2018-19 ACCT Chair Connie Hornbeck is a believer in the transformative nature of community colleges.
ACCT's awards program is designed to recognize and honor outstanding community college trustees, equity programs, presidents, faculty members, and professional board staff members at regional and national levels. In order to be considered for an Association Award, you must first submit a nomination at the regional level.

The Awards committees will select and notify the Awards recipients prior to the ACCT Leadership Congress. ACCT Awards recipients will be honored at the 2019 ACCT Leadership Congress this October in San Francisco, California.

Visit www.acct.org for specific nomination criteria and to submit nominations online.

Call 202-775-4667 with any questions.

All nominations must be received by June 10, 2019.

www.acct.org
From the Chair

At Your Service

FROM THE MOST REMOTE RURAL TOWNS TO the most bustling cities and everywhere in between, our community colleges are the on ramps that give over 12 million students a year access to higher education that equips them to make their lives better, whether through further education or work. I am honored to serve as the chair of the association that brings together those of us who govern all our life-changing colleges.

As chair of the national Association of Community College Trustees, I recognize that ACCT has the same responsibility to be welcoming, inclusive, and open to our members as our colleges are welcoming, inclusive, and open to students.

This year, a major part of our focus is to think about how we can encourage greater participation from members, and to ensure that the resources we create and make available to governing boards are as accessible and useful as possible.

Speaking for myself, and for other ACCT board members and the ACCT staff, I really want to hear from you about your interests, your needs, and what more ACCT can do to facilitate and enhance your role as a community college leader. Are you receiving enough information from us? Are we addressing the topics that you need to know about adequately? What haven’t we addressed that would make your governance experience more productive? Why do you come to ACCT’s educational and advocacy events — or why don’t you?

If you will be coming to the Community College National Legislative Summit this February, I hope you will find me and share your thoughts, and perhaps inquire about how to get even more involved with ACCT through committees, by serving as a trustee ambassador, or perhaps even running for the board of directors.

And while you are in Washington advocating on behalf of community colleges, I’d like to draw your attention to one legislative priority of special interest to me: Second-Chance Pell Grants — the federal program that makes college attainable for our incarcerated brothers and sisters so that when they rejoin society, they will be prepared for successful, productive lives in their communities. If you aren’t yet familiar with the Second-Chance Pell Grants program, I encourage you to read more about it in the Community College Federal Legislative Priorities backgrounder document that will be provided to you at the Summit. This and other advocacy tools are also available to all members year-round via the ACCT website.

For those who will be attending the National Legislative Summit, I look forward to seeing you and hope that you will say hello. For those who aren’t able to make it, please get in touch with our staff at acctinfo@acct.org with your thoughts about our programs and services. ACCT exists as a service to you. And it is our pleasure and our honor to serve.

CONNIE HORNBECK
TRUSTEE, IOWA WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Leading Boldly into the Future

LEADERSHIP. TAKING TOGETHER ALL OF TRUSTEES’ roles and responsibilities, this is the one word that sums it all up. But what qualities characterize the practical kind of leadership needed to make our colleges as strong as they need to be?

A strong, clear vision. Commitment to service. Understanding the needs of those we are serving. Rigorous review, risk taking, always seeking to improve processes, practices, policies — and ourselves. Leadership is a notion that cannot be summed up by any simple definition; it is multifaceted, the sort of art that can only be understood and then practiced with continuous effort.

This issue of Trustee Quarterly is dedicated to leadership. In these pages, we present facets that contain many gems, but taken as a whole illuminate one another.

Our cover story is a capsule version of Connie Hornbeck's story that begins in the cornfields of Iowa and has carried her metaphorically beyond humble beginnings to run a successful business that gives people second chances at good lives, to govern a college that does the same, and to the apex of national leadership as chair of ACCT. The cover photo was taken in Times Square — a long way and a very different environment than pastoral Iowa — during the 2018 ACCT Leadership Congress this past October. Her story embodies a commitment to practical, effective leadership.

Also in this issue, we interview two government officials — Congressman Bobby Scott, the Ranking Member from the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor, and new Assistant Secretary for Career, Technical, and Adult Education Scott Stump. Each leader discusses priorities for higher education over the coming year — information vital to any community college leader and advocate.

From the philanthropic world, Lumina Foundation’s Debra Humphreys talks about balancing efforts to address workforce needs with sustainable outcomes. How, she asks, do we define quality for today’s world and today’s students? What is the new credentialing landscape today, and what will it be tomorrow? Her vision of quality assurance deserves consideration by community college leaders.

Shifting to practice, this issue also includes important advice for new trustees and the boards who welcome them in Bernie Rhinerson’s “Four Questions That Every New Community College Trustee Needs to Ask,” as well as a continuing discussion of state system governing boards and a closer look into policies involving guns on campus by Governance Institute for Student Success and special projects director Norma Goldstein.

Because becoming an effective leader is always an ongoing process, I also strongly encourage you to listen to our In the Know with ACCT podcast. This platform, which began in 2018 as an experiment, has now proven to be an unparalleled platform for delivering nuanced, in-depth perspectives about a great array of topics that you can listen to anytime, anywhere, and which I guarantee will expand your mind and your vision of what you can accomplish as a community college leader. Listen at www.acct.org/podcast.

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ACCT PRESIDENT AND CEO
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Casey Sacks Named U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Community Colleges

Casey K. Sacks has been named the deputy assistant secretary for community colleges in the office of career, technical, and adult education at the U.S. Department of Education. She provides leadership for initiatives supporting career and technical education, adult education, correctional and re-entry education, and community colleges. These initiatives collectively serve over 25 million students each year.

Prior to assuming the role of deputy assistant secretary, Sacks served as the vice chancellor for the West Virginia Community and Technical College System. In West Virginia, she led a statewide guided pathways initiative, expansion of apprenticeship and work-based learning programs, developed customized workforce training for employers, and served as acting chancellor.

Sacks also previously served as the assistant provost for academic programs and innovation for the Colorado Community College System. During her tenure there, Sacks led two TAACCCT grants, the statewide redesign of developmental education, the redesign of credit for prior learning, and the development of online and blended delivery for career and technical education programs in energy and manufacturing.

Annual ACCT Association Awards

The 2018 ACCT Association Awards were presented on Wednesday, October 26, during the Annual ACCT Awards Gala in New York City. For photos and videos of the Association and Regional Awards, visit www.acct.org/awards.

2018 Charles Kennedy Equity Award
Howard Community College, Md.

2018 M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award
Barbara Oilschlager
College of Lake County, Ill.

2018 Marie Y. Martin Chief Executive Award
Henry Shannon
Chaffey College, Calif.

2018 William H. Meardy Faculty Member Award
Maria Alvarez
El Paso Community College, Texas

2018 ACCT Professional Board Staff Member Award
Trish Villines
North Arkansas College, Ark
ACCT Association Award honorees offer advice for their peers.

2018 M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award
Barbara Oilschlager
College of Lake County, Ill.
My best advice to others is a “tag line” or “mantra” I made up when I was president of the Illinois Community College Trustees Association. It is something I wholeheartedly believe in. It was true then, and it continues to be true today. “Ordinary people, working together with common purpose, can achieve extraordinary results.”
Everything is built on relationships, partnerships, and teamwork. It is important to make new friends each and every day. You can never have too many friends. As long as we all work together, moving forward in the same direction with one voice, the opportunities are limitless.

2018 Charles Kennedy Equity Award
Howard Community College, Md.
As open-access institutions, community colleges educate students from varied backgrounds, cultures, and experiences. Creating a culture of equity and inclusion must start with an institutional mission, vision, and values that speak to all students and employees.
The commitment to equity originates with the board of trustees and the college president, and then filters throughout the institution. HCC has an ongoing diversity plan, which is created by a committee of faculty, staff, and students who develop programming all year long. Additionally, each budgeted staff member and full-time faculty member is required to participate in at least two diversity educational sessions every year.
As a community college dedicated to institutional equity, you must recruit and retain faculty and staff who reflect the demographics of your student body and the broader community in which your college resides.

2018 Marie Y. Martin Chief Executive Award
Henry Shannon
Chaffey College, Calif.
The advice I want to provide to others in my field includes the following: be prepared because a leader needs solid credentials, a good theoretical background (review ACCT leadership competencies), and the attainment of relevant experiences. And finally, be competent in emotional intelligence.

2018 William H. Meardy Faculty Member Award
Maria Alvarez
El Paso Community College, Texas
My advice is to participate in conferences to provide visibility to your students and learn about current educational issues and learning strategies, volunteer to be a reviewer for funding agencies, rely on teamwork, and never give up.

2018 ACCT Professional Board Staff Member Award
Trish Villines
North Arkansas College, Ark.
Be willing to take on any project or task; it will open and expand your depth and breadth of experiences. Be the person the board and institutional leaders count on to complete and accomplish any identified need.
For more information about the ACCT Awards program, contact awards@acct.org.

Aligning for Student Success
How Community Colleges Work with K-12 to Improve College and Career Outcomes

In October, ACCT, in partnership with Education Strategy Group and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), released Aligning for Student Success: How Community Colleges Work with K-12 to Improve College and Career Outcomes, a paper that calls on community college presidents and trustees to implement strategies to accelerate academic transitions, extend navigational supports, and serve as career bridges from high school to the workforce.
The report identifies successful community college practices and offers high-level strategies community college presidents and trustees can take to partner with K-12 to dramatically improve student outcomes. The report specifically recommends that community colleges focus on three priorities:

continued on page 6
Rave Reviews for ACCT Podcast

In the Know with ACCT, our podcast focused on issues of importance to community college trustees, launched last spring as something of an experiment. We’re excited to report that members have been listening to and loving this new portable format for expanding knowledge about community college leadership.

The association launched season two this December, and we’ve seen an immediate record number of downloads for each new episode, which include:

• Tassels and Second Chances with Connie Hornbeck
• Addressing Students’ Basic Needs: Homelessness and Hunger Among Community College Students
• Sara Goldrick-Rab: The Heart of a Community College Movement
• Top Global Tech Executives on Community Colleges as Hotbeds of Talent Development
• Philanthropy, Corporations, and Community Colleges as Partners
• Unleashing Leadership: How Boards Can Empower 21st Century Leaders
• How Boards Support and Nurture Leadership
• Creating a More Compelling Employee Learning Experience
• Safeguarding Your College from Natural Disasters, On-Campus Violence, and Other Threats

…and more. New episodes are added weekly, and existing episodes can be downloaded to your mobile device or streamed online anytime. Don’t miss these convenient opportunities to become a better community college leader.

Visit www.acct.org/podcast or the iTunes or Google podcast stores.

Aligning for Student Success (continued from page 5)

1. Accelerate Academic Transitions: Community colleges can partner with K-12 school systems to provide opportunities for students to “speed up” their learning through early postsecondary course-taking opportunities in high school or “catch up” to a college-ready level through 12th grade transition courses that bring developmental education down to high school.

2. Extend Navigational Supports: Community colleges can work with K-12 partners to strengthen academic counseling and provide clear academic and career pathways for students.

3. Serve as Career Bridges: Community colleges can and should serve as career bridges that guide students from high school to a credential with currency in the labor market.

The paper can be downloaded at www.acct.org/term/reports-and-white-papers. An accompanying podcast episode on aligning K-12 schools and community colleges featuring Education Strategy Group President Matt Gandal can also be accessed via ACCT.org or the iTunes or Google podcast stores.
Partnerships for a Future-Ready Workforce

Released in October, this new ACCT report, with support from Guardian Life Insurance, details how community colleges and businesses can form strong partnerships, illustrates national trends in employer needs and postsecondary attainment, and highlights policies and practices that form a continuum of education and career training. The report also includes five examples of innovative postsecondary education and workforce development initiatives from South Carolina; Washington; Miami-Dade County, Florida; Maricopa County, Arizona; and Maryland.

“Today perhaps more than ever, college educations are crucial to finding meaningful, sustainable work that pays a living wage,” said ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown. “This report is designed to help guide community college leaders and business leaders in forging stronger partnerships with businesses to create programs that will connect college careers and job prospects, while also providing essential resources to sustain institutions.”

Major takeaways from the report include:

• Developing partnerships with businesses is a cornerstone of the community college model. Community colleges and businesses must work together to assess the capabilities and skills of students and existing employees; identify career opportunities and the necessary skills; and implement strategies to align individuals’ skills with business needs.

• In today’s labor market, employers increasingly seek trained individuals with a postsecondary degree or credential, and seek to meet new business needs resulting from the increased use of digital technologies and automation. Community colleges and businesses have an opportunity to provide a continuum of learning opportunities for students, including academic programs, work-based learning, and employer-based training.

• There is a strong imperative for community colleges and businesses to collaborate; however, in the current policy environment both sectors face limited resources for developing partnerships. Funding has been limited by state-level disinvestment in postsecondary education and large federal cuts to career training programs, including designated grant funds for developing partnerships between community colleges and businesses. Many community college students and existing employees also face financial barriers to cover the full cost of college attendance and have limited financial aid options for career training.

“At Guardian Life we have partnered extensively with community colleges across the country to provide our expertise, support, and guidance to building strong new pathways to career success for students,” said Deanna Mulligan, president and CEO. “We recognize the tremendous importance of community colleges to the nation’s economy and workforce, and we hope that this report will serve as a foundation upon which to improve connections between postsecondary education and business needs.”

“Ultimately,” Brown said, “stronger partnerships between community colleges and businesses can help students and existing workers be successful in their careers and achieve greater economic prosperity.”

The paper can be downloaded at www.acct.org/term/reports-and-white-papers.

LET THE LAW WORK FOR YOU

Timing is everything when it comes to advocacy, but not everyone has time to pay attention to pending legislation day in and day out.

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

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

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

For more information about ACCT’s advocacy services, visit www.acct.org/advocacy.
Improving Student Financial Aid in the New Congress

Simplifying the application process would improve access to federal financial aid for community college students.

By Jee Hang Lee

As the 116th Congress convenes, the first major to-do item for higher education is reauthorizing the Higher Education Act (HEA), which has been pending since 2014. While the House and Senate education committees already have done substantial work to consider the HEA and large topic areas of interest, the committees have not been able to agree on a comprehensive, bipartisan reauthorization of the act. Elsewhere in this issue of Trustee Quarterly, new House Education and Labor Committee Chairman Bobby Scott (D-Va.) details his priorities for reauthorization (see p. 16).

In the 115th Congress, neither the House nor the Senate was able to pass an HEA reauthorization. What was previously called the House Education and Workforce Committee — its name was changed from “Education and Workforce” to “Education and Labor” in the 116th Congress — passed the PROSPER ACT, a comprehensive HEA rewrite, out of committee. However, PROSPER was unable to garner enough support for a vote on the floor of the House. Many representatives voiced concern about the financial impact that new risk-sharing provisions would have on institutions, especially open-access institutions, and cuts to federal student financial aid. The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee did not introduce a comprehensive rewrite, but instead introduced several smaller bills that would have impacted higher education. However, these bills did not pass.

While many areas are under consideration as part of HEA reauthorization, Congress continues to focus on ensuring that students can more easily apply for and receive federal financial aid. Successfully completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) remains a significant hurdle for students and their families. Anyone who has filled out the FAFSA knows the difficulty and time-consuming nature of the application. The form is lengthy, and students often have difficulty accessing family financial information. Moreover, students must complete the FAFSA every year they wish to receive federal aid. Changing many of the questions on the FAFSA and the yearly process would require an act of Congress. In the meantime, the Department of Education...
has worked to help students by creating a mobile app through which the FAFSA can be completed as well as a data retrieval tool to access tax returns from the Internal Revenue Service to facilitate completion of the form.

While FAFSA completion rates have gone up in recent years, community college students lag behind their counterparts in other sectors. According to the 2016 National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey, only 72 percent of community college students apply for federal financial aid. By comparison, 85 percent of public four-year students and 90 percent of private, non-profit four-year students apply for federal financial aid. For many community college students, the FAFSA can be a big red stop sign that impedes accessing federal funds, thereby limiting access to higher education.

Even if students are successful in filling out the FAFSA, approximately half of Pell-eligible FAFSA applicants are flagged for verification, according to the National College Access Network. Essentially, through this process the government is saying to students, “we know you are low-income, but we need additional information for you to prove it.” At many community colleges, students who have the greatest need and have a $0 expected family contribution (EFC) are routinely chosen for verification and required to submit additional information. Among those flagged for verification, roughly one quarter do not complete their applications, according to the National College Access Network (NCAN). Many are community college students.

ACCT recently participated in a One-Time FAFSA project with the Center for American Progress and the National College Access Network. Essentially, through this process the government is saying to students, “we know you are low-income, but we need additional information for you to prove it.” At many community colleges, students who have the greatest need and have a $0 expected family contribution (EFC) are routinely chosen for verification and required to submit additional information. Among those flagged for verification, roughly one quarter do not complete their applications, according to the National College Access Network (NCAN). Many are community college students.

While many areas are under consideration as part of HEA reauthorization, Congress continues to focus on ensuring that students can more easily apply for and receive federal financial aid. Successfully completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) remains a significant hurdle for students and their families.

For all our efforts to increase the Pell Grant maximum and allow students the ability to access Pell year-round, the impact will be undermined if thousands of community college students are still unable to access federal financial aid. Without financial aid, many are more likely to drop their college enrollments or reduce their course loads. To ensure as many students as possible receive aid, Congress needs to significantly simplify the FAFSA and ease the burdens of the financial aid process. Additionally, college leaders should work with their financial aid offices to gather data on financial aid access and the number of students impacted by verification to inform your colleges’ advocacy for an improved process.

As you prepare and continue your advocacy efforts for meetings and letters to members of Congress, visit www.acct.org/page/other-advocacy-resources to get up-to-date fact sheets, letters, and legislative priorities.

It is important that trustees and college leaders continue to support community college priorities. Make your voice heard by visiting your member of Congress and talking about these key issues. To keep updated on key legislative items, sign up for the Latest Action in Washington alerts at publicpolicy@acct.org.

ACCT Vice President for Public Policy and External Relations Jee Hang Lee can be reached by email at jhlee@acct.org, or by phone at 202-775-4667.
BUILDING BLOCKS

THE 2018 ACCT LEADERSHIP CONGRESS FOCUSED ON SUSTAINING THE SECTOR’S PROGRESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS, INNOVATION, AND ADVOCACY.

BY MARK TONER
Attendees filled the Broadway Ballroom at the New York Marriott Marquis in Times Square

From left: DeRionne Pollard, Madeline M. Pumariega, Mike Flores, Pam Eddinger, and Josh Wyner

WHEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADERS CAME TOGETHER IN New York City last fall for the first time in a decade, it was reason to celebrate — and to look at the challenging road ahead.

The 2018 ACCT Leadership Congress was, in part, a recognition of the significant progress community colleges have made in becoming more student-focused institutions over the past decade. At the same time, speakers in more than 150 sessions stressed the need to scale promising efforts, chase disruptive ideas, and advocate for the resources required to help far more students be successful in the years to come.

"Higher education is changing in ways that no one would have ever begun to predict when we last met in New York City 10 years ago," said 2017-18 ACCT Chair Emily Yim, a trustee at Edmonds Community College in Washington. "This presents challenges for all of us, and it also presents opportunities."

The community college sector has repeatedly created opportunities out of challenges over the past decade. The College Promise movement, now with programs in place in 23 states and more than 200 communities, is a response to President of Louisiana State University F. King Alexander called "a core problem."

"State legislatures have been backing out of their responsibilities," says Alexander. "And to that end, Zakiya Smith Ellis, New Jersey's secretary of higher education, urged community college leaders to "stop talking about free college and start talking about universal access to higher education."

"Nobody talks about free libraries or parks," she said. "It's a public good we should be investing in."

A key focus for 2019 is to bring greater awareness to "the discrepancy between what our institutions give and what they receive in delivering on the promise," ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown said during the Congress opening session.

A video highlighted that discrepancy with a series of sobering statistics: Community colleges serve 40 percent of all college students and contribute $800 billion to the U.S. economy, but they receive less than half the per-student funding as peer four-year institutions and up to eight times less in appropriations.

"As much as students trust us and communities trust us to transform lives, there are many challenges that remain — especially funding challenges," Brown told the 1,800 community college leaders who attended the 2018 Congress. "Community colleges deserve support. This is a message I'm going to ask you all to commit to sharing as we move into 2019."

Scaling Success

A decade after the last New York City Congress, many examples of "scaled and sustainable work in student success," as Josh Wyner, founder and director of the College Excellence Program at the Aspen Institute, put it, now exist on campuses across the nation.

"None of this happens without strong leadership at the top," said City University of New York Interim Chancellor Vita Rabinowitz.

While winning greater support from policymakers is critical, it's also vital that students see the relevance of the programs community colleges offer to ensure they not only enroll, but also persist and complete, said Madeline M. Pumariega, former chancellor of the Florida College System.

"We've got to make a case that an investment in your time and resources are going to have an output of earnings," she said.

Boards also must redouble efforts to support the growing numbers of low-income and minority students for whom academic success is imperiled by a wide range of out-of-school factors, including hunger, homelessness, and child care issues.
“Almost all my students are one small disaster away from dropping out,” said Pam Eddinger, president of Bunker Hill Community College in Massachusetts. “You’ve got to acknowledge those realities, look at policies and procedures, and see what’s standing in their way.”

About half of all community college students face food or housing insecurity, and between 12 and 14 percent have experienced homelessness in the past year, according to Sara Goldrick-Rab of the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice and a professor at Temple University. “We’ve moved beyond the numbers,” she said. “The conversation today is about action.”

At Amarillo College in Texas, leaders discovered that the top 10 things students identified as barriers to success “had nothing to do with the classroom,” said President Russell Lowery Hart. “We had a robust and profound student success agenda that has taken hold in the community college, but we were ignoring the one big reason” students dropped out or stopped out.

Supports must be retooled to meet students’ real-world needs, added Joe May, president of the Dallas Community College District. “We had resources to deal with the electricity being cut off,” he said. “It takes a week to cut a check — in a week, they’ve missed classes.”

Another key factor involves helping students rethink what it means to accept support, said William Serrata, president of El Paso Community College. “You’re not asking for help, you’re ensuring that you’re taking advantage of what you paid for,” he said. And colleges must push for bigger changes. “The world we live in in higher ed is not going to improve by polishing systems that aren’t working,” said Hart. “We have to be disruptive and reimagine the fabric, and sacrifice things that might be working on a small scale for things that might work on a bigger scale.”

‘Radically Different’ Partnerships

The theme of disruption extended to partnerships, which was the theme of the 2018 Congress. Philanthropic and business leaders urged community college leaders to focus on seeking “radically different” ways to collaborate with other organizations.

“It’s early days, but it’s important for community colleges to engage and say this is an opportunity for us to do something radically different,” said Alan Golston, president of the United States Program at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Speakers discussed industry-created credentials, as well as massive online learning courses (MOOCs), stackable credentials, and ongoing learning experiences including badging and skills registries being adopted by leading employers in a variety of sectors. “If you don’t meet companies where they are going, your students are not going to be as valuable to them as they could have been,” said Kevin Mulcahy, co-author of The Future Workplace Experience and partner at Future Workplace.

“There’s no reason community colleges couldn’t be fulfilling that role, and for the good of their students, they should,” added Deanna M. Mulligan, president and chief executive officer of the Guardian Life Insurance Company of America. With unemployment at near historic lows, there’s an “enormous opportunity for community colleges to position students to take advantage of that gap,” she said.

The key to doing so, Golston said, is being “radically student focused.” To that end, he said, community colleges must forge partnerships with both businesses and K-12 systems to ensure that “every student who walks through the door, instead of an obstacle course, has a clear path…. It takes time, commitment, and resources, but it’s possible, and we’re inspired by what we see in the space.”
For that to happen, trustees also must support strong partnerships with their institutions’ CEOs, speakers said. “It's about working in partnership to develop a strategy,” said DeRionne Pollard, president of Montgomery College in Maryland. “Sophisticated, thoughtful boards ask, ‘What role do you need us to take in this?’”

In the spirit of new partnerships, Phi Theta Kappa presented its first annual New Century Workforce Pathway Scholarship during the Thursday general session. The scholarship supports community college students who plan to enter the workforce upon completion of a degree or certificate. Each of the 46 student awardees received $1,250 courtesy of The Coca-Cola Foundation.

Sarita Brown, president of Excelencia In Education, also announced the new Seal of Excelencia framework, a data-based student success initiative focused on Latino students. J. Noah Brown announced that ACCT has signed on as a partner to the framework.

The Final Word
The 2018 Congress came to a close by giving community college students the final word by discussing ways that institutions — and their leaders — could better support them.

Elda Pere, international president of Phi Theta Kappa and a student at Bergen Community College, discussed her challenges navigating financial aid, registration, and transportation as an incoming student from Albania. “It’s important to let students know what they don’t know and allow them to ask even the silliest questions,” she said. “We [also] need more individuals focused on opportunities for students [beyond] just helping with processes like registration and financial aid — people who think of the whole spectrum.”

Alicia Moreno, a former student trustee at Alamo Colleges in Texas and a member of ACCT’s newly formed student trustee advisory board, shared her experience as a military veteran returning to earn her degree and urged leaders to invest in veterans offices and services. “It’s an opportunity to not only serve them, but their families,” she said.

Michael Aguilar, a former Lone Star College student now at Washington University in Missouri, pointed to his Phi Theta Kappa sponsor, who connected him and others to scholarships and encouraged service projects, including one which led to the creation of a food pantry. “What’s really important is for community colleges to focus on helping those people committed to student success,” he said. “They’re going to push more than one student through the door, but whole generations of people through the door.”

Taking the gavel during the final session, 2018-19 ACCT Chair Connie Hornbeck pledged to continue the emphasis on partnerships and introduced two new priorities for the upcoming year (see profile, p. 20). Hornbeck, a trustee at Iowa Western Community College, stressed the importance of improving ACCT’s engagement with member boards and urged trustees to support efforts to provide educational opportunities to the 2.3 million incarcerated Americans, the vast majority of whom have no postsecondary education.

“It’s an issue worthy and uniquely related to the mission and value of community colleges as transformative and life-changing,” said Hornbeck. “We can serve as the shining light for those who need a second chance to what access to education can bring.”

Many of the sessions discussed in this article are available as audio podcasts. Visit https://www.acct.org/podcast to listen.
REP. BOBBY SCOTT (D-VA.) IS CURRENTLY serving his 13th term in the United States Congress, representing Virginia’s third congressional district in the House of Representatives. He currently serves as the Ranking Member on the House Committee on Education and Labor, on which he has served since he first took office in 1993. Congressman Scott spoke with Trustee Quarterly about his priorities for the committee over the coming legislative term, as well as the prospects for reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and other key community college priorities.

As chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor, what would you like to accomplish during the first half of 2019?

My top priority is to shift the Committee’s focus back to improving the lives of students, workers, and their families. This Committee has a responsibility to strengthen access to the building blocks of a strong middle class: quality and equity in education, fair wages and decent benefits for workers, and access to affordable health care. Through legislation, hearings, and oversight, we will advance our vision of a country where everyone can succeed.

What are your top priorities for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act? Do you think a bipartisan bill is possible?

Our primary goal is to restore the original intent of the Higher Education Act so that every student around the country, regardless of circumstance, can graduate with a quality degree or credential without the burden of unaffordable debt. This requires action in three key areas.

First, we must make higher education more affordable by expanding financial support for students and incentivizing states to reinvest in their public institutions. Second, we must
hold all programs accountable for providing high-quality instruction while cracking down on predatory, low-quality institutions. Third, we must create the right incentives for institutions to provide services that help students complete their education on time and successfully enter the workforce. Education has historically been an area for bipartisanship, and we will make every effort to continue that tradition. The American people are counting on Congress to address the serious challenges in our higher education system and to correct the inequities that have prevented many students from reaching their full potential.

In many ways, the Higher Education Act is structured with a traditional student population in mind. How do you think the law should be modified to provide stronger support for non-traditional students?

Community colleges have played an integral role in educating non-traditional students at an affordable cost. As open access institutions, community colleges enroll nearly half of all undergraduates, many of whom are low-income students, first-generation students, older undergraduates, and student parents.

As we think about the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, we are conscious of the fact that, as reflected by state funding, community colleges have long been undervalued. This next reauthorization of the Higher Education Act should place an emphasis on ensuring that community colleges are equipped to support students from access to completion.

The Aim Higher Act, the comprehensive HEA reauthorization proposal Democrats introduced last year, expanded Pell Grant eligibility for high-quality, short-term job preparation programs; provided direct funding to community colleges for improvements to student services; invested in campus child care to support student parents; and increased support for other non-traditional students, including homeless and foster youth, to ensure that all students who enter the higher education system are given the tools needed to complete their education.

How would you change or improve the Pell Grant program?

Pell Grants are the foundation of federal financial aid. There are three important ways we can strengthen Pell Grants to support the needs of today’s students. The first is to make the grants more generous in order to restore the share of college costs they cover. The second is to expand eligibility to individuals who have been traditionally shut out of higher education, such as workers wanting to gain technical skills, DREAMers, and individuals in our state and federal prisons. The third is to reduce uncertainty about future Pell funding by shifting more of the program from discretionary to mandatory spending.

Do you believe there should be a stronger federal role in encouraging state support for higher education?

State disinvestment in higher education is a primary driver of the rising cost of public institutions. In the last decade, state funding for four-year institutions decreased by 24 percent, and funding for community colleges decreased by 14 percent. This trend has particularly hurt low-income students and their families who are now expected to dedicate a large share of their income toward paying for higher education. The federal government can play a critical role in reversing this trend and lifting the burden that’s been shifted to students and their families.

To address this issue, the Aim Higher Act included a federal-state partnership that would incentivize states to reinvest in all of their public institutions as well as provide tuition-free community college to all students.

Community colleges serve an important role in supporting educational opportunities for incarcerated individuals and those who have reentered society following incarceration. How can the federal government provide additional support for those individuals and the institutions serving them?

Incarcerated individuals often leave prison with few marketable skills, and they struggle to assimilate back into mainstream society. Research shows that obtaining higher educational credentials while in detention helps this population transition smoothly out of detention and reduces the likelihood of recidivism by 43 percent within three years of exiting prison. Providing incarcerated individuals with higher education opportunities means safer communities and lower costs to taxpayers.

Unfortunately, slogans and soundbites during the debate around the use of Pell for incarcerated individuals led to a ban of the practice in 1994, leaving incarcerated individuals with no financial recourse to pursue higher education. In 2015, the Obama administration sought to re-examine this practice by creating the Second Chance Pell program, a small pilot program that expanded financial aid for incarcerated individuals and was shown to increase the rate of higher education enrollment by 236 percent among prisoners.

The Aim Higher Act allows incarcerated individuals to access Pell and obtain higher education credentials. Given the role of community colleges in providing educational opportunities to incarcerated individuals, your colleges are uniquely positioned to help ensure that these individuals get a second chance.
SCOTT STUMP IS THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CAREER, technical, and adult education at the U.S. Department of Education. He serves as the principal adviser to Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos on all matters concerning high school, career, technical, and adult education, as well as community colleges, the workforce, and economic development. Stump spoke with Trustee Quarterly about his background and the Department’s areas of interest.

Tell us a little about your background and work with community colleges.

My career began as a high school teacher in North Manchester, Indiana. Then I was blessed to spend nearly a decade developing student leadership programs, conferences, and events for the National FFA Organization.

After FFA, my wife and I moved to her hometown of Stoneham, Colorado, and I joined the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) as the State FFA Advisor. In Colorado, the CCCS is the state agency responsible for Perkins [Career and Technical Education Act], with approval authority for both secondary and postsecondary programs. It was here that I learned to speak “postsecondary” fluently. After a season of approving and providing technical assistance to the agriculture, natural resources, and energy programs in the state, I stepped into the role of assistant provost for career and technical education. In that role, I worked with each of our 13 system colleges, three local colleges, 178 school districts, and correctional institutions to meet Colorado’s diverse workforce needs.

While at CCCS, I also had the opportunity to serve as an interim college president while the college was conducting a national search for a new president. I count that experience as one of the most influential times in my life. There is nothing more fulfilling than participating in a community college graduation ceremony.
What areas are you focusing on in your role as assistant secretary?

My first priority in this role is the implementation of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education Act for the 21st Century (Perkins V). Our goal is that states are bold and innovative as they create their new vision for CTE and use that vision to develop state plans that empower local high schools and community colleges to meet the needs of their constituents.

I hope to see the end of terminal degrees during my lifetime. I hope to see vertical integration between K-12, community college, and four-year institutions so that students and parents will see that a “college for all” mentality does not mean just a four-year degree path. Like Secretary DeVos, I believe that multiple pathways must be equally valued by our institutions and systems of education.

In addition, I will work to elevate the conversation on the unique role community colleges play in urban and rural communities across this nation. From being the most economic path to employment and a four-year degree to being the most responsive cog in the American economic engine, voters and policymakers alike need to recognize the significant return on investment our community and technical colleges provide.

What should our institutions expect from the recent reauthorization of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act?

Colleges should expect a ton of activity over the next 18 months related to Perkins. Institutions need to be ready to be engaged stakeholders in the process. From helping define in-demand industries to crafting the process and product for the local needs analysis now required by law, the input of college faculty and leaders will be critical for a productive implementation of the Act.

The Trump Administration has a strong focus on apprenticeship programs. How does that fit into your priorities at the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education?

President Trump and Secretary DeVos see apprenticeships as an untapped resource in filling America’s skills gap. We see community colleges positioned to take the lead on incorporating apprenticeships in both traditional and non-traditional career pathways.

In the May 2018 final report of the Taskforce on Apprenticeship Expansion, Secretary DeVos said, “the negative stigmatization of apprenticeship must come to an end, and that a traditional college education and a modern-day apprenticeship are no longer mutually exclusive education options.” She and I believe that work-based learning, and specifically apprenticeships, adds a critical dimension to the education toolkit — one that is engaging for students, cost effective for employers, and a path to tackle the growing problem of rising student loan debt.

Apprenticeships provide a new way to expand the educational and career pathways available to Americans.

What are some challenges you see to innovation in career and technical education?

There are two barriers that must be addressed for true innovation in career and technical education. First, we must increase the connection of secondary and postsecondary CTE programs. All students should have access to concurrent or dual enrollment as soon as they demonstrate preparedness. No longer can we make students relearn competencies that they have already mastered. Our students, parents, and employers demand more.

Second, we must increase the nimble nature of our colleges. In many cases, we still have to resort to customized and non-credit training to meet the emerging needs of employers. While these options meet short-term needs, they do not meet the long-term needs of students or employers.

How can community colleges support your efforts?

I firmly believe there’s never been a better climate for community colleges to do what they do best: to adapt, anticipate, and innovate, and to create programs customized to local workforce needs and offer personalized learning and supports that help individual learners succeed.

Community college leaders can accelerate innovation and our efforts by joining us in rethinking education in America. Secretary DeVos has called on each of us in the Department of Education to question everything to ensure nothing limits a student from being prepared for what comes next. Think about the students and communities you serve and ask:

• Why do we measure education by seat time and credit hours?
• Why do we believe education stops at graduation?
• Why do we force all students to learn at the same speed?
• What would a 21st-century higher education law look like? Shouldn’t it:
  • Focus on achieving results for individuals, rather than on buildings or systems?
  • Anticipate and meet the needs, unique schedules and aspirations of students, instead of making them to conform to parameters that only work for some?

Ask the tough questions and then be bold in implementing solutions that are “right” for the students, employers, and communities we serve.
EMBRACING INNOVATION AND QUALITY OUTCOMES

Boards need to ground efforts in an understanding of the changing nature of work and the global economy.

By Debra Humphreys

Important changes in our approaches to learning after high school are being led by many college educators and urgently demanded by lawmakers, policy leaders, and the public. Institutional trustees, too, have a critical role to play — especially when it comes to clearly defining and holding institutions accountable for results that reflect a strong vision of quality and a commitment to more equitable outcomes.

This need for board leadership to drive both quality and equity is especially important in a climate of increasing skepticism about higher education. A recent Pew Research Center survey revealed that nearly two thirds of Americans believe that higher education is heading in the wrong direction. Even more think students are not getting the skills they need to succeed in the workplace. Surely, these twin findings are related.

This is no surprise to many educational leaders and government policymakers, and many are working hard to address the mismatch between the skills needed and the design of postsecondary programs.

But as they support redesign efforts driven by changing economic demands, board members should make sure the work is grounded in a deep understanding of the changing nature of work and the dynamic demands of a global economy. Boards can and should ask tough questions about the quality of both their traditional and new academic programs. Do they prepare students for immediate workplace demands? How do they set graduates up for economic opportunity and social mobility over the long term?

Seeking Integrative Models

Some employers complain about very specific, short-term needs in terms of skilled workers. But many economic forecasters and business leaders acknowledge an even greater and additional challenge: The pace of technological change and the nature of global competitiveness put a premium on a blend of shorter-term skills and longer-term adaptability and the capacity to keep learning.

Graduates need both specific technical skills and broad, transferable competencies that enable them to understand the broader context in which they live and work and to pivot on the job and across their working lives as necessary.

This means all programs need to consider an integrative approach to program redesign. They should be combining real-world experience — through which students gain practical, technical skills — and broader liberal learning approaches that provide context and higher order capacities to think critically, communicate clearly using multiple data sources, and solve complex problems in diverse settings. This is true both for two-year technical degrees as well as general studies degrees designed for transfer.

Defining Quality for Today’s World and Today’s Students

In light of the changing nature of work and the diversity of today’s students, Lumina Foundation has articulated a vision of quality postsecondary credentials that prioritizes three things:
Leaders at traditional community colleges are in an ideal position to help guide a national conversation about the quality of learning in all settings — and to integrate new innovative approaches into degree programs in ways that protect students and assure that they are getting the right learning building blocks to help them succeed in the long term.

Understanding New Policy Environments

Given their fiduciary responsibilities, board members also should be following closely changes in the policy environment in relation to quality.

Many states are beginning to track attainment of a much broader set of credentials from learning after high school. They are working hard to define which credentials really have value in the current and future labor markets. The U.S. Department of Education also has begun a process known as negotiated rule making designed to reduce and update regulations related to who has access to federal student aid. This effort may result in minor — or significant — changes in requirements related to accreditation and quality assurance processes that govern institutions of higher education. (See Accreditation and Community College Trustees, available at www.acct.org/term/reports-and-white-papers.)

In particular, the Education Department has cited the need for more innovation and attention to the expanding landscape of credentialing in announcing its efforts to negotiate new rules governing higher education. Board members should pay particular attention to how these shifts might change their own institutions’ internal quality review processes and how these changes may impact “competing” credential providers, which may gain increased access to federal financial aid.

In the end, regardless of which way the regulatory winds blow, board members can and should prioritize innovation in educational programs to better align with today’s students and today’s economy and vigorous, ongoing attention to the quality of their programs — what they produce for students in terms of learning and post-graduation outcomes.

It is only by attention to these twin priorities that governing boards will help regain the public’s confidence in institutions of higher education and assure that students are well served today and into the future.

Debra Humphreys, Ph.D. is vice president for strategic engagement at Lumina Foundation. Hear more from her about this topic in episodes 12 and 13 of the "In the Know with ACCT" podcast, available at https://intheknowwithacct.podbean.com or via the Apple podcast application or Google Play store.
CONNIE HORNBECK LIKES TO SAY SHE STARTED COLLEGE YOUNG. Born in rural Iowa to itinerant farmers, the Iowa Western Community College trustee attended a one-room schoolhouse with no running water starting at the age of six. Its name? While it was known locally as Frog Pond School, its official name was “Swamp College.”

It's also safe to say that Hornbeck didn't particularly enjoy her initial experiences with education. “I ran away from school every day,” she says. “Every day, my dad brought me back to school, and every day my teacher took me back. Over a year, that was 100 chances for her to say, ‘she's not ready,’ but she never did.”

Today, that idea of second chances is a driving theme of Hornbeck’s tenure as 2018-19 ACCT Chair. Along with an emphasis on strengthening engagement with the association and maintaining the focus on partnerships, Hornbeck is focused on providing new opportunities to the estimated 2.3 million incarcerated Americans seeking a return to society — and another chance.

“I became so impassioned with community colleges because of that transformative nature we have,” she says. “We give not one, not two, but I’ll bet we give some people 100 chances.”

The first in her family to attend college, Hornbeck paid her way through a combination of scholarships, work study, and “tassel pulling” — overseeing workers who pulled tassels from corn stalks to prevent cross-pollination and create hybridized seed corn.
It was the early 1970s, when the nation was still reeling from the Vietnam War. Seeing veterans return to college sparked Hornbeck’s interest in driving for change. “In the end, I realized what advocacy for a position can do,” she says.

After graduating, Hornbeck began working as a planner and grant writer for criminal justice programs. Working with a restitution program for juvenile offenders provided an insight that led her to start her own business.

Recognizing it was hard to find companies willing to hire juveniles with criminal backgrounds, she created a business plan to start a lawn service in 1985. Called CJ Futures, the business grew to include lawn and landscape design, as well as a retail lawn and garden center. The company soon was joined by Senior Futures, a nonprofit entity that helps senior citizens stay in their homes by providing free lawn care — and, she says, something more.

“People give what they can — sometimes it’s pennies or change,” she says. “It’s about dignity.”

As the businesses grew from her garage to dedicated office, staging, and retail space, Hornbeck found herself needing to learn new skills.

“I took accounting courses at my community college and used the community college for all sorts of workforce development for my staff,” she says. “They were my trainer of choice when I was trying to learn what I needed for my business.”

Hornbeck made the shift from community college student to community college leader in 1995, when an outgoing Iowa Western Community College board member encouraged her to consider applying for her seat. Now the mother of four children and four grandchildren, Hornbeck and her husband Jim, a retired English teacher, still live in rural Iowa. She’s since been elected to Iowa Western’s board nine times.

During Hornbeck’s tenure on the board, Iowa Western developed expanded student housing, a valuable option with no four-year college in its service area, which spans more than a dozen counties. The college also built an arts center, a new student center with a cyber library, and an advanced manufacturing and robotics facility. A wellness center also is in the works. The board has taken six bond issues to voters, all of which were approved.

Hornbeck watched as student demographics in her rural region shifted, and she encouraged diversity, inclusion, and equity programs. The needs of the region’s employers have shifted as well, and Iowa Western recently worked with Google and other local small businesses, entrepreneurs, and nonprofits to develop specifically identified skill sets and hands-on learning opportunities. The college’s health sciences programs, in particular, also have expanded significantly in recent years.

“We’re responding to community needs,” she says. “That’s so exciting for me — reinventing ourselves to reflect our community.”

Still, Hornbeck attributes the college’s success during her tenure to the collective action of the full board. “We learned to work together to meet the needs of our community, students, and employers, and in the end, move forward with one voice,” she says. “That whole concept is critical, and I hope I have modeled that behavior.”

Hornbeck soon became involved in state-level advocacy, ultimately serving as treasurer and chair of the Iowa Association of Community College Trustees (IACCT) and as a founding commissioner of the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), which coordinates efforts among two- and four-year institutions across the region. In 2010, she received the John P. Kibbie Outstanding Trustee Award, the highest honor for Iowa board members. Again, Hornbeck sought ways to improve her skills, and fellow board members steered her to ACCT, where she ultimately was elected to the association’s Board of Directors in 2013.

Hornbeck stresses the importance of ACCT’s strategic plan, which she says will help the organization “focus our ability to take on things and say no to things.” She also emphasizes the priorities undertaken by previous chairs, including 2017-18 ACCT Chair Emily Yim’s focus on partnerships, which Hornbeck pledged to continue upon taking the gavel at the 2018 ACCT Congress in New York City last October.

“Nothing at the community college level is done alone,”
Hornbeck says, “If it weren’t for our board, or staff, or our education partners, it wouldn’t get done.”

Another priority for her tenure as chair, Hornbeck says, is improving ACCT’s engagement with member boards. “I know firsthand the resource constraints our community colleges face,” she says. “That is why I want to explore ways we can create greater value and connectivity for our association and all of you.”

Doing so, she says, will involve harnessing technology to boost engagement in new ways, such as ACCT’s new podcast series, in which Hornbeck was recently featured (see p. 6). An increased emphasis on policy and issue analysis and the development of policy templates for boards to help them focus on data and goal setting are among her other priorities.

“The goal is to make ACCT the highest and best investment” for member boards, she says.

But the impetus for Hornbeck’s last, and newest, priority goes way back — back, in fact, to her childhood.

After becoming a small-town policeman when she was still in primary school, Hornbeck’s father taught her two rules — don’t lie and don’t steal. But he also taught her something else. “He’d say, ‘I could put [someone] in jail tonight and take him out for coffee in the morning, and you’ve got to remember it’s always double,’” she says. “As a police officer in a small town, he was not judging because of past mistakes.”

Through her work with criminal justice organizations and then her own business, Hornbeck met “so many people who just made a mistake,” she says. But today, she adds, there’s an important difference in their prospects.

“As I look at it now, the difference is when our incarcerated brothers and sisters get out, there’s nowhere to go without some postsecondary education,” she says. “Without that, you’re going to be back in.”

The statistics are sobering. The vast majority of today’s incarcerated population have no higher education background — only 6 percent have completed any education beyond high school. Most leave with few marketable skills, making it all the more difficult to readjust upon release.

Conversely, incarcerated individuals who earn higher education credentials before they re-enter society are far more likely to succeed — one study says earning credentials reduces the odds of recidivism by 43 percent within three years of exiting prison.

Pell Grants once helped fund programs for incarcerated individuals by community colleges and other providers, but support was curtailed in the 1990s, a decision that has persisted for more than two decades. In 2016, however, the U.S. Department of Education launched a pilot Second Chance Pell Grant program. Through the program, nearly 30 community colleges have offered postsecondary programs inside correctional facilities, awarding more than 700 certificates and 230 associate degrees to date.

The results to date, Hornbeck says, are like “a bright light.”

“This is something community colleges can do — we’re transformative in nature,” she says. “If we can set up [programs] with Google, we can set up welding programs in our correctional facility.”

Along with advocating for Second Chance Pell to be included in the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, Hornbeck says there also are opportunities to look at eligibility for other forms of federal financial aid and to seek additional funding sources through the Trump Administration’s efforts to champion “results-driven” education and training.

“We need workers, we need skilled workers, and we have folks that need jobs,” she says. “That’s a perfect scenario for community colleges and how we can serve our communities. We offer what no one else can, and in many instances no other higher education system wants to.”

Quoting songwriter Leonard Cohen, Hornbeck says, “there’s a crack in everything — that’s how the light gets in. Community colleges can bring the light and help repair the cracks in our communities by serving as the shining light for those who need a second chance to what access to education to education can bring.”
STATE SYSTEM GOVERNING BOARDS

COMMUNITY COLLEGES ARE OVERSEEN BY A VARIETY OF MODELS IN DIFFERENT STATES.

BY NORMA GOLDSTEIN
AS DISCUSSED IN THE FALL 2018 ISSUE OF TRUSTEE Quarterly, community colleges are designed and organized differently throughout the United States. In many states, each college operates independently, or through satellite campuses that constitute a single local community college system, but only four states have no state governing or coordinating boards.

Thirty-two states have some combination of state and local governance for community and technical colleges. Eleven states organize all of their community colleges into singular statewide systems, comprising about 22 percent of the boards across the nation. Some are exclusively for community colleges, while other states have higher education boards whose scope includes public four-year colleges and universities.

New Hampshire, for example, has seven community colleges governed by the Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH). “Having a statewide system has enabled our colleges to do more with limited resources, to enhance student success efforts in partnership with and with funding from national foundations and federal grants, and to be a unified major contributor to the state higher education attainment goal 65 by 2025 and economic goals,” says Chancellor Ross Gittell.

Gittell notes that “operating as a system has better positioned New Hampshire’s community colleges with state government and statewide business leaders, and this has helped to increase financial and other support. It has enabled the colleges to achieve economies of scale that have led to cost savings and capacity upgrades in financial, operational and academic technology areas. Our colleges have also been able to work more effectively with the state's university system colleges at the four-year level, in universal articulation agreements. And it has enabled our rural and smaller colleges and their students and communities to benefit from joint programming and academic collaborations with our larger community colleges with wider breadth of academic programs and faculty.”

This article is intended to help higher education leaders understand the nuances of different governance structures in different states, as well as what community college governance has in common everywhere.

Governing vs. Advising

To better understand the nuances of different state governing system models, we must first look at them structurally. Differences
often depend on system size, the number and type of institutions involved, student enrollment or capacity, and of course, state budget allocations. Governing board sizes and terms also differ. In New Hampshire, the CCSNH governing board is comprised of 36 members, of whom 23 (including two students) are voting members nominated by the governor and confirmed by executive council. The remaining 13 ex-officio trustees include the governor, the chancellor and vice chancellor, three state commissioners, and the presidents of each community college.

Along with governing boards, some — but not all — of the 11 states with state system models also have local campus advisory boards, which may advise on or perform similar functions as the state boards. While the state system trustees, for example, typically allocate state resources, set tuition rates, and develop statewide policies for higher education institutions, the local advisory or campus board may recommend the budget for approval, recommend certain executive hires, and generally monitor college adherence to the state plan for higher education. In some but not all state systems, local boards work either in tandem with statewide boards or work independently at the regional or institutional level to advise and coordinate.

Many of the basic responsibilities of state and local campus boards are identical. Each has to act as a unit, conform to a code of ethics, be mindful of monitoring rather than micromanaging, and so on. According to several college presidents, local board members often participate on screening committees and get the first shot at interviewing presidential or chancellor candidates. The actual hiring, however, is typically completed by the statewide board. In many states, the local board maintains its advisory role separate from the state board.

**Maintaining ‘Local Flavor’**

Each state system breeds its own unique practices. Connecticut, for example, is an example of a state system with local campus advisory boards. The Connecticut Board of Regents (BOR) for Higher Education governs Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU), which is comprised of four state universities, 12 community colleges, and Charter Oak State College. (The state’s flagship university, the University of Connecticut, is governed by its own board). The Board of Regents is made up of 19 members, nine of whom are appointed by the governor, four by legislative members, of whom one is a specialist in K-12 education, and two by its student advisory committee. Six members are ex-officio non-voting members: commissioners of departments of economic and community development, public health, education and labor, and the chair and vice chair of the system’s faculty advisory committee.

“It’s a very centralized system with a funding algorithm used to distribute the block grants allocated by the statewide board,” says David L. Levinson, president of Norwalk Community College (NCC) and vice president of CSCU. “The local campus boards do not have many formal mechanisms to work with the BOR other than informational sessions days at the state house or legislative sessions that most colleges sponsor. The role of the advisory boards is to recommend and advise, and they do so for the most part on local curricula and programmatic issues.”

Indeed, the main function of the Nutmeg State’s local campus advisory boards is to advise and coordinate academic programs for the state’s approximately 53,000 students. Each college has a regional or local campus advisory board and foundation board for local decisions involving coordination of programs with local employer needs. The local board members guide programs for curriculum development and local input on construction projects; the foundation boards help with fundraising.

NCC’s local campus board is a combined regional advising board and foundation board whose major task is fundraising. “We raise the most money in the system, and it is very productive to have this local board,” Levinson says. Along with the scaling benefits at the state level, Levinson praises the role of local boards in determining their institutions’ programs and local policies. “Campus boards keep that local flavor,” he says.

**‘Streamlining’ Governance Without Local Boards**

Vermont, which has a small state system without local advisory boards, prides itself on being unified, sleek, and tightly regulated to reduce redundancy and expense for the 12,000 students in the state, 10,000 of whom are natives. Headed by a longtime Vermonter, Chancellor Jeb Spaulding, the Vermont State College (VSC) governing system is comprised of a 15-member state board of trustees, including the governor. Board members have four-year terms with no limits. The chancellor’s office regularly communicates areas of opportunity for growth and expertise gaps on the board for consideration as the governor casts a wide net for board candidates.

“We are thinking all the time and keep a list as terms expire,” Spaulding says. He notes that the board at times can benefit most from appointments from outside academic circles, and at other times it can be most beneficial “to bring someone up from within.”

Five of the board members are appointed by the governor, four by the board of trustees, one is selected by constituency groups, and four legislative ex-officio trustees are members of the General Assembly, including the governor. There is one student trustee who can vote; this person is elected by the student government associations of all four state institutions: two four-year liberal arts universities, one state technical college, and one community college that has 12 learning sites across the state headed by coordinators.

Spaulding believes “it’s helpful to have one board. We try to operate as a tightly regulated system for easy transfer of credits, avoiding redundancy. One board is helpful in that regard. It’s easier for the presidents to be responsible to one board, and the chancellor acts as intermediary.”

Chancellor Spaulding also addressed the pros and cons of a single board for the state’s colleges and universities:

**Pros:**

• Easier to find ways to accomplish goals

• Eases shared services — i.e., consolidated business functions
4 STATES WITHOUT A STATE GOVERNING OR COordinating board

Michigan: 29 local governing boards for governing each of the state’s 29 community colleges

Arizona: 10 district governing boards for governing the state’s 21 community colleges*

Nebraska: 6 local governing boards for governing each of the state’s 6 community colleges

New Jersey: 19 local governing boards/19 colleges*

*with some state coordination responsibilities by their respective statewide associations, the Arizona Association of Community College Trustees (AACCT) in Arizona and the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC).

• One Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system
• Allocating resources equitably
• Negotiating contracts all at once — i.e., reduces administrative work

Cons:
• Institutions may not get individual attention
• Institutions may not be autonomous if they are part of a system.

As a specific example of the benefits of a single state board, Spaulding points to the recent consolidation of two separate institutions (the Lyndon and the Johnson campuses) into one: Northern Vermont University. “The board made that unification more doable,” he says. “The two sites doubled their power, connected classrooms, and students now have more access to more courses.” For a small state like Vermont, he says, not having local boards keeps the system streamlined.

The board of trustees hires the chancellor and the presidents, but the Vermont chancellor can remove the president with approval from the board. Selection of the chancellor and the presidents is a major role of the board, yet the chancellor’s office runs the search committee and tries to keep the trustees involved all the way. “This is one of the most important things we do — making sure the system has effective leadership,” Spaulding says. “It’s critical for the CEO to have a tight relationship with the board chair and talk on a regular basis.”

Autonomy and Coordination

Michigan is one of four states without a state governing or coordinating board (see box, above). Unlike its four-year institutions, the state’s community colleges are the creation of the legislature and not the state constitution, and each of the state’s 28 community colleges has its own local governing board. However, according to Dan Phelan, president of Jackson College, the state has a voluntary association of all 28 community colleges, called the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA).

“Our colleges are autonomous and follow the direction of our locally elected, non-partisan boards,” Phelan says. “In terms of pros and cons, I offer the following, based on 18 years of service in the state. Having worked in other states with a coordinating commission or state board, I can tell you that I greatly appreciate the flexibility that comes with advancing programs and services without the significant delays that come from state department of education reviews and approvals. Our board is much more responsive to local needs and is given to ensuring that the college does its best to meet them in an urgent way, holding the college president accountable to do so. Our board sets their own tuition and fee rates each year as well.”

“As the challenge side of the coin, I would offer that, from time to time, it can be difficult to get all colleges to agree to a particular course of action regarding operations, curriculum or other legislative pursuit,” Phelan adds. “That said, MCCA and our presidents and trustees do a great job in making the case for a particular effort, so the occasions of not being all together on any particular decision are infrequent.”

The Vital Role of Citizen Governance

Despite the variation among governance structures from state to state, all community colleges are governed by citizens who are not necessarily professional educators. This system of lay governance reflects the democratic structure adopted by each state and local community in different parts of the country. Community college governing boards provide oversight to public community and technical colleges throughout the nation. Legal, fiduciary, and ethical responsibilities are engaged when they appoint CEOs, approve appointments and billions of dollars in expenditures and ensure institutional compliance with regulatory requirements (Public Community College Governing Boards, ACCT, 2012, p. 1)


Norma Goldstein, Ph.D., is director of the Governance Institute for Student Success and special projects for ACCT.
**CENTRAL REGION**

Lorain Community College and Lakeland Community College in Ohio have created a new pathway in partnership with Case Western Reserve University. The pathway is intended to allow students to earn an associate’s degree from either community college, then a bachelor’s degree from Case Western in four years at a reduced cost.

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities are launching MN Reconnect, an initiative which will help adult learners who did not complete their degree finish their program of study. The program focuses on students absent for two or more years.

Somerset Community College in Kentucky will offer students degrees from partnering four-year institutions while remaining on the community college campus.

Ivy Tech Community College in Indiana launched a dual-enrollment partnership with the Evansville Vanderburgh School system. Participating students can finish high school with a high school diploma and an associate’s degree or technical certificate.

Chicago mayoral candidate Bill Daley has proposed merging the Illinois city’s K-12 public schools with City Colleges of Chicago to create a comprehensive P-14 system. Under the proposal, all Chicago Public Schools graduates could attend City Colleges for free. City Colleges also recently opened a new $45 million manufacturing and engineering center. The 57,000 square foot center is complemented by new curriculum intended to meet industry needs in the fast-growing fields.

Kishwaukee College in Illinois is partnering with the city of Sycamore to provide leadership training for city employees. The Sycamore U certificate program includes four courses from the college’s associate in applied science in marketing management program. Classes will be held weekly at City Hall to make it easier for employees to attend.

**PACIFIC REGION**

To streamline the transfer process, Bristol Community College and the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth have inked an agreement to launch an articulation program called Plus Program: Bristol + UMassD.

As part of a $10 million fundraising campaign, Cape Cod Community College in Massachusetts received the single largest individual gift in its history. The $5 million donation from longtime benefactor Maureen Wilkens will support the construction of the college’s new science and engineering building.

A bill in New Jersey to establish hunger-free campus grant programs has gained committee approval. The grant would seek to address food insecurity at the state’s campuses.

The Community College of Rhode Island has seen major enrollment growth in the second year of the state’s Promise Program. Enrollments grew 47 percent, with a total of 2,321 new students.

The University of New Hampshire is expanding a free tuition program for students who transfer to the school from the state’s community college system. The program guarantees that full-time students who receive Pell grants won’t pay tuition.

The Community College of Beaver County in Pennsylvania received a $1 million grant to continue leading the Tristate Energy and Advanced Manufacturing Consortium. The consortium connects STEM graduates to jobs in energy and advanced manufacturing.

**NEAR EAST REGION**

California Gov. Gavin Newsom’s first budget proposal would add $402 million in new funding for the state’s 115 community colleges as part of his $209 billion state budget plan. The board of governors had requested $736 million in extra funds. The new governor put special emphasis on expanding mental health services for students and getting Californians with some college credits to finish their degrees.

A bill was introduced in the California state assembly to expand the statewide college promise program to cover two tuition-free years. The program was passed in 2017 and currently covers one year of tuition.

In Seattle, Washington, voters approved a tax that, among other things, will fund two...
years of tuition-free community college for all graduates of Seattle Public Schools regardless of income.

Lane Community College in Oregon is partnering with Oregon State University to create more efficient pathways for students to earn bachelor’s degrees. One of the pathways allows students to earn a bachelor’s degree in general business in three years instead of four.

The University of Hawai’i system, which includes the state’s seven community colleges, announced plans to offer its first completely online degree programs. The first cohort of associate degree students will begin the accelerated program in August, with the possibility of completing online studies for a bachelor’s degree for select programs in 2020. “We know that many Hawai’i residents want to earn a college degree but have competing demands, which make it difficult to take classes at a college campus. This program allows students to learn on their own schedule and to focus on one class at a time,” said Vice President of Community Colleges John Morton.

The West Virginia legislature is again moving legislation to make community and technical education free for in-state students. The legislation, which moved out of a Senate committee in January and is supported by the Senate president, is nearly identical to a bill unanimously passed by the Senate last year but which failed to clear the House.

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System has entered a transfer articulation agreement with Louisiana College. As part of the agreement, Louisiana College will provide pre-transfer advising to LCTCS students through online, onsite, and telephone advising.

Piedmont Technical College in South Carolina is partnering with local K-12 school districts to prepare students for careers in healthcare with the Health Care Quick Start Program. The first year of the program is dual enrollment and tuition-free.

The South Carolina Technical College System is planning to use a $100,000 grant provided by the SC Heritage Classic Foundation to enhance its mechatronics program by remodeling labs and training faculty.

At the end of 2018, students in Tennessee’s tnAchieves program had surpassed 2 million hours of community service, a requirement of the program which provides tuition-free community college in the state.

Alamance Community College in North Carolina is set to receive $35 million for upgrades to its campus. Over 65 percent of local residents voted to pass the bond, which also included funding for the local K-12 school system.

A food pantry on the Dale Mabry campus of Hillsborough Community College in Florida helped 750 students last semester, handing out more than 3,500 pounds of food.

Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts proposed a $3.5 million state-funded scholarship to connect Nebraska college graduates to high-paying jobs throughout the state. The funding would include both four-year institutions and the state’s community college system.

A four-college consortium including schools in Wyoming and Montana received more than $4 million from America’s Promise, an $111 million initiative from the U.S. Department of Labor. The money will help students pay for their education and connect with in-demand jobs after graduation.

Two Texas Senate bills were introduced to help state residents pay for higher education. One would give free community college tuition to students who completed high school within the past year, and the other would give free tuition to students whose families earn less than $150,000 annually.

Around the Regions provides an opportunity to share what’s happening in the states and around the regions. This section focuses on state legislative and budgetary issues, economic development, and finance. Please e-mail items from press releases or newsletters to ACCT at jbray@acct.org.
CONGRATULATIONS! YOU WERE JUST ELECTED (OR APPOINTED) to be a trustee of your local community college board. With the November elections now behind us, there are literally hundreds of newly elected community college trustees who will begin their new role as a board trustee in 2019. Each of them ran for this office to do a public service and to help their community and the students of their local community college.

New trustees come onto their boards with a wide range of experiences, some with experience in education and others with experience in private business or other sectors. Each trustee brings a unique set of skills to their board and his or her own values and interests to this new role. When I was elected to my board in 2012, I came in with a great deal of enthusiasm, a desire to make a positive contribution, and lots of questions.

I joined a board with four seasoned trustees who had decades of combined experience leading our district. We also had a long-serving chancellor with years of experience as a community college administrator. I was the new trustee, full of questions and energy, and ready to get to work.

After a couple of meetings, I realized the best advice I had been given was to "slow down." There is no way anyone can learn and understand this complex educational system we call "community colleges" overnight. I learned over time that the best way to become a member of the board, and not just an individual trustee, was to spend more time listening and less time asking questions whose answers everyone else already knew. The best way to build a rapport with your fellow board members and with your chancellor or president is to ask your questions in separate briefing meetings and not to take up valuable board meeting time with questions on complex topics that will require detailed answers.

I have learned to focus my work as a board trustee on four key questions. My advice to all newly elected and appointed board trustees around the country is to use these four questions as your guide to becoming an effective trustee and a contributing member of your board team.

1. What is the best way to get my questions answered?
I believe learning how and when to ask questions is the most important skill a new board trustee must develop. As a new trustee, you will have questions come up in your mind constantly, so this is a process question that is especially important. But even
as an experienced trustee, I still find that I ask myself this question every time I am interested in a college issue or policy.

New trustees should ask this question — “what is the best way to get my questions answered?” — of their chancellor or college president at their very first meeting after the election. Hopefully, you will learn the best ways to get information without becoming a pest or a burden to your college staff. Good governance practice teaches us that all informational requests should be directed from the board member to the college president or chancellor in a multi-college district. That process will allow your college president to ensure that your questions get answered and to manage the workload of college leadership staff.

Recognizing this trustee-president relationship is paramount, because as a trustee you will find yourself in informal conversations and possibly in email discussions with college staff. It is important to remember that anytime a trustee asks for something or asks a question, it is seen by staff as a priority. Often to please a trustee, staff may take on the added work of responding when there are always other parts of their workload and priorities to consider. Therefore, it is important to remember to always include your college president in any questions or requests that you make of college staff — even what you might think is a trivial request.

As we seek to become and continue to be effective trustees, how we ask questions is just as important as the questions we ask. Mastering this skill will lead to a more positive relationship with your board colleagues and with college leadership.

2. How is our college funded?
The second key question for new trustees to ask is, “how is our college funded?” Understanding the ins and outs of your college budget will take some time, but gaining a basic understanding of the budget should be the first task of a new trustee.

There are many different funding sources for community colleges, and they vary widely from state to state. In California, community colleges are almost totally funded by the state, with very little local revenue. And our state’s funding process is very complex, with formulas for both unrestricted and restricted revenues. As a new trustee, don’t expect to understand these budget complexities after one or even a few briefings with your college president and chief financial officer. Ask questions related to fiscal policies and be patient, because it may take a few budget cycles for you to gain a full understanding of the entire budget process.

As you begin your work as a new trustee, try to understand the budget challenges faced by your institution. Remember that any budget challenges your college may face will need to be solved over time and with a team approach. By asking policy-oriented questions, you can be a team player who wants to contribute to positive solutions.

3. What is our data on student success measures?
Community college trustees are elected to their college boards to ensure that the educational needs of their community are being met. To meet that responsibility, trustees must understand the student outcomes of their college. As a new trustee, it is particularly important to understand your college’s student success data. Your initial briefing should give you an understanding of degree completion rates, transfer rates, course persistence, academic achievement, and other metrics of student success.

Knowing about student success data is important, but it is also important to know what programs are in place that are working to improve student success. Are there policies and programs that your college needs but has been unable to implement? Understanding the student success data will help you as a new trustee begin to play a role in supporting your institution’s efforts to implement student success programs that can increase key student success metrics.

4. What does our enrollment data show?
Enrollment management is critical for community colleges, which are often funded based on enrollment. The board of trustees plays an important role in enrollment management by overseeing their president’s enrollment-management programs and monitoring enrollment data.

The importance of understanding enrollment and student data goes far beyond the budget implications. Trustees need to be aware of the diversity and profile of the students served by their institution. Knowing the demographic and economic profiles of the students you serve can help trustees better understand student needs and challenges.

Knowing the numbers of first-generation college students, immigrant students, and the racial and ethnic breakdowns of their students can help a trustee understand the need for various policies that can help students be successful. Knowing the estimated numbers of housing and food insecure students can help trustees promote policies to help students meet those needs.

Four Questions for Good Policy Making
In summary, these four questions will help a new trustee, and even experienced ones like me, become better policy makers. Trustees who understand the budget process, student success data, and student enrollment data will have the information they need to support their board in making effective policy decisions that will have a positive impact on students. Knowing how to ask the questions to get this information will help a new trustee become a team player and a trusted leader with their board and college leadership.

Bernie Rhinerson is a trustee on the San Diego Community College District Board and a member of the ACCT Board of Directors.
ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT ISSUES AFFECTING BOARDS TODAY

TRUSTEE TALK WITH ACCT

BY NORMA W. GOLDSMITH, Ph.D.

Guns on Campus – A Loaded Issue, Part I
How do Boards of Trustees create policies on highly controversial issues such as guns on campus for their community colleges?

Polarization over weapons and safety on college campuses has reached an all-time high. The issue of guns on campus is a pivot point for many boards across the country. Some feel safe with guns; others feel terrorized by them. These ambivalent views of campus firearms keep the issue alive on our campuses, in the news, in our political chambers, in our communities, and in the boardroom.

Even on campuses where shootings and deaths occurred, feelings are mixed. More than two years after 10 deaths, Umpqua Community College is still sensitive to the trauma. Trauma is pervasive, according to Umpqua Community College President, Debra Thatcher — so much so that the board does not yet have a weapons policy established for this rural college in Oregon, an open-carry state that allows concealed weapons with a permit. According to Thatcher, “Our safety training has a light touch; we offer simulations, but active shooter training is not mandatory. There’s not even a memorial on campus. For some, the campus is still too fragile.”

It’s a complex issue everywhere. In a 2016 issue of Contemporary Justice Review, researchers Bruce A. Arrigo and Austin Acheson from the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte propose that current policy has yet to appropriately balance the competing demands of Second Amendment liberty guarantees against personal safety concerns and learning-environment interests. Further, they argue that societal forces and human dynamics “constitute cultural impediments to achieving meaningful consensus-building legislation.” Nevertheless, as a corollary to our initial story on campus carry in 2016 (available at https://www.acct.org/page/trustee-talk-issue-10), this Trustee Talk provides updates to help boards and college leaders more effectively deal with gun policies and practices on their campuses.

Getting feedback from students, faculty, and staff is a first step. Process becomes important when college leaders deal with controversial topics on their campuses. Most important is providing constituencies with basic information about their state’s weapons laws, many of which are confusing, according to Matt Franz at Clark State Community College in Ohio. He urges boards and college leaders to make sure student, faculty, and staff understand the key elements of their state’s weapons laws.

WHICH STATES ALLOW GUNS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES?
• 10 states allow concealed weapons on college campuses.
  • States include: Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Mississippi, Oregon, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin.
• 31 states allow open carrying of handguns without any license.
• 15 states require some form of a license or permit.
• 4 states prohibit open carry: California, Illinois, New York, and South Carolina, plus the District of Columbia.

10 states allow concealed weapons on college campuses.

31 states allow open carrying of handguns without any license.

15 states require some form of a license or permit.

4 states prohibit open carry: California, Illinois, New York, and South Carolina, plus the District of Columbia.
Ohio, who reviewed 12 community colleges in Kansas, Texas, Mississippi, and Wisconsin that had recently enacted campus carry laws for his doctoral dissertation on the topic.

Foremost is getting the pulse of the campus: Many community college presidents have undertaken lengthy feedback sessions, held open forums, and conducted surveys of students, faculty, and staff. At Clark State, all three senates voted against allowing concealed carry. Jo Ann Blondin, president of Clark State, told Community College Daily, “The decision rested with the board of trustees, but I wanted to get as much information as possible from people on campus on how we should approach the issue.” The board decided to keep its current ban on weapons on campus. Ohio is an open-carry state, and according to current Ohio law, persons with a valid concealed-carry license and active military members can now carry concealed handguns in a school safety zone subject to certain exceptions, including not being allowed to enter school buildings or premises.

**Knowing the community gun culture is the second step.**

Boards represent their communities, so understanding the region’s gun culture is important. According to a 2015 report, *Gun ownership and social gun culture*, there is wide regional variation in gun ownership across the United States. While one-third of U.S. residents owned guns in 2014, the prevalence of household firearms ranged from 10 to 66 percent across the 50 states.

In 2013, the greatest percentage of gun ownership was in Alaska, at 61.7 percent, and the least was Delaware with 5.2 percent. Large states like California, with 20.1 percent gun ownership, and Texas, with 35.7 percent, were below and above, respectively, the mid-range national gun ownership rate of 29.1 percent (*Gun ownership and social gun culture*, Kaleson, et al., Injury Prev, June 29, 2015).

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<th>REGION</th>
<th>AVERAGE GUN OWNER RATE</th>
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<td>West</td>
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**Mental health issues on campus**

Trustees also need to be aware of the mental health issues faced by students on their campuses. These issues have implications for gun policies, as Everytown for Gun Safety notes that suicide by firearm makes up the majority of both gun deaths and suicides in the United States, according to the American Journal of Medicine (2016: 129 (3) 266-273) and a list of dangerous gun policies in 2017.

It is also important to note that, while keeping firearms out of the hands of people with profound mental illnesses is commonly discussed, a number of facts are commonly misunderstood. For example, according to The New York Times, “in an analysis of 235 mass killings, many of which were carried out with firearms, 22 percent of the perpetrators could be considered mentally ill.” It is important to note, however, that what might be considered “mental illness” is very broad, and serious mental illnesses that are most likely to be diagnosed and potentially surface through a background check as a “red flag” are uncommonly associated with mass shootings. “Overall,” according to the American Psychiatric Association (2016), “mass shootings by people with serious mental illness represent 1 percent of all gun homicides each year.”

According to former National Institute of Mental Health Director Thomas Insel, “…mental illness contributes very little to the overall rate of violence in the community. Most people with [a serious mental illness] are not violent, and most violent acts are not committed by people with [a serious mental illness]. In fact, people with [a serious mental illness] are actually at higher risk of being victims of violence than perpetrators.”

And according to a peer-reviewed literature review by Jonathan M. Metzl, M.D., Ph.D., and Kenneth T. MacLeish, Ph.D. in the American Journal of Public Health (February 2015), “connections between mental illness and gun violence are less causal and more complex than current U.S. public opinion and legislative action allow.” They assert that highly complicated nuances involved in mental illness classification and diagnosis, and a broad and diverse array of societal considerations, makes directly correlating mental illness and gun violence factually incorrect and unproductive. “Ultimately,” they write, “the ways our society frames these connections reveal as much about our particular cultural politics, biases, and blind spots as it does about the acts of lone, and obviously troubled, individuals.”

Mental health issues on both two- and four-year campuses are significant, however. As part of overall efforts to protect student well being, trustees should determine the statistics for their own colleges as well as assess campus and community resources for mental health treatment. The mental health and well being of students is a primary concern with respect to student success as well as individual students’ safety and campus safety; at the same time, campus leaders and policies should be cognizant that mentally ill people are more likely to be victims of violent crimes — including suicides — and not necessarily public safety risks.
What do students want?

A survey of 15 Midwestern colleges and universities “Do College Students Want Concealed Weapons On Campus?” Moneywatch, September 13, 2013) indicates that an overwhelming number of college students (68 percent) “are opposed to concealed weapons where they attend school.” The survey showed that 16 percent of undergraduates owned a firearm, 20 percent had witnessed a crime on their campus involving a firearm, 66 percent did not feel carrying a gun would make them less likely to be troubled by others, and 79 percent did not feel safe if faculty, students, and visitors carried concealed weapons on campus. Most students were also concerned about increased suicide and homicides on campus. In February 2018, Newsweek reported that polls suggest that “gun control opinions don’t differ greatly by age.” A three-year Gallup poll asking whether U.S. gun laws should be more or less strict found that 57 percent of all respondents favored stricter gun laws, with 58 percent of people ages 18 to 29 favoring stricter laws.

Impacts on free speech and people’s sense of power

As stewards of the entire campus, boards also need to consider other complex implications of gun policies for students, faculty and staff. In his 2016 article in The Atlantic, “The Armed Campus in the Anxiety Age,” Georgia Tech faculty member Ian Bogost states, “If faculty and students cannot discuss contentious issues in the open without fear of inciting angry students to draw their guns, then democracy could be undermined.”

Bogost also notes a commonly cited argument for allowing guns on campus. “Safety cuts both ways, and appeals to security have long justified support for expanded gun rights in America,” he writes. “If college campuses are among the few venue where guns are prohibited, argue gun advocates, they will become targets for attacks.”

‘Wholesale collegiate anxiety’

Rather than safety or speech, Bogost feels that universal anxiety is the underlying issue driving the gun debate. Noting that today’s 21-year old students were entering school on 9/11, he states, “Today’s students are beset by unease.” He concludes that the loss of state support for education, the focus on testing and rankings, and high student debt contribute to “massive, wholesale collegiate anxiety.”

Bogost proposes that college leaders spend time and legislative effort de-escalating the massive anxiety among college students today. “We can do that by providing the resources to teach them well as kids, to help them secure productive places in society,” he writes. “The great tragedy of the push to extend gun rights to every nook and cranny of American life is not that firearms make people feel greater power and great control. It’s that they are so stripped of that power and control that they should need to seek solace in guns in the first place.”

The third step is safety: campus safety and the community college context

Rather than focus just on controversial gun policies, boards often turn first to broader safety issues. Community colleges and other higher education institutions are penetrable “open access spaces that are target rich and vulnerable to attack.” According to CNN, there has been, on average, one school shooting every week this year, including both K-12 and higher ed campuses. Others, including the Independent, agree that “educational institutions seem to be the prime target of attack for gunmen.”

Safety is costly

A post-Parkland analysis by IHS Markit noted that the school security market has surged to about $2.7 billion a year. The next wave of products available to school districts could include facial-recognition cameras and impenetrable classroom doors, the firm said. Some school districts, however, already use a network of internet-based surveillance cameras and door alarms that can alert and track intrusions remotely, monitored by control centers in each school. In some places, these systems have stopped young intruders and interrupted serious incidents.

Boards exercise their fiduciary responsibilities when funding campus safety

A 2015 article in Forbes magazine, “The Push for Campus Safety Means More Guns, Officers, Security Spending,” notes the increase in public safety officers has in itself resulted in more weapons on college and university campuses: guns (94 percent), chemical sprays (94 percent), batons (93 percent), and tasers (40 percent). Along with armed guards, institutions are also securing their campuses with technology that facilitates crime prevention and investigations. Among the trends:

Worldwide total for gun deaths hits 250,000 yearly, and the U.S. is among six countries making up half of those fatalities.

— Lindsey Tanner, AP

“Firearms deaths — A major public health problem for humanity.”

— Journal of the American Medical Association, August 2018
Campus mental health services — clinical and policy crises

As stated earlier in this article, boards should attend to the mental health needs of people on campus; this is where their policymaking can reap great changes to benefit students.

The statistics are clear: College students are more likely to use a gun to harm themselves than to protect themselves in a mass shooting. Mental health, not mass shootings, is the bigger issue for colleges and universities. Umpqua’s president noted the lack of mental health services in the small rural community. (See Trustee Talk #11, Being Open to Discussing Mental Health Issues: The Board’s Role on College Campuses on the ACCT website.)

To highlight both the campus crisis and the policy crisis, The JED Foundation (JED) provides information on protecting emotional health and preventing suicide for teens and adults. Even though health professionals were worried about students’ mental health issues in colleges for years before the more recent spate of school shootings and suicide events, research and funding have remained scarce. According to JED, the demand for services has dramatically outpaced the capacity and rate of growth of available mental health care systems. Again, boards should review the services available at their colleges.

What are policymakers doing?

According to Everytown Research, the 115th Congress has worked to roll back existing gun laws, making it easier for people with mental illnesses to get guns. Rollbacks have kept 433,000 records for people with mental illness out of the gun background check system. Everytown Research also asserts that there is no evidence that arming teachers will protect students, as some lawmakers have suggested. Access to a firearm, respective of age, triples the risk of death by suicide and doubles the risk of death by homicide.

Many national educational and public safety organizations oppose the proposal. The National Association of School Resource Officers, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the National Education Association (NEA), and the Major City Chiefs Police Association, which represents 75 police forces from large cities in the U.S. and Canada, agree that arming teachers is not a good idea. The National Rifle Association claims that arming teachers will stop active shooters during a school shooting, but the Federal Bureau of Investigation found only one armed civilian intervention — by a U.S. Marine — was successful.

Recommendations for boards

Key findings from a study (Baker & Boland, 2011, p. 683) found that there is strong division on gun issues on campuses and often in the surrounding community. Among the recommendations made by college leaders from Clark State Community College in Ohio and Independence Community College in Kansas during a presentation at the 2018 American Association of Community Colleges Convention were to:

- Increase communication
- Foster a collaborative and inclusive policy development process
- Leverage available research and data to inform policy development.

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) Statement on School Safety urges leaders to:

- Examine national and state policies on access to weapons
- Maintain safeguards for Americans to engage in peaceful protests
- Support students and educators who engage in appropriate civil action
- Increase teacher, school, and community resources to appropriately address students’ mental and emotional health.

Among other issues to consider:

Red Flag laws. College leaders should be aware of Red Flag laws that empower family members and law enforcement to petition a judge to temporarily block a person from having guns if they pose a danger to themselves or others.

Support raising the minimum age to 21 for purchase of semi-automatic rifles and shot guns. Statistics show that 18 to 20-year-olds commit gun homicides at a rate nearly four times greater than adults 21 and older.

Disclaimer: This newsletter is offered for general informational purposes only. It is not offered as and does not constitute legal advice. The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and they do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the association.

Norma Goldstein, Ph.D., is director of the Governance Institute for Student Success and special projects for ACCT. She can be reached at ngoldstein@acct.org.
ACCT LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

Community college trustees give a lot of themselves — time, energy, wisdom — and ask for little or nothing in return. The gift of an ACCT Lifetime Membership is a way to thank trustees for everything they do, and to empower them to keep doing it for as long as they choose.

A lifetime membership is a perfect way to...

- Recognize outstanding trustees whose dedication to your college has made a difference and set an example.
- Thank outgoing members for their service.
- Remain involved with your peers and make a tax-deductible donation to your national association by purchasing a Lifetime Membership for yourself.

7 REASONS TO BESTOW A LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

1. Giving outstanding and retiring board members a Lifetime Membership to ACCT is a way to thank them for their service, recognize them among their peers, and ensure their ongoing interest in your college.

2. Lifetime Members receive complimentary registration to all ACCT meetings, including the Annual Leadership Congress and the National Legislative Summit, after retiring from their local boards.

3. Lifetime Members receive all of ACCT’s award-winning publications, including Trustee Quarterly magazine and Advisor.

4. Lifetime Members are recognized publicly in Trustee Quarterly, on the ACCT Web site, and elsewhere.

5. The Lifetime Membership program supports and promotes ACCT’s continuing trustee education and professional development.

6. Colleges that purchase Lifetime Memberships can deduct the expense from taxes to the fullest extent allowed by law.

7. It’s just a nice thing to do — and haven’t your most exceptional trustees earned it?

For more information and to submit an application, go to www.acct.org/membership/lifetime or contact ACCT’s Member Services at 202.775.4667 or acctinfo@acct.org.
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 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 Colleen Allen at callen@acct.org / 202.775.6490.
Legal Issues Impacting Community Colleges

Recent developments include FMLA litigation, compliance efforts at the Department of Labor, and rising harassment claims in the face of #MeToo.

By Ira Michael Shepard, ACCT General Counsel

The following are recent legal issues and court actions of interest to community colleges and their leaders.

Federal court rules that a county official can be sued for alleged FMLA violations. A federal district court judge in Wisconsin recently ruled in favor of allowing a county official to be sued individually for an alleged violation of the Family and Medical Leave Act. In the case, a sheriff’s deputy was ordered back to work by the county’s human resources director, even though the deputy claimed to be on lawful FMLA leave (Hemenway v. Rock City, 2018 BL 427414, W.D. Wis., No. 18-cv-307, 11/19/18).

The judge recognized that the plain language of the FMLA allows HR directors to be sued under its broad definition of “employer.” The FMLA defines an employer as any person who acts in the interest of the employer.

While the judge noted that the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, which includes Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana, has never ruled on the issue, three other federal circuit courts of appeals have ruled in favor of allowing county officials to be sued. They are the Third Circuit (including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware); the Fifth Circuit (Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi); and the Eighth Circuit (North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, and Arkansas). Two circuits, however, have ruled against allowing HR directors to be sued under FMLA: the Sixth Circuit (including Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee); and

"Do you get overtime for this, Miss Marble?"
the Eleventh Circuit (Alabama, Georgia, and Florida).

**Business school professor loses First Amendment retaliatory discharge claim by raising personal grievances, not public issues.** The Second Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals (covering New York, Connecticut, Vermont, and New Hampshire) recently affirmed the dismissal of a business school professor's First Amendment retaliatory discharge lawsuit. The court held that a First Amendment claim must raise broad public purpose issues, not just the airing of personal grievances, in order to move forward (Weinstein v. University of Connecticut, 2018 BL 445706, 2nd Cir., No. 17-3839, unpublished, 12/4/18).

The professor argued that he complained about his supervisor's nepotism, and that nepotism is a matter of public concern in a public institution. He also complained about labor issues and again argued that for a public institution to commit labor violations is a matter of public concern. As a result, the professor argued that his complaints are therefore protected under the First Amendment and that the university's failure to continue his contact was a retaliatory violation of his First Amendment rights to raise these issues.

The Court of Appeals rejected all of the professor's arguments, holding that his complaints arose during the time that changes were being made to an academic program and his own reappointment as a professor, making them much more of a personal nature as opposed to the broader public purpose required by the First Amendment. The court pointed out that the professor's speech was focused on the private matter of his employment, which it held is not a matter of public concern.

**Approaching the anniversary of the #MeToo movement, sexual harassment claims are on the rise, even as overall discrimination claims decrease.** The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission recently reported that despite an overall decrease in total discrimination charges during the first three quarters of 2018, the number of sexual harassment claims rose by 3 percent compared to the same period in 2017.

The EEOC's preliminary analysis for this period is that 57,000 complaints of discrimination were filed during the first three quarters of 2018 compared to 64,000 claims filed during the first three quarters of 2017, a decrease of nearly 12 percent. However, the more than 9,800 additional sexual harassment claims filed during the same period compared to the previous year bucked the trend in the reduction of overall discrimination claims filed with the EEOC.

**Blackboard Inc. hit with gender pay inequality lawsuit brought by former employees.** Blackboard Inc., which is a large education technology and consulting firm, was hit with a nationwide collective action claiming that it discriminated against women under the Equal Pay Act by paying women in its K-12 sales division less than men for the same jobs and responsibilities. The lawsuit was filed by two former female salespeople who worked from their respective homes in Arkansas and Illinois. They have asked a federal court judge to certify a collective action lawsuit, which would include all past and current female K-12 salespeople who worked there over the previous three years, the applicable look back period under the federal Equal Pay Act. (McMeech v. Blackboard Inc., E.D. Ark. No. 3:18-cv-00218, complaint filed, 11/14/18).

The lawsuit alleges that Blackboard used a variety of different titles for the same work to justify the pay differential. The company responded by saying that it investigated the allegations when they first arose and found no substantiation of them. Blackboard indicated it would vigorously defend the lawsuit.

**Department of Labor creates new compliance office as an alternative to enforcement litigation.** With the stated goal of reducing enforcement actions, the U.S. Department of Labor has created a new Office of Compliance. In order to provide compliance assistance as opposed to enforcement litigation, the new office has created two new websites to disseminate legal requirements, one for workers and one for employers. The websites are www.worker.gov and www.employer.gov, respectively. Each provides a breakdown of compensation, benefits, and safety guidelines required by law. The websites also provide contact information for the wage and hour division and state labor offices.

The philosophy behind the new office is to promote compliance by providing information involving the applicable rules directly to employers and workers. A new director of the office has not yet been named.

Ira Michael Shepard is Of Counsel with the law firm of Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr, LLP, in Washington, D.C., and ACCT's general counsel.
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To register, go to: acctgli.org

PORTLAND, OREGON
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.

**Executive Searches**

Dr. Koffi Akakpo  
President, Bluegrass Community & Technical College, Ky.

“I’m pleased to welcome Dr. Akakpo to KCTCS. His broad background in higher education and business make him the right fit for BCTC as our focus on workforce development continues to increase.”

—Jay K. Box, President, Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS)

Dr. Jason Warren  
President, Henderson Community College, Ky.

“The Henderson Community College board and I were impressed with Dr. Warren’s passion for student success. He understands that success goes beyond enrolling students and knows the end goal is for them to complete their programs so they have better lives.”

—Jay K. Box, President, Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS)

Dr. Amanda Lee  
President, Bladen Community College, N.C.

“Dr. Lee brings a vast amount of experience not only in the classroom, but also as an administrator within the community college system. She has done an outstanding job engaging the community and growing the relationships necessary to make a community college thrive. We welcome Dr. Lee’s leadership as we enter the next era of BCC’s history.”

—Dennis Troy, Board Chair

Dr. Kevin Horan  
President, Crafton Hills College, Calif.

“Dr. Kevin Horan brings two decades of leadership expanding career training and higher education opportunities for low-income and first-generation students and a refreshing zeal for building bridges, and trust, with people from all walks of life.”

—Bruce Baron, Chancellor
Thank you to the following colleges who recently held a Board Retreat or conducted a Board Self-Assessment and/or CEO Evaluation.

ACCT appreciates the opportunity to be of service to the colleges and their proactive commitment to leadership.

Chaffey College, Calif.  
College of Southern Maryland, Md.  
Diné College, Ariz.  
Garden City Community College, Kan.  
Lake Tahoe Community College, Calif.  
Los Angeles Community College District, Calif.  
Massasoit Community College, Mass.  
Mesalands Community College, N.M.  
Northern Wyoming Community College District/Sheridan College, Wyo.  
Ohlone College, Calif.  
Portland Community College, Ore.  
San Bernardino Community College District, Calif.  
Western Nebraska Community College, Neb.

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Yavapai College, Ariz.  
Dr. Lisa Rhine  
President

“We are extremely excited to have Dr. Rhine as the next President of Yavapai College. Dr. Rhine brings a strong passion for education and a deep understanding of the community college landscape that will benefit YC’s students, employees, and all of Yavapai County.”

—Ray Sigafoos, District Governing Board Chair
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SEEKING:
Chancellor, President, Provost, Vice Chancellor, Vice President, Dean

CONTACT:
Julie Golder, J.D.
Search Services Coordinator
jgolder@acct.org
202.775.4466 (O)
202.384.5816 (M)

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Atop the Empire State Building

By Pamela Payne
El Paso Community College

ONE OF MY ALL-TIME FAVORITE MOVIES IS SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE, with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan. No matter how many times I watch it, I always love the scene at the top of the Empire State Building when Sam (Tom Hanks) and Annie (Meg Ryan) meet for the first time. When the members of the Professional Board Staff Network (PBSN) reunites each year, I feel that same magic! It was a dream come true for me to travel to New York in October for the 2018 ACCT Congress and venture to the top of the Empire State Building.

The sights of New York City were not the only highlights of being in the big city. It was a terrific opportunity for fellow PBSN members to gather together, catch up with old friends and make new ones, and learn from our colleagues. We kicked off our time in New York with the PBSN Meet & Greet on Wednesday at Carmine’s Restaurant, which featured a full luncheon of Italian delicacies and desserts. PBSN extends its appreciation to Margaret Lamb, immediate past president, and Dr. Constance M. Carroll, president of the San Diego Community College District, for sponsoring this outstanding event.

Based on comments received from our PBSN members, the officers added an option of a “No-Host Breakfast” on Thursday at the Brooklyn Diner. A few of us were able to attend and spent some time just getting to know each other. The workshop kicked off later that afternoon with an excellent presentation on “Run, Hide, Fight” (active shooter training) presented by Barbara Lee Steigerwald, deputy commissioner of the New York State Department of Homeland Security. Her talk was followed by a presentation on electronic board agendas with our very own PBSN members as presenters: Jeannie Moton of Portland Community College, Cynthia Gruskos of Brookdale Community College, and Amanda Ficken-Davis of San Diego Community College District. They did a fantastic job informing the membership about different electronic board agenda options. Thank you to all our presenters.

We closed out our conference on Friday with the PBSN Business Meeting. During this year’s meeting, the PBSN bylaws were amended and a new position was created, communications coordinator. This position will assist the president, vice president, immediate past president, and secretary with social media and other aspects of serving on the executive committee. The gavel changed hands as Margaret Lamb moved to the role of immediate past president and I assumed the role of president. Lamb thanked the members of the executive committee and all members for attending the meetings. The association presented Margaret with a token of our appreciation for the great job she did during her presidency.

The newly-elected 2018-19 PBSN Executive Committee is:
Pamela Payne - President (El Paso Community College)
Jeannie Moton - Vice President (Portland Community College)
Margaret Lamb - Immediate Past President (San Diego County Community College District)
Benita Duncan - Secretary (Lansing Community College)
Tiffany Prince - Communications Coordinator (Columbia George Community College)

continued on page 46
Heidi Soodsma - Central Region (Lake Shore Technical College)
Cynthia Gruskos - Northeast Region (Brookdale Community College)
Amanda Ficken-Davis - Pacific Region (San Diego County Community College District)
Sara Kleinpeter - Southern Region (Louisiana Community & Technical College System)
Esther Sonen-Yun - Western Region (Austin Community College)

Our final session in New York was a panel presentation on Microsoft Office tips and tricks led by PBSN members. Sara Kleinpeter, Amanda Ficken-Davis, and Christina Heskett of Hillsborough Community College all did a great job providing our group with some great tips to use in our day-to-day use.

One of the many highlights of the annual conference was the recognition of the regional Professional Board Staff Member awardees and the Association Professional Board Staff Member Award. This year’s outstanding awardees are:

- Rebecca Garrison, St. Louis Community College (Mo.) – Central Region
- Julie Hart, Onondaga Community College (N.Y.) – Northeast Region
- Jennifer Delucchi, Los Rios Community College District (Calif.) – Pacific Region
- Trish Villines, North Arkansas College (Ark.) – Southern Region
- Diane Reikofski, Northeast Community College (Neb.) – Western Region

At the awards dinner on Friday night, Trish Villines received the ACCT Professional Board Staff Member award. Congratulations to all these exceptional women for their hard work and dedication to their profession.

Reunite with us again to experience the magic of PBSN this coming year. I encourage all of you to participate in the 2019 ACCT Leadership Congress and the Professional Board Staff meetings in San Francisco, California, October 16-19, 2019. The PBSN officers will be preparing an exciting agenda over the next few months as ACCT will be celebrating its golden anniversary. I am sure it will be an exceptional event that you will not want to miss!

I am excited to be your president this year and look forward to another great year of fellowship with our PBSN members. Please check out our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/ACCTPBSN/.

Have a great year!
EVER SINCE I LEARNED I WOULD BE WRITING A PIECE FOR Trustee Quarterly, I tossed around ideas of what I would address. I was stretching to come up with ideas that were timely and relevant, then I stopped and looked around at my peers, my network of assistants, and heard common themes. These themes focused on the partnerships with their CEOs, none of which could be accomplished without both players. So I decided to take a different approach. I know the information in this section should be to the benefit of the Professional Board Staff members, but I wanted to address the executives.

I did a short random survey of my personal network. This sample was not intended to be a scientific study, just a quick check-in with the “gatekeepers.” From the feedback I received, communication, trust, and responsibility were the themes that presented the most with this group. After mulling over those three themes and figuring out how they were related, I came to the conclusion that each is dependent upon the others. For example, there is no way to gain the trust of someone without open communication.

Of the assistants who responded to my survey, almost 70 percent have been with their executives for one to three years, and 40 percent weren’t hired by that executive. This tells me there are executives coming into positions with an assistant in place. Considering the executive and their needs, that would be the ideal in most cases. As a new executive coming into an organization, having someone with the experience and knowledge of the organizational culture is invaluable.

Although trust and responsibility were mentioned most by the respondents, communication was also an issue for some. A lot of respondents used words like two-way, open, ask questions, regular check-ins to describe their ideal communication styles. The assistants noted that communication gaps between the assistant and their executive could be easily addressed and overcome. Communication is key to moving to trust and then on to responsibility.

Trust is something that can only be built through open communication. That is a pretty safe and logical statement. But to another point, there are ripple effects that happen when trust is established. However, of the responses I received to my survey, an alarmingly high number, 55 percent, stated that there were barriers to trust being built with their executive. Sixty percent said they did not feel they were being used to their fullest potential. Some even stated that they go so far as to find other tasks and projects to keep them busy or engaged.

All assistants want to feel like their work has value, and that the work being assigned is meaningful and critical to the mission of the organization. Assistants need to feel that they too are part of the team, as much as any other administrator on the executive’s team. Most of the assistants said providing institutional knowledge, being forward thinking, and helping with workload priorities were the ideals they thought were of most value to a new executive.

I am writing this as part of those 40 percent of assistants who weren’t hired by their current executive; I was a current assistant in place for a new president. I was terrified. Not sure what to expect, what the demands would be, I convinced myself all would be okay if I did the best job I could. Having been at the organization a few years, I had institutional knowledge, I knew the college culture, I had valuable relationships, and I knew a lot of people, internal and external. I think within a few weeks of the new president starting, he understood this. He saw the value of my work, of my relationships. The communication was open right out of the gate. I am lucky — other assistants, not so much. I’ve seen and heard many stories of assistants not being valued, not being included, some even being pushed out of their positions.

In closing, I want to convey the messages I hear all too often from assistants — we are here to help. We want to help. We can help! We just need to be communicated with, trusted, and given the opportunity to succeed — we are assistants. We can do anything!
2018-2019 ELECTION RESULTS

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ACCT DEADLINES

► ACCT Leadership Congress Call for Presentations
   May 1, 2019

► ACCT Awards Nominations
   June 10, 2019

► Director-at-Large Candidate Nominations
   July 1, 2019

► Amendments to ACCT Bylaws
   July 1, 2019

► Submitting Resolutions
   July 1, 2019
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CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

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