen when well-educated black and brown men and women who have attended our community colleges and public universities work and rise up with their equal white counterparts to take over the seats of justice and become the decisionmakers in law enforcement agencies. When the next generation is given the opportunity to reevaluate how police officers are recruited and when the focus is on de-escalating a situation rather than retaliating, we will see the kind of transformation necessary to prevent the senseless and racially motivated killings of black men and boys.

Soon after I shared my story within the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA), which I lead as executive director. We decided to engage our community colleges to share their stories on #CCLiftUp. We made the following simple request: The best way to give hope to those who have been victimized is to share what you are doing at your college and in your community to uplift people of color and those who are underrepresented.

Not surprisingly, the response was overwhelming and inspiring: the formation of anti-racist teams, racial sensitivity training in law enforcement, Illinois Equity in Attainment Initiatives, TRIUMPH (Transforming and Inspiring Undergraduate Men Pursuing Higher Education), and a host of other initiatives from across the state. In addition to the stories we requested, several trustees and even presidents shared their personal stories. One of the most memorable testimonials was from a trustee who said: “All members of the college community must take time to listen and reflect, evaluating the ways we passively or actively, intentionally or unintentionally support systems of inequity and structural racism, then self-educate about how to change.”

The change we all seek for the betterment of our country and our community colleges will occur when we start within ourselves!

James "Jim" Reed Jr. is the executive director of the Illinois Community College Trustees Association. He can be reached at jreed@communitycolleges.org.
MONTHS HAVE NOW PASSED SINCE WE WITNESSED IN HORROR the brutal murder of Ahmaud Arbery, learned about the tragic killing of Breonna Taylor, and watched the horrific video footage of the murder of George Floyd. Mere weeks ago, as national attention was focused intensely on these unjust killings, a police officer fatally shot Rayshard Brooks after he was found asleep in his car outside of a restaurant. Reports and recordings of African American people being threatened or intimidated by authorities and by average people alike for no other reason than for trying to live their lives, or simply engaging in everyday responsibilities or pleasures afforded all people in a free society, persist despite protests. We acknowledge all those affected, afflicted, or harmed without just cause or reason, especially the Black community, which has borne the brunt of these unjust actions repeatedly over our nation’s history.

These shameful acts have given rise to the current social uprising in the form of countless protests around the nation calling for change, and again forced us to confront the difficult truths that systemic racism and injustice remain all too frequent occurrences in our society.

What We Stand For
ACCT unequivocally condemns police brutality and systemic racism. We stand with all who protest racism, an inequitable system of justice, and social and economic inequalities of all kinds. We stand with those proposing reforms geared toward achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion not only at the colleges we represent, but in all aspects of American life. We believe change must happen, and we will play an active role in making that happen.

As the international association of community college governing boards, ACCT represents more than 6,500 elected and appointed trustees who govern over 1,200 community, technical, and junior colleges in the United States and beyond. Our colleges serve an estimated 11.8 million students every year, and ACCT and the community college sector take tremendous pride in our diversity, equity, and inclusion values and practices. ACCT’s members encompass the smallest rural colleges and the largest urban institutions, among them Historically Black Colleges, Minority-Serving Institutions, and American Indian tribal colleges, all operating in the interests of their students and not-for-profit.

Diversity is one of ACCT’s core values. We believe in the promotion of respect and acceptance of diverse individuals and awareness and educational opportunity for underrepresented populations. We believe in and we participate in taking active measures to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion at our institutions and through the work of our institutions in their communities.

We applaud and celebrate our boards and presidents on their efforts to double down to help students succeed, persist, and maintain connectivity to their colleges — especially for students of color and others who are disproportionately affected by the pandemic, resulting economic downturn, and historic rates of unemployment. These efforts have taken on increased urgency.

Rethinking What Works
Statements can be powerful — but only focused actions will achieve real and meaningful change that ensures that Black Americans, and thus every human being in this nation, receives equal justice and opportunities to become fully enfranchised in our great society.

ACCT has much to be proud of in these regards. For example:

• Our executive search services intentionally bring diverse college executive candidates from broad walks of life, from far and wide, into contact with boards. In many cases, these
placements help to introduce diverse points of view among leadership even at colleges whose areas may not yet have become as diverse as they are certain to become in the coming years.

• Our board retreat services emphasize greater awareness of and help to implement diversity, equity, and inclusion as primary interests of all community colleges.

• Our national advocacy efforts focus on our values, and ACCT proudly advocates in the interests of Historically Black Colleges, Minority-Serving Institutions, and tribal colleges, and we have advocated boldly in the interests of Dreamers’ rights to access higher education.

• We require hotels throughout the nation to abide by our commitment to diversity in our contracts for large national conferences, incentivizing them to standardize such commitments with all clients.

• Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee continually identifies areas that need improvement and advises our leadership on how we can and must move the needle forward for people of color and others.

• We benefit tremendously from the insights of our diverse Board of Directors, committee members, and our Association staff.

• And, of course, we strive to demonstrate our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion through all of our content, including welcoming underrepresented voices to share insights with our membership through events, publications, webinars, podcasts, and other venues, developing and disseminating equity policy guides to member boards and college CEOs, and more.

And yet, this is not enough. We commit to do better.

Steps Forward

In the coming months, we plan to reexamine issues of equity through our actions, programs, and services.

Among many other services, our colleges train and prepare thousands of public safety personnel, including police and first responders. Many colleges are looking at their curricula and investigating how they can redouble efforts to include implicit bias and sensitivity training around issues of racism, and particularly with an eye toward preventing excessive force. We applaud these efforts and believe they are vital to ensuring trust and transparency between our first responders and our communities that depend upon them. ACCT will strive to add value to its membership by highlighting best practices in this regard via multiple platforms, including webinars and live sessions when available. As we collaborate on these reforms, ACCT will not hesitate to speak out against any abuses of power or unjust treatment of any marginalized population.

Further, we commit to using our many platforms to advance discussions on the national current state of affairs in an effort to increase multicultural awareness and sensitivity, and we will more deeply engage our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to review board best practices to identify at-risk student populations and how to better serve them.

As an employer, ACCT recommits to sustaining a workplace that values diversity, multi-culturalism, compassion, and embracing the value of differences.

Finally, in recent months, many American people have come to understand that they had been unaware of the prevalence of events such as the killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks, Trayvon Martin, Amadou Diallo, and so many others. No one can know what they do not know. We at ACCT pledge to look and to listen, to see and to hear, and to learn and to share. The commitments stated here are small steps forward. We will continually seek opportunities to grow, to become better, and to bring others along as we do this. There is much that we do not yet know.

We pledge action, engagement, and dialogue to help forge a society faithful to our creed and values — a society that works for every person. ACCT is a nationally representative organization that advocates nationwide community college interests at the federal level. At the same time, we are an association of locally elected and appointed officials who have deep ties to veritably every community throughout the nation, and who have power to make great change from the roots of their communities.

Our mission as we move forward is to develop synergy at the national and local levels, and through our determined and noble membership to create real and lasting change to acknowledge and respect all people in the United States as welcome and equal in the same way that the nation’s community colleges always have respected and welcomed all people equally.

Dawn Erlandson, Chair, ACCT Board of Directors
J. Noah Brown, ACCT President and CEO
DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION
A CHECKLIST AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARDS

With the endorsement of the DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
THIS GUIDE IS INTENDED TO ASSIST COMMUNITY AND technical college boards of trustees and CEOs to actively implement and reinforce a culture that values and promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The governing board’s role is pivotal in impacting college culture by shaping and supporting goals, policies, practices, and college procedures that promote equitable experiences, opportunities, and outcomes. This guide provides college leaders practical steps and institutional examples for designing and implementing equitable institutional policies, practices, processes, and programs. For an expanded version of this guide and a companion Equity Action Agenda, visit www.acct.org/publications.

Critical Steps for Boards to Implement an Equity Lens

**STEP I: CREATE AN EQUITY-MINDED BOARD AND INSTITUTION**

**Developing equity mindedness in board and college culture is the first step.**

Instead of deficit thinking which blames students for qualities they lack or unequal outcomes from a lack of motivation, boards and the college community must be made aware of inequities and reframe equity as an institutional responsibility. Together with the college president, boards can inspire commitment and change at a personal, professional, and systemic level starting with the makeup of the board itself, and the college’s mission and vision statements and core values which set the direction of the college. It will also be important to highlight diversity, equity, and inclusion on college websites, particularly home pages, which often reflect a college’s core values. Diverse seekers must be able to find DEI immediately and embedded everywhere in the institution.

**Increase the institutional capacity for making change.**

Equity mindedness can mean changing people’s underlying beliefs and attitudes and encouraging inquiry, reflection, and deep conversations in and out of the classroom. Including impacting the mindset of board members, staff, faculty, and the community, for many colleges a cultural shift is needed, and this is accomplished in many ways, including:

- Ensuring diversity in the membership of the governing board;
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion professional development at all levels of the institution;
- Courageous public all-campus conversations by the board, faculty, staff, and student groups;
- Disaggregated data analyses which provide success data on specific diverse student cohorts;
- Cross college collaboration to develop an equity lens for all college and learning transactions;
- Equitable outcomes for all diverse full-time and part-time students; and
- Boards and college administrators promoting equity as a public priority for the entire college and community.

**Review all policies with equity firmly in mind.**

“Equity is grounded in the principle of fairness. In higher education, equity refers to ensuring that each student receives what they need to be successful through the intentional design of the college experience.”¹ More specifically, equity “is a set of principles, reflective questions, and processes that focus at individual, institutional, and systemic levels by deconstructing what is not working around equity; reconstructing and supporting what is working; shifting the way we make decisions and think about this work; and healing and transforming our structures, our environments, and ourselves.”²

Strategies include to:

- Review and redraft or edit the college’s mission and vision statements and core values.
- Develop, disseminate, and publish on the college website a DEI value statement from the board.
- Redesign college hiring policies, particularly in hiring the CEO and other top-level college administrators and faculty.
- Provide diversity training specifically for college search committees, and if using a search firm, select one with a proven track record of providing diverse qualified candidates.
- Develop broad policies about eliminating barriers to access, success, and completion in all college departments and programs. Examples from the field include:
  - Micro grants to students with unmet needs (first generation, low income, homeless, etc.);
  - Addressing food and housing insecurity (food pantries, open campus showers, weekend parking, local housing agreements, etc.);
  - Using Open Educational Resources (OER) to reduce the cost of student books and supplies;
  - Partnering with local childcare providers for student parents;
  - Improvements to the FAFSA process and financial aid advising, including loan defaults;
  - Flexible curricular offerings (for working students, student parents, etc.).³

Community colleges have used these among many other strategies.
STEP 2: MONITOR AND EVALUATE COLLEGE PROGRESS ON EQUITY GOALS

Disaggregated data: Including compliance with state and federal civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, ethnicity, gender, marital status, age, genetic information, or disability, governing boards have oversight responsibility of college progress on meeting its diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. To do this well, boards need a more mindful systemic approach to data collection and analysis. The data needs to be disaggregated so that boards better understand student demographics in their colleges and can proactively remove barriers for underserved students and others.

Equity Plans and Reports: Some states mandate that colleges submit annual equity plans and reports which include assessment of the college’s methods and strategies to achieve goals and timelines addressing areas of underrepresented minorities in its academic program, activities, and employment. Some states and accrediting agencies require equity reports (and/or institutional effectiveness reports) supported by institutional data to evaluate progress on strategic goals. Some community college systems have advocated to include formerly incarcerated students and LGBTQ students in their student equity plans.

STEP 3: ANNUALLY EVALUATE BOARD LEADERSHIP, EFFECTIVENESS, AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION GOALS

Trustees have a leadership role in ensuring that the governing board itself actively promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion. The following inventory is a checklist to further gauge board readiness and effectiveness in pursuing policies to increase institutional and student diversity, equity and inclusion. Questions below provide detailed ways for boards and colleges to discuss and intentionally implement diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the college and community.

Using the DEI Inventory below, boards can assess their progress and that of their colleges. Examples that follow come from ACCT’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (2019-2020) as well as from the websites of ACCT member institutions.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Implementation Checklist

The BOARD

- Do the College Mission Statement, ___Vision___, Core Values ___ specifically include broad and inclusive (multifaceted) DEI language?
- Is there sufficient and significant racial and ethnic diversity on the governing board? Does board membership reflect the racial, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity of the college’s student population and community?
- Are board members aware of the college’s history in educating underserved populations? Does the board receive disaggregated data on student access, progress, and success and assess the college’s past and current record in serving underrepresented populations?
- Does the college have a diversity, equity, and inclusion policy approved by the board?
- Has the board developed and implemented a public DEI statement, white paper, philosophy, or values statement for the college website?
- When hiring a new college CEO, does the board ensure DEI are clearly evident in the position description, in evaluating candidates, and then later in evaluating CEO performance?
- Do the college’s strategic plan and institutional effectiveness reports reflect the board’s DEI goals?
- Does the board ensure DEI in policy development and implementation? Do all relevant board and college policies and college procedures reflect diversity, equity, and inclusion fully, including sexual orientation, gender identity, or incarceration status whether or not federal or state law mandates against discrimination?
- Does the board have a regular schedule for conducting equity-minded policy reviews? (i.e. with an equity lens?)
- Does the board have a DEI policy regarding contracts, minority bidding, etc.?
- Has the board prioritized equity through a multi-faceted college diversity, equity, and inclusion plan that includes the board and all departments throughout the institution?
- Does the board receive and monitor annual DEI/equity reports on student demographics, community stakeholders, college partnerships, etc.?
- Does the board allocate resources based on student data through an equity lens? Are sufficient resources aligned with the board’s and the college’s equity goals for underserved students?
- Do the board and the college provide the campus and community evidence of achieving its diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and publish and celebrate milestones?

The COLLEGE

- Does the president’s message on the website reflect DEI values or goals and their multiple facets?
- Is DEI reflected in the CEO/ president’s annual goals? ___
  In public statements to the campus ___ and in the community ___ and in the CEO’s evaluation process? ___
- Does the college review disaggregated access and success student data that highlights underserved populations? Is this data shared with the board? With other administrators? With the faculty?
- Is there a shared public equity scorecard?
“Equity is grounded in the principle of fairness. In higher education, equity refers to ensuring that each student receives what they need to be successful through the intentional design of the college experience.” More specifically, equity “is a set of principles, reflective questions, and processes that focus at individual, institutional, and systemic levels by deconstructing what is not working around equity; reconstructing and supporting what is working; shifting the way we make decisions and think about this work; and healing and transforming our structures, our environments, and ourselves.”

FACULTY AND STAFF

1. Does the college have an institutional equity plan?
2. Does the college have an institutional effectiveness plan with explicit DEI goals and results?
3. Has the college made a commitment of resources (human and financial) to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
4. Have the president, cabinet, and college staff and faculty had annual equity training and professional development?
5. Does the college have a multicultural or equity center for students? ___ Do the president, staff, and faculty participate in the center’s programming? ___ Does the board allocate resources?
6. Is equity mindedness an explicit goal across the institution’s reform efforts?
7. Are diversity, equity, and inclusion goals explicit in hiring throughout the college?

THE FOLLOWING SHORT EXCERPT FROM THE FORTHCOMING BOOK TRUSTEESHIP IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES: A Guide for Effective Governance, briefly outlines the board’s and the CEO’s distinct roles in developing college policy. For more information about the book, or to purchase copies for your board, visit www.acct.org/publications.

Informed and visionary policymaking is a joint effort between governing boards and their chief executives. Together, they establish a systematic approach that defines the roles and responsibilities of college employees and stakeholder groups, the steps in the process, questions to be answered, the perspectives sought, and how the policy will be implemented and monitored. In fact, boards should have policies that set standards for participation in decision-making, including policy and procedure development. They then delegate authority to the CEO to manage the process on behalf of the board.
Governing boards have the following responsibilities in the policymaking process:

• Be alert for the possible need for new board policy or changes in policy.
• Establish a thoughtful and public policymaking process.
• Analyze policy proposals in light of ethical and legal standards.
• Seek out multiple perspectives and consider their implications for policy.
• Adopt broad policies that both provide visionary direction and establish clear parameters.
• Monitor policy implementation.
• Assess the effect of policies on students, the community, and the institution.
• Ensure that policy is periodically reviewed and updated.
• Respect written policy as the voice of the board.
• Identify the policy implications of issues that come before the board.

The chief executive officer, as the board’s chief advisor:

• Alerts the boards to a possible need for new policy or a change in past policy.
• Assists the board in defining an appropriate level of policy.
• Helps define and manage a thoughtful and public policymaking process.
• Provides succinct policy analyses and presents alternatives for board discussion.
• Alerts the board to the political ramifications of proposed policy alternatives.
• Includes appropriate references to existing board policy in board meeting agenda items.
• Ensures that procedures identify who implements policy.
• Provides information that enables the board to monitor policy implementation.
• Ensures that the board regularly evaluates and updates its policies.
• Helps the board to clarify the policy implications of their discussions.
• Provides new trustees with an orientation to board policy.

College staff are essential contributors to policy development. They are aware of changes in student populations and community needs that might influence policy. They see the need for policy changes as they perform their day-to-day duties. College staff members are in an excellent position to assess the impact of proposed policies on their programs and provide that information as part of policy analysis. They develop the data that help boards monitor policy. Since they are the ones who implement the policies, their input obviously needs to be a component of policymaking.

Effective boards adopt, live by, and then monitor their own policies. CEOs help boards adhere to their own policies by including appropriate references to existing policy statements in agenda items. CEOs provide boards with the information they need to monitor policy implementation and evaluate its effectiveness.

How are Policies Developed?

The ways policies are developed vary from college to college and state to state, based on tradition, organizational culture, research capabilities, and politics. All process, though, should be clear, succinct, and allow for openness and engagement of stakeholders.

As strange as it may sound, the first order of business is that each college or college district should have a policy on policies, as it is more critical than one might initially think. The policy should describe the process for policy development, who can initiate it, the opportunity for constituent input, the roles of different players, and how and when a decision is made. It reaffirms the expectation for transparency and involvement but also makes it clear the board makes the final decision. This policy should reference the CEO’s role in developing procedures, including collaborating with constituents where that is appropriate. It may make a distinction between the board having a primary role in the development of both policy and procedures related to board operations and a secondary, albeit final, role in the development of some college operational procedures.

Pay close attention to your policy on policies, as some caveats are in order. The board’s policy on policies, while generally deferring to the CEO to develop procedures, should clarify that the board retains the right to review all procedures if it becomes concerned that perhaps they are not consistent with the intent of the policy they approved. Additionally, while constituent participation is valuable, be sure that neither policies nor procedures are adopted that confer significant decision-making powers to any constituent group, except where prescribed by law.

INFLUENCING POLICY

As a trustee, you want to influence your board’s policy decisions. You probably have many ideas about who the college should be serving, what the college should be accomplishing, and how staff should do their work. In addition, community members and college employees may contact you with requests for actions or policy changes. You also may feel obligated to promote the ideas of those who supported your election or appointment to the board. How can you, as a single member of the board, best influence the policymaking process and make sure your ideas are considered?

Influencing policy development involves doing your homework and understanding how “things get done.” It also involves creating allies by being a positive, supportive member of the board-CEO team. You will be more likely to gain support for your ideas if you understand the culture of your board and institution. You can be more effective when you make suggestions at the appropriate time and place and use the proper channels to present ideas. You will lose your ability to influence decisions if you work outside the system or show disrespect or attack other board members, the CEO, or college staff. Effective trustees uphold their oath of office to work on behalf of the college, and trustees do that by being a positive, contributing member of the board.

Pamila J. Fisher, Ed.D., former chancellor of Yosemite Community College District and former interim chancellor of the City Colleges of San Francisco, has consulted with ACCT for over a decade, focusing on developing leaders, board/CEO relationships, executive coaching and equity and cultural proficiency. Dr. Fisher authored two chapters in the forthcoming second edition of Trusteeship in Community Colleges.
THE MAKING OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEE:
CHAPTER FOUR

NEW TRUSTEE PAM SCHIER PLAYS A KEY ROLE AS THE COLLEGE NAVIGATES CHALLENGES INVOLVING FREE SPEECH AND CAMPUS DISRUPTIONS.

BY EDUARDO MARTI

TRUST IS THE CURRENCY OF GOOD GOVERNANCE. IT IS NURTURED EVERY DAY THROUGH every action. In order to nurture trust among fellow trustees and between the board and the various communities served, there must be good channels of communication. So it is important that new and veteran trustees are very clear as to the procedures used by the board to resolve conflicts and find common ground to better the college. This is especially important during times of conflict. In the past three articles, we have seen Pam Schier grow in her role of trustee. She is now a valued member of the board, and her relationship with the chair and her fellow trustees is excellent. Based on this level of trust, Pam wanted to know how well prepared the college is to address the turbulence of our times.
Schier asked Chuck Frazier, the board’s chair, how the college would handle campus disruptions. Other board members asked if the college has a prepared statement regarding the Black Lives Matter movement. Had the board made its position of support clear to the communities they serve? Members of the executive committee asked Frazier to charge the governance committee with reviewing existing policies governing free speech on campus and to ask President Pendleton for a carefully crafted document regarding the Black Lives Matter movement for board consideration.

After careful review, Jonas Martin, the chair of the governance committee, reported that while there was a policy regarding campus demonstrations, the committee found it to be too general. The existing policy simply stated that the college would protect free speech according to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure. However, Martin added that this statement addresses only the freedoms of a teacher to conduct research and to make statements within the classroom walls.

At the next executive committee meeting, Chair Frazier reviewed the existing policy. He reminded the rest of the members that the role of the board is to set policy and that since the existing policy clearly states that the college will protect free speech on campus, that was sufficient. It is up to the college president, he reminded trustees, to institute procedures to ensure that the policy is carried out appropriately.

The chair asked President Pendleton for a report on how he was readying the campus for activities around issues affecting the nation. President Pendleton, realizing the delicacy of the request, engaged the faculty senate and administrative bodies to formulate a policy recommendation on how to address the issue of free speech on campus, freedom of assembly, and campus disruptions. The urgency of the request demanded prompt attention. President Pendleton requested a recommendation by no later than the end of the semester, but preferably sooner.

The chair of the faculty senate, professor Joseph Quincy, established a faculty committee of three individuals to work with the President’s cabinet (Vice President for Academic Affairs Judith Marshall, Vice President for Student Affairs Robert Jones, and Vice President for Administration Mary Worth) and three student government senators. The charge of this ad hoc committee was to come up with a procedure to ensure freedom of expression at the campus with minimal disruption to the academic endeavor.

The ad hoc committee met twice per week, and after one month of deliberations it decided that the college should adopt a positive response to any demonstration sponsored by a campus organization. The only requirement was that the vice president for administration be informed prior to the activity. The office of the vice president for student affairs also was charged with assigning counselors to hold “open mic” sessions at the central quad. Students would be encouraged to express themselves for periods of 10 minutes each. Members of the student government would be asked to serve as timekeepers to assure that all who want to speak have an opportunity to do so. Whenever possible, the faculty would use the campus discussions as a teaching moment.

This procedure was rooted in the principle that mutual respect engenders trust among all parties and that, so long as a college organization sponsors the activity, the campus community is bound to facilitate the discussion of the topic. It also was based on the idea that the trust engendered by the actions of the president and the board will help defuse emotional expressions of anger and frustration. President Pendleton and Quincy presented this proposal to the faculty senate.

The campus debate became intense. Some members of the faculty were adamant in their position that, as an academic institution, the college must be a safe haven for free speech and that anyone who wants to express a position, no matter how distasteful, must feel free to do so. Other members of the faculty were concerned that complete freedom of expression could be disruptive to the learning process and demanded that parameters be set for any demonstrations on campus. The state’s legal department was consulted, and it was noncommittal, referring only to the body of law around the First Amendment.

At the end of the second month of deliberations, the faculty senate voted to reaffirm the proposal of the ad hoc committee. While some members of the faculty were not pleased, they were content in knowing that their voices and objections had been noted. This led them to trust that the ad hoc committee and the administration had no hidden agenda.

Concomitantly, the board passed a resolution indicating its support for the Black Lives Matter movement and encouraging the president and the entire academic community to institute a campus-wide series of discussions around the injustices of our country.

Questions for the Board
1. Do you think that the board acted in an appropriate manner? Why or why not?
2. Do you think the board would have passed the resolution if the new trustee, Pam Schier, had never asked how the college would handle board disruptions?
3. By involving the campus, did President Pendleton open a “can of worms” needlessly, or was he honoring his commitment to the community?
4. What if you are a board member who does not agree with this approach? How would you attempt to influence the decision? How would your fiduciary duties to the board, the college, and the community affect your actions?
5. Once a board makes a collective decision, all board members are obligated to support that decision. How can a dissenting board member reconcile their own beliefs while also honoring their commitment to support board decisions?

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AS THE NATION CONTINUES TO COPE WITH AN unprecedented crisis affecting every aspect of our lives, America’s community colleges have responded quickly to meet the needs of their current students. The role of local governing boards during this crisis is to ensure their colleges continue to serve their communities now while also focusing on the long-term future of their institution. But even experienced conscientious boards may wonder what is the best way to carry out that role during these dramatically different times.

The short answer is that following widely accepted “best practices” for effective trusteeship is still the most helpful way to support your CEO and protect and advocate for the interests of your students and community. That said, some attitudes and behaviors are more productive than others during a crisis. Focusing attention on what matters most, both in the short-term and the long-term, is the responsibility of a governing board.

Exemplary Individual Board Members
Most board members understand their role is to set policy and direction, monitor results, and collaborate closely with their CEO. During a time of crisis, if even a single member behaves inappropriately, the impact is magnified and will divert the CEO’s attention from critical tasks.

What an exemplary board member can do is

• Be available and responsive to their CEO.
• Be informed, prepared, and read all updates as soon as they are received.
• Be adaptable and willing to quickly learn and use new technology.
• Be patient as some usual services may be delayed.
• Be compassionate to their students, staff, the president, and peers.

Exemplary Governing Boards
Ensuring the safety of students and staff while providing much needed services are the basic priorities of every board. Exemplary boards, though, also will ensure the future viability of the institution.

What exemplary governing boards can do is

• Focus on the big picture and the future.
• Focus on the college’s mission and values.
• Focus on energizing momentum to continue major initiatives.
• Focus on policy and stringently avoid getting into operations.

Excellence in Action
As visible community leaders charged with ensuring the viability and success of the college, governing board members may want to consider some of the following strategies.

Empower and Support Your CEO
Even in the best of times, positive working relationships between and among board members and their CEO are critical to the success of the college. Open communication, respect, and trust are essential. During a serious ongoing crisis, these characteristics are even more significant.

Governing boards need to empower their CEOs to do what is necessary and vital to the safety of students and staff and the future of the college, even if it means the CEO sometimes may have to act quickly and not always consult with the entire board. The board should expect its CEO to exercise good judgement and inform the board as soon as possible of key decisions. But this is not the time for individual board members to second-guess decisions about college operations.

It also may be necessary for the board to defend the CEO with campus constituents regarding decisions that did not go through the usual participative governance process.
governing board, the CEO should provide communication with those constituents and explain, when needed, why a decision had to be made expeditiously. However, even when consultation occurs, the implications of operating within a COVID-19 environment will require significant changes that may not be popular with all constituents. When this happens, the board must support its CEO and the new directions of the college if their institution is to thrive during and after this crisis.

Conduct Courageous Conversations
Regular and special board meetings are certain to contain discussions about how the college is responding to the safety demands of a COVID-19 environment. In addition, the board's role is to ask questions about other critical topics related to the college's long-term viability. For example, boards may ask:
- How are our students really doing?
- What are we doing to ensure our equity agenda is surviving?
- What pedagogical options are being explored, and do we know what works?
- Are we developing different scenarios that provide flexibility for the college?
- What are the fiscal implications for the next three to five years?

Invest in Technology for the Governing Board
Most community colleges already are heavily invested in instructional and administrative technology. The spring of 2020 saw a huge increase in the use of remote learning. Regardless of COVID-19's path, the increased use of technology will continue, and most colleges are wisely planning for that. What may be overlooked is the need to invest in the technological expertise of governing boards.

While some boards had been using technology during meetings for the past several years, many were not. When physical safety required not meeting in person this past spring, all boards had to learn to conduct their business through some use of technology. Unfortunately, the range of expertise among board members was glaringly apparent and impacted the effectiveness of those meetings.

To conduct effective meetings honoring social distancing, colleges should move quickly to provide technological tools to every board member who needs them, as well as the training to acquire the skills to use those tools. Also critical is educating board members about effective practices for virtual meetings. (Suggestions for this topic are available at www.acct.org/article/suggestions-successful-virtual-board-meetings).

Governing boards also will need to practice openness and flexibility regarding how they conduct their business. A few boards have conducted not just effective virtual meetings, but also workshops, retreats, and even presidential search interviews. All will need to learn to do that. Everyone knows the success of the college is dependent on the governing board, and now (intimidating as it is for some) technology literacy has become a requirement for an effective governing board.

Provide Professional Development at all Levels
Governing boards are not the only college constituency in need of professional development. As widespread as distance learning had become, there were thousands of instructors who, before this past spring, had never taught online. Additionally, some college support staff do not use or have access to computers at their immediate worksites or in their homes. This discrepancy must be addressed.

From the simplest of skills to being able to participate effectively in a virtual meeting and becoming a superb facilitator of remote learning and services, the demand for much greater technological expertise will only continue to grow. Part of the governing board's role is to ask the right questions about technological use, access, training, and funding.

Community College Boards Can Do It!
Community college boards historically have responded to the needs of their communities through a wide variety of challenges. COVID-19 is arguably the most profound and pervasive challenge so far, but boards can influence how colleges respond and move forward. By understanding their role, supporting their president while asking the right questions, and keeping the focus on the big picture, they can ensure that their communities will be served well today and remain viable and successful tomorrow.

Pamila J. Fisher, Ed.D., former chancellor of Yosemite Community College District and former interim chancellor of the City Colleges of San Francisco, has consulted with ACCT for over a decade, focusing on developing leaders, board/CEO relationships, executive coaching, and equity and cultural proficiency. Dr. Fisher authored two chapters in the forthcoming second edition of Trusteeship in Community Colleges.
EVEN IN THE MIDDLE OF A PANDEMIC, GOVERNING BOARD members continue to be appointed and elected and are taking on the great responsibility of ensuring the viability of the colleges within their communities.

The 2020 Governance Leadership Institute for New Trustees proved that obstacles can present opportunities. This August 3 – 6, new community college trustees and their presidents from throughout the country and as far away as the Marshall Islands participated in the first-ever virtual Governance Leadership Institute.

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

- Day One: Governance 101 — Roles and Responsibilities presented by Pamila Fisher, Ed.D. and David Rutledge
- Day Two: Governance 102 — Board Ethics, Fiduciary Responsibilities, and Code of Conduct presented by Ken Burke, CPA and Eduardo Marti, Ph.D.
- Day Three: Advocacy and the Students We Serve presented by Jee Hang Lee and Pam Eddinger, Ph.D.

Each day, these deeply experienced experts presented on the day's topics for one hour, followed by an hourlong group discussion.

Nearly all participants indicated that they would be interested in further online trustee education. One told us that “I applaud the great work that went into this interactive [institute]. They have been excellent. I almost felt like I was right there.”

Despite a few local Internet connection hiccups among participants, the virtual Governance Leadership Institute proved that both educational offerings and human connectivity are not only possible, but also can thrive in the face of new challenges.

New and experienced trustees who were unable to participate in the live virtual Governance Leadership Institute can watch all of the presentations on demand for only $99 (members) or $149 (non-members). Visit www.acctgli.org/2020-new-trustee-gli for more information.
KEY TAKEAWAYS
• The nature of leadership is changing as a result of the pandemic.
• Real change requires the will to do something different.
• Effective change leaders stay on target, take risks, and unite their communities.

ELLUCIAN IS A GLOBAL HIGHER-EDUCATION SOLUTIONS company with over 2,700 customers in more than 50 countries. We recently hosted a virtual event, bringing together three community college presidents for a panel discussion about the issues impacting their communities — in particular, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on their institutions. All three panelists expressed how change leadership is helping them navigate the pandemic. Here are some key takeaways.

Change leadership is the way forward
From temperature checks and screening questions to detailed safety and social distancing guidelines, community colleges are preparing for the fall semester in many of the same ways as their four-year counterparts. As they discussed their plans for the fall, the panelists each emphasized the importance of change leadership.

Dr. Devin Stephenson, president of Northwest Florida State
YOUNG EMPHASIZED RISK-TAKING IN HER ADVICE TO LEADERS.

“WE HAVE TO BE, AS LEADERS, WILLING TO TAKE THE RISK AND BE DIRECTIVE AND MAKE QUICK DECISIONS, SOMETIMES WITHOUT A LOT OF COMMITTEES AND THE THINGS THAT WE NORMALLY LIKE TO WORK THROUGH BECAUSE OF THE SITUATION THAT WE’RE IN.”

College, sees change leadership as the way forward. “Effective change leaders cannot rely on our modalities of being a transactional leader or a transformational leader. We must lead as change leaders,” Stephenson said. “We must create teams around us that think flexibly, that think adaptability all the time because this is now a new world of change. This is a change era that we live in.”

Stephenson advised “eliminating the unnecessary and unhealthy competition within our organizations to bring people together.

“That’s really what we’ve seen the coronavirus crisis do,” he said. “It’s brought our people together to try to synergize and innovate different ways of approaching the work that we do.”

Dr. Michael Redmond, former president of Bergen Community College in New Jersey, agreed, saying that “the nature of leadership is going to change.”

“Institutions will have to be nimble, more innovative,” he added. “Those disaster recovery plans that we used to think about only in terms of losing our IT center on campus, now we’ll have to think about in a broader context. Those plans are going to be dusted off and revised. We’re being forced very quickly, and not on our own terms, to rethink and reimagine how we go about doing our business, performing admissions, and educating students. If we can lift up our eyes and look down the road a bit, we might find that because of this, higher education comes out better and more effective than it was before.”

From crisis comes the will to do something different

As the conversation pivoted to CARES Act funding, Dr. Betty Young, president of Hocking College in Ohio, shared a story about a fiscal crisis her institution faced in 2014 and related that experience to the current crisis caused by the pandemic.

“I think the virus has given us a crisis, and a crisis often gives us the will to do something different,” she said. In 2014, Young continued, “we had to make some major changes, really revamp and look strategically at operational models that we used. We took two years and really dug deep into this institution and made significant changes.”

Drawing from that experience, Young has taken a cautious approach to CARES Act funds. “We really strategically thought about what we could do in the long term. We looked at this as a two-year project because we believe that we’re going to be dealing with this for the next two years,” she said.

“Then we’re going to have another two to three years of recovery after that before we’re anywhere back to where we were before.”

How to lead through challenges

While what happens this fall semester and beyond remains to be seen, the panelists offered advice to their peers for the road ahead. Stephenson challenges himself and other leaders to examine their values and stay on target every day.

“Look every day at what your values are,” said Stephenson. “What drives you to get up every morning and be the president or vice president or higher ed leader that you are? What makes you get up to make a difference in somebody’s life? What do you value the most?”

“At our institution, it’s about doing things excellently,” he continued. “It’s about diversity and inclusion. It’s about being a person of integrity. It’s about being innovative and being a person that is committed to stewardship. That is the message that keeps me going through these dark days.”

Young emphasized risk-taking in her advice to leaders. “We have to be, as leaders, willing to take the risk and be directive and make quick decisions, sometimes without a lot of committees and the things that we normally like to work through because of the situation that we’re in.”

Young concluded with a reminder that while we’re all in this together, “we’re not all in it equally. Our students aren’t all in it equally. Some are under much greater hardship, particularly financially in this situation. Let’s not forget it.”

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TRUSTEE QUARTERLY FALL 2020 37
Legal Issues Impacting Community Colleges
Challenges raised by the COVID-19 pandemic dominate the legal environment.

By Ira Michael Shepard, ACCT General Counsel

The legal environment continues to be dominated by the extraordinary challenges raised by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this column, we discuss a number of legal issues related to the pandemic, as well as our continued review of current legal issues impacting community colleges, their staffs, professors, and students.

Adjunct professors contest COVID-19 layoffs, alleging violation of federal CARES Act. The union representing the City University of New York (CUNY) faculty, staff, and adjunct faculty recently sued CUNY in federal district court, claiming that the university wrongfully laid off “thousands” of adjunct faculty in May 2020 after receiving $251 million under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).

The union, the Professional Staff Congress of CUNY, claimed that the CARES Act required CUNY, as a funding recipient, to continue to pay its employees to the greatest extent possible during the disruptions caused by coronavirus pandemic. The union claims that CUNY violated the CARES Act when it laid off approximately 20 percent of its 12,000 adjunct faculty members (Professional Staff Congress/CUNY v. City Univ. of New York, S.D.N.Y. No. 1:20-CV-05060, comp filed 7/1/20).

The union has asked for a preliminary injunction stopping the adjunct faculty layoffs, reinstatement of all laid off adjunct faculty, a permanent injunction against layoff of adjunct faculty until the end of the period of closures due to the coronavirus pandemic, attorney fees, back pay, and costs.

EEOC guidance concludes that ADA prohibits employers from requiring employees to submit to COVID-19 antibody tests — but allows returning employees to be tested for active infections. Consistent with guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has concluded that mandatory antibody tests cannot be required before employees can return to work, and that such a requirement would violate the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The CDC has concluded that the presence of antibodies cannot be equated to a person’s immunity from the coronavirus. However, the EEOC concluded that employers can test returning workers for COVID-19 under the ADA because an individual suffering from the virus poses a “direct threat” to the health of others in the workplace. In its guidance, the EEOC stated, “please note that an antibody test is different from a test to determine if someone has an active case of COVID-19.”

Supreme Court rules 6-3 that gay and transgender employees are protected against discrimination under Title VII. Conservative Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch and Chief Justice John Roberts joined the four-judge liberal group of the U.S. Supreme Court in holding 6 to 3 that Title VII protects gay and transgender employees from discrimination on the basis of sex. This ruling by the high court protects employees from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

“Personally, I worry that, with everyone wearing masks, readers won’t be able to tell who in the cartoon is speaking.”
The ruling was handed down in three cases: *Bostock v. Clayton County* (17-1618), involving alleged employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation; *Altitude Express v. Zarda* (17-1623), involving alleged employment discrimination against a gay worker; and *RG and GR Harris Funeral Home v. EEOC* (19-107), which alleged employment discrimination against a transgender employee on the basis of sexual identity.

The decision will have broad impact, as more than half of the nation’s states do not cover sexual orientation and gender identity in their state anti-discrimination statutes. According to a UCLA Law School report, more than half of the nation’s 8 million LGBT workers live in states where they were not protected. **Whistleblower and retaliatory discharge lawsuits involving workplace safety likely to proliferate in the wake of the pandemic.** A case involving a nursing home in Illinois is likely to be the precursor of many other whistleblower and retaliatory discharge lawsuits filed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. An assistant nursing home director who was discharged following her objection and refusal to participate in a directive to outfit all staff with personal protective equipment (PPE) masks without proper facial mask fit testing or training filed a whistleblower and retaliatory discharge lawsuit. The plaintiff was allegedly discharged one day after she raised her pandemic-related safety and health objections (*Hinich v. Norwood Crossing*, III. Cir. Ct. No. 2021005539, 5/20/20).

The plaintiff alleged that in response to her objections she was told that the fit testing was not necessary because the PPE masks were only given to staff “to make them feel better.” The nursing home defendant has about 250 residents and 500 employees, contractors, and volunteers on its premises on a daily basis. The lawsuit alleged a violation of the Illinois Nursing Home Care Act and retaliatory discharge.

**Court rules that university’s sex harassment investigation and pre-termination procedures satisfied due process requirements.** A former anthropology professor’s federal lawsuit claiming he was denied due process and fired after a sex harassment investigation by the University of New Mexico because of bias against males and Hispanics has had his lawsuit dismissed as without merit. The federal district court concluded that the professor offered no proof that the university or its officials exhibited any bias against males or Hispanics. The ruling concluded that the plaintiff was given ample opportunity to review the charges against him and present his side of the story before his termination. The judge stated that the university accepted all of the professor's evidence and reviewed his side of the story, but concluded that termination was appropriate given the evidence presented regarding his prior conduct (*Valencia v. Board of Regents*, 2020 BL 181423, D.N.M. No. l:17-cv-00509, 5/14/20).

The ruling summarized that the plaintiff was terminated after an investigation and appeals process which spanned 21 months. The professor was given notice of the complaint and then presented with formal charges, including all evidence uncovered during the investigation. He was given the opportunity to respond to the evidence and present his own evidence. He was invited to give additional evidence, and his attorney met twice with university investigators. He was also given the right to appeal the termination decision. The court concluded that the university’s procedure afforded the professor all due process rights to which he was entitled. 

**Community college softball coach wins right to jury trial over retaliatory discharge whistleblower claims.** The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit (covering Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Kansas, and Oklahoma) recently reinstated a retaliatory discharge whistleblower claim brought by the former coach of the Barton Community College women’s softball team, holding that a jury could find that the reasons stated by the college supporting the discharge were pretextual. The court held that the short timeframe between the alleged whistleblower activity and the discharge gives a reasonable jury the possible evidence to find in favor of the plaintiff (*Benjamin v. Trustees Barton Community College*, 10th Cir., no. 19-03048, 4/24/20).

The plaintiff alleged that he was hired in 2013 and fired only after he began complaining that student athletes were being paid to travel to or from home or college. The allegations resulted in an investigation by the Kansas Jayhawk Community College Conference, which bars such payments under its rules. The plaintiff alleged that he had never received discipline for the purported reasons for his discharge nor had been warned about such conduct. He alleged that the temporal connection between whistleblower complaints and the firing, along with other circumstantial evidence, supported his case of retaliatory discharge. The divided court of appeals ruled he should be allowed to receive a jury trial over the matter. **Court advances professor’s First Amendment retaliation claim based on expert witness testimony and expression of conservative views on gender dysphoria.** A federal district in Kentucky recently ruled that a University of Louisville psychiatry professor’s claim of First Amendment retaliatory demotion must go forward as he stated a proper claim of potential First Amendment bias resulting from his conservative expert testimony and speech on gender dysphoria in children and adolescents. (*Josephson v. Bendapudi*, W.D. Ky., No. 19-cv-230, 3/24/20).

The plaintiff had a record of perfect scores in his annual performance reviews up until 2016. In 2017, he participated in a panel discussion at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank in Washington, D.C., and also served as an expert witness in cases where he testified that caregivers should fully explore the issue with childhood and adolescent patients before allowing the patient to become a member of the opposite sex. The professor alleges that university officials retaliated against him in violation of the First Amendment for expressing those views, demoted him from division head to professor, and created a hostile work environment for him. **Ira Michael Shepard is Of Counsel with the law firm of Saul Ewing, LLP, in Washington, D.C., and ACCT’s General Counsel.**
Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker announced that 15 community colleges will receive $103.5 million as part of the state’s Rebuild Illinois plan. The funding, which will be supplemented by $34.5 million in additional local investments, is earmarked for new and expanded facilities, classroom and lab renovations, and repaving streets and parking lots. “As the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the economy of every state in the nation, it is more critical than ever that we continue to invest in the state’s educational institutions,” Pritzker said in a press release.

Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot launched Fresh Start, a debt forgiveness plan for City Colleges of Chicago students who dropped out due to financial reasons within the last 10 years but left in good academic standing. Students must take at least one class, meet with an advisor, and complete the FAFSA, if eligible.

Oakton Community College in Illinois launched the state’s first program to train contract tracers. While there is currently no official certification required to work as a contact tracer, Oakton officials said they created the program based on state, federal, and local guidelines. The self-guided online program focuses on contact tracing techniques and health regulations, including patient privacy laws.

Ozarks Technical Community College in Missouri is offering $2 million in grants to support students during the college’s transition to online instruction. Students can apply for a $500 grant to purchase laptops or other education-related technology needs, as well as credits to help cover tuition and fees if they take more than 12 hours of online courses. “In the spring, when all classes moved online, we realized that some of our students did not have the technology necessary to be successful,” Joan Barrett, OTC vice chancellor for student services, said in a press release.

Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) in Wisconsin launched a program to help returning students repay past-due balances for college expenses. MATC identified nearly 7,000 students who would benefit from the program, which helps students repay up to $1,500 in expenses for tuition, books, and other fees. The pilot for the program began in the spring and has already helped 56 students.

Ivy Tech Community College in Indiana is expanding its tuition-free credential offerings. Aimed at helping newly unemployed individuals develop new skills, Ivy Tech hopes that these new opportunities will help local employers fill an ever-present need for more skilled workers.

The Community College System of New Hampshire will use a $3.45 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to improve high school apprenticeship programs. The grant will be applied to 30 different occupational paths, including automotive, business and finance, healthcare, and hospitality.

The Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education approved $3 million in one-time funding to offer free community college for the fall 2020 semester to eligible students.

The Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) in Maryland will distribute an additional $35 million in aid to make tuition free for the fall semester for students most harshly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. CCBC is also hoping to target students who otherwise would be attending a four-year institution this coming semester.

A California community college and a nonprofit that assists homeless and displaced young adults have opened a housing project for students facing housing insecurity. Cerritos College and Los Angeles-based Jovenes opened The Village, a development of townhomes with a mix of free and affordable rental options for eligible students ages 18 to 25. At Cerritos, 55 percent of students are housing insecure and of those 15 percent are homeless, while only 6 percent of students who have experienced homelessness receive housing assistance. Across the state, nearly half of community college students are housing insecure or homeless.

In the wake of the killing of George Floyd and subsequent protests, California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley called for a review of law enforcement curriculum at the state’s 115 community colleges, which train 80 percent of the state’s police officers. Oakley said that the curriculum must be reviewed to better...
reflect the experiences of black Californians and other people of color.

A partnership between San Diego Community College District in California and the United Way of San Diego County will provide emergency grants of $200 to more than 1,300 students who were excluded from collecting COVID-19 relief funds.

The University of Hawai‘i Community Colleges announced the Kūlia Scholarship for people who have had their employment status impacted by the pandemic. Students who take advantage of the program will be able to take a class for free, including fees and required books.

The Tennessee Promise, the last-dollar free tuition scholarship for community college students the state began in 2015, has increased first-time, full-time undergraduate enrollment at Tennessee’s community colleges by at least 40 percent, according to a researcher at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. The program also has had a significant impact on Black and Latino students.

Greenville Technical College in South Carolina inked a transfer agreement with Clemson University to allow students in selected social science programs to seamlessly transfer to pursue a bachelor’s degree in either anthropology or sociology at Clemson.

High school students in North Carolina will have access to free online classes through the state’s community colleges this fall. The transition to online classes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic will mean that there will be more options available to students planning to expand their education from home.

Programs at three community colleges in Kentucky received the Essential Employability Qualities (EEQ) certification, which focuses on integrating essential job skills. The certification, overseen by the nonprofit QA Commons, signals to employers that academic programs teach skills like communication, thinking and problem solving, inquiry, collaboration, adaptability, learning, principles and ethics, and responsibility and professionalism. The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) partnered with QA Commons in 2018 to pilot the certification program on two- and four-year campuses.

Alamo Colleges in Texas is working with the Alamo Colleges Foundation to support students in need during the pandemic. Funds are being used primarily to provide emergency grants to students experiencing or at risk of facing housing or food insecurity.

Emsi (Economic Modeling Specialists Intl.) released a study on Lone Star College in Texas which found that the college adds almost $3 billion annually to the Houston economy through increased student incomes and business productivity.

Colorado high school students can find information about how to earn college credit while they are still in high school on a new website created by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE). The website, which is required by legislation passed in 2019, contains information about dual and concurrent enrollment programs, including their costs, benefits, and eligibility requirements. It is designed to help students get an early start on college classes while in high school and begin navigating their path toward college completion.

Colorado’s new Bridge to Bachelor’s Degree Program allows first-time students at the state’s 13 community colleges to be conditionally admitted to a participating four-year college once they complete their two-year degree.

Central Community College (CCC) in Nebraska partnered with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and the Nebraska Department of Labor to launch the CCC Nebraska Workforce Retraining Initiative Scholarship.
Executive Searches

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

Baton Rouge Community College, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

**Dr. Willie Smith**
Chancellor

“On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, I want to congratulate Dr. Smith on his selection as the new chancellor of Baton Rouge Community College. Dr. Smith has led BRCC on an interim basis for the past 10 months and provided the college with great leadership and a vision for the college's future. In managing the pandemic's impact, Dr. Smith has kept students at the forefront. We believe Dr. Smith is the perfect fit for BRCC.”

—Tim Hardy, Chair, Chancellor Search Committee and Member of the Board of Supervisors, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

“Dr. Smith's appointment as chancellor of Baton Rouge Community College capped off the most unique chancellor search conducted in our system’s history. Dr. Smith's leadership and management of the COVID-19 pandemic as interim chancellor, in addition to his many years of successful experiences in higher education and workforce development, helped to solidify him as the permanent chancellor. Despite the disruptions caused by the pandemic, I am grateful to our Board of Supervisors and our search consultants at ACCT for remaining committed to continuing the search process and ultimately the selection of Dr. Smith as chancellor.”

—Dr. Monty Sullivan, System President, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

Hinds Community College, Mississippi

**Dr. Stephen Vacik**
President

“The search committee has worked diligently through a rigorous process to select our next president. We are extremely pleased that Dr. Vacik has chosen to return to Mississippi and assume leadership of Hinds Community College. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated the ability to develop and nurture relationships between the community, business and industry, and the college. We are confident that he will be a tremendous asset to our organization and will be respectful of our long history of success as we move into the future.”

—Paul Breazeale, President, Board of Trustees, Hinds Community College, Mississippi

Hopkinsville Community College, Kentucky Community and Technical College System

**Dr. Christopher Boyett**
Chief Academic Affairs Officer

“Hopkinsville Community College partnered with ACCT to conduct a nation-wide search for a Chief Academic Affairs Officer. We are pleased to announce the addition of Dr. Christopher J. Boyett to our campus. Dr. Boyett possesses a tremendous amount of talent and experience and will enhance an already very strong leadership team at HCC.”

—Alissa Young, President, Hopkinsville Community College, Kentucky Community and Technical College System
Ohlone College, California
Dr. Eric Bishop
President
“We are happy to welcome Dr. Bishop as the seventh president of Ohlone College. It’s been an extensive nationwide search process, and we have a good feeling about what lies ahead for Ohlone under this new leadership. We look forward to welcoming Dr. Bishop and his family to the Ohlone community and look forward to his leadership in guiding the district into a new era.”

—Richard Watters, Chair, Board of Trustees, Ohlone College, California

Southeastern Community College, North Carolina
Dr. Christopher English
President
“Dr. English brings a high level of expertise from his background within the North Carolina Community College System. We are confident that he is a dynamic leader for the future of SCC, and we look forward to introducing him to our community. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to thank the search committee for its outstanding effort and to the college community for your interest and support in the process to identify our next president.”

—Henry Edmund, Chair, Board of Trustees, Southeastern Community College, North Carolina

Victoria College, Texas
Dr. Jenifer Kent
President
“We are excited to have Dr. Kent taking the helm at Victoria College. Her background and experience demonstrate a keen ability to engage with students, faculty, and the community to focus on student success. We are confident that she will maintain and enhance Victoria College’s distinguished traditions of leadership, vision, and impact.”

—V. Bland Proctor, Chair, Board of Trustees, Victoria College, Texas
# Board Services

## BOARD RETREATS, BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENTS, AND CEO EVALUATIONS

Thank you to the following colleges who have recently used ACCT to facilitate a board retreat, board self-assessment, or CEO evaluation. We appreciate your trusting ACCT to assist you with our board development needs.

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Virtual Meetings Present New Opportunities

By Jeannie Moton
Portland Community College

This is the issue of Trustee Quarterly in which I normally would be informing you all of the great things we are planning for this fall’s ACCT Leadership Congress in Chicago — encouraging you all to attend our meet and greet, our sessions, our business meeting, and to meet peers and learn new things.

But alas, this year will look and feel very different. While we plan to move forward with a virtual event, it will not be the same. I have made connections at these sessions over the years and truly enjoy reconnecting each year. But instead of focusing on what we will miss by not meeting in person, I would like to focus on the positives of holding a virtual Professional Board Staff Network (PBSN) meeting.

By hosting a virtual meeting, we can only be limited by our imaginations. We have the ability to host a guest speaker from anywhere in the world on any topic. Typically we would be concerned with the cost associated with travel and timing for such a speaker, but with a virtual format, we can push those limits. Speaking of topics, anything is fair game. We are able to touch on topics that we might not have considered in the past because of our new virtual environment.

One of the biggest positives I see is the delivery of our programming. We are all learning new platforms for remote operations, and sharing that knowledge in this day and age is crucial. While we may have our favorite system for virtual meetings, the market is developing new tools every day for this new age. Being flexible is important for our roles, so the more we use and see other systems, the more efficient we can become. I can recall the first few weeks of online meetings were very intimidating for me. I have since come to relax a little and don’t have the same anxiety from those first few weeks.

I am also encouraged by the potential of increased attendance and introducing more of you to PBSN. We have increasingly grown our membership over the years, but we would love to see hundreds of you at our sessions. We have over a thousand folks in positions that support our boards throughout the country, and having a full room at the ACCT Leadership Congress would reflect our important roles.

Eliminating the need to travel also has fiscal and environmental impacts. Most of us travel and attend the conferences to support our boards, and sometimes presidents. For those who don’t need to travel for that support, we would encourage virtual attendance. In these times, many travel budgets are being affected, making a remote option all the more ideal.

If we find that this format complements our planning, it may be that we introduce a hybrid model to our future planning for these sessions and create a new tradition for PBSN and its future. As you can imagine, the executive officers of PBSN have been busy adapting and adjusting not only ourselves to our virtual environments, but also our boards. Everything seems to take a bit more time, including our planning for the fall conference. Rest assured we do plan to have sessions that offer meaningful and thoughtful programming for our membership. While it may look different from past conferences, we are committed to keeping with the spirit of PBSN and look forward to connecting with you.

Hope to see you all soon, virtually!
Working from Home, the New Norm

By Benita A. Duncan, Lansing Community College

WIKIPEDIA STATES THAT “A QUARANTINE IS A RESTRICTION on the movement of people and goods intended to prevent the spread of disease or pests.” It is to impose isolation on a person, animal, or place. For many of us, the word “quarantine” has taken on a new meaning this year: learning to work from home.

For months, this has become our new normal. Although working from home has its advantages, it comes with many challenges. As professional board and president staff members, we are usually the glue to keeping everything together and making sure things continue to run smoothly. It is important that we learn to work efficiently and effectively from home.

So how do you overcome the challenges of working from home? First, it is important to have your own working space. When I began working from home, my husband had his own home office and my daughters had desks in their rooms. I was working at the kitchen table, the couch, my bed, outside on the deck, the basement — you name it. I was a displaced worker leaving stuff all over the house!

Not having a dedicated space can cause you to misplace files, notes, and become unorganized and less productive. It is important to find a dedicated workspace. My space was a spare room in the lower level of my house. Next, I purchased a desk, a desktop printer, desk accessories, and all the amenities anyone would have at their non-home office. You can purchase a nice desk for under $200 at places like Ikea, HomeGoods, or World Market. Fix up your space with paint, curtains, a throw rug, and a nice office chair to make the space your own, comfortable and conducive for work. Create a work environment you are accustomed to. Decorate your desk with pictures, or gather things from your work office. Invest in a good file tote to transport files back to your work office on days you might report to the office to swap out file folders.

Once you have established your space, it is important to maintain your normal working hours. When the quarantine started, I was working different hours every day, and often late hours. Not shutting down and leaving work for the day as I normally did caused me to lose track of time. It is easy to set different working hours at home, but if you keep your regular working hours, it will keep you accountable and more productive.

During your working day, make sure to break up your day with lunch and short five-to-ten-minute breaks. Take a lunch hour with your family at the same time to talk about the day and enjoy family time as well. Enjoy short breaks away from your desk by sitting on the porch, watering the plants, or going to the mailbox. To work effectively at home, it is important to not to get burned out from working crazy hours, and to find ways to maintain normalcy.

Finally, social distancing does not prevent us from collaborating and socializing by Microsoft Teams, Webex, Google, or other interactive online platforms. A lot of great software programs out there can help you work collaboratively face-to-face in a virtual environment. It is important to maintain personal socialization with our coworkers and board members during this time. Virtual face-to-face meetings where you are collaborating and sharing documents make work productivity better. Let's face it: we are all missing human-to-human socialization. It makes our workday more enjoyable and personable. Check in with your boss, coworkers, and board members weekly. See how they are doing. You can even schedule a virtual lunch date with some to help maintain great working relationships.

During this time, we can lean on one another for information on how we are continuing to conduct our board meetings and effectively getting our job responsibilities done. As a group, we have a wealth of knowledge that we should utilize.

We are not sure how long this pandemic will last or if it will hit us again, but with a few easy steps, we can ensure that our time working from home is efficient, effective, productive, and that it doesn’t take too great a toll on our physical or mental well being. So teammates, be encouraged and stay strong! We are here for one another and this too shall pass. Enjoy your time working from home. I think we will find that working from home can be very rewarding and find ourselves better and more productive workers in our new working normal.
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/product/lifetime-membership or contact ACCT’s Member Services at 202.775.4667 or acctinfo@acct.org.
Election of Board and Diversity Committee Members

Elections for ACCT Regional Directors and Diversity Committee Members will be held at the Regional Caucuses and Meetings on Wednesday, September 30 and/or Thursday, October 1. Elections for Directors-at-Large will be held on Friday, October 2, from 3:00 p.m. Eastern – 5:00 p.m. Eastern, during the ACCT Senate Meeting.

NOTE: The Regional Caucuses and Senate Meetings will be held virtually and at Eastern Time. Please refer to congress.acct.org for the date and time of each meeting.

2021 Candidates for The ACCT Board Of Directors

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

(1) Three-Year Term in Each Region

The following is the slate of nominees received as of July 1, 2020:

Central Region – James Cooksey*
Moberly Area Community College, MO

Northeast Region – Sheetal Ranjan*
Bergen Community College, NJ

Pacific Region – John Leal*
State Center Community College District, CA

Southern Region – Tim Hardy*
Louisiana Community and Technical College System, LA

Western Region – Rose Benavidez*
South Texas College, TX

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE

(3) Three-Year Terms

The following is the slate of nominees received as of July 1, 2020:

Amanda Howland*
College of Lake County, IL

John Lukas*
Lakeshore Technical College, WI

Gilbert Wong*
Foothill-De Anza Community College District, CA

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

Note: Nominations will be accepted from the floor for all elections.

2021 Candidates for the ACCT Diversity, Equity, And Inclusion Committee

(1) Two-Year Term in Each Region

Following is the slate of nominees:

CENTRAL REGION

Stacey Gannon
Delta College, MI

Zaida Hernandez-Irisson
Gateway Technical College, WI

Fritz Larsen
Black Hawk College, IL

Angela Mathews
Lansing Community College, MI

NORTHEAST REGION

No Nominees

PACIFIC REGION

Barbara Calhoun
Compton Community College District, CA

Richard Fukutaki*
Bellevue College, WA

SOUTHERN REGION

No Nominees

WESTERN REGION

Carolyn Thomas Morris*
Navajo Technical University, NM

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

Note: Nominations will be accepted from the floor for all elections.

Note: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee Candidate Diane Dixon-Proctor from Anne Arundel Community College retired from the board in June.

Note: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee Candidate Sam Lieberman from Nevada System of Higher Education in Nevada, unexpectedly passed away this April.

Elections of Regional Nominating Committee Members

Regional nominating committee elections will take place during the Regional Caucuses and Meetings on Wednesday, September 30 and/or Thursday, October 1.

NOTE: The Regional Caucuses and Meetings will be held virtually and at Eastern Time. Please refer to congress.acct.org for the date and time of each meeting.

Based on the ACCT Regional Nominating Committee structure, each committee consists of five members elected for two-year staggered terms. No more than one member shall be from the same state. The following seats need to be filled for the 2021 – 2022 term:

CENTRAL REGION

Two (2) seats are available to members from the following states: Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

Bruce Clark (IA), Joan Gebhardt (MI), and Jon Looney (IL) will continue to serve in 2021.

NORTHEAST REGION

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

Jorge Gardyn (NY) and Cathy Guild (MA) will continue to serve through 2021.

PACIFIC REGION

Three (3) seats will be available to members from the following states/territories: Alaska, Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, Guam, and Republic of Palau.

Jim Osterling (CA) and Leanaavoata Sukuini Seva’aetaasi (AS) will continue to serve through 2021.

SOUTHERN REGION

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

Steve Cousins (AR) and Mac Sherrill (NC) will continue to serve through 2021.

WESTERN REGION

Five (5) seats will be available to members from the following states: Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming.

No committee members will continue to serve in 2021.
ACCT’s Retreat & Evaluation Services are designed to help trustees effectively carry out their responsibilities in an increasingly complex and litigious world. We are committed to assisting boards by enhancing their capability to provide effective lay governance and leadership to strengthen the capacity of community colleges to achieve their mission on behalf of their communities.

Retreats can strengthen communication and understanding among board members, which can lead to a stronger, more effective working group. When a board engages in training and professional development, it is also a model for the rest of the institution.

ACCT will customize a retreat that fits your board’s individual needs. We provide comprehensive retreat services and guidance to the Board of Trustees and CEO.

Do You Remember…your last board retreat?

If it’s been more than a few years, you probably have work to do.

An annual board retreat can support team building, strategic planning, and good governance.

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Classic Topics

Below are some classic retreat topics. ACCT can customize any of these programs or create original board development programs around any topic to meet your needs.

- Roles and Responsibilities of the Board
- Strengthening the Board/CEO Relationship
- How to Implement Policy Governance
- Board Ethics and Standards of Good Practice
- Board Planning and Goal Setting
- The Role of the Board in Strategic Planning
- The Role of the Board in the Accreditation Process
- Mediation and Conflict Resolution
- The Board’s Role in Advocacy
- The Board’s Role in Fundraising
- New CEO Transition
- New Trustee Orientation
- Board Self-Assessment and CEO Evaluation

For more information or to schedule a retreat, contact Colleen Allen at callen@acct.org / 202.775.6490.
Community College National Legislative Summit

DATE
FEBRUARY 7-10 2023

LOCATION
Marriott Marquis
WASHINGTON, DC

SPONSORED BY
ACCT

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