Pathways to Prosperity

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Commitment Pays Off

FOR DECADES, OUR COLLEGES WERE underestimated, unrepresented, or misrepresented in the media, our students too often maligned. We were taken for granted — until the Great Recession, when students flooded community college classrooms hoping that their hard work and newly acquired knowledge and skills would create opportunities for them. But as the economy rebounded, state divestments in higher education continued and tuition and fees for many four-year universities became so high that many Americans now question the very value of higher education. Is the return on investment great enough to warrant one, two, three, or more decades of student loan repayments?

This spring, a broad-scale survey from the New America Foundation found that community and technical colleges scored highest among all sectors of higher education in public opinion. In this nationally representative survey, Americans felt that community and technical colleges “prepare people to be successful,” “are for people in my situation,” “are worth the cost,” “contribute to a strong American workforce,” and “always put their students first.”

Reflect on that for a moment. How many of us realized that our colleges have become the most trusted among all sectors of higher education to improve students’ lives? This transformation in public perception is remarkable. I don’t say this to suggest we spend time patting ourselves on the back, but as evidence that our commitment to students pays off, and as encouragement to keep working together on behalf of our colleges and our students no matter what new obstacles come our way.

This year’s ACCT Leadership Congress theme is Pathways to Prosperity, an indicator that all of us still are focused on what matters most: helping students with the greatest barriers to opportunity and setting them on a trajectory of continued success. I look forward to seeing you in Las Vegas this fall.

It has been my great honor to serve as Chair of the Association of Community College Trustees this year. I am proud of the dedication of my own college in Jersey City, New Jersey, and through my involvement with ACCT, I have witnessed and learned from peers throughout the country who are changing lives. We have remained focused on what matters, and as Chair of ACCT’s Board of Directors, I can tell you confidently that this commitment is part of our organizational culture. In fact, it is our driving force.

The work we do as trustees can be life changing, and at the same time humbling. We see countless students leave our institutions with so much more than that with which they arrived, and with brighter futures than many ever had imagined for themselves. Thank you for your dedication to your colleges and students, and for your continued engagement with ACCT. Together, we are the voice of community college leaders, and together we are changing lives for the better.

BAKARI G. LEE, ESQ.
CHAIR
Pathways for Prosperous Boards

Each semester, our students are presented with catalogs that offer an overwhelming selection of options. Some courses are foundational. Others are elective. Knowing what to choose from among all the options can be daunting. The same can be true for the many avenues down which trustees have to travel to become exceptional board members.

This issue of Trustee Quarterly offers a selection of articles designed to help you become a well-rounded board member, as explained from the perspective of peer community college trustees and presidents.

On page 26, Dorey Diab and Dwight McElfresh discuss how the Policy Governance model helped North Central State College expand its mission to better meet students’ needs. On page 16, Stephen C. Head discusses how a five-year financial planning model is helping Lone Star College prepare for the future.

Other topics in this issue include ways to create an entrepreneurial college culture from Fox Valley Technical College’s Susan A. May, a remarkable new partnership between Northern Virginia Community College and a federal agency that will bolster cybersecurity education nationwide, and Cumberland County College Trustee Michael R. DeLeon’s perspective on how community colleges can help address problems of addiction and recovery among students. Finally, Martha Kanter and Andra Armstrong provide an update on the remarkably successful campaign to make the College Promise a reality for American students.

This issue of Trustee Quarterly is about and written in great part by you, our members. I hope that you’ll take away some new ideas from these stories and consider sharing your stories with us and our membership in future issues.

J. Noah Brown
ACCT President and CEO
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The Completion Agenda in Community Colleges

ACCT’s newest book, The Completion Agenda in Community Colleges: What It Is, Why It Matters, and Where It’s Going by Christopher Baldwin with Richard L. Alfred and Debbie L. Sydow, is intended to improve understanding about the complex issues surrounding the national college completion agenda.

By highlighting the origins of this agenda and the dilemmas and opportunities it creates for community colleges, The Completion Agenda in Community Colleges describes the many innovations underway nationally.

The book bridges gaps between practice, policy, and research to provide the reader with a holistic view of community colleges’ response to the completion agenda. While this agenda is a positive development, it also raises some critical questions. What is the appropriate balance between open access and ensuring more students earn a credential? What can policymakers do to incent innovation among institutions without jeopardizing the strengths of community colleges? In an era of constrained resources, how can colleges improve outcomes when so many students enroll academically unprepared? And perhaps most importantly, how can we collectively increase these outcomes while also ensuring that the credentials attained are high quality and with labor market value?

For more information about the Futures Series and the online bookstore, visit www.acct.org/futures-series-community-colleges.

2017 ACCT Regional Awards Announced

ACCT congratulates the 2017 ACCT Regional Award recipients for their outstanding work. Those recognized at the regional level will contend for the national-level recognition of the following ACCT Association Awards: 2017 M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award; 2017 Charles Kennedy Equity Award; 2017 Marie Y. Martin Chief Executive Award; 2017 William H. Meardy Faculty Member Award; and 2017 ACCT Professional Board Staff Member Award.

One outstanding award recipient in each category will be announced during the Annual ACCT Awards Gala on Wednesday, September 27, at the Cosmopolitan Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, in conjunction with the 48th Annual ACCT Leadership Congress.

2017 Trustee Leadership Award Recipients

CENTRAL REGION: Lois Bartelme, Kirkwood Community College, Iowa
NORTHEAST REGION: Dorothea H. Smith, College of Southern Maryland, Md.
PACIFIC REGION: Dan Altmayer, Highline College, Wash.
SOUTHERN REGION: Helen Rosemond-Saunders, Tri-County Technical College, S.C.
WESTERN REGION: Mike Johnson, Barton Community College, Kan.

2017 ACCT Regional Equity Award Recipients

CENTRAL REGION: Harper College, Ill.
NORTHEAST REGION: Montgomery College, Md.
PACIFIC REGION: Allan Hancock College, Calif.
SOUTHERN REGION: Trident Technical College, S.C.
WESTERN REGION: Oklahoma City Community College, Okla.

2017 ACCT Regional Chief Executive Officer Award Recipients

CENTRAL REGION: Dorey Diab, North Central State College, Ohio
NORTHEAST REGION: William Austin, Warren County Community College, N.J.
PACIFIC REGION: Lee Lambert, Pima Community College District, Ariz.
SOUTHERN REGION: Deborah Lamm, Edgecombe Community College, N.C.
WESTERN REGION: Michael Chipps, Northeast Community College, Neb.

2017 ACCT Regional Faculty Member Award Recipients

CENTRAL REGION: Jessica Cole, Des Moines Area Community College, Iowa
NORTHEAST REGION: Tammy Peery, Montgomery College, Md.
PACIFIC REGION: Christopher Scinto, Maricopa Community College District, Ariz.
SOUTHERN REGION: Amber Morgan, Greenville Technical College, S.C.
WESTERN REGION: Matthew Lewis, San Jacinto College District, Texas

2017 ACCT Regional Professional Board Staff Member Award Recipients

CENTRAL REGION: Mellanie Toles, Clark State Community College, Ohio
NORTHEAST REGION: Alonia Sharps, Prince George’s Community College, Md.
PACIFIC REGION: Janet Reaume, Centrailia College, Wash.
SOUTHERN REGION: Kimberly Mack, Halifax Community College, N.C.
WESTERN REGION: Sandra Mora, Alamo Colleges, Texas

ACCT congratulates the 2017 ACCT Regional Award recipients for their outstanding work. Visit www.acct.org to learn more about the ACCT Awards program.
Ted Mitchell Appointed to Lead American Council on Education

Ted Mitchell

Former U.S. Under Secretary of Education Ted Mitchell was appointed on July 20 to serve as the new president of the American Council on Education (ACE).

“This appointment could not be more timely,” said ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown. “Ted brings a wealth of experience and policy acumen to this position. While he served as U.S. Under Secretary of Education, Ted was always responsive and thoughtful, genuinely sensitive to the needs of community colleges and our students, and to the sector’s desire to be more fully integrated into the Washington policymaking community.”

“I am honored to lead ACE into a new century of focusing on advocacy, leadership, and innovation on behalf of all colleges and universities,” Mitchell said in an ACE statement. “These are demanding times for American higher education, and I am confident that ACE can continue to help our member institutions and the entire higher education community best serve our students while we reach our common aspirations for improving access, preparing every student to succeed, and celebrating diversity and opportunity.”
Transportation Expenses Can Take a Toll
The average full-time community college student spends $1,760 per year on transportation.

By Jacob Bray

Community college students spend a considerable amount of money to obtain a degree or certificate. While tuition in our sector is lower than others, other expenses facing students — including housing, food, and transportation — quickly add up. Although paying for transportation might not sound like a major barrier, the average full-time community college student spends $1,760 per year on transportation, which is nearly half of the national average tuition for such a student.

“On the Verge: Costs and Tradeoffs Facing Community College Students,” a 2016 report published by The Institute for College Access and Success (TICAS), underscores the importance of transportation in student’s overall finances. “Knowing I had been awarded the Cal Grant was great, but not getting it on time to pay for my books and materials was really inconvenient,” said one California student interviewed for the report. “I also need that Cal Grant to pay for transportation — there were many times I couldn’t attend class because I didn’t have money for the bus.”

With the reality of student transportation needs in mind, community colleges could work with local officials to provide free or discounted transportation to students. Some cities are already providing free or discounted transit, although the focus seems to be on high school students. In Washington, D.C., public school students under the age of 22 can ride the city bus for free on school days during select times. This is a great deal for high school students, but Washington unfortunately excludes older students at the University of the District of Columbia Community College who may be racking up high transportation costs to juggle trips to work, class, and other obligations.

In addition to municipal initiatives, some colleges are getting the job done themselves. Starting in 2015, St. Louis Community College students who paid fees for at least one credit hour became eligible for the U-Pass, which allows unlimited rides on St. Louis public transportation. Aside from the enrollment requirement, students only need to provide a valid ID to receive the pass made available on the first day of the semester. Students at the University of Pittsburgh can use their student IDs to ride any Port Authority or Allegheny County bus for free, although this benefit is not extended to community college students.

Large cities aren’t the only ones working to provide transportation support to students. In Arkansas, Ozark Regional Transit and the NorthWest Arkansas Community College (NWACC) have created a partnership that established on-campus bus stops and allows any student or faculty with a NWACC ID to ride for free.

Providing transportation assistance to students isn’t a new or revolutionary idea. Colleges and local governments are already taking the initiative and ensuring their students have one less expense on their minds. Transportation may not be the biggest expense our students face, but an extra $1,760 a year in their pockets can make a world of difference.

Jacob Bray is an associate writer with ACCT. He can be reached at jbray@acct.org.
Getting to Graduation: The Importance of College Assessment Policy for Financial Aid Recipients

The Institute for College Access & Success and ACCT, in collaboration with the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, examine the effect financial aid and assessment policy have on graduation and transfer rates.

By Debbie Cochrane

Earlier this year, The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS) and ACCT, in collaboration with the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (CCCCCO), set out to explore community college students’ rates of transfer and graduation, and how those rates differed by students’ financial status (both their own ability to pay for college and the amount of financial aid they receive). This effort was an attempt to expand upon the CCCCCO’s Student Success Scorecard efforts, which track first-time students’ success at reaching particular academic milestones but have not included factors related to their financial status. In line with other work on student success and financial status, we found that students with less ability to pay graduated and transferred at lower rates than those with more financial cushion, but that financial aid helped to close the gap.

Our findings also shed interesting light on the importance of college assessment policy and its particular significance to financial aid recipients. Three out of four California community college students in our sample attempted math or English coursework below transfer level, signaling that they had been assessed as being unprepared for college-level coursework. The same is true for 81 percent of California community college students who received a financial aid package that included an institutional fee waiver, Pell Grant, and state Cal Grant. This finding is particularly surprising given the academic merit standards students must meet to be eligible for a Cal Grant, the state’s primary grant aid program. Eligibility for Cal Grants requires a minimum high school grade point average (GPA) of 2.0. Most students’ grades far exceed this threshold: data from the California Student Aid Commission show that the average Cal Grant recipient at a community college has a GPA of 3.0.

The fact that developmental coursework was so prevalent among a group of students who have demonstrated academic merit raises questions. Is the alignment between high school and college curricula so disjointed that students who leave high school with a B average are truly not capable of succeeding in college-level work? Or is it the colleges’ assessment of students’ capabilities that is the issue, and are college-ready students being placed into developmental coursework unnecessarily?

Indeed, research suggests that many students placed into developmental coursework could succeed in college-level courses, rendering the developmental coursework unnecessary. Importantly, students who take developmental coursework have lower odds of success, and those who do succeed take more time to graduate. In other words, overly aggressive placement of students into developmental coursework isn’t simply duplicative. It has the potential to derail students from reaching their academic goals.

These are particularly problematic issues for financial aid recipients, given strict limits on the number of years students can receive federal Pell Grants (six years) or state Cal Grants (four years). And it isn’t just grant aid: in our study, 91 percent of students receiving an aid package including a federal student loan had taken developmental coursework. Given these students’ need to repay loans after they leave college, it is particularly important that unnecessary barriers such as overly aggressive placement into developmental coursework are removed to increase students’ odds of graduating or transferring.

Within California, developmental placement policies have undergone reforms in recent years, but more remains to be done. A bill currently working its way through the Legislature, AB 706 (Irwin), would require that colleges consider high school performance when determining if students need remediation. However, whether driven by state policy or not, college leaders must ensure that their own institutional policies do not place students into developmental coursework unnecessarily, causing undue hardship for their most vulnerable students.

TICAS and ACCT strongly encourage colleges to use multiple measures — including high school transcripts and test scores — to assess students in order to reduce the likelihood of placing them into developmental coursework unnecessarily. Colleges can also ensure that students receive the targeted support and counseling they need after being placed into developmental coursework so they understand their progression out of remediation and into — and through — a program of study. These steps will help all students to succeed, including the financial aid recipients for whom the stakes are particularly high.

For more original perspectives on research and higher education policy, visit NOW.ACCT.ORG.

Debbie Cochrane is vice president for The Institute for College Access & Success.
How did we win back Year-Round Pell?
This spring, Congress passed the funding legislation for fiscal year (FY) 2017 that makes year-round Pell Grants available to qualifying students as of this July 1st. Thanks to the permanent reinstatement of Year-Round Pell, students will now be able to receive an additional Pell Grant disbursement to take additional coursework beyond the standard 24-credit annual maximum. For most students, this additional award would be applied during the summer months, allowing them to have continual and seamless access to Pell Grant aid throughout the year. Under this expansion, the maximum amount of Pell aid a student may receive annually has increased from $5,920 to $8,880 for students who attempt 36 credit hours during a single award year.

The reinstatement of year-round Pell was a major policy priority for ACCT and the top community college legislative priority this year at the Community College National Legislative Summit. It is a testament of the continued advocacy of our institutions that we as a national community were able to galvanize Congressional support and get year-round Pell passed in Congress and signed into law.

Why was Year-Round Pell cut in the first place?
The concept behind year-round Pell had strong bipartisan support and was initially authorized in 2008. That initial offering of year-round Pell also coincided with other expansions of the program — the maximum award level was increased and the eligibility formula was adjusted to allow for more generous awards for some students. These changes, combined with record postsecondary enrollment numbers during the economic downturn, created significant demand for the program. Millions more students were receiving awards at greater levels, and as a result the program began to accumulate large shortfalls. To generate savings for the program, Congressional appropriators adjusted Pell Grant eligibility rules in 2011 and 2012 by eliminating Year-Round Pell, eliminating Ability-to-Benefit (ATB) students, changing the formula to calculate Expected Family Contribution (EFC), and reducing the full-time semester eligibility to 12 full-time semesters.

Many of the changes to Pell Grant eligibility rules had a disproportionately negative impact on non-traditional students, and especially on community college students. As a result, many community college students saw their Pell Grant award reduced or their eligibility was eliminated.
Why was 2017 the right time to reinstate Year-Round Pell?
This fiscal outlook for the Pell Grant program has changed significantly since the Great Recession. Postsecondary enrollment numbers have declined, and demand for Pell is not as great. That, combined with the eligibility changes enacted in 2011 and 2012, has resulted in a significant decrease in the cost of the program. As a result, the Pell Grant program is now operating with a significant surplus — $8.5 billion in surplus funds are being rolled into FY 2018. While it is important to reinvest this surplus into the Pell Grant program to ensure that funds are available for future years, the existence of this surplus is enticing for Congressional appropriators as they deal with other funding shortfalls and reductions.

At our urging, some of the surplus was tapped to reinstate Year-Round Pell. But the 2017 funding bill also eliminated $1.3 billion from the Pell Grant program surplus. These funds were reallocated to other funding areas or used to backfill funding gaps. For the forthcoming appropriations process, the House Appropriations Committee and the Trump Administration have proposed once again raiding the Pell Grant surplus to fill budgetary holes. However, these proposed rescissions are significantly larger than this spring’s $1.3 billion, at $3.3 and $3.9 billion, respectively.

What’s uncertain about the future of Pell Grant funding?
Questions remain about what may happen to the Pell Grant program during the FY 2018 appropriations cycle. Current funding caps make some sort of rescission of surplus funds possible; however, negotiations to raise the caps may occur in the fall. The ongoing surplus also opens the door to possible expansions for the program. Therefore, as the FY 2018 appropriations process plays out, ACCT has focused on potential areas for near-term reforms to Pell. These include changes to the formula to calculate Pell, expansions of Pell Grant eligibility for qualified students enrolled in certain short-term training programs, and an increase in the maximum award amount.

What Pell-related requests should community college leaders make next?
Pell Grant awards are calculated via formula based on factors such as income, enrollment intensity, the number of individuals in a household, and whether a student is independent or dependent. At the core of the Pell Grant calculation is the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). In 2012, Congress opted to scale back the income levels at which a student can qualify for a full Pell Grant award. Prior to that change, students with an income of up to $32,000 could qualify for zero EFC. Zero EFC students who attend full-time are eligible for a maximum Pell Grant award. In 2012, that number was reduced to $23,000, essentially reducing the set-aside for basic living expenses such as food, housing, and clothing. This reduction has disproportionately impacted working students and students with families.

Ending this work penalty and restoring the zero EFC levels to at least $32,000 would allow many community college students who are at or within 150 percent of the federal poverty line to receive additional aid.

Congress also may consider an increase to the Pell Grant maximum award for FY 2018. Since the 2010-11 academic year, the Pell Grant program has received mandatory funding to increase the maximum award. For the past five years, that increase has been automatically tied to inflation. The current academic year is the last year for that inflationary increase, potentially leaving the maximum award to stagnate at $5,920 for full-time students taking the standard 24-credit full-time course load. An increase to the maximum award in FY 2018 would improve the purchasing power of Pell.

Another ongoing priority for community colleges is the extension of Pell Grant eligibility for certain students enrolled in short-term training programs. Currently, Pell is limited to programs that are at least 15 weeks in length, even though many job training programs are shorter. Legislation such as the bipartisan JOBS Act would open eligibility for certain short-term programs that are at least eight weeks in length. This would enable eligible students to receive half of the current discretionary Pell Grant award, or up to $2,887.

ACCT will continue to monitor budgetary developments and alert members about pressing updates relating to Pell Grants and other programs vital to community colleges and our students. Please follow along with the latest developments and encourage other advocates at your college to use ACCT’s new online policy website, ACCT NOW. To receive legislative updates via email, send us an email at publicpolicy@acct.org.
‘VARYING DEGREES’
OF SUPPORT
FOR HIGHER ED

NEW FINDINGS PROMPT AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE TO RECOMMEND THAT GOVERNMENT INVEST IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE FIRST.

BY RACHEL FISHMAN
NEARLY THREE OUT OF FOUR AMERICANS (71 PERCENT) see higher education as a societal good, rather than a private benefit for individual graduates. This was one of the major findings of a representative survey of Americans ages 18 and over fielded by New America, an independent public policy institute. According to our study, this verdict holds true regardless of demographics, even when accounting for political ideology. (For the full report and interactive data, see newamerica.org/in-depth/varying-degrees.)

Yet despite high public appreciation for higher education, state investment has decreased by over $1 billion over the past decade, according to data from the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO). A history of state disinvestment from America’s public colleges and universities has led to the federal government partially filling the gap by providing students more Pell Grants and loans. But in the end, the greatest burden has fallen on students and families, who increasingly bear significant upfront expenses once school starts and face costly loan payments upon leaving school.

Given that most Americans think higher education is a public good, how can we get policymakers to see it — and to fund it — that way? The answer may lie in looking toward the most positively viewed sector of higher education: community colleges.

Compared to all other higher education sectors, Americans who participated in New America’s survey were more likely to believe that community colleges contribute to a strong American workforce, are worth the cost, prepare people to be successful, and always put their students first. (See table below.) Importantly, well over half of Americans believe that public two- and four-year colleges are “for people in my situation.” Conversely, fewer than half said the same about private two- and four-year institutions.

All signs suggest that community colleges are having a moment. This could be in part because they remain the most affordable pathway to a sub-baccalaureate credential, increasingly opening doors for students hoping to secure a bachelor's degree. It also could be the regional and local ties community colleges have with employers, or maybe even the additional attention the sector has gotten through such popular “free college” (College Promise) initiatives like the Tennessee or Oregon Promise programs.

Given that U.S. Department of Education data show that community colleges educate approximately four out of ten undergraduates, many of whom are low income, any policy aiming to make them more affordable would be well targeted and have far-reaching benefits. An example of such a policy could be the creation of low-cost or debt-free college programs at the state or local level. The Tennessee Promise already offers such a program, but it and similar programs could help students even more by making the Promise scholarship first-dollar, allowing for other aid, like the federal Pell Grant, to defray the cost of books and other related expenses.

Regardless of how federal, state, and local policymakers choose to focus scarce resources on higher education, the focus should always be on community colleges first. Not only are they the sector Americans see as the most valuable, but they also are the lowest-cost option for educating today’s students. Community colleges are the low-hanging fruit to which policymakers should focus resources for the sake of delivering on the promise of maintaining higher education as a social good.

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**Rachel Fishman is deputy director for research, higher education initiative at New America. She can be reached at fishmanr@newamerica.org.**

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MAKING GOOD ON PROMISES

BY DAVID CONNER

COLLEGE PROMISE CAMPAIGN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARTHA KANTER AND SENIOR STRATEGY ADVISER ANDRA ARMSTRONG DISCUSS THE GROWING POPULARITY OF TUITION-FREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROGRAMS.
Q: Congratulations on the anniversary of the College Promise Campaign. Thinking back to the campaign’s launch two years ago, how do your expectations from that time compare with the state of College Promise programs today?

When we launched the College Promise Campaign at Macomb Community College in Warren, Michigan, on September 9, 2015, our expectations were high. We had identified about 50 College Promise initiatives. Our goal was to encourage exponential growth. Our mission was, and continues to be, to encourage more communities, cities, and states to recognize the need to establish College Promise programs and to inspire them to make community college or technical education as universal and free as public high schools have been for the last century.

Our approach is yielding some exciting results. Our latest tally now counts well over 200 College Promise initiatives in 35 states and statewide programs in 11 states. Momentum is growing! Every new Promise program established is an inspiration and model for other communities and states to consider.

Just two years into our campaign, we are pleasantly surprised at its momentum. The dramatic pace is a reflection of the dire need for states and communities to find affordable ways to send more students to a community or technical college so they can get the education and training they need to enter the workforce and earn a living wage. We believe that none of this would have happened without the vision and leadership of cross-sector leaders committed to making free community college a reality.

The drumbeat for local and statewide Promise programs has picked up speed dramatically this year. The growth of statewide programs has been dramatic. Though approaches vary from state to state, we have now seen commitments to free college in 11 states, whether that’s through legislation, grants, or scholarships: Tennessee, Oregon, Minnesota, California, Kentucky, Arkansas, Indiana, Hawaii, New York, Nevada, and Rhode Island.

We’ve spoken about how the proposed federal America’s College Promise Act of 2015 gave way to a viable College Promise movement at state and local levels. How do College Promise programs continue to evolve, or have their characteristics and the ways by which they’re administered stabilized into a fairly consistent pattern?

There’s no one way that programs have evolved. Some use public funds, some use private donations, and others use a mixture of both. Some programs are statewide, some cover a single institution, and others serve entire cities, towns, counties, or regions.

But as the movement catches on, we find that many new programs find inspiration from those whose results have implemented sustainable solutions. Certainly, the Tennessee Promise has been the North Star for states that want to replicate its success. Other governors are impressed that the Tennessee Promise has been able to build a college-going culture and to create support systems to enable students to start and complete their community college education.

As time progresses, the College Promise Campaign is keeping track of the many innovative ways that communities and states are designing and funding their College Promise programs and sharing that data with researchers and the general public at www.collegepromise.org.

In April, the New York Times ran an op-ed declaring that *New York’s free-tuition program will help traditional, but not typical, students.* Others have expressed similar concerns. Since most community college students are so-called non-traditional students, what can be done to ensure that College Promise programs help non-traditional students access, persist in, and complete a degree or certificate program, or to transfer to a four-year bachelor’s degree program?

The College Promise Campaign is tracking the evolution of the movement, examining the progress of its champions and the concerns and caveats of its critics. Some of the most common concerns and criticisms include:

- Low college graduation rates
- College is not for everyone
- Part-time, adult students are not prioritized in many of the new College Promise programs
- Racial, ethnic, and income stratification concerns
- Limits on choice for students who qualify for more selective colleges and universities
- Could increase college costs for the junior and senior year with large numbers of qualified community college students
- Demand could outpace supply
- Public universities might be forced to limit access for qualified transfer students
- Financial sustainability of local or state funds raised for College Promise programs

The College Promise Campaign supports the design of financially sustainable College Promise programs at the local and state level that incorporate the right mix of educational interventions like mentoring and academic support with incentives to help students persist through their college or university program. Every sector has high-performing and low-performing community colleges and universities if you look at college completion rates, college costs, college debt after graduating or dropping out, earnings over time, and workforce outcomes, to name a few. There are models that enable part-time students to participate in the College Promise. Others have designed their programs to attract adults with little or no college, like Tennessee’s Reconnect or North Carolina’s Vance Guarantee.

College Promise initiatives can learn from one another and replicate the best designs from what’s already underway. Even though we’ve had “free college” models available for select populations for many years, including the GI Bill and Pell Grant
WE ENCOURAGE ALL COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARDS AND PRESIDENTS TO LOOK INTO BRINGING COLLEGE PROMISE PROGRAMS TO THEIR CAMPUSES. IT'S A VALUE PROPOSITION THAT WILL YIELD A HIGH RETURN ON THEIR INVESTMENT — AND IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

program, the College Promise movement is young. We are excited about the work of the University of Pennsylvania’s Alliance for Higher Education and Democracy, WestEd, MDRC, the Public Policy Institute of California, Institute for Higher Education Policy, and others that will inform the College Promise movement as it evolves in the years ahead.

Does the College Promise Campaign support the extension of promise programs to four-year colleges and universities? From the beginning, our mission has been to build broad public support for states and localities to make the first two years of community college — at a minimum — as universal, free, and accessible as public high school has been for the last century. We applaud the efforts of several states extending free college to four-year colleges and universities, as well as Kalamazoo, El Dorado, and others for the range of public and private higher education institutions available to their Promise students. However, the College Promise Campaign has prioritized enabling students to enter and complete a community college degree, a technical certificate, or credits to transfer to a four-year university.

We emphasize that K-14 — at a minimum — should be the new 21st-century standard. A generation ago, a high school education was enough to prepare students to enter the workforce and to assure access to a good job and a decent quality of life. That is no longer true; to be ready for 21st century jobs, students must go on beyond high school. We want a community college education to be available at no cost to anyone willing to put in the work.

The College Promise Campaign has created a database in partnership with the University of Pennsylvania to “spur further research.” How will the data amassed in this database be used? We have put together a user-friendly, open access database that researchers, policymakers, and the general public can use at any time. As we learn more about evolving College Promise programs, we put data into the online tracker on our website at www.collegepromise.org. Anyone interested in studying College Promise programs and assessing their designs and outcomes can use the tracker to determine what existing programs fit their research parameters. We are hoping that this easily accessible database will spur further study of Promise programs.

In working with Dr. Laura Perna and her research team at the University of Pennsylvania, our goal is to share a rich body of data communities and states can use to make informed decisions about the best way to build sustainable College Promise programs. We know that communities and states are more likely to invest in free community college programs if they can be confident that they are a worthwhile investment, one that boosts economic prosperity, social inclusion, and healthy communities by increasing college enrollment and attainment.

The data examine a range of program characteristics such as eligibility criteria, funding streams, academic support, mentoring, and credit transfer from community colleges to participating universities. As College Promise programs evolve, we will make more information available to identify which models increase enrollment, college completion, workforce advancement, and economic and community success, to name just a few outcomes. Our research partners will continue to offer recommendations for the ideal structure and characteristics of Promise programs by using the latest research.

We also worked with the Educational Testing Service to co-sponsor a conference on designing sustainable funding College Promise models in June 2016. At that event, over 90 scholars, policymakers, business leaders, and government officials came together to examine different financial approaches for creating sustainable and effective Promise programs. Five design teams presented papers that analyzed different financial models for building College Promise programs. And on October 4, 2017, the Campaign will co-host a joint event with ETS at the National Press Club to announce the publication of those papers.

At the PromiseNet 2016 conference on College Promise programs, there was a lot of talk about College Promise program outcomes. How are outcomes being gauged, and have any preliminary findings compared these outcomes yet to those of community colleges that do not offer College Promise benefits? A wide range of researchers are assessing the outcomes of local and state College Promise programs across the nation. Early findings (e.g., Tennessee Promise, Detroit Promise, Long Beach Promise, El Dorado Promise, Richmond Promise, etc.) are showing increases in college enrollment, especially for low-income, first generation students, and higher rates of persistence. While we are still in the early years when it comes to assessing the long-term
impact of College Promise programs versus those that do not offer free college benefits, we are establishing the College Promise Research Network to collect, publish, and share the results of the many College Promise outcomes studies and the range of factors that result in success, improvement, and/or re-engineering.

If a College Promise program enables more students to start and complete a college degree or certificate, that's success. If students can complete their educations without going into burdensome college debt, that's a victory. If a community can say that it attracts more industry and employers to the region and retains its employees and their families because the workforce is benefiting from its local or state free college program, that's progress.

**What do you think would happen to education in the United States if everyone were able to complete a two-year college program at no direct personal cost? Would there be a butterfly effect on the economy and productivity? Do any data support the vision?**

Today, we have a massive skills gap in this country that can only be solved if more people complete education beyond high school, whether that means earning a two or four-year college degree or certificate. The U.S. Department of Labor notes that there are 5.5 million vacancies in this country because industries cannot find workers with the right skill sets to match jobs. That's bad for students, employers, and local economies. What industries will invest in a community or state where they cannot attract and retain well-educated, well-prepared employees? What communities will remain vibrant and cohesive if there are no job prospects for their residents?

If we can get more students to start and complete their education, by covering college costs for the first one or two years of higher education, results from the Kalamazoo and El Dorado Promises already demonstrate positive effects on the local economy. Studies show that for every dollar invested in community colleges, the local community gets a threefold return on its investment.

**What do you say to critics who say that College Promise programs are too expensive for taxpayers without any evidence of a return on the investment?**

There is no one way to finance a College Promise program. Many communities have launched successful College Promise initiatives from multiple funding sources, using contributions from corporations, foundations, education, and/or government. The many communities and states that do use taxpayer dollars have found the cost to be a worthwhile investment — a necessary expense to develop the workforce and make a more productive community for their residents.

Taxpayers need to assess the cost of not acting on initiatives to make college more affordable. How much will it cost in lost revenue if the workforce is unprepared? What are the social costs for communities if people are unemployed? Research shows that healthcare and prison costs decline as a function of better educated residents. Those are expenses, too.

**And what would you say to college boards and presidents who haven't yet investigated bringing College Promise programs to their institutions? Why should they look into it, and what are the first steps toward learning about and implementing a College Promise program?**

We encourage all community college boards and presidents to look into bringing College Promise programs to their campuses. It's a value proposition that will yield a high return on their investment — and it is the right thing to do. At a time when campuses face declining enrollments and low completion rates, we know that far too few students are starting and completing their education because of the unbearable cost of attending school. For too many students and families, the escalating cost of tuition, fees, living expenses, and loans makes a college education seem out of reach. By making a community college education free, we know that more youth and adults will enroll in and complete their programs of study.

For those boards and presidents that might be skeptical about starting a College Promise program, we point to the success of free college programs, such as Tennessee Promise, which has had dramatic results since its inception in 2014. In under three years, the state has seen a huge boost in college enrollment and retention. In its first two years, the state witnessed a 30 percent increase in full-time freshman enrollment at community colleges and a 32 percent increase at technical schools. New results show higher rates of college persistence. Education officials also have noted a cultural shift, as more students ascribe to a college-going culture. Tennessee now leads the states in the number of students who complete a FAFSA application.

We also encourage education leaders to consider what would happen if they don't invest in College Promise programs. We know that industries will not invest in communities that don't have enough workers with the needed skills. We also know that community colleges are uniquely equipped to tailor curricula to the needs of the workforce. And community colleges are the gateway to affordable baccalaureate and advanced degrees. We believe it is a local, state, and national imperative to make those first two years of college beyond high school — at a minimum — universal and free for any student willing to work hard by putting in the effort. The return on investment will more than double for this and future generations.

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A FINANCIAL PLANNING MODEL

AT LONE STAR COLLEGE, A ‘LIVING DOCUMENT’ OF INSTITUTIONAL FINANCES HELPS THE BOARD SET PRIORITIES AND EXPLORE ‘WHAT-IF’ SCENARIOS.

BY STEPHEN C. HEAD

AS A COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD MEMBER, FEW ISSUES ARE MORE difficult to understand fully than the finances of the institution. Board members generally have three major roles: 1) hiring the chancellor or president, 2) approving policies, and 3) overseeing and approving finances. The first two are largely process driven and involve common sense, legal issues, and community norms. Finance is a uniquely separate issue, and unless you are a CPA or you hold an MBA, reviewing finances can be a daunting task at times.
The normal scenario for budgeting and finances looks like the following: If you were a trustee in Texas, you would be one of six to nine members elected to a community college board. While you should understand spreadsheets and financial reports, it is likely that you would have limited background in the actual management of the college. The college leadership comes before the board in late spring with budget proposals for some combination of tuition and fees, as well as state and local funding dollars and miscellaneous revenues. When the board meets to review the budget, the questions focus on state appropriations, tuition and fees, local tax rates (in most cases, you are not on the board to raise taxes), pay raises, enrollment growth or decline, and miscellaneous expenditures proposed by the administration. Most board members are sensitive about “micro-managing,” and while they may have legitimate questions about long-term financial consequences because they are successful in their own careers, few board members are likely to know the questions to ask. Nor would the average board member know whether the given answers are accurate.

Lone Star College, located in the north metropolitan Houston area, is one of the largest and fastest-growing
community colleges in the country, featuring six comprehensive
colleges and 10 centers with over 95,000 credit-earning
and non-credit students each semester, an annual budget
exceeding $500 million, and 7,300 employees spread over a
2,100 square mile service area. Therefore, having an in-depth
knowledge of the budget is critical to the success of a high-
performing institution.

When I was named chancellor in 2014, one of my key
initiatives was to have discussions with the board (and college
administrators) about key revenue and expense issues using a
“living document” so they could see how changes in one year
impacted revenue or expenses in years two, three, four, five,
and beyond. For example, at Lone Star College:
• Every 1 percent increase in salaries permanently adds
  $1.7 million to the budget
• A 1 percent increase in the fund balance represents
  $3.75 million
• 5 million square feet of older facilities need repair and
  renovation on a planned and regular basis
• New facilities (LSC is in the midst of a $485 million bond
  program) mean additional costs for staffing, utilities,
  and supplies
• Refreshing 17,000 computers and other instructional
  equipment on a schedule requires planning.

Lone Star’s Five-Year Plan involves several specific decisions
by the board and administration. The first decision was
agreement on general philosophy. Working together, we
decided that students would generally pay 35 percent of the
total cost of education, local taxpayers would pay 40 percent,
and the state contribution — a steadily declining amount of the
total budget — would be 20 percent. Grants and miscellaneous
revenue account for the remainder. Those numbers could
fluctuate slightly if the state reduces its contribution or if the
local assessed value increases or declines. These parameters
form the basis of guidance in our financial decision-making.

The second major decision on the Five-Year Plan included
the selection of revenue and expense variables. Basically,
we took known and projected revenues and then factored in
estimates for years two, three, and beyond. These variables
include compensation changes, tuition and fee rates, tax rates,
state appropriations, workforce equipment, special projects,
new staffing, additional faculty, and about a dozen local issues.

The Five-Year Plan has two major components (see
accompanying charts). The budget overview itself is a one-page
spreadsheet and details revenues and expenses over a five-
year period in a clean manner. The basic formatting starts
with Year 1 but allows different scenarios to be explored with
the board using “what-if” analysis. If a board member asks
about the possibility of pay raises in future years, the impact
can be seen immediately. If another board member asks
about state revenues or local tax rates, we can change those
numbers and show the impact. The administration initially
inputs the assumptions, but changes can occur as different
scenarios evolve.

The second major component of the plan involves charts and
graphs that monitor the tuition-and-fees percentage, the tax
percentage, the state contribution, and a minimum 16 percent
fund balance. So if we believe that the state contribution will
decrease as a percentage of our operating budget (a reality),
we can see how that impacts the budgeting philosophy of
35 percent student tuition and fees, 40 percent tax revenue,
20 percent state funding, and the 16 percent fund balance. Any
changes in the revenue-and-expenses column have an impact
on those percentages.

An auxiliary piece of the Five-Year Plan is how we distribute
funds among the colleges and system office. At Lone Star College,
the distribution is based on a formula allocating 40 percent to the
system office (police, HR, financial aid, information technology,
and other system functions) and 60 percent of new money
to the colleges based on performance metrics that focus on
systemwide goals and growth.

Student success is our first priority, but without a solid
financial foundation based on facts and long-term planning, it is
difficult to sustain creativity, innovation, and high performance.

One unexpected benefit of the Five-Year Plan was that our
credit rating agency — LSC is AAA rated — noted that no
college they worked with had such a model. We believe the
Five-Year Plan allows us to present the finances to the board,
our employees, and the community in an open, transparent,
and businesslike manner.
Community college governing boards are increasingly being held accountable for the success of the institution and its students. ACCT’s Retreat & Workshop Services are designed to help trustees effectively carry out their responsibilities in an increasingly complex and litigious world. ACCT is 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 Board Leadership Services will customize a retreat that fits your board’s individual needs. ACCT’s expertise is able to provide comprehensive retreat services and guidance to the Board of Trustees and CEO.

Our service derives its strength and uniqueness from the following:

- Focus only on the two-year community and technical college sector.
- A 35-year history of outstanding and recognized service to boards of trustees in colleges and districts throughout the United States and abroad.
- A range of board retreat and consultative services that set the stage for long-term success.
- A range of services that can be customized to a board’s exact needs.
- Experience conducting more than 300 retreats for community colleges all over the country.
- Facilitators and consultants who include former trustees, presidents, and scholars with proven track records and expertise in college governance and board leadership.

**Classic Topics**

While each retreat or workshop can be tailored to meet the individual needs of any institution and its board, ACCT offers a range of Classic Topics. Potential retreat topics include:

- Roles and Responsibilities of the Board
- Strengthening the Board/President 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 President Transition
- New Trustee Orientation
- Board Self-Assessment and Presidential Evaluation

For more information or to schedule a retreat, contact Narcisa Polonio at narcisa_polonio@acct.org / 202.276.1983 or Colleen Allen at callen@acct.org / 202.775.6490.
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John Wright
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• Thank outgoing members for their service.

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For more information and to submit an application, go to www.acct.org/membership/lifetime or contact ACCT’s Member Services at 202.775.4667 or acctinfo@acct.org.
Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos visited Grand Rapids Community College in Michigan to promote community college training. The visit was in part to support the emphasis on apprenticeships championed by the Trump Administration.

Kellogg Community College in Michigan is adding five new sports to its athletic program, along with new associate degree programs in sports management and exercise science.

A partnership in Illinois between Kane County Juvenile Detention Center and Elgin Community College allows inmates the opportunity to earn college credits. Based on the success of the year-old program, expansion to other counties is being considered.

Harper College in Illinois pledged to match up to $1 million in funds from a budget surplus for scholarships as part of the college’s promise program. After the Harper College Educational Foundation raises $10 million for its Harper College Promise Scholarship Program, the college will match up to an additional $1 million through the challenge. The foundation already has collected $8.6 million and anticipates reaching the $10 million mark as Harper celebrates its 50th anniversary.

Ohio became the 24th state to allow its community colleges to offer four-year degrees following Governor John Kasich’s signing of the state budget. The state has set a goal of 65 percent degree or certificate completion among adults ages 24 through 65 by 2025.

Lorain County Community College in Ohio is offering a new associate program in digital fabrication this fall. More than 8,000 jobs in the state are related to digital fabrication technologies, an area which is also a focus of local employers and the Lorain County Manufacturers Association.

Kentucky has launched a program called the Help Wanted Campaign intended to connect state residents with educational programs offering certificates and degrees in areas such as healthcare, information technology, and advanced manufacturing.

Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy is reviewing a bill passed by both houses of the state legislature that, if signed, would clarify which credits the University of Connecticut and the four other state universities accept.

Hartford Community college received a grant to boost STEM education. The $650,000 grant will provide scholarships to students with a GPA of 3.0 or higher with financial need.

Baltimore Mayor Katherine Pugh has proposed providing free community college to all public high school graduates of the Maryland city. The $1.5 million proposal could help instill “a higher level of hope, expectation, and motivation in the Baltimore City atmosphere,” Baltimore City Community College President Gordon F. May said in a statement.

Hudson County Community College in New Jersey hosted the ACCT Board of Directors Summer Retreat. The ACCT Board met to develop strategies to advance community college governance and advocacy at the national level.

Rhode Island is moving ahead with the promise of free tuition to any Rhode Island high school graduate from the class of 2017 at the state’s community college.

Maine community colleges will freeze tuition for the 2017-18 school year. At about $3,600 a year, tuition at the state’s two-year institutions are the lowest in New England. The tuition freeze was made possible by an increase in the state appropriation.

The Nevada state assembly passed a measure that gives the state legislature increased ability to oversee the Board of Regents and state higher education system.

Starting in July, inmates in Washington state will have
access to state-funded associate degree programs and an expanded offering of vocational certificates. Research shows a 43 percent drop in recidivism for those who receive an education while incarcerated.

Monterey County Community Colleges in California have signed agreements with high schools in the area to offer college-level classes on 9 to 12 campuses. Courses include programming fundamentals and computer information systems.

California Governor Jerry Brown signed a $125 billion state budget that includes increased funding for education.

A bill introduced in the California Legislature would give low-income Native American students the same priority enrollment in community colleges as other low-income residents. Thirteen percent of Native Americans have completed a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 29 percent of the total U.S. population.

About one-third of California community colleges now have alumni organizations, as part of efforts to increase fundraising and support that have intensified since the 2008 recession. Los Angeles City College, for example, attributes alumni fundraising as a significant part of the $560,000 its foundation raised last year for student scholarships.

The California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office issued Maker Grants to 24 colleges. As part of CCC’s Maker Initiative, the colleges will develop curriculum and internships to help promote innovation and entrepreneurial skills. They also will create “makerspaces” and provide opportunities for students to collaborate with peers across the state.

Mississippi has launched a program called Complete 2 Compete to encourage as many as 158,000 students who have started but not finished their postsecondary degree.

Hinds Community College in Mississippi received a $5.1 million dollar Upward Bound grant from the Department of Education to target students from low-income families, potential first-generation college students, and students with a high risk of academic failure.

Virginia Tech has created a program funded by a $5 million grant from the National Science Foundation that will provide 336 scholarships to students at Virginia Western and Northern Virginia Community colleges. The grant will pay for the entirety of two years at community college, and up to $10,000 a year at Virginia Tech.

A bill introduced in the North Carolina Senate would offer annual forgivable $8,250 loans for up to four years of college for as many as 160 students seeking to become STEM or special ed teachers.

Pitt Community College in North Carolina is offering a free construction program as part of a partnership with the state’s department of transportation. The training program focuses on the different skills required to work in the highway construction industry.

Students at Calhoun Community College in Alabama can now access University of Alabama at Birmingham facilities, resources, and counselors. Graduates of the community college will then be able to transfer to UAB with financial assistance.

The Texas Legislature has approved a bill that would permit more community colleges to offer four-year degree programs. Three community colleges in the state already do so, and San Jacinto College in Houston is developing bachelor’s degree programs in Nursing and Applied Technology in industrial management programs.

An increasing number of Oklahoma students are registering for concurrent enrollment despite decreased funding for the program. In the 2016-17 school year, 19,400 students completed 91,000 college credits, saving on average $100 per credit.

A new grant program created by the Montana Legislature would allow people to contribute to the cost of tuition and living expenses for residents going through two-year community or tribal college programs. The grant program, run through the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, would provide funds for low-income Montana students.
AMERICA IS DEALING WITH THE WORST SOCIAL HEALTH CRISIS our nation has ever seen: Addiction. Two of the most afflicted populations are youth and young adults. Young people always have been disproportionately touched by addiction because of the risky behavior associated with adolescence; however, the real dilemma today is that so many youth and young adults have been directly affected by a pharmaceutical-induced opiate explosion. Coupled with the legalization of this population’s most abused illicit drug, marijuana, I personally submit that addiction is the greatest threat to student success we face.

Every state and community is affected. Recent statistics show us that the problem is getting worse, not better. Janet Yellen, chair of the Federal Reserve System, testified in July to a Senate committee that the opioid epidemic is contributing to a labor shortage. The United States, she said, “is the only advanced nation that I know of where in these communities we’re actually, especially among less-educated men, seeing an increase in death rates partly reflecting opioid use.” David Mericle, an economist from Goldman Sachs, said in July that economic research shows that opioid addiction is a reason more people aren’t actively seeking employment. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has stated that the number of opiate overdose deaths have quadrupled since 1999, killing more than 33,000 people in the U.S. in 2015 alone, with no improvement anticipated for the remainder of the decade. It’s beyond time for an all-hands-on-deck approach to this challenge, and as the epicenters of many counties and communities, community colleges are well positioned to take a lead in the solutions.
At the same time, there has been a significant increase in drug use among college students, according to surveys. According to Monitoring the Future, a continuing study of American youth by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the University of Michigan, the 2015 rate of past-month marijuana use was the highest reported since 1986. The most rigorous study conducted to date on the effects of marijuana legalization on college students show that marijuana use may encumber student success: students who lost access to recreational marijuana use saw a 5 percent increase in their odds of passing their courses,” according to a July 2017 Washington Post account of a study of over 4,000 students from Maastricht, a city in the Netherlands.

A more troubling finding for community college leaders is that, according to the Indiana College Survey, students who attended two-year colleges consistently had higher reported rates of illicit drug use than those who attended four-year institutions. Thus, community colleges are particularly and uniquely affected. They must become leaders in the fight against addiction.

The students we serve are a microcosm of society, and society is in the middle of a pandemic. Society’s unpreparedness and naiveté about opiates and the growing overuse of those drugs brought us to where we are today. Studies show that young adults aged 18 to 27 are among the populations most significantly affected by addiction. As providers of education, we can’t be naive about how pervasive addiction is among our student population. And yet a 2011 study from the Journal of Student Affairs Research Practice reported that “despite the significant attention that drugs and alcohol receive on college campuses, few resources and supports are available to students who are recovering from addiction.”

To lead, we need to understand the problem. Without systemic education among college boards, administration, staff and students, and a campus-wide plan to address the issue, addiction will continue to impact student access, retention, and completion rates, encumbering all of our student success efforts. We have to look beyond solely investing in prevention and awareness, and we need address to addiction as a personal health condition that requires professional intervention without stigma.

We must address this issue differently and openly. It must be addressed on three fronts: prevention, intervention, and recovery support. I call this the trifecta approach to addressing our country’s growing addiction problem.

Education is perhaps the most important protective factor in preventing addiction and the most foundational component in recovery from addiction. Every study ever done on recidivism of jail and prison populations shows that increased education reduces recidivism. Educating our population is critical. Supporting recovery is just as important. We must face this social issue in a systemic way.

Helping our Students

Many four-year universities offer housing that supports students in recovery with an all-around substance-free environment, but most community colleges lack that component since their students don’t live on campus. We must be more community-resourced and partner with students who need help or are in recovery from addiction. Aside from housing,

• Colleges need to set up core curriculum about addiction, not only in freshman orientation and seminars but throughout all programs for all students.
• Staff must be aware of current drug trends and the importance of intervention when students present symptoms. A good place to start is the Monitoring the Future website at drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics/monitoring-future

• Administrators should be aware of and inform students about community resources that are available and how they can access those programs. Treatment centers can be found on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) website at findtreatment.samhsa.gov. If possible, the ideal would be to offer certified addiction counseling to students in need.

• A campus-wide approach is necessary to overcome the stigma that fuels addiction. Not talking about this will not make this go away. The National Council on Patient Information and Education has created a resource kit for college campuses, “What You Can Do: Tips for Raising Awareness about Prescription Drug Abuse on Campus,” which can be found at bemedwise.org/documents/WhatYouCanDo_Tips.pdf.

As postsecondary education remains vitally important in American life, promoting substance abuse prevention and treatment and supporting recovery for our population is more crucial than ever to student success. Facing this American pandemic of addiction head-on is vital. Our students increasingly will come to depend on our partnership in this issue for their success. Our success is only their success.

Michael R. DeLeon is a trustee at Cumberland County College in Vineland, New Jersey.
In the rapidly changing landscape of higher education, how does a board of trustees stay connected to the community and meet its needs? In examining the leadership role of the college, the board of trustees of North Central State College decided to adopt the Carver Policy Governance Model. The overarching principle of this model is framing every discussion, goal, and measure by the development of “ends” policies based on the tenets of “what good, for whom, at what cost?”

The challenges facing North Central State College, located in Mansfield, Ohio, are similar to those facing institutions nationwide: Declining student enrollment, loss of business and industry, changing demographics, and the increased accountability of a state funding model based solely on performance. Our stakeholders helped shape the strategic direction for the college in alignment with the tenets of the governance model, specifically in the areas of student access (for whom), student success (what good), and effective use of resources (at what cost). These efforts revealed the need to expand the access mission, enhance student success, and align the college’s human, fiscal, and physical resources.

An Expanded Mission

**Access:** Past-year enrollment has grown by headcount (3 percent) and credit hours (1 percent) under adverse external conditions that include declining and aging populations, fewer high school graduates, an improving economy allowing adults to pursue jobs instead of education, and increasing competition from public, private, and online institutions. Total early college credits increased by 4 percent. Matriculates to the college with previous college credits increased by 6 percent. Fifty-five percent of NC State’s credit programs are less than three years old, reflecting the changing needs of our community. Through strong community partnerships, the college established outreach centers in two of the counties it serves to facilitate access to underserved and under-resourced first-generation students.

Partnering with more than three dozen high schools, dual enrollment has quadrupled to approximately 1,200 students. Since 2010, the college has served 4,515 unique high school students through some form of early college. These students have earned 63,000 credits, saving around $9 million collectively. If using four-year university costs, the dollars double or triple.

Another access initiative is the Tuition Freedom Scholarship, which provides free tuition up to an associate degree for high school students finishing at least six college credits in dual enrollment with a minimum 2.5 GPA and continuing with the college full time. NC State was the first college in Ohio to offer this program. We awarded these scholarships to between 150 and 200 students in each of the first two years. NC State invested more than $400,000 in the scholarship program in its first year.

**Success:** The Ohio funding formula is now based solely on student completion. The college has done better under the new
formula, which rewards numerous measures. The course success rate continues to be high at 88 percent. The latest three-year success rate for minority students increased by 9 percent, the fall-to-fall three-year entering cohort success rate increased by 1 percent, and the graduation rate of first-time, full-time students for the 2012 cohort increased by 1 percent. Licensure and certification rates are high, with multiple programs achieving 100 percent. Students completing 12 credit hours increased by 5 percent, and those completing 24 credit hours increased 1 percent.

The president’s cabinet has authored numerous policies to embed student success in the college infrastructure, including academic advising and planning, early alerts, and financial responsibility. We have expedited inclusion of corequisites instead of prerequisites to accelerate student completion. The Community College Resource Center recognized NC State as one of the first community colleges in the nation to scale up a math corequisite sequence using statistics instead of algebra in 75 percent of the curriculum. Students also may complete Honors College coursework that includes community service.

**Physical resources:** The newly renovated Kehoe Center for Advanced Learning provides cutting-edge learning facilities in support of our expanding business, engineering, and IT programs, including automation, robotics, cybersecurity, and 3-D printing. In collaboration with career centers, we award more than 50 associate degrees to high school students who receive their high school diplomas at the same time. We provide each student with pathways to continue their baccalaureate degrees on campus with partners like Franklin and Miami Universities through 3+1 programs where the third baccalaureate year is offered at the college tuition rate. Recently, the Ohio legislature approved applied baccalaureate degrees for community colleges. NC State will be pursuing these opportunities to further raise educational attainment and meet the needs of the workforce.

These efforts have received significant recognition over the past year. NC State was named “Education Organization of the Year” by the Ashland Chamber of Commerce. President Diab was awarded a U.S. State Department Fulbright international exchange award to explore international education expansion and received an honorary Ph.D. in community leadership from Franklin University. In addition, the college is leading a statewide effort of 18 colleges and universities to deliver Open Education Resources (OER) to reduce the cost of textbooks for students.

All of these are pragmatic examples of the hard work of the dedicated faculty and staff, led by a board of trustees who employs Carver Policy Governance to work collaboratively with the president and empower him to achieve the “ends” within the executive limitations they established. Any college can build upon its existing mission to better serve students — particularly when the board and president remember to ask, “what good, for whom, at what cost?”

Over the past four years, we increased reserves threefold, from 5 to 20 percent, and the state fiscal viability ratio from 2.7 to 4.0 (a 48 percent increase). We have received more than $15 million in grants, which have allowed us to renovate facilities, update curriculum, and improve information technology.

**Human resources:** NC State works diligently to maintain 50 percent of contact hours taught by full-time faculty. In addition, we are expanding student services, hiring more advisors to maintain a student-to-advisor ratio below 300:1, and providing embedded tutors in classrooms. Working with area employers, we provide hundreds of our students with clinical sites, internships, and apprenticeship opportunities.

**Financial resources:** NC State maintains a balanced budget.

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Dr. Dorey Diab is president of North Central State College.
Dr. Dwight McElfresh is a trustee at North Central State College and a retired dean from the Founders School of Continuing Education in Ashland, Ohio.
At times, we as college leaders — trustees and presidents — may lose sight of the fact that our organizations play a critical and impactful role in the overall prosperity of the communities we serve. When we think about economic development, we quickly recognize the impact of a regional medical center, a major manufacturer, a high-tech software development firm, or a research university in our communities. But what about our community and technical colleges? Are they front and center when we consider economic impact and prosperity? The fact is they certainly are engines of prosperity for the individual students we serve and their families, the numerous and wide-ranging businesses and employers across our landscape, and therefore our communities as a whole.

If we are going to be most effective as economic engines, our colleges need to thrive and a special organizational culture needs to exist, a stage that is set by a unified board and president. Sometimes culture — particularly an entrepreneurial college culture — is considered to be an organization’s “secret sauce,” and it might be worth examining some of the ingredients that make up this sauce that enables both the college and its communities to thrive. Beyond the ingredients that make up a culture’s “secret sauce,” what is the role of leadership and governance in developing and sustaining an entrepreneurial culture?

Let’s start by considering the ingredients. There are several key conditions for an entrepreneurial college culture to be realized:

- **Listening and awareness** — It’s very difficult for an organization to be responsive to needs or to seize new opportunities when we, as leaders, or members of the faculty and staff aren’t aware of what they might be. It’s important that we are intent listeners, observers, and deeply engaged in our communities to uncover important needs and develop a greater awareness of opportunities. Our antennae always need to be up. If we believe that we’ve exhausted all opportunities for service, we need to be asking ourselves, “what more can we be doing?”

- **Empowerment at every level** — Entrepreneurial organizations empower their employees to address needs, solve problems, take risks, explore new possibilities, and be innovative. Why? Because our faculty and staff are closest to the action, to our customers, and to our communities.
potential partners. And because we need everyone’s help with listening, observing, and engaging to address needs and uncover opportunities. This type of empowerment can only be successful in an environment without fear of failure, repercussions, or backlash. This level of empowerment doesn’t always result in a neat, orderly, and perfectly aligned organization; sometimes it’s messy. It may feel like initiative fatigue, and sometimes mistakes or miscalculations are made. However, the benefits for the organization and those we serve far outweigh the challenges of staff empowerment at every level.

- **Creativity with resources** — A key benefit of an entrepreneurial culture is that it encourages the development of new products, services, or partnerships, often resulting in new revenue sources for a college. More and more, we need to look beyond our traditional funding sources to create a future of prosperity in our communities. This type of culture supports creative ways to make new investments in good ideas that emerge from the listening and awareness — the intel, if you will — garnered by staff leaders at all levels.

At Fox Valley Technical College, we’ve developed and successfully employed several well-established innovative and entrepreneurial organizational practices over the years. These practices have allowed us to thrive under both strong and very challenging economic conditions. I will briefly describe two of these practices.

**Strategic Investment**

With the support of the board, we instituted a process whereby strategic investment proposals can be advanced to the administration and board by our faculty and staff at any time throughout the year. Great ideas, with reasonable justification and a business plan, are then entertained for funding. The key premise here is that good ideas don’t just materialize at budget planning time; opportunities and ideas can arise at any time.

The startup funding for these proposals is supported by the college reserve funds, and they are intended to either stand on their own financially in a few years or be incorporated into future budgets. Our board has approved more than 70 strategic investment proposals in the last 15 years, most involving investments of several hundred thousand dollars. This process has been used to advance program expansions, new centers, key partnership programs, and targeted support services for improving student outcomes, among others. The success rate for these investments has been outstanding, and we’ve never actually had to use reserve funds to support these initiatives. I can’t even imagine where our college would be today without this important entrepreneurial process.

**Industry Partnerships**

Another practice that has allowed our college to thrive over the last several decades is the extent to which we engage and form partnerships with regional, national, and sometimes international companies and industry associations. Technical or workforce programs need to be well equipped with current technology. Relationships with strong and longtime industry partners are needed by every college to properly support technical education. With few companies willing to simply donate resources, these partnerships must truly be win-win arrangements today. There are many ways to collaborate and create those wins for both partner organizations.

So what’s the role of leadership and governance in setting the stage for an entrepreneurial college culture? What difference can presidents and boards make? The key conditions noted above are largely supported and communicated by the college leadership — making sure that we’re engaged with our communities in ways that allow us to understand needs and opportunities, empowering those on the front lines of our organization, and not only allowing, but actively encouraging the creative use of resources and innovative proposals. All of this requires a solid foundation of trust, particularly between the board and the president, and support for risk-taking — calculated risk taking. And isn’t that really the essence of any entrepreneurial venture?

Dr. Susan A. May is president of Fox Valley Technical College in Appleton, Wisconsin.
Northern Virginia Community College and other institutions partner with the National Security Agency to prepare students for the fast-growing field.

By Jacob Bray
NOVA AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE HELPING FILL THE GAP BY DEVELOPING PROGRAMS IN CYBERSECURITY THAT MEET GUIDELINES DEVELOPED BY THE NSA AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

CYBERSECURITY JOB OPENINGS ARE FORECASTED TO grow by over 50 percent over the next two years, and growth in the field is not expected to slow. Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA), in collaboration with the National Security Agency (NSA), is trying to fill some of these openings and help other community colleges do the same.

“We provide occupation-oriented degrees,” says Dr. Margaret Leary, who leads NOVA’s cybersecurity program. “Students finish their programs at two-year institutions with hands-on experience, prepared for a career. Many of the available jobs we see now are technician-oriented and cannot be filled by students with a four-year computer science degree without significant training.”

In the cybersecurity sector, this need for hands-on experience and qualified skills makes two-year degree holders especially attractive when quick hiring needs to be done. When a company is awarded a federal contract, for example, it typically has only a couple of weeks to hire staff.

NOVA and other institutions across the country are helping fill the gap by developing programs in cybersecurity that meet guidelines developed by the NSA and the Department of Homeland Security. Programs that meet the standards are designated Centers of Academic Excellence. The NSA states that the goal of the program is to “…reduce vulnerability in our national information infrastructure by promoting higher education and research in cyber defense and producing professionals with cyber defense expertise for the nation.”

Designated a Center of Academic Excellence for Two Year Colleges (CAE2Y), NOVA also is one of several NSA National and Regional Resource Centers that assist other institutions in obtaining the NSA designation — both community colleges and senior institutions. NOVA’s focus as a National Resource Center is providing faculty peer reviews of applications for CAE-Cyber Defense (CAE-CD) and CAE2Y designation from colleges and universities across the country. This entails traveling throughout the country and training two- and four-year faculty to review application submissions to NSA.

While NSA’s CAE-CD program dates back almost 20 years, the two-year CAE2Y component was established in 2010 to allow two-year and technical institutions to receive the Center of Academic Excellence Designation. With assistance from the National and Regional Resource Centers, including comprehensive mentoring and support for faculty professional development, the vast majority of applications for CAE designation are successful.

To receive CAE2Y designation, an institution must establish a process that will:

- Provide programs that commit to excellence in the field of cyber defense (CD) education at community and technical college and government training institutions.
- Provide innovative, comprehensive, and multidisciplinary education and training in the CD field.
- Strengthen the cybersecurity workforce by providing CD education and training through degree and certification programs at community and technical colleges and government training centers.
- Build an effective education pipeline model with K–12 schools to encourage students at an early age to enter CD fields of study.
- Provide the nation with a pipeline of qualified students poised to become the future skilled technical workforce.
- Continuously improve the quality of CD programs, curriculum, faculty, students, and other institutions.

Although a two-year degree is right for some cybersecurity students, others will transfer to senior institutions in pursuit of a four-year degree. NOVA has developed cybersecurity pathways to senior institutions in Virginia and Maryland, including George Mason University and Old Dominion University. Pathways also exist for graduates to receive full scholarships at Marymount and George Washington University through CyberCorps: Scholarship for Service, a federally funded program designed to facilitate degree attainment in the field of cybersecurity by funding the typical costs incurred by full-time students and providing a stipend of $22,500 to undergraduates.

By providing high-quality programs through designation as a Center of Academic Excellence, assisting other institutions in attaining the same designation, and providing pathways for further degree attainment, NOVA is actively closing the skills gap and providing its students with a bright future.

Jacob Bray is an associate writer with ACCT. He can be reached at jbray@acct.org.
The following are recent legal issues and court actions of interest to community colleges and their leaders.

**Federal appeals court sides with Texas professor’s free speech claim.**
The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (covering Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi) recently sided with an untenured professor at Texas Tech University in a First Amendment free speech claim (*Wetherbe v. Texas Tech University*, 2017 BL 184747, 5th Cir., No. 16-10458, unpublished, 6/1/17).

The professor, whose First Amendment complaint had been dismissed by a federal trial court, was allegedly demoted by the university because he wrote articles and spoke out criticizing the institution’s tenure system. The trial court had dismissed the case, ruling that since the matters discussed were part of the professor’s job duties, he had no First Amendment protection. However, the appeals court reversed the lower court’s decision, stating that the professor met the applicable Supreme Court standard as he spoke on a matter of public concern as a private citizen in articles published outside his university. The appeals court said there was no reason to conclude that writing articles for public consumption and speaking at public venues were part of his job duties.

The professor’s anti-tenure articles had appeared in the *Harvard Business Review* and the *Wall Street Journal*. The court held that the fact that the articles appeared in these widely read publications indicated that the topic was a matter of public concern. The court went on to conclude that since there was no specific job duty involved, regardless of his personal stake in the issue as a non-tenured professor, the professor is entitled to a trial over whether he was demoted because of First Amendment protected speech.

**Undocumented worker can sue for retaliation after deportation attempt.**
The Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals (covering California, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, and Arizona) recently ruled that the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) wage and hour law provisions prohibiting retaliation allow an aggrieved worker to sue his or her employer and that employer’s counsel (*Arias v. Raimondo*, 2017 BL 214215, 9th Cir., No. 15-16120, 6/22/17).

In this case, an undocumented worker sued after her employer’s counsel attempted to have her deported, allegedly in retaliation for pursing a wage and hour complaint. The plaintiff’s attorneys alleged that it is a “common tactic” for employers to avoid calling the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) themselves, instead using a third party such as an attorney. However, unlike FLSA’s wage and hour provisions, which state that violations can only be brought against an “employer,” the law’s provisions on retaliation prohibit such

“I do support your right to free speech—I just don’t support your tone.”
actions by any "person." The appeals court allowed the case to proceed against the employer and counsel involved in light of the broader statutory language contained in the retaliation provisions of the FLSA.

Bucking the trend, federal appeals court rejects permanent telecommuting as a reasonable Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation. The federal Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals (covering Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi) ruled that the recent trend favoring telecommuting as a preferred accommodation under ADA may not hold when "regular worksite attendance" is an essential requirement of a job, such as when on-site teamwork or interaction with coworkers or clients are necessary (Credeur v. Louisiana, 2017 BL 217392, 5th Cir., No. 16-30658, 6/23/17).

The case involved an attorney working in the State of Louisiana Attorney General's office recovering from complications following kidney transplant surgery. After working from home as an accommodation, she was terminated after what the state deemed a reasonable amount of time. The appeals court decided against establishing a blanket rule requiring employers to provide unlimited telecommuting as an ADA accommodation, arguing that doing so ignored the essential job functions of some jobs that require a workplace presence in order to complete their required responsibilities.

Trump Administration's proposed EEOC/OFCCP merger may require Congressional action. The proposed merger of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) is likely to run into a political fight and a series of complications which make it unlikely absent Congressional approval.

The Trump Administration proposal has been criticized by both civil rights organizations and federal contractors and stakeholders. Congressional leaders also have questioned whether the merger could be accomplished given that the EEOC's budget request contains no line item addressing the increased costs of the proposed merger.

It has been argued that the president could transfer the OFCCP's affirmative action and fair employment practice/discrimination jurisdiction over government contractors to the EEOC by issuing an executive order, in large part because OFCCP was created by executive order in the first place. However, the OFCCP's jurisdiction and enforcement of section 503 of the Rehab Act and the Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act were both given to the EEOC by an act of Congress, raising the argument that it would take similar action by lawmakers to transfer additional OFCCP jurisdictions to EEOC. Still others argue that ample precedent exists for the president to act through a presidential reorganization order, as President Carter did in 1978 when he transferred enforcement of the ADEA and the Equal Pay Act from the Department of Labor to the EEOC. However, in that case Congress had passed a law the year before that specifically allowed Carter to make these changes over a specific period of time.

As a result, it remains unclear whether Congress would need to pass a new Reorganization Act to give the president the authority to accomplish the merger. There likely will be further talks between the White House and Congress if the president decides to put force on the EEOC-OFCCP merger.

Appeals court backs EEOC contention that a single use of a racial epithet in the workplace is sufficient for a Title VII complaint of racial harassment. The initial U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) regulations concerning workplace harassment generally required the offensive conduct to be repeated and "pervasive" in the workplace in order to sustain a harassment discrimination claim. However, the EEOC always held to the position that a single incident or comment, if severe enough, could constitute actionable workplace harassment. The commission argued this point in an amicus brief to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit (covering New York, Vermont, and Connecticut) in a recent case involving a single incident of a racial epithet made by a supervisor to a subordinate (Daniel v. T&M Protective Resources, 2017 BL 135339, 2nd Cir., No. 15-560-cv, unpublished, 4/25/17). The court accepted the EEOC's position and will allow the single incident racial epithet case to proceed to trial over allegations of racial harassment in the workplace, overturning a trial court decision to dismiss the case. The decision is one of the first of its kind to allow a single incident to proceed to trial under the applicable Title VII statute.

Ira Michael Shepard is a partner with the law firm of Saul Ewing, LLP, in Washington, D.C., and ACCT's general counsel.
Executive Searches

The Board Leadership Services 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.

Prince George’s Community College, Md.

Nassim Ebrahimi, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President, Strategy, Planning, and Effectiveness
Former Interim Vice President, Institutional Advancement, Marketing and Research and Associate Vice President, Institutional Research, Effectiveness and Planning, Baltimore City Community College, Md.

Kim Bobby, Ed.D
Chief of Staff
Former Director, Inclusive Excellence Group, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.

“At Prince George’s Community College, we were delighted to engage the services of ACCT to assist us with key administrative hires. The consultants understood our needs and worked with the search committee to quickly identify potential candidates with the expertise and commitment necessary to support our goals and aspirations.

As a result of this collaborative partnership, we were able to bring two outstanding professionals, Dr. Nassim Ebrahimi, associate vice president for strategy, planning, and effectiveness, and Dr. Kim Bobby, chief of staff, to PGCC to join in our strategic and operational work.”

—Dr. Charlene M. Dukes, President, Prince George’s Community College

Massachusetts Bay Community College

Neil Buckley
Vice President for Finance and Administration
Former Associate Director of Human Resources, Massachusetts Community Colleges

“MassBay was delighted with the help we received with our executive search for our Finance and Administration position. Our new colleague has the experience, skill sets, and point of view that meet our needs, frankly, precisely.”

—Dr. David Podell, President, Massachusetts Bay Community College
Jacqueline Jackson, Ph.D.  
Vice President of Student Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness  
Former Dean of Student Services, Anne Arundel Community College, Md.

Anton “Tony” E. Wohlers, Ph.D.  
Dean of Behavioral and Social Sciences  
Former Director of Academic Enrichment and tenured faculty member, Cameron University, Okla.

Pamela Pape-Lindstrom, Ph.D.  
Dean of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics  
Former co-chair and tenured faculty member of the Life Sciences Department, Everett Community College, Wash.

“I am pleased to welcome three new leaders to Harford Community College. They include Jacqueline Jackson, Ph.D., vice president of student affairs and institutional effectiveness, Anton “Tony” E. Wohlers, Ph.D., dean of behavioral and social sciences, and Pamela Pape-Lindstrom, Ph.D., dean of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Each brings their own expertise to HCC — strategic management, Title IX policy, faculty leadership, program assessment, accreditation, and institutional research — that I am confident will add value, knowledge, and experience to our already outstanding team of higher education professionals. With these new appointments, HCC is even better positioned to meet our mission of providing accessible, innovative, learner-centered educational opportunities as we strive to become a national leader of higher education.”

—Dianna G. Phillips, Ph.D., President, Harford Community College, Md.

Cheryl Lesser, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Former Vice President for Academic Affairs, Clinton Community College, State University of New York

“Services of the ACCT were most beneficial in completing a successful search for the Vice President of Academic Affairs.”

—Thomas P. Leary, President, Luzerne County Community College, Pa.
ACCT would like to thank the following colleges which have conducted a Board Retreat, Board Self-Assessment, Presidential/Chancellor Evaluation, and/or Policy Review between January and August 2017. ACCT applauds the proactive approach to board leadership taken by these institutions.

Aims Community College, Colo.
Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions Inc., Barbados
Atlantic Cape Community College, N.J.
Bermuda College, Bermuda
Brookdale Community College, N.J.
Coconino Community College District, Ariz.
College of Southern Idaho
Crowder College, Mo.
Houston Community College System, Texas
Lake Tahoe Community College, Calif.

Mendocino-Lake Community College District, Calif.
Middlesex County College, N.J.
Moraine Park Technical College, Wisc.
Northern Wyoming Community College District-Sheridan College, Wyo.
Northwest College, Wyo.
Ohlone Community College District, Calif.
Pima Community College District, Ariz.
San Bernardino Community College District, Calif.
South Puget Sound Community College, Wash.
Yavapai College District, Ariz.

ACCT Board Leadership Services brings over 30 years of experience to every executive search. We have assisted more than 300 colleges and governing boards in successfully identifying the best candidates for new presidents and chancellors. ACCT’s services have been expanded to work with chancellors and presidents to identify the most outstanding candidates for vice presidential positions at your college. ACCT Board Leadership Services will guide you through every step of the process.

For more information on ACCT’s expanded services to assist with the placement of vice presidents, provosts, and vice chancellors, please contact Narcisa Polonio at narcisa_polonio@acct.org or 202-276-1983.
When the President is New: Helping the Campus Community Transition to New Leadership

By Heather M. Lanham, PBSN President
Edison State Community College, Piqua, OH

THE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE WEARS MANY HATS. Along with our obvious office duties, we perform many less tangible roles: support to various sectors on campus outside of the president’s office, the middleman facilitating communications between off-campus entities and administrators, event and meeting organizers, policy police when necessary, and masters of the president’s calendar, to name a few. One of the biggest hats that we wear is that of the “sharer of information.” We take pride in helping to keep our presidents in the know, as they cannot be everywhere and know everything at once. This is never more important than when a president is brand new to the institution. The president’s new assistant can be invaluable to acclimating him or her to their new campus surroundings, all while helping existing employees navigate the transition.

When a new president joins an institution, it’s an opportunity for exciting changes and growth. But it is also a time of adjustment for everyone involved, from classified staff members and faculty to the executive level. This is a time when employees are eager to impress, showing their new boss all of the initiatives their individual departments are undertaking, as well as displaying their own personal talents and capabilities. Everyone is vying for the new president’s attention. But they also are trying to figure out his or her expectations, and the direction their new boss anticipates taking the college in the future.

Existing employees have the benefit of having support teams and colleagues in place as they traverse this change. For the new president, however, everything is new. From the moment they begin their new job, they are in constant adaptation mode, trying to familiarize themselves with the more palpable information such as faces, names, titles, and the general layout of the building as well as the less tangible elements, such as campus culture, employee dynamics, and important community and business connections.

The president’s assistant has a unique vantage point during this adjustment period, and, if adept, can help make the transition easier on everyone, including the new president. This is the person that the rest of campus will rely on to get some insight on the president, both professionally and personally. Many people in this position are looked up to as the gatekeeper to the president, but I personally like to see myself more as the gateway. This hopefully makes me more approachable. When our institution hired our president in 2015, I was asked many questions as employees were trying to adjust. Most of the questions dealt with her leadership style and expectations of employees, but many were of a personal nature, such as “What types of food does she like to eat?” “What are her hobbies?” “Have you met her family yet?” “Does

Continued on page 42
she follow sports, and what are her favorite teams?” I always kept
in mind that it is an innate need to try to relate to your fellow
human beings through questions such as these. I answered them
as openly as I perceived was comfortable for my new boss.
One thing I tried to focus on was helping to garner connections
between the president and her new staff. I made it a point to share
information unprompted when it was appropriate and useful. For
example, for those employees I knew to be dog lovers, I made
sure that they knew the name of our president’s dog, Jack. For
those employees I knew to be runners, I made sure to let them
know that running was one of their new boss’s favorite pastimes.
I tried to give little bits of information that would allow them to
relate to the president on a personal level.

While working to help faculty and staff adjust to new
leadership, I took it as my main responsibility to help the new
president adjust to her new surroundings. This included small acts,
such as whispers in the ear of names and titles that she might not
remember right away, and more significant information sharing,
such as helping her to connect the dots between the contributions
of community members and local businesses to some aspect of
our institution’s history.

Helping introduce our new president to the existing campus
culture was also an important part of the transition period.
It could at times be a tricky process, as I never wanted to
overstep my bounds or create any perceptions or biases. I
learned quickly a few presidents ago that the worst thing that
you can say to new management is “this is how it’s always been
done around here.” I would always do my best to inform the
new president about existing methods and processes without
making it sound like it was anticipated that everything stay the
same. They appreciate knowing the existing processes, but
always have methods for improvement in mind. I would cringe
whenever I would hear someone from the executive team say
“but this is how we’ve always done it.” In my experience, that
is never perceived well. And a new president does not want
to feel trapped within the confines of an institution unwilling
to change.

While it can be tricky at times, it is in everyone’s best interest
if the transition to a new president goes as smoothly as possible.
The president’s assistant is a logical person to help facilitate.
Change is inevitable and necessary, but it doesn’t have to be
painful. Eventually the bumps will level out and familiarity will
set in, and if everyone works hard towards common goals, that
which was once new will feel like it’s always been in place.

Meet Us in Las Vegas!
By Margaret Lamb, San Diego Community College District, California

IT’S HARD TO IMAGINE THAT 2017 IS ALMOST TWO-THIRDS
over. The ACCT Professional Board Staff Network’s Executive
Committee has been hard at work throughout the year planning for
the PBSN Workshop, which will take place September 25-26, 2017,
during the ACCT Leadership Congress in Las Vegas, Nevada.

What’s in store for participants? Every year following the PBSN
workshop, we invite attendees to fill out a survey, which provides
valuable feedback to the incoming Executive Committee and
solicits suggestions for topics of interest for the next workshop.
Based on the discussions and feedback received last year, we
have put together a program that we hope you will find beneficial
and enjoyable.

The annual PBSN Meet and Greet will take place on Monday,
September 25, from 7:30-9:30 p.m. at the Planet Hollywood
Las Vegas restaurant. This is a wonderful opportunity to get to
know and network with fellow board staff professionals in a
relaxing atmosphere.

The PBSN Professional Development Workshop will be held
Tuesday, September 26, from 2-5 p.m. at the Cosmopolitan
Hotel. The sessions include:

• A demonstration and discussion of board portal software
• Ergonomics, including information on the proper way to
  sit and stand at work and an opportunity to win a sit/stand
desk, sponsored by Ergotron
• A mindfulness session, where attendees will learn how
  practicing mindfulness can improve their reaction to stress
  as well as their mood and well-being
• A demonstration of the new ACCT Member Portal
• Roundtable discussions on requested topics pertinent to the role of professional board staff.

Due to popular demand, the PBSN Workshop will continue on Wednesday, September 27, from 9:45-11:30 a.m., with sessions on social media and a panel discussion on the role of professional board staff in preparing for meetings with legislators. Following the workshop, the PBSN Business Meeting will convene in order to recognize the Professional Board Staff Award recipients, the accession of officers for 2018, and elections for the position of secretary and members-at-large for each region.

As the PBSN Charter states, “The Professional Board Staff Network (PBSN), under the aegis of the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), will provide individuals at community colleges who support governing boards and/or presidents/CEOs with a focus on continued development and enhancement of professional skills, sharing expertise and best practices, keeping abreast of new developments, and becoming more proficient at rendering service to governing boards and/or presidents/CEOs.” The 2017 PBSN Workshop promises to provide board staff professionals with expert advice and knowledge needed to keep current in the ever-changing world of the executive/governing board assistant.

We hope you can join us for these important professional development sessions, where you will meet with colleagues in order to learn from the experts, share best practices, and share experiences — sometimes funny and sometimes horrifying — all in a relaxed and confidential setting, because, as we all know, “What’s said in Vegas, stays in Vegas!” We hope to see you there.

PBSN Meet & Greet
Sept. 25, 7:30 p.m.
Planet Hollywood Las Vegas
3500 South Las Vegas Boulevard

Take a walk over to Planet Hollywood and join us at the PBSN Meet & Greet (sponsored by Edison State CC). This is an opportunity to become more acquainted with other members of the PBSN.

The restaurant is located in the Forum Shops at Caesar’s Palace, just a short walk away from The Cosmopolitan.

PBSN Annual Professional Development Workshop
Sept. 26, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Join us for presentations and discussions which will include board portal software, ergonomics, mindfulness, and information on how to use the new ACCT Member Portal. This is a great opportunity to network and enter to win your own Ergotron sit/stand desk! You must be present to win.

Sponsored by:

PBSN Wednesday Workshop & Business Meeting
Sept. 27, 9:45 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Let’s be social! At this workshop, we will learn more about using social media effectively, and preparing for meetings with local, state, and national legislators. This will be followed by the PBSN business meeting which will include ascension of officers and elections for open positions.
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 Tuesday, September 26, from 2-3:30 p.m. during the ACCT Leadership Congress in Las Vegas, Nevada. Elections for Directors-at-Large will be held on Wednesday, September 27, during the ACCT Senate Meeting.

2017-2018 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, 2017:

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

Northeast Region – Hector Ortiz*
Harrisburg Area Community College, PA

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

Southern Region – Dennis Troy*
Bladen Community College, NC

Western Region – Rose Benavidez*
South Texas College, TX

*Received support of their respective Nominating Committees.
Note: Nominations will be accepted from the floor for all elections.

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE

(3) Three-Year Terms
The following is the slate of nominees received as of July 1, 2017:

Robert Hydorn
Montgomery College, MD

John Lukas*
Lakeshore Technical College, WI

Larry Meyer
Lansing Community College, MI

Dan Mims
San Jacinto College District, TX

Gilbert Wong
Foothill-De Anza Community College District, CA

Elections of Regional Nominating Committee Members

Regional nominating committee elections will take place during the 2017 ACCT Leadership Congress Regional Caucuses and Meetings on Tuesday, September 26. 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 2017-2018 term:

CENTRAL REGION
Three (3) seats will be available to members from the following states: Iowa, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, and Ohio.
Diane Gallagher (IL) and Carla Hedtke (WI) will continue to serve in 2018.

NORTHEAST REGION
One (1) seat will be available to members from the following states: Delaware, District of Columbia, and Pennsylvania.
Cathy Guld (MA), Rosemary Gillet-Karam (MD), Camile Kahler (NY), and Catherine Hesboll McVicker (NJ) will continue to serve through 2018.

PACIFIC REGION
Four (4) seats will be available to members from the following states/territories: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Republic of Palau, and British Columbia.
Dana Saar (AZ) will continue to serve through 2018.

SOUTHERN REGION
Two (2) seats will be available to members from the following states/territories: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, West Virginia, Bermuda, and British Virgin Islands.
Paul Batson, III (SC), Steve Cona, III (FL), and Rick Pearson (VA) will continue to serve through 2018.

WESTERN REGION
Two (2) seats will be available to members from the following states: Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Wyoming.
Jim Garver (NE), Conrad Heede (TX), and Morris Reeves (KS) will continue to serve in 2018.

2017-2018 Candidates for the ACCT Diversity Committee

(1) Two-Year Term in Each Region
The following is the slate of nominees:

CENTRAL REGION
Jay Nardini*
Hawkeye Community College, IA

NORTHEAST REGION
Mary Zimmerman*
Union County College, NJ

PACIFIC REGION
Judy Chen Haggerty*
Mt. San Antonio College, CA

Tamra Jackson*
Wenatchee Valley College, WA

Candidates with an asterisk received the support of their respective Regional Nominating Committees.
Note: Nominations will be accepted from the floor for all elections.

SOUTHERN REGION
Betty Holness*
Daytona State College, FL

WESTERN REGION
Art Fierro
El Paso Community College, TX

Carlton Underwood*
Central Wyoming College, WY

Richard Vasquez
San Joaquin Delta College, CA

SOUTHERN REGION
Betty Holness*
Daytona State College, FL

WESTERN REGION
Art Fierro
El Paso Community College, TX

Carlton Underwood*
Central Wyoming College, WY

Richard Vasquez
San Joaquin Delta College, CA

*Received support of their respective Nominating Committees.
Note: Nominations will be accepted from the floor for all elections.
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