The 2020 National Legislative Summit focused on workforce — and the growing needs students face.
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's Awards recipients will be honored at the 2020 ACCT Leadership Congress this September in Chicago, Illinois.

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 15, 2020.
From the Chair

Preserving Our Communities’ Lifelines

THERE IS NO GETTING AWAY FROM COVID-19. It leads every news story, and almost every email subject line and conversation relates to it. As I write this, it is April — Community College Month — and thanks to a strong online #CCMonth campaign led by ACCT, we’ve seen countless stories about how community colleges have been vital lifelines to their communities during the coronavirus pandemic. That’s something everyone needs to know.

I am inspired to see how colleges have applied their resources to serve their communities. Iowa Western, the college of ACCT Immediate Past Chair Connie Hornbeck, has dedicated its student housing to serve as a temporary home for nurses and other healthcare workers who are spending countless hours at area hospitals. Lorain Community College in Ohio is running its 3-D printers “all day, every day” to ensure a constant supply of face shields and masks are available to healthcare workers. Atlantic Cape Community College in New Jersey distributed 10,000 pounds of food to residents in a single day. Northern Virginia Community College offered $500 emergency grants to at least 1,500 students. Here in Minnesota, Rochester Community and Technical College in my hometown donated supplies from their nursing, dental, and science programs to the Mayo Clinic and Salvation Army, including 34 hospital beds, 29 IV poles, and multiple cases of personal protective equipment. And as you know, these colleges are not the exception — they are the norm. Your college is working just as hard and making just as much of a difference to the people in your community.

Community colleges are not just filling gaps during this emergency. Our colleges have proven to be hero incubators as well as direct service providers. They are the primary educators and certifiers of in-demand nursing and other healthcare and emergency medical professionals. Now we are seeing exactly how life-saving these educational programs are on a massive scale.

You understand how vital your college is to the healthcare pipeline and as a provider of community services. Now is the time to make sure everyone understands. During the Great Recession, states across the country significantly cut funding to colleges and universities. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities found in 2016 that 46 of 50 states had not restored higher education funding to pre-recession levels. And in many states, community colleges have seen less support restored than their four-year counterparts.

As board members of these institutions, we have the fiduciary duty to our institutions to change this. As public officials, and even as self-interested private citizens, we have the responsibility to our communities and ourselves to ensure that community colleges have the support they need to continue incubating the heroes who save lives.

I urge you to think as you read through this issue of Trustee Quarterly how the information in these pages can support the case that you’ll make for your college. And then I urge you to make that case using every channel possible. Make sure local journalists know the value of your college. Make sure legislators know. Make sure your neighbors know. Cutting off support to community colleges is like cutting off the blood supply to vital organs. The vitality of our communities depends on the health and welfare of our institutions.

DAWN ERLANDSON
TRUSTEE, MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
From the President & CEO

Our Commitment to You

ACCT is driven by our commitment to meeting the needs of our members. We are committed to returning your investment with the best services we can provide to your board and institution.

We understand that this is a trying time for all institutions. Because we understand that your college is adapting to unprecedented changes at an unprecedented pace, we have frozen our dues at the same low rates we've maintained for several years despite a planned modest increase needed to support the association's operations. Our first commitment is to meeting members' needs, and we will continue to find innovative ways to do that.

We also understand that community colleges are lifelines to their communities and their students, and that they are second to none in higher education. That's why we are currently driving a national Community College Month campaign to bring attention to the life-saving work that community colleges are doing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout the spring, we have been conducting outreach across the nation to determine how COVID-19 has affected community colleges, and in particular how boards and CEOs are working together to overcome unprecedented challenges. We continue to update our pandemic response resources for boards and presidents, including a compendium of up-to-date federal COVID-19 guidance for community colleges. In addition, we've sought out and compiled free resources for colleges from our corporate members to take some of the pressure off colleges in this time of greatest need. This and more information is available on our website at www.acct.org.

All of us at ACCT are inspired by the work that community colleges are doing on the ground, and we have been fighting at the federal level for the resources you need to carry out your mission.

Everything above is represented in the pages of this magazine, which I urge you to read from cover to cover, and to use as a reference and a resource as you move your college forward.

Please stay in touch. Let our staff, including me, know what your college leadership has experienced, what you've learned, and what information you need. Let us know how we can help. Please plan to attend the 2020 ACCT Leadership Congress so you can share lessons and strategies with your peers while they are still at the top of your mind. Visit congress.acct.org for more information and to register.

We look forward to working with you to get through this challenging time, and to glean and share important lessons as they come to light. We're all in this together.

J. NOAH BROWN
ACCT PRESIDENT AND CEO
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ACCT’s Pandemic Response and Commitment to Our Members

Since March, ACCT staff has been conducting outreach throughout the nation to determine how COVID-19 has affected community colleges, and in particular how boards and CEOs are working together to overcome unprecedented challenges. **We strongly encourage you to visit acct.org and now.acct.org for important updates, news, information, and resources.**

Among the resources available via acct.org:

- **Federal COVID-19 Guidance for Community Colleges:** Includes calls to action for community college leaders, advisories from the U.S. Department of Education and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for higher education institutions, and analyses of federal legislation that affects community and technical colleges.
  acct.org/COVID-federal-resources

- **Community College Pandemic Response Resources:** A report-in-progress on responses to COVID-19 by community college boards and presidents.
  acct.org/boards-role-pandemic

- **Free COVID-19 Response Resources from ACCT Member Companies:** ACCT’s membership body of service providers, the Corporate Council, is full of true-blue community college friends who have come through in the time of greatest need (see p. 22 in this issue). These companies have been solving the most difficult challenges for students and colleges for years, and many have opened up their services to the public during this challenging time.
  acct.org/article/acct-member-companies-aid-colleges-time-crisis

In addition to offering advisory information, ACCT is also working with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) to advocate strongly at the federal level in the interests of member colleges and your students. We are working with state community college associations to identify the most pressing needs, and we are communicating those needs to federal legislators and agency officials with the greatest urgency. ACCT will keep members apprised of all legislative and related updates as they arise.

While none of us has ever lived through an event of this nature or magnitude before, we are all in this together, and we at ACCT are committed to serving your needs as we weather this storm.

As community college leaders, we are one community. We encourage members to get in touch and to connect with one another to share experiences and practices during these trying times.

We thank you for your patience and more than anything, for your dedication to your institutions, your students, and your greater communities.

Protect yourselves and one another. We will get through this together.

**In Memoriam:**

Wayne Thomas Newton

It is with great sadness that we share the loss of Wayne Thomas Newton, 84, a longtime member of the ACCT family beloved for his singular kindness and passion.

Wayne was a committed community college leader and advocate, having served as a trustee at Iowa’s Kirkwood Community College from 1973 to 2003. He also served on the ACCT Board of Directors from 1980 to 1986, and as the 1984-85 ACCT Board President. Following his board service, he consulted nationwide on behalf of ACCT, helping to guide the development of strategic plans, identify college CEOs and other executives, and help boards to run smoothly as a retreat and workshop facilitator for countless institutions.

ACCT has made a donation to the Kirkwood Foundation — the Wayne Newton Endowed Scholarship — in his memory. Our thoughts are with Wayne’s family and all those whose lives he touched.
Senators Richard Durbin, Mike Lee, Brian Schatz Honored for Bipartisan Service to Education

In conjunction with the 2020 Community College National Legislative Summit, ACCT and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) recognized Senators Richard Durbin (D-Ill.), Mike Lee (R-Utah), and Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii) with the 2020 National Education Service Award. The award is presented annually to a national leader or leadership team who have made extraordinary contributions to national public policies and resources that support education, training, and postsecondary learning.

The three 2020 awardees have worked jointly on bipartisan legislation, known as the Restoring Education and Learning (REAL) Act, to repeal the ban on Pell Grants for individuals who are incarcerated.

Since 1994, incarcerated individuals have been unable to receive tuition assistance via the Pell Grant program. The ban has stymied postsecondary access for incarcerated individuals even though these educational programs have demonstrated a strong return on investment, reducing the overall cost of incarceration and improving public safety.

In addition, postsecondary education is highly effective at lowering recidivism rates for incarcerated individuals. Earning a postsecondary credential can help many incarcerated individuals overcome obstacles to employment upon release and provide a chance for these individuals to rebuild their lives and contribute to the economy. Passing the REAL Act and repealing the ban on Pell Grants for incarcerated individuals will enable community colleges to expand access to postsecondary programs and better serve this population.

Senators Schatz, Lee, and Durbin have recognized the benefits of providing additional access to postsecondary education for incarcerated individuals and remain committed to advancing the REAL Act. The work that our awardees have put forth to make this a bipartisan effort has raised the profile of the issue and increased the chances the bill could pass and be enacted into law in the coming years.

Rise Prize Will Award $1.5M For Innovative Solutions Supporting Student Parents

Imaginable Futures, a venture of the Omidyar Group, Lumina Foundation, and several other organizations, has announced the launch of a $1.5 million postsecondary prize competition.

The Rise Prize will provide support to ten innovative ideas aimed at advancing postsecondary success for students who are parents. Proposals can be for programs that support currently enrolled parents or that offer encouragement to those who may have "stopped out" of school.

To that end, the prize will award grants of $50,000 in support of six early-stage ideas and grants of $200,000 to three mature-stage ideas, with one winner in each category to be selected by two student-parent judges.

According to Imaginable Futures, students with children represent nearly one-quarter of the 17 million students enrolled in undergraduate degree programs as well as a large portion of the millions of students in trade certificate programs, vocational training, or alternative college pathways. But while they tend to have higher GPAs, on average, than non-parent students, student parents stop out of school at higher rates than their non-parent peers and have more debt.

"Student-parents are thriving and are vital members of the postsecondary system," said Vinice Davis, a venture partner at Imaginable Futures. "But they are largely unseen and unsupported by college administrators, policymakers, and innovators, and so their needs often go unaddressed. We are hopeful that the Rise Prize will draw attention to the massive opportunity to address student-parents’ needs. When student-parents rise, we all rise."

To learn more, go to http://theriseprize.com.
Central Arizona, Howard, Pima Community Colleges Receive 2020 Bellwether Awards

The Bellwether College Consortium is comprised of award-winning colleges charged with addressing critical issues facing community colleges through applicable research and the promotion and replication of best practices addressing workforce development, instructional programs and services, and planning, governance, and finance. The nationally recognized Bellwether Awards focus on cutting-edge, trendsetting programs worthy of replication. Each year, 30 community colleges are deemed finalists from a large group of applicants in the United States and its territories. The selected colleges compete for one of three Bellwether Awards. The 2020 awards were presented February 2-4 in San Antonio, Texas.

Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona, received the 2020 Bellwether Award for Instructional Programs and Services. Howard Community College in Columbia, Maryland, received the Planning, Governance, and Finance Award. Central Arizona College in Coolidge, Arizona, received the Workforce Development Award. To learn more about the Bellwether College Consortium and the Bellwether Awards, visit bellwethercollegeconsortium.com.

2020 ACCT Leadership Congress
Call for Presentations Extended Through July 1

On behalf of ACCT, we hope everyone is staying safe and healthy during this uncertain time in our country.

As we closely monitor the COVID-19 pandemic, we wanted to let everyone know that we are also continuing our efforts to provide you with important and timely content and opportunities during the 2020 ACCT Leadership Congress this fall in Chicago, September 30-October 3. Many of you have reached out to let us know that you hope the 2020 ACCT Leadership Congress will go on as planned. At this time, we are planning diligently to make sure that happens.

In light of recent events, we are extending the Call for Presentations deadline from April 15 to July 1 in order to give you, our members, ample time to submit presentations that demonstrate the important work you’re doing on your campuses and throughout your communities. We have also decided to add two new tracks to this year’s Congress in order to address some very timely issues, and most importantly to share lessons that have been learned.

Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic
Most of the world has been affected by the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. Community colleges are in a unique position and face major challenges as resource providers to their local communities and providers of high-quality higher education. ACCT seeks sessions that offer insights on how community colleges have responded to these events — what challenges they’ve faced, how they’ve coped, and what lessons are being learned.

Strengthening Rural Community Colleges
Rural community colleges face a number of acute challenges, including recruitment and retention of qualified faculty, access to broadband internet, and transportation issues, to name a few. Despite these challenges, rural community colleges also have great potential to lessen the impact of education deserts, drive economic growth, and help sustain vibrant communities. In partnership with the Rural Community College Alliance, ACCT seeks sessions that offer proven practices or local or state solutions that have helped strengthen your institution and community.

To register, submit presentations, and for more information, go to congress.acct.org or contact Christina Sage Simons at csimons@acct.org.
Lambert Wins Executive Leadership Award for Diversity Work

Diversity Abroad, a membership organization supporting educators, policymakers, and industry professionals in leveraging global educational programs to support the academic success, interpersonal development, and career readiness of students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds, has awarded Lee Lambert, chancellor of Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona, its 2020 Executive Leader Award for excellence in diversity and inclusion in international education.

Lambert has been at Pima since 2013 and helped the college develop its first strategic plan for diversity and inclusion, with global education as one of its main goals. “During this challenging time, it is important to recognize and celebrate individuals, institutions, and organizations who are committed to advancing diversity and inclusive excellence within international education,” announced Diversity Abroad.

According to Ricardo Castro-Salazar, vice president for international development for the Pima Community College District, Lambert is “definitely a global visionary. He is global minded in his thinking about diversity and inclusion.”

“Under his leadership, PCC has developed its first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2017-2020 (PCC-DEIP), where one of its six strategic goals is to ‘Prepare students, faculty and staff to adapt and succeed in a diverse, global, multicultural, multi-ethnic society,’” Castro-Salazar says. “This includes study abroad objectives that emphasize helping minorities and less privileged students to participate in international education abroad.”

Lambert ascribes his award in part to the many international partnerships that Pima has developed. He cites the raising of $700,000 in grants and gifts in partnership with the Mexican Consulate to raise the level of relations between the two countries and the strengthening of the college’s study abroad program, which includes nontraditional students. Noting Pima’s recognition by the Institute of International Education (IIE) for workforce development across borders, Lambert said, “We are all interconnected on this global stage.”

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.

2020 CONGRESS: MARK YOUR CALENDAR

• June 15 – ACCT Awards Nominations Deadline
• July 1 – Presentation Proposals Due
• July 24 – Early Registration Discount Ends
• September 7 – Deadline to Reserve Room at Congress Group Rate
FOR THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, THE HIGHER education landscape has fundamentally shifted due to COVID-19. Almost all community colleges have had to change their modes of instruction from face-to-face to completely online models. The disruptions to daily life will have a significant impact for the foreseeable future. On the horizon, state budgets will be significantly hampered as they deal with the ramifications of lost tax revenue. While community colleges as a sector routinely receive fewer public resources per student than other public institutions, rescissions or reductions in funding will likely threaten the ability of our colleges to meet their critical mission.

In March, Congress and the administration were able to pass stimulus legislation (the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, also known as the CARES Act or Stimulus 3). This package provides funds for higher education, institutions, and students. For more information, see the analysis written by ACCT General Counsel Ira Shepard that follows this article, but it is important to recognize that our institutions will need additional resources in the months and years ahead.

Why is it so critical that colleges receive more resources? The institutional allocation from Stimulus 3 is insufficient to cover all of our colleges’ financial losses and expenditures during this period. We have heard from several institutions that when they moved instruction online, the college purchased hardware

Reseting the Higher Education Landscape

Without additional support, the coronavirus outbreak will challenge our institutions and their missions in the months and years to come.

By Jee Hang Lee
Community colleges will play a critical role in providing a pipeline of workers in essential sectors and in retraining workers to help the economy recover. As such, we are asking for $1 billion per year for at least two years in dedicated job training funding for community colleges.

Institutional Support
While the $14 billion for higher education in the CARES Act will help, far more is needed to make colleges whole. We are asking for an additional $46.6 billion for higher education to stabilize institutions' budgetary gaps resulting from COVID-19.

Student Support
We are also asking Congress to provide an additional $5 billion in student support through the Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG), with an emphasis on institutions that serve the largest numbers of low-income students.

Job Training
Community colleges will play a critical role in providing a pipeline of workers in essential sectors and in retraining workers to help the economy recover. As such, we are asking for $1 billion per year for at least two years in dedicated job training funding for community colleges.

Support for Student Loan Borrowers
This pandemic will likely leave students in dire financial constraints and a sagging economy, so we support providing additional relief, including loan forgiveness, for borrowers — and particularly for low-debt and low-income borrowers.

Tax Credits for Students
We additionally support enhancing tax provisions that can support affected community college students, including the American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC) and Lifetime Learning Credit so our institutions can better serve students at a time when they need it most.

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

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

ACCT Senior Vice President Jee Hang Lee can be reached at jblee@acct.org.
THIS COLUMN IS USUALLY DEVOTED to commentary on significant legal cases directly affecting the higher ed community and community college administration. Given the challenges we face in the wake of the unprecedented coronavirus pandemic, I will depart from my usual approach and provide a summary of takeaways important to the higher ed community from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). Following that will be a summary of two non-coronavirus legal developments involving the First Amendment and gender pay bias of import to our community.

CARES Act Provisions Impacting Student Borrowers

Effect on Students’ Eligibility to Receive Future Federal Student Loans and Pell Grants: For purposes of Title IV funding, any semester that a “student does not complete due to a qualifying emergency” (i.e., a public health emergency related to COVID-19 as declared by the Secretary of Health and Human Services or a major disaster or national emergency declared by the President of the United States) does not count toward a student’s lifetime eligibility for subsidized student loans or, separately, a student’s lifetime eligibility to receive a Pell Grant.

Non-Repayment of Federal Funds Due to Withdrawal Because of Qualifying Emergency: If a student withdraws from an institution due to a “qualifying emergency” such as COVID-19, that student does not need to return money received via a federal student loan, a Pell Grant, or “other grant assistance.”

Academic Progress: Any credits that were “attempted” by a student but “were not completed” as a result of a qualifying emergency may be excluded from calculating whether “a student is maintaining satisfactory...
academic progress.” As a result, the noncompletion of credits due to a qualifying emergency will not adversely affect the student’s eligibility to receive federal student loans or federal grants, including Pell Grants.

**Deferral of Federal Student Loan Payments:** Any borrower with federal student loan payments due will have those payments deferred, without penalty, until September 30, 2020. During that deferral period, no interest will accrue, and the Secretary of Education will “deem each month for which a loan payment was suspended…as if the borrower of the loan had made a payment for purposes of any loan forgiveness program or loan rehabilitation program…for which the borrower would have otherwise qualified.” Similarly, for purposes of reporting to consumer-reporting agencies, “any payment that has been suspended is treated as if it were a regularly scheduled payment made by a borrower.” In other words, all efforts by the U.S. Department of Education to collect on any federal student loan — including wage garnishment, reducing tax refunds, reducing any other federal benefit, or taking any “other involuntary collection activity” — is suspended during the deferral of federal student loan payments.

Moreover, beginning on August 01, 2020, the Secretary of Education will issue “not less than six notices by postal mail, telephone, or electronic communication to borrowers” indicating “when the borrower’s normal payment obligations will resume” and “that the borrower has the option to enroll in income-driven repayment, including a brief description of such options.”

**Stabilization Fund Issues Impacting Institutes of Higher Education**

Under the CARES Act, $30.75 billion is allotted to the [Department of Education’s Education Stabilization Fund](https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/higher-ed/education-stabilization-fund.html) to allow for: (1) emergency support of local school systems and institutions of higher education (IHEs) so that they may continue to provide educational services to students; and (2) ongoing educational operations. The fund provides approximately $14.3 billion to institutions of higher education; K-12 schools will receive about $13.5 billion.

**Allocation of Funds for IHEs:**

Section 18004 of the Act establishes that of the roughly $14.3 billion allotted for emergency relief:

- 90 percent will be allotted to IHEs, and apportioned upon a formula that is predicated upon Federal Pell Grant allocation (and on-campus student learning):
  - 75 percent according to the number of Federal Pell Grant recipients not exclusively enrolled in online learning
  - 25 percent according to the number of non-Pell Grant recipients not exclusively enrolled in online learning.

- 7.5 percent will be allotted to Minority-Serving IHE’s in “additional awards” under Title III, V, and VII of the Higher Education Act to “defray expenses” and “address needs directly related to coronavirus that shall be in addition to” the awards noted above.
  - Such expenses and needs include “lost revenue, reimbursement for expenses already incurred, technology costs associated with a transition to distance education, faculty/staff trainings and payroll,” and grants to students for “any component of the student’s cost of attendance,” including “food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care.”

- 2.5 percent for those IHEs that the Secretary determines to have the “greatest unmet need” related to COVID-19. However, the Act provides no details as to how such a determination is to be made and/or communicated.
  - This money may be used to defray expenses related to COVID-19, such as “lost revenue, reimbursement for expenses already incurred, technology costs associated with a transition to distance education, faculty/staff trainings, and payroll,” and for grants to students for “any component of the student's cost of attendance,” including “food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care.”
  - Priority will be given to IHEs not eligible for at least $500,000 under the 90 percent funding allocation or the 7.5 percent funding allocation outlined above that is able to “demonstrate significant unmet needs related to expenses associated with coronavirus.” But no details as to what proof IHEs will be required to provide, or what the threshold will be, have been provided.

- In addition to the above, the Education Stabilization Fund makes $100 million available to domestic and international K-12 and
Recent First Amendment, Pay Discrimination
Legal Developments

Educators’ support of disabled student’s accommodation request not protected free speech. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (covering Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi) recently rejected the First Amendment claims of a teacher and a principal’s assistant whose job function was to administer standardized tests. Both complained that the school district had violated the rights of a disabled student suffering from ADHD and learning disabilities who was not given the right to take a standardized test orally. Both were fired by the school district for their actions.

The court ruled that the educators did not have a First Amendment right to speak out on that topic, as it was part of their job duties. The court pointed out that both educators had compliance responsibilities for the school district under Section 504 of the Rehab Act and therefore their speech was part of their job and not protected by the First Amendment. The Court concluded that the educators were not private citizens speaking out on a public issue and that their terminations must stand. Their additional claims under the applicable Texas whistleblower statute were also rejected. Both were found not to have mitigated their damages properly after discharge because rather than seeking new jobs they retired and began accepting their annuities under the state system (*Powers v. Northside Independent School District*, 5th Cir., No. 18-50983, 2/26/20).

Appeals court upholds claim that salary history can lead to pay discrimination; case forwarded to U.S. Supreme Court. The full Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (covering California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, and Montana) recently rejected an employer defense to an Equal Pay Act claim of gender-based salary discrimination against a female employee who argued her salary history for pay in a prior job justified her current salary. The court held that prior pay for a different prior job is simply not related to the current position and can be used to perpetuate gender-based salary discrimination (*Rizo v. Yovino*, 9th Cir., no. 16-15372, en banc 2/27/20). This development is of substantial importance to the rise of gender-based salary discrimination claims brought by college professors and other employees.

The court reasoned that prior pay is not job related for purposes of the Equal Pay Act because it pertains to compensation the worker received for a different job. The Second (covering New York, Vermont, and Connecticut), Fourth (covering Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and North and South Carolina), and Tenth (covering Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma) Circuits all agree. Only the Seventh Circuit (covering Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana) holds open the possibility that prior job history may be a defense in an Equal Pay Act claim. This split in the circuits makes the case ripe for Supreme Court review. Separately, it is notable that California is one of several states that have by state or local law banned the use of prior salary history as a defense to state and local gender-based salary sex discrimination claims.

Ira Michael Shepard is Of Counsel with the law firm of Saul Ewing, LLP, in Washington, D.C., and ACCT’s general counsel.
The 2020 Governance Leadership Institute for New Trustees has GONE VIRTUAL!

Now, you can attend this dynamic trustee training institute from the comfort of your own home or boardroom. All units will focus on different aspects of the fundamentals of effective trusteeship as we move our colleges forward bravely into the new post-pandemic world.

SAMPLE TOPICS:

Unit 1: New Governance Frameworks for Community College Boards & CEOs in a Brave New World

Unit II: The New Business Model for Community Colleges

Unit III: Considerations in Today’s Legal Landscape: Legal & Ethical Board Behaviors & Liabilities

Unit IV: Advocacy & Policy Imperatives: The Values Proposition

Unit V: Reflection and the Future

For more information and to register: ACCTGLI.org
SILVER LININGS

EARLY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES.

BY NORMA GOLDSTEIN
MOST OF THE WORLD HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY THE unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. Community colleges are in a unique position and face unique challenges as resource providers to their local communities and providers of high-quality higher education. ACCT has reached out to member colleges to find out how they are responding to these events — what challenges they’ve faced, how they’ve coped, and what lessons are being learned. This is part of a series of topical articles that addresses the concerns of community colleges and their boards. This article series will be updated as we learn more about how our nation’s most nimble educational institutions are adapting in real time.

Cohesion and Focus
Focus is critical for large and small institutions to function well in a crisis. Across the nation, boards have been working closely with their chancellors and college presidents to help colleges focus on two priorities during this unprecedented time: (1) the safety and well-being of the college community and (2) student success. Shared values of both the board and the administration help presidents and the board focus and leverage all college resources to these two purposes (for more on the board role in managing crisis, see p. 24).

This dual focus propels colleges to energize their emergency task forces and college administrations to take immediate action, modify operations, and to put their communications, safety and security plans, and board directives and polices into motion.

While unprecedented, the coronavirus pandemic has showcased the core values of the community college sector to unify efforts to provide equity and support to students, staff, and the community to meet their college’s missions.

Strong Board-CEO Bonds
To lead well, trustees and the administration need to lead together in stressful times. Boards are approving college emergency plans of action (whole and partial campus closures, extending spring vacations, online course delivery, suspending events and operations, etc.) and trusting and supporting presidents’ efforts to implement the plans. Trustees are using their voices to make their institutions’ needs known and to advocate for needed supports for their institutions, their students, and their communities.

In this time of pandemic stress, community college leadership and governance shine when they act as a unit. As a leadership team, boards and presidents have had to communicate daily and act quickly together in unprecedented ways for such unprecedented times. Effective operations highlight the importance of the close, trusting relationship and frequent communications between a board and the college president.

Planning Ahead
Colleges that had board policies, communications, and emergency plans in place prior to the outbreak of the virus were able to act immediately. For many colleges, having campus-wide practice drills for emergency situations in the past helped a great deal to ensure that services worked properly. Key to this are upgraded technology systems that are vital to the college’s response.

As colleges throughout the country are adapting to unprecedented events, they are also documenting how they are responding in real time so that lessons can be digested and accounted for moving forward.

Adapting to Disruption
Higher education has been discussing existential disruptions in the face of rapidly developing technological advances for years. Students of all ages currently finger-walk to higher learning with their phones and laptops to access information quickly from the internet, YouTube, social media, blogs, lectures, podcasts, and so on. Who would have expected that an invisible animal virus rather than a computer virus would wind up being the biggest disruptor of all to higher learning, compelling college staff and students to work and learn online?

Many of the leaders with whom we have spoken acknowledge that this crisis is an unfortunate but immediate way to shift most instruction and student services to digital formats. Except hands-on clinicals and labs, most of the nation’s community colleges are now offering classes online, upgrading faculty skills for online course development and student access to online tutoring, advising, and other services. For years, college libraries (where many computer labs are located) have been promoting online resources, search engines, and research for both students and faculty. This pandemic shines light on the critical nature of technology and technical services to our colleges. The future of higher education may well depend on how equitably and how quickly we can upgrade college systems.

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On Capitol Hill, a Focused Forum

THIS YEAR’S COMMUNITY COLLEGE CONGRESSIONAL FORUM ZEROED IN ON REAUTHORIZING THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT.

BY MARK TONER

Running in and out of the Forum as the Senate was taking votes, Alexander and his Democratic counterpart, Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.), both stressed bipartisan support for reauthorization — and the importance of getting it right.

“We have to make sure that this federal law governing higher education and student aid works for community colleges and the students you serve,” Murray, who is the ranking Democratic member of the Senate HELP Committee, told Forum attendees.

Murray called the December passage of the FUTURE Act, which provided permanent funding to minority serving institutions and simplified financial aid, “a good start that shows that we can work together in a bipartisan way to get things done. But there is a lot more we need to do.”

“There are many ways the current system is not working for students or families or our economy today,” said Murray. “Too many students tell me they cannot afford the cost of college, especially the ever-increasing cost of living expenses that go along with that. Too many students have been left out of higher education altogether, and too many students don’t feel safe on campus today. We’ve got to fix that.”

Areas of Consensus

Alexander’s imminent retirement has led many on Capitol Hill to speculate in recent years that consensus on HEA would be an important part of his legacy. During the Forum, he and other lawmakers signaled that focusing on areas of consensus may be the way they accomplish this longstanding goal.

“We’ve been working for five years to reauthorize the HEA, and we intend to get a result this year if we possibly can. That doesn’t mean we’re going to take that whole big act and reauthorize everything,” Alexander said. “You could take the position that we’re not going to do anything until we do everything. If you take that position, you’ll be here about 100 years… I think we can make some progress.”

Senators touted bipartisan agreement in a wide range of areas...
important to community colleges, including financial aid and student loan reform, accountability, and including short-term programs in the Pell Grant Program.

Long known for holding up a long series of pages that represent the complexity of applying for federal financial aid, Alexander noted that the FUTURE Act "got rid of 22 questions" on the FASFA, which he said would eliminate 90 percent of verification procedures that complicate free college initiatives like his home state’s Tennessee Promise.

"The governor tells me that the single biggest obstacle toward our free tuition for two-year institutions... is this," he said. "We have bipartisan support to further reduce the FASFA from 108 to 24 questions and still leave the states with the information they need to make state grants."

Both Alexander and Murray also spoke to the importance of short-term Pell grants, although Alexander expressed caution. "We don’t want to get in a situation where we put it in one year and have to take it out the next year because we didn’t think of what the unexpected consequences might be," he told Forum attendees.

Another area of guarded optimism involved the question of institutional accountability for financial aid and student outcomes. While previous proposals such as risk-sharing that led to concerns have largely fallen by the wayside in more recent deliberations, lawmakers stressed the need for some kind of accountability mechanism. "We spend $130 billion of taxpayer dollars in loans and grants every year, not to mention the money that students actually pay themselves. That is a worthy investment in our students and it’s an investment in our economy, but it can’t be just a blank check," Murray said. "We all need to do our part, and colleges have to be a part of that…. any reauthorization of HEA needs to hold colleges accountable for supporting students and prioritizing students’ long-term success."

"I know that building a system that takes into account the many differences between colleges is very tricky," Murray added. "And it has to be done in a nuanced way. So we need to work with all of you so we get that right."

Added Priorities

Holding up one of the ACCT green sheets provided by his community college delegation, Sen. Bob Casey (D-Pa.) reiterated bipartisan support for key components of HEA reauthorization, including strengthening the Pell Grant program. He also discussed two proposed pieces of legislation, the Success Act, which would restore federal financial aid for students convicted of drug offenses, and the Create Graduates Act, which would strengthen reverse transfer programs.

“All these issues are critically important to people on both sides of the aisle;" Casey said. “We should capitalize on what is generally bipartisan efforts to expand and enhance our Pell Grant program investment.”

Turning to the DREAM Act, Casey expressed optimism that an election year could finally push years of bipartisan efforts to address the challenges faced by Dreamers into action.

“This is America," he said. "We made a promise to young people. Let’s keep it."

Casey also stressed the importance of community college leaders advocating for their institutions on Capitol Hill. “Your presence here matters,” he said. “It has meaning and value to us. We learn a lot from you... without your voice, your passion, and expertise, we would be a lot less able to carry the arguments.”

Past is Prologue

With the widespread disruption caused by the coronavirus outbreak just weeks in the future when lawmakers spoke, they pointed to past experience to suggest that progress on issues important to higher ed will take place in the months to come.

Alexander noted one of the HELP committee’s most significant wins, the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act governing K-12 education, now known as the Every Student Succeeds Act. “Do you think higher education is hard? That was hard," he said. “And we got it done. Now we know what federal policy on K-12 will be for the next dozen years, and I’d like to do the same thing for higher education…. to let you go about your business, which is very important… Community colleges are our secret weapon.”
THE 2020 NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT FOCUSED ON WORKFORCE — AND THE GROWING NEEDS STUDENTS FACE.

BY MARK TONER

WHEN NEARLY 1,000 COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS, trustees, students, and advocates came to Washington, D.C., in February for the 2020 Community College National Legislative Summit, they were urged to focus on a larger group — one 42 million people strong.

“Workforce is an eminently fixable problem — we know what employers need, we have training providers to provide training… and 6 million people who are unemployed and 36 million who are not part of the workforce,” John Pallasch, the U.S. Department of Labor's assistant secretary for employment and training, told attendees. “That’s 42 million people we can conduct outreach to [and] pull into workforce training, ultimately landing them in a job. It’s really that simple.”

Today, those numbers are much higher. The 2020 NLS came just weeks before the rapid proliferation of the coronavirus began shutting down large swaths of the nation. Even before the current crisis brought the economy to a standstill, lawmakers and policymakers stressed the importance of blending workforce and education policy and practice.

2020 ACCT Chair Dawn Erlandson (top) and U.S. Department of Labor Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training John Pallasch (bottom).
“We feel like for far too long, the [U.S. Department of Education] was advancing a one-size-fits-all solution without regard to what kinds of students [colleges] admit or their goals,” said Diane Auer Jones, the department’s principal deputy under secretary. “Some of you have outstanding programs that result in very high wages. But oftentimes students and families aren’t aware….They should get the information they need to make an informed decision.”

Community college leaders — including a record number of student trustees — came to Washington to advocate for their institutions. At the same time, they also were told to take bold steps of their own to serve their communities’ workforce needs.

“Take that as your guide to be innovative and creative, to come to us with solutions,” Pallasch told NLS attendees.

‘One Workforce’

Trump Administration officials stressed efforts to coordinate workforce programs. They also emphasized the importance of making decisions far beyond Washington.

Pointing to an upcoming $40 million competitive grant program targeted at workforce programs at community colleges, Pallasch said that the Trump Administration is committed to empowering state and local workforce initiatives, including a new federal emphasis on apprenticeships.

“You know what the workforce needs are,” he told attendees. “You’re hearing what your local areas are needing, whether it’s RNs, welders, or cybersecurity specialists. They’re not calling me — they’re calling you.”

Stressing the value of “mission-driven accountability,” Jones emphasized Education Department rulemaking changes giving accreditors greater flexibility to evaluate noncredit programs, along with a pilot work-study program that could ultimately qualify more work-based learning experiences and reporting changes that could emphasize career-focused education.

Other speakers echoed the growing recognition that higher education will need more flexible models to address the needs of the growing ranks of nontraditional students. “You’re starting to see a recognition that if you’re trying to think about federal or state higher ed policy, you can’t fully talk about that strategy unless you’re talking about workforce development,” said National Skills Coalition Managing Director for Policy Kermit Kaleba.

Community college leaders stressed the importance of allowing Pell Grants to cover short-term, typically noncredit programs as part of providing greater access to workforce training. “We see a tremendous need for these programs to get our students in the workforce,” said Brenda Hellyer, chancellor of San Jacinto College in Texas.

Virginia’s New Economy Workforce Credential Grant Program, which has resulted in more than 20,000 new credentials since it was enacted in 2016, is based on what Randy Stamper, the state community college system’s assistant vice chancellor, called the “1-2-7 ratio” — that is, for every employee with an advanced degree, companies need two with a bachelor’s and seven with some postsecondary education or a credential. “That ratio resonated across all industries,” he said.

Efforts to restore Pell Grant funding to incarcerated individuals also received strong support within the Trump Administration and on Capitol Hill.

“We think this is one of the most important changes we can make to the federal student aid program,” Jones said, noting that her department received more than 100 applications for the next phase of the Second Chance Pell pilot. And the 2020 National Education Service Award was presented to three senators — Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), Mike Lee (R-Utah), and Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) for their efforts to introduce legislation that would restore Pell funding for incarcerated individuals (see p. 5).

New Challenges, Ongoing Priorities

Community college leaders were briefed on legislative priorities for the upcoming year — priorities which remain vital even as the fiscal outlook has shifted dramatically in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak and its economic aftershocks.
The number-one priority, the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, saw key Congressional leaders expressing optimism that progress was likely this year (see p. 16). That’s the result of years of ongoing advocacy, ACCT Senior Vice President Jee Hang Lee told attendees.

“Some things take a lot of time, a lot of momentum,” he said, pointing to repeated efforts to restore year-round Pell Grants which ultimately came to fruition in 2017.

Three years later, Pell remains the “bedrock of postsecondary education for access and equity,” said Jennifer Stiddard, former ACCT director of government relations. She stressed the importance of continued efforts to advocate for eligibility for short-term programs, automatically tying increases in the grant maximum to inflation, and expanding the Second Chance Pell pilot.

“Our students are now the traditional students, so we need to talk about ways to modernize the Pell Grant program,” Stiddard said. Budgetary challenges will also likely increase pressure on the Pell Grant reserve fund, projected to exceed $9.4 billion next fiscal year.

While College Promise programs continue to spread across the country, the focus has shifted to the state and local level, said David Baime, senior vice president for government relations and policy analysis for the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). “People forgot a lot of the energy behind free community college was kicked off at the federal level,” he said.

Proposed legislation, including the 2020 College Affordability Act introduced in the House, would create federal-state partnerships to support Promise programs. The act would also address food and housing insecurity and hold for-profit institutions accountable to protect veterans and other students, Rep. Mark Takano (D-Calif.) said during the NLS closing session.

“It makes smart investments in community colleges and makes sure that all student populations are served well,” said Takano, who served on the Riverside Community College District Board.

Supporting students and workforce needs also requires better data systems that track students through postsecondary education and into the workforce, Baime said. “We are well past time for such a system,” he told attendees.

A Position of Strength

Despite the challenges ahead, community college leaders advocate from a position of strength, Gallup consultant John Clark told NLS attendees. In an era of declining confidence in public institutions, only police, small businesses, and the military are more respected than higher ed, he said.

Even so, the need for systemic change bears out in public opinion. Only half (51 percent) of Americans today believe a college education is important, compared to 70 percent a decade ago. While business leaders give higher ed low marks for preparing students for workplace success, just 4 percent of higher ed trustees strongly agree that their institutions have a good understanding of what employers are looking for, and fewer than one-third of all higher ed grads experienced any kind of work-integrated experiential learning.

“Colleges aren’t delivering on the promise of a good job,” Clark said.

Community colleges, however, represent a bright spot. Their graduates are more likely to agree their coursework is closely tied to their post-college lives and that they do work that’s interesting to them. They’re also more likely to say they have their ideal jobs.

“These are all points of pride for community college, and they should be shouted across the halls of Capitol Hill,” Clark said. (See pp. 22 - 23 for more from John Clark.)
IN-PERSON ADVOCACY REMAINS RARE IN HIGHER ED. ONLY 19 percent of all higher ed trustees — and even fewer students — engaged with a member of Congress on education issues in the past year, according to Gallup.

“By virtue of being here this week, you’re already in the top quintile,” Clark told NLS attendees.

With student trustees making up nearly 1 in 10 of the community college leaders attending this year’s NLS, they played an outsized role as delegations traveled to Capitol Hill to meet with lawmakers.

“I found a job that worked with school and a school that worked with my job,” Kaitlyn Veliz, the student representative of the Union County College board, said in the office of Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-N.J.). Pell Grant support helped her become active in student government, and then governance, before transferring to a four-year institution. “I just took my senior pictures last week,” she said.

The daughter of an immigrant family which lived “paycheck to paycheck,” Sitwat Syed, the alumni representative to the Middlesex County College board, discussed how a combination of federal and state support helped her earn a bachelor’s degree. “It means a lot to me and people like me,” she said.

Sen. Thom Tillis (R-N.C.) didn’t need convincing about the importance of community colleges. After working at a warehouse, “I learned that community college was the path to getting a job and having a family,” he told a delegation of community college leaders.

Dreamers spoke in Congressional offices across Capitol Hill, receiving strong support from many lawmakers. Tillis pointed to the thousands of recipients who have gone on to careers in the military, education, and medicine. “It makes no sense to me why we’ve taken so long to provide certainty and a path to citizenship,” he said.

“Whatever the outcome is, we’re still here, we’re still students, and we’re still graduates and alumni,” Zaida Hernandez-Irisson, a Gateway Technical College graduate who is now on its board of trustees, told Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.).

Apprenticeships and other workforce programs also took center stage. Baldwin promoted proposed legislation that would encourage collaboration on apprenticeship programs among employers, community colleges, and workforce boards.

“We invented apprenticeships in Wisconsin. We have a very good system and are innovating into new areas,” Baldwin said. “We hope we can find some common ground with the administration.”

Second Chance Pell also represents an opportunity to meet workforce needs, community college leaders said. “We’re seeing more and more employers who used to be not interested in that population who are now,” Barrie Kirk, provost of Midlands Technical College, said in the office of Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.).

Community college leaders stressed the importance of noncredit programs. Joanna Anderson, president of State Fair Community College in Missouri, said that many short-term programs are in high-demand areas that command good salaries. “If Pell could pay for that, [people] would be working in a few months,” she said in the office of Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.). Dena McCaffrey, president-elect at Jefferson College, added that Pell could address the key barrier to many short-term programs. “We haven’t been able to get as many students into programs because of the cost,” she says.

One Portland Community College student who took a non-credit EMT program made the point to Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-Ore.). “I walked away with a job within a week,” he said. “A lot of people could benefit from the program, and I was one of the lucky ones who could afford it.”
COMMUNITY COLLEGES’ STRENGTHS MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN EVER

A recent Gallup/Strada survey shows students feel supported, while staff could use encouragement.

By John Clark
IN A TIME OF PROFOUND UNCERTAINTY, COMMUNITY colleges have heroically rallied to provide core services for their students. But with the continued threat of COVID-19, we’re likely to face severe budgetary and logistics challenges for the foreseeable future.

When faced with an existential threat, robust institutions find solid footing by leaning into their strengths. So it’s worth highlighting the areas where community colleges excel — namely, providing emotional support for students and career-oriented learning.

A few years ago, Gallup partnered with the Strada Education Network to survey more than 2,000 Americans who completed an associate degree. The study revealed that community colleges are outperforming their four-year brethren on a few key measures.

Community Colleges Care — And Students Know It

First, associate degree holders (30%) are more likely to strongly agree that their instructors care about them as people than graduates with bachelor’s degrees (26%). They’re also more likely to strongly agree that they had a mentor who encouraged their goals and dreams (20% v. 18%).

These two data points are notable because, through its annual Alumni Survey, Gallup has found that graduates who strongly agree with either of these benchmarks are more likely to be engaged in their post-college careers and to be thriving in their well-being.

Community Colleges Prepare Students for Work

Another pillar of the community college experience is career-driven learning. Associate degree holders are more likely to strongly agree that their current work is “completely related” to their program of study (35% v. 33%) and that their education was “worth the cost” (46% v. 45%).

And associate degree holders are also more likely to express strong interest in their work (41% v. 38%) and strongly agree that they have the “ideal job” for them (29% v. 26%). These students are leaving college with a clear sense of professional direction.

Of course, these outcomes don’t happen by chance. They require the intervention of faculty and staff who care enough about their students to offer compassionate mentorship and clear career guidance. As a result, it’s vital to keep campus employees engaged in their own work.

Community College Staff Need Encouragement, Too

Over the past few years, Gallup has surveyed tens of thousands of faculty and staff to learn what drives their engagement; that is, what enhances their psychological commitment to students and promotes their exercise of discretionary effort.

We’ve found that faculty and staff are five times more likely to be engaged at work if they strongly agree they have “opportunities to learn and grow.” And they’re four times more likely to be engaged if their supervisor “cares about them as a person.”

Questions for Boards to Consider

With this in mind, trustees should ask themselves two key questions: How are you providing learning and growth opportunities for your faculty and staff? And do campus leaders and managers express genuine empathy for all campus employees?

If your answer is in the affirmative, your students are likely reaping the rewards. But if you have room for improvement on either front, you can tackle these core areas of engagement with limited resources, regardless of external constraints.

Providing opportunities for learning in a setting specifically designed for this very pursuit doesn’t require much of a fiscal lift. Nor does expressing care for your employees through constant, clear, and heartfelt communication.

This type of communication is especially important during episodes of reduced state funding and campus reorganization, both of which are likely outcomes in the shadow of the coronavirus pandemic.

So while you’re preparing your colleges for unchartered terrain, be mindful of how you’re caring for your faculty and staff. They remain the keys to student success and the long-term sustainability of our colleges, especially during times of hardship.

John Clark is an education consultant for Gallup. He can be reached at john_clark@gallup.com.
Trust During a Time of Crisis

BACKED BY THEIR BOARDS, PRESIDENTS IMPLEMENT EMERGENCY PLANS.

By Norma Goldstein
ACROSS THE NATION, BOARDS OF TRUSTEES HAVE approved college emergency plans of action, including whole and partial campus closures, extending spring vacations, transitioning to online course delivery, suspending events and operations, and more. They have trusted their administrations and supported college presidents' efforts to implement these plans.

Trust is the real glue in the relationship between a board of trustees and a college president. In times of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, boards need to support the CEO and the administrative team to get their jobs done quickly and effectively. During this pandemic, most community college boards across the nation have learned to trust their college leaders to do what the board expects: protect people and focus on helping students succeed in these stressful times. Frequently, this involves board members approving emergency plans and then allowing presidents and their administrators to rapidly implement them.

Boards hire the district chancellor or the college president. Some consider hiring the CEO a board's most important role, but board responsibility does not end there. According to ACCT's standards of good practice, boards should support their president and allow him or her to do their job, particularly when swift action is needed during an unprecedented crisis. What follow are examples of boards which have done just that in recent weeks as COVID-19 impacted institutions across the nation.

Empowering the CEO
Trust is an essential component in empowering the president or CEO to respond effectively during challenging times.

"Trust is important at a time like this," says Bernie Rhinerson, a longtime trustee for the San Diego Community College District (SDCCD). "This board and CEO have worked together for over a decade, and we have a very high level of trust with our CEO. It was important for the board to give the CEO the flexibility to act in a time of crisis."

To provide this flexibility, the SDCCD declared emergency conditions and its board passed a resolution that empowers the district's chancellor, Dr. Constance Carroll, to take action. "It is imperative that the Chancellor have the tools necessary to ensure the health and safety of students and staff on campuses and other district facilities [and] to ensure that student learning continues if student education needs to be conducted from alternate locations or virtual learning environments," the resolution states.

The resolution further resolves that "the Board of Trustees authorizes the Chancellor and /or her designee to take any and all actions necessary to ensure the continuation of public education, and the health and safety of the students and staff at the District sites." It was signed March 12, 2020.

Ratifying a Task Force Plan of Action
At the five Alamo Colleges in San Antonio, Texas, Chancellor Mike Flores set up a task force to limit the impact of the pandemic on the college and students by developing a plan of action.

The board rescheduled its regular meeting "to allow the chancellor time to implement the plan of action. He had to hustle to get it done, and we gave him that space," says Roberto Zárate, a former chair of the ACCT Board of Directors and a current member of the AACC Board. “The board reviewed and ratified the emergency plan and then got out of his way.”

Authorizing Board Chairs to Approve Presidential Decisions
"With things moving so fast, sometimes changing daily or even hourly with this pandemic, it has been critical to act quickly," says Dr. Kathleen Hetherington, president of Howard Community College in Maryland. "I feel the full support of the board in making decisions."

Hetherington indicated that the board hears from her routinely and that their college had to deal with many critical financial issues relating to the virus that required timely resolution. The board conducted a Zoom open meeting March 18th during which all board members attended, as did many others since the meeting was open to the public. The board authorized the board chair to approve Hetherington’s actions on behalf of the full board for a limited amount of time. At its next meeting, the board plans to extend that decision until the state of emergency is over.

The board also gave the president authorization to maintain continuity of operations with faculty, staff, and students according to current state and federal safety and health best practices. "Having trust, the board had the confidence we'd do things right to help students finish the spring semester," Hetherington says. “Having that support from the board, plus state guidance, influenced what we do at the college.”

Emergency Policies
Most high-performing boards have longstanding policies regarding emergency procedures which delegate authority to the president to act in times of duress. However, few could have expected the extent of college closures and rapid transition to remote learning that has occurred with COVID-19. Because each crisis brings its own set of critical circumstances, boards cannot assume that a college’s emergency plan will cover every potential crisis.

Some boards have general policies for all emergencies, and some developed specific policies related to infectious diseases. In early March, the board at the Community College of Morris (CCM) in New Jersey reviewed and approved detailed infectious disease control policies for both CCM students and employees which outlined safety precautions for the college. The policy states:
In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, this policy and related procedures replaces and supersedes any other college policies and procedures on the following topics. It is understood that the policies herein are subject to change upon directives from State and Federal agencies.

The policy allows for changes per state and federal authorities, built-in flexibility that allows the president to make modifications as needed during an uncertain crisis. The administration continued to manage to meet its own responsibilities, and the board was available if and when policies needed attention.

The board at Clark State Community College in Ohio recently reviewed its interruption of college operations policy, which clearly authorizes the college president "to interrupt all or a specific part of the College's operations...if it is in his/her judgment the health, safety, or well-being of employees and/or students is jeopardized." Additionally, the policy states that "The President will determine when an emergency is declared." Such broad authorization is based on the board's trust of college leadership.

A Team Approach with the President, Board, and Board Attorney

In responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, the college administration will need to act quickly to meet rapidly changing state and federal directives. Trustees should work with the president and the college's legal counsel to determine if the college's existing policies provide the flexibility needed by the president to respond effectively. If they do not, the board should consult with legal counsel on whether maintaining compliance with institutional bylaws and state law requires developing emergency policies to provide the authority to the president to protect the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff during the emergency.

Authorizing the President to Act

Most presidents are well aware of how important good communications are between a CEO and board members — and particularly the board chair who often serves as the conduit between the two. Wise presidents make sure that the board is apprised of the college's plan of action in the face of any emergency. Yet how does it work when each emergency is different? Here's where trust comes in.

Boards approve college's emergency plans, and certainly they should review their emergency policies on a regular basis to assure that quick action can be taken by a college president.

Through good communication, wise CEOs inform boards of intended implementation steps and ask for input and approval in some cases. However, when immediate action must be taken, as was the case for many in this pandemic, CEOs need to feel confident that the board has their support. According to CCM board chair Thomas Pele, "the board is very comfortable with allowing the administration to handle all necessary procedures because the president keeps the board fully informed on a daily basis."

Supporting Swift Decisions

According to Dr. Robert Martin, president of the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe, New Mexico, he and his board of trustees had to move quickly to develop, approve, and implement the college's emergency response plan to protect students and staff to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. "This COVID-19 disease is so challenging that we have had to make swift decisions to protect our students from harm," Martin says. "The board has given me their support."

Dr. Pearl Bower, President of Ilisaqvik College in Barrow, Alaska, says her board gave her free reign to act. After the state issued mandates to close government agencies and basically the whole state, “I had taken the bull by the horns to close the college campus down as soon as possible,” Bower says. “We had to think of our students and our employees.”

“I kept the board in the loop with my plan of action and had their support,” Bower adds. “When I need the board, they are there for me, but the board also knows that when I need to make a decision for the good of our entire campus, that I need to have authority to make those calls. This is why we are hired as executive administrators, presidents, CEOs — to make tough decisions. Boards need to put their trust in us and remember why we were hired.”

Teamwork in a Policy Governance Model

“We truly work as a team with our Policy Governance model,” says Dorey Diab, president of North Central State College in Ohio. “The board has been really supportive of me to enable the college to be responsive to the needs of the state, the college, and the community,” including the rapid switch to online operations during the pandemic and rolling out a Quality Matters process and training for faculty. “We are also protecting as many jobs as possible,” Diab says.

Before the governor's mandate to stay at home, North Central State loaned laptops to students, faculty, and staff to use at home. “I can’t be more thankful for the board’s support and backing up our decisions,” Diab says. “Right now, we are waiting for the federal stimulus monies and the state subsidy with its projected 20 percent cut this year. We are planning different scenarios to do what is best for students and staff. A lot depends on the circumstances in the summer and fall.”

Balancing Responsibilities with Trust

According to Dr. Jay Box, president of the Kentucky Community College System, the Board of Regents has been very supportive of allowing college administrators to handle operational issues. “It’s been good to see the board taking responsibility for supporting college operations and balancing that with their trust of administration to do their work,” says Box.
After trustees learned of the governor’s shutdown of face-to-face instruction, their first major decision was to allow Box to stay on as system chancellor until the fall rather than appoint an interim this spring. “This was not the time for me to transition out, and once I made the decision to stay, I reached out to the board,” Box says.

Of particular importance is communications at all levels now that staff is working remotely, Box says. In less stressful times, the board holds quarterly meetings, and Box communicated with trustees every two weeks. Now, however, the chancellor is providing weekly updates to the board, including some of his communications with the 16 community college presidents to provide weekly updates of internal communications to faculty, staff, and students and external communications to the community and media.

“Our systemwide communication plan is to do weekly videos to all faculty and staff and bimonthly communications to all employees and students to keep people in the loop,” he says.

Executive Staff Assisting the President

Many presidents, like Iḷisaġvik College’s Bower, immediately turn to their senior executive staff or cabinet, and later their boards, to help with swift decision making. “In the case of COVID-19, I knew early on that we at Iḷisaġvik would have to make some tough decisions. With this in mind, I connected with my senior leadership team right away, and we determined what’s best for our students, our employees, and our communities across the North Slope. A closure and then a very slow minimal operations schedule would need to be implemented ASAP,” she says.

“Once we had a plan, I notified our board, and have kept them notified via email throughout the past few weeks. They have communicated back with me via phone and emailed their support for the decisions we have made. This is how good decision making and good relationships happen,” she adds. “The board trusts me.”

Avoiding Micromanagement

To lead well in such stressful times, trustees and the administration need to work together. Boards need to assure comprehensive policies are in place for emergencies, and the president needs to implement those policies and have the authority to make time-sensitive decisions. When boards interfere with the president’s ability to act to implement the emergency plan, they are engaging in micromanagement.

Micromanagement hurts the board-CEO relationship and often is based on a lack of trust. In all of its governance leadership institutes, training opportunities, retreats, and assessments, ACCT emphasizes the importance of the board-CEO relationship and the need to avoid second-guessing administrative decisions.

“Micromanaging often leads to conflict, confusion, and dysfunction,” says Colleen Allen, ACCT’s director of retreats and evaluation services. “Boards need to show support for the CEO and empower him or her to do the job they are expected to do.”

Now that the initial transition to online learning has successfully been made, trustees are using their voices to make their institutions’ needs known and advocate for needed supports for their institutions, their students, and their communities. Going forward, trustees will also need to work with their presidents to assess the long-term financial impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on their institutions. Fostering trust between boards and their presidents will be just as important in the months and years to come.

For a copy of the San Diego CCD resolution, see: https://go.boarddocs.com/ca/sdcd/Board.nsf/files/BMNQ9B649C89/$file/REVISED%20and%20SIGNED-SDCCD%20Resolution%20re%20Emergency%2003-12-20.pdf

Below are links to Infectious Disease policies of the County College of Morris, N.J.


For Clark State Community College’s Interruptions of College Operations Policy, call 937.328.6002 or email tolesm@clarkstate.edu.

Disclaimer: This article is offered for general informational purposes only. The examples described and the interview quotes on trustee practices are educational only and do not constitute advice as to how any board should act with regard to the COVID-19 emergency or any other emergency. The article is not offered as and does not constitute legal advice. Before acting, a board should seek guidance from experienced legal counsel on unique aspects and facts surrounding its situation. Finally, in responding to any emergency boards must make their best judgement based on comprehensive legal counsel, common sense, unique college culture and circumstances, and best practices.
A bill in Kentucky would require all high school students to fill out the FAFSA form prior to graduation. The bill recently advanced out of the state House of Representatives on a bipartisan vote.

Somerset Community College in Kentucky is offering free tuition for one-credit online classes to non-enrolled individuals. The online courses in digital photography, blueprint reading, and the 5S process management system, are intended to help individuals looking for a pathway to a new opportunity or career.

The Michigan Department of Treasury has approved the Grand Rapids Promise Zone Authority’s Development Plan, which will provide students who live in Grand Rapids and graduate from one of 24 eligible high schools free tuition to Grand Rapids Community College.

Essential workers in Michigan would be eligible for free college under a new plan proposed by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. Modeled on the GI Bill, the plan would pay for college for front-line workers without college degrees, including medical staff, grocery store employees, childcare providers, PPE manufacturers, and trash collection, delivery, and other public service workers.

The Elgin Community College Foundation in Illinois raised more than $21,000 for an emergency student relief fund to assist students encountering personal, academic, or financial hardships after the campus shut down during the coronavirus outbreak.

Lincoln Land Community College in Illinois is partnering with Memorial Health System to address the region’s nursing shortage. This agreement will allow LLCC to admit an additional 90 students per year.

West Virginia has waived the minimum GPA required to take advantage of the state’s free community college program. Students still have to meet the program’s other guidelines.

Edison State Community College in Ohio offered a “bonus” spring term in recognition that many people were at home during the state’s stay-at-home order. The eight-week term began on March 30 and offers a full eight weeks of online instruction.

The City University of New York (CUNY) launched a tech mentoring program focused on small businesses owned by veterans, minorities, and women. The grant, provided by the Verizon Foundation, will enable entrepreneurs from 250 small businesses across the city to take courses at five CUNY colleges.

Camden County College and Rutgers-Camden on Monday announced a new dual admission agreement that will allow New Jersey students studying in five areas to continue studies towards a bachelor’s degree at a lower tuition cost.

Quinsigamond Community College in Massachusetts received a $298,108 National Science Foundation grant to develop a robotics technician certificate program.

Boston’s tuition-free community college program added a sixth college, Urban College of Boston. The program is funded by fees from large-scale commercial development in the city.

An Arizona legislative panel voted to allow community colleges to offer four-year degrees, calling them a less expensive and more accessible alternative. The vote by the
House Education Committee came despite objections from the Arizona Board of Regents and the three state universities they govern, which argued the universities already have partnerships with every community college to offer four-year degrees.

The city of Mesa unveiled the Mesa College Promise campaign, which provides free tuition at community colleges for students graduating from the Arizona city’s high schools.

Most California public colleges and universities have moved the majority of all courses online. Dorms remained open for homeless, foster, international, or other students in need. Health and counseling services also remained open. The California Students Higher Education Advocacy Roundtable (HEART) has urged college leaders to keep campus services open whenever possible.

Community Colleges in Oregon are taking stock of an asset some might overlook — trees. A survey found that Portland Community College has 3,800 trees, representing a retail value of more than $13 million.

The North Carolina Community College system has moved most classes online but is working to develop exemptions for essential programs such as law enforcement training, fire training, emergency medical and rescue training, and nursing.

There were more than 11,000 registered apprenticeships in North Carolina during the 2019-20 school year, up from 7,679 the previous year and 5,434 in 2016-17.

Northeastern Technical College in South Carolina is preparing students for new careers in drone piloting with a new certificate program. The college also offers a 62-credit Associate of Applied Science degree that builds upon the certificate.

After Midlands Technical College in South Carolina launched a paramedic program, the Lexington County EMS created a loan agreement program which covers the cost of training in return for time and service once students complete the program.

Lawmakers in Virginia are considering funding for a tuition-free community college program. Gov. Ralph Northam requested $145 million for the program dubbed ‘G3’, which stands for “Get skilled, Get a job, Give back,” in his 2020 budget.

Northern Virginia Community College will offer tuition-free online summer classes for more than 70,000 high school students, funded in part by the federal stimulus package for colleges and universities.

The City of Texas City pledged $1 million through its economic development corporation to a new Opening Doors Promise Scholarship, which allows every qualifying high school student in the city to attend College of the Mainland full-time tuition free.

The seven colleges in the Dallas County Community College District would merge into one under a massive overhaul plan announced in February. The move will simplify the process of taking courses offered at different campuses in the district, helping more students earn degrees and certificates, officials said.

San Jacinto College in Texas has launched the Harris County Promise, a partnership between local independent school districts, higher education institutions, and Good Reason Houston, allowing local high school seniors to earn a tuition-free higher education credential.

The Wyoming Community College Commission granted the Northern Wyoming Community College District approval to offer four-year degrees. Other community college districts in the state are in the process of gaining approval.

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.
MANY OUTCOMES ARE UNPREDICTABLE AT THE ONSET OF any major crisis. But at least one can be depended on: in an emergency, we find out who our real friends are.

No one alive has ever experienced anything quite like the COVID-19 pandemic. Forcing the U.S. and national economies across the globe to press the pause button, every kind of business was ordered to batten down its hatches and, when possible, morph from face-to-face to virtual operations literally overnight. No matter how versatile and nimble most community colleges are, this put a particular strain on our underfunded open-access institutions.

ACCT’s membership body of service providers, the Corporate Council, is full of true-blue community college friends who have come through in the time of greatest need. These companies have been solving the most difficult challenges for students and colleges for years, and many have opened up their services to the public during this challenging time. ACCT is proud to highlight some of the honorable work being done by our Corporate Council members.

CampusWorks is a transformation partner dedicated exclusively to higher education that works with community colleges throughout the country to adapt and evolve to meet students’ needs. In March and April, the company hosted online “learning shots” — actionable information for higher-education leaders in the face of COVID-19 disruption. These brief online lessons address how to manage remotely, how registrars can tap into stopgap technologies to open registration and test-drive the future, keeping fiscal operations on track despite uncertainty and disruption, a COVID-19 cybersecurity update to protect staff and students from emerging threats, and ‘preventing COVID-melt’ to preserve college enrollment during and after the pandemic. Learn more at www.campusworksinc.com/news/detail/covid-19-support/.
**Cengage** creates learning experiences that build confidence and momentum toward the future students want. The company designs tools that make learning accessible to all, and in doing so supports the open-access mission of all community colleges. For U.S. higher education institutions experiencing unplanned mid-semester impacts due to COVID-19, Cengage in March began offering free access to all of its digital platforms and 14,000 e-books through Cengage Unlimited throughout the remainder of the spring semester. Access resources at www.cengage.com/covid-19-support/.

**EAB’s** mission is to make education smarter and communities stronger. EAB has created free resources specifically to address the COVID-19 pandemic to support and retain students. Researchers and experts from EAB have published online over 40 short articles on how higher education is responding to COVID-19, with more added daily. The page also includes a database of policies set by schools, tips for moving staff and students to a virtual environment, and templates for effective communication. For more information, go to eab.com/research/strategy/resource-center/support-your-campus-through-the-coronavirus-crisis/.

**Edquity** helps students find the emergency resources they need to keep them on the path to graduation. As soon as the pandemic crisis began, Edquity launched StudentReliefFund.org, an online fundraiser to support students who were faced with sudden housing and food insecurity. The Student Relief Fund is a collaboration between Believe in Students, Edquity, and the Rise Education Fund to support students affected by COVID-19-related campus shutdowns. For more information, go to https://edquity.co/COVID-19.pdf.

**Ellucian** is well-known to most higher education institutions as the maker of such ubiquitous software packages as Banner and a provider of services that facilitate and advance student and institutional success. In support of colleges and students affected by the COVID-19 crisis, Ellucian has created webinars about business continuity best practices, ways to power remote campuses, and more. To access this information, visit www.ellucian.com/business-continuity-coronavirus.

**Emsi** began as an ACCT-supported initiative to research and communicate the returns of community college educations to local, state, and national economies. Now part of the Strada Education Network, Emsi has grown to become a major international economic and workforce development organization. In March and April, the company began adding daily job postings data to labor market analysis tools to identify, prioritize, and support local businesses impacted by COVID-19 restrictions and closures. More information, data tools, research, and webinars to help with COVID-19 response are available at www.economicmodeling.com/covid-19-resources/.

**Ferrilli** is a technology services provider that specializes in serving the needs of higher education as a strategic partner dedicated to compliance, security and customer service. Ferrilli is helping community colleges adjust to the new normal by offering two webinars. “Grading Scheme Transitions,” scheduled for April 9, discussed how to transition grading schemes from alphanumeric to pass/fail, and “New Financial Aid Implications,” scheduled for April 23, helped college leaders decipher how the CARES Act may impact your institution’s financial aid process, things for institutions to consider, and potential pitfalls to avoid. The company is also offering enhanced help desk, campus remote readiness, virtual desktop, and other supports. For more information, visit Ferrilli.com or call 888.864.3282.


**Ocelot** builds artificial intelligence-powered tools and develops content for higher education institutions. The company's automated chatbots and video platform enables staff and student communities to engage and thrive in an ever-changing, resource-constrained world. Ocelot's services have been in demand since colleges have been forced to operate remotely. In March, Ocelot began providing all colleges with a free AI chatbot to communicate with and support students on COVID-19 related questions for as long as needed. This emergency response support tool is simple to implement, includes preloaded content, and the ability to customize and update immediately. For more information, go to covid19.ocelotbot.com.

**Single Stop** is a national nonprofit organization that works to leverage technology and partnerships to connect individuals to existing resources. In March, Single Stop announced that it has made its benefits screener along with COVID-19 resource toolkits available for free to anyone in states where Single Stop currently operates (Florida, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.) The benefits screener allows individuals to screen themselves for an array of public benefits, including food supports, tax credits and health insurance, and provides information about how to apply for or access those benefits in their area. While the screener is typically only available to partners who license the full technology suite, Single Stop decided to release the screener portion of the technology publicly as a public service during the COVID-19 event. The organization also will be offering webinars in the coming weeks on virtual case management, as well as on any emergency benefits released at the federal level. For more information, go to singleshop.org/covid19/.

**Transamerica** encourages customers to consider their long-term health in pursuit of their financial success. The company has issued advisories about monitoring the market during the COVID-19 pandemic and stock market performance through sickness and in health.
OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES, THE DEFINITION OF A “traditional” student has expanded to include a college’s adult, part-time, and remote learner populations — most of whom are native multitaskers incapable of recalling life before the connectivity of smart phones and 3G. But despite this new normal, a majority of institutions continue to maintain the status quo, relying on decades-old processes and technologies that are ill-equipped to support the 21st century needs of today’s students.

Facing Reality
We live and operate in an age of fantastic technological advancement. The expectation is that community colleges, like others, will leverage technology to improve student outcomes, innovate academic offerings, and prevent sophisticated cybersecurity threats regardless of deep, sustained cuts to funding. To do so, they must embrace the concept of digital transformation.

Commonly understood as an integrated, coordinated series of shifts across the institutional landscape (from culture to workforce to technology and everything in between), digital transformation seeks to optimize all operating and delivery models, transforming the institution by realigning its execution to its stated mission, strategic direction, and unique value proposition.

Sounds simple, right? Just reengineer all processes so constituents are operating in the best interest of the college and its students. Okay, but guess what? All those processes and people are typically supported by a single, operational platform that was implemented between ten and twenty years ago: the enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. That’s right, one system powers the completion of vital student functions like registering for classes and applying for financial aid and also makes sure employees receive their paychecks and HR benefits.

And so, your path to digital transformation must begin by evaluating the alignment between your institution and its goals, its students, and the ERP.

As a trustee, you will play a critical role in this complex process: that of mission-focused advisor. I’ve broken the transformation process down into three phases, providing guidance on what to look for along the way.
Laying the Groundwork for Success

Just as you wouldn't build a house without pouring the proper foundation, nor should your college attempt to transform without first laying a solid groundwork. In the case of digital transformation, a solid foundation is built through engaging your campus community and giving them a voice in the process. This work should bring together faculty, staff, administrators, leadership, trustees, and students to co-create a shared vision for success. This vision will serve as a charter, guiding future decisions and reimagining and redesigning the college’s business processes to realize it.

Process Reimagine & Redesign (PRR) work empowers campus stakeholders to become innovators by teaching them about industry best practices and technical advances in the ERP market. It's designed to open their minds to new possibilities and more efficient ways of working and learning. Inherently collaborative, this work facilitates buy-in across the organization and allows stakeholders to see their voice become part of the process, which is essential when it's time to implement new processes and technology.

During the preparation phase, trustees should be asking:

- What are the college's ultimate goals and expectations of this transformation? How do they support our strategic priorities?
- Are we engaging the key stakeholders who are impacted by the business processes we’re reimagining and redesigning? Do students have a voice in this process?
- Are we planning for the future?

Selecting a New ERP Solution

The decision to adopt a new ERP system will reach the farthest corners of your institution and will likely be accompanied by a multimillion-dollar price tag. During the ERP evaluation and selection process, the college must investigate multiple solutions and conduct a competitive bid process. If the college has completed its requisite planning, the selection process will naturally lead the group to the solution that best meets the institution’s needs.

As a steward of the college’s future, trustees can help ensure that the new solution is selected with long-term success and longevity in mind. During this phase, trustees should be asking:

- Can the provider clearly articulate how its solution is poised to respond to our challenges?
- How can the provider help our institution turn data into information in order to address problems?
- Is the provider's business sustainable to ensure continued partnership well into the future?

Achieving Transformation

Technology projects are often deemed successful if they are delivered ‘on time’ and ‘on budget.’ While these indicators can certainly help gauge a project's future success, it shouldn’t be a measure of transformation because it doesn’t account for the deeper organizational changes that need to take place. Ensuring that the new technology is accompanied by organizational transformation is critical to success. Without it, problems and challenges from the past will persist.

To ensure the college achieves long-lasting, meaningful transformation, trustees should be asking:

- Has the college evaluated whether the organization is ready for change?
- How is the college supplementing existing workloads to ensure it has the resources necessary to implement the new ERP system and redesigned processes?
- How is the college helping stakeholders embrace change?

Final Thoughts

As a mission-focused advisor, trustees should also collaborate with outside parties to bring valuable insights and best practices to the organization. Connect with trustees at peer institutions which have undertaken similar initiatives in order to explore what worked well, what didn’t, and what they wish they would have known earlier. These lessons can save your college valuable time and money by avoiding costly missteps.

If digital transformation is in your college’s future but you’re not sure where to start, consider working with an independent transformation partner.

Digital transformation can be a long, complex journey. Trustees who maintain a big-picture perspective, ask the right questions, and contribute valuable insights which can help keep the project on mission and achieve the desired transformation.

To learn more about CampusWorks’ approach to ERP evaluation and selection, listen to “ERP for the Mindful Trustee” with Keith Myers on ACCT’s In the Know, available at www.acct.org/in-the-know or through Apple and Android podcast apps.

Keith Myers is the Senior Vice President of Client Development at CampusWorks, an independent ERP selection and implementation partner dedicated to providing community colleges with an unbiased perspective and creative solutions to improve operations, reduce costs, and position students for success.
Author’s Note: This installment of Trustee Talk is Part III of a multi-part series on free speech in our colleges. Trustee Talk Free Speech Issues on College Campuses, Part I addressed what boards need to know about free-speech rights guaranteed by the First Amendment and academic freedom on campus. Trustee Talk Free Speech Issues on College Campuses, Part II addressed what boards should know about constitutionally protected and unprotected speech. These articles, available online at www.acct.org/product/trustee-talk, served as preludes to this discussion of the free speech rights and responsibilities of trustees.

Disclaimer: We caution that First Amendment issues are not only controversial, but also subject to new and different outcomes as courts continue to analyze each matter on a case by case basis. Before acting, a board should seek guidance from an experienced First Amendment counsel on the unique aspects and facts surrounding its situation.

How do boards protect the institution and their own First Amendment rights?

For over 50 years, ACCT has identified good practices of boards to collaborate, act ethically and harmoniously, and set a positive tone for the college. The basic tenet that every board of trustees should govern as a singular unit and speak with a single voice is sometimes hard to follow for board members who want to speak out about a real or perceived injustice or difference of opinion with the rest of the board.

Backed by comprehensive board bylaws and a code of conduct, effective boards have several ways to avoid litigation and preserve civility among dissenting board members. One key, says ACCT General Counsel Ira Shepard, of counsel with the law firm of Saul Ewing, LLP, in Washington, D.C., is “promoting professional problem-solving techniques which facilitate efficient and effective administration and stress civility.”

Use Prudence and Common Sense

According to ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown, trustee free speech is “a difficult issue to grapple with” and trustees need to “be mindful that you can’t always divorce those statements and actions from the fact that you are a recognized individual in a leadership role.” In an Inside Higher Ed article, “Do trustees have full freedom of speech?” Brown encourages board members to use common sense and to recognize the extent of their leadership responsibility to the college community, avoiding public controversy and conflicts that could reflect badly on the college and on the board.

Whether their comments are issued through social media, personal statements, or letters, public college board members are advised to use prudence in their actions and communications. They have the fiduciary “duty of care” for their institutions and should avoid bad publicity for the college, the board, and for themselves. This is particularly relevant to elected trustees who represent the interests of the community and the voters who elected them to be on the board.

Function Only as a Whole Body

The power of the board is as a body of the whole, not as individual actors. Board members should avoid personal self-interests in the boardroom and speak on behalf of the college and community, not for any political or personal affiliation. According to Cindra Smith, author of Trusteeship in Community Colleges: A Guide for Effective Governance (2008), “Every trustee brings their own perspectives to the board room and applies their own experiences and insights to the important discussions and decisions that are made. Yet the commitment to serve on a board of trustees is tied to the inextricable acknowledgement that no individual trustee has power or authority to act on his or her own.”
Look to Board Policies

Open records requests, public letters to the editor of local papers, and speaking out publicly seem to be the most prevalent strategies that discontented board members choose. Other more harmonious and more appropriate means of getting the information they seek to resolve concerns about mismanagement lie in board policies. In ACCT’s Guide to Ethical Governance, governing boards function best when the ethical standards for trustee behavior are clear. “ACCT recommends that all boards adopt a set of standards, often called a ‘code of ethics’ or ‘standards for good practice.’ Some regional community college accrediting commissions already require that boards have a code of ethics or similar statement in place,” the guide states.

Boards’ codes of conduct and board policy manuals can provide avenues for individual board members to speak their minds to the board rather than speaking to the press. These include:

• Speak first with the chair about the troubling issue.
• Seek counsel: The chair sets up a meeting with the president, chair, trustee, and board counsel to get more information.
• In executive session, the entire board meets with board counsel to discuss the alleged facts and seek legal advice.

• If a board member asks for a review of ethics issues at a public meeting, the board chair shall direct that the discussion take place in executive session with the participation of counsel in order to seek legal guidance on the issue.

Individual members of a board should not be conducting investigations into college business. A formal request at a public board meeting can be made, but such requests should have been made previously in executive session. Even though trustees may have concerns about the college’s management, they need to be prudent in their requests to avoid their own mismanagement or micromanagement. And likewise, college administrations need to be willing to share with the board the requested information before formal open requests are initiated. A “no surprises” rule should be practiced by both board members and presidents.

Rogue Trustee Behavior

To maintain board cohesion, individual trustees who have differing opinions should consider what’s best for board harmony and for the college. “Going rogue” may mean bad headlines and possible censure. According to “Trusteeship 101: Board Basics” from ACCT’s seminal handbook, Trusteeship in Community Colleges, the term “rogue trustee” has been used in the news media to describe board members whose personal or competing interests interfere with the board’s collective interests. Every board member should be aware of the potential of wandering into this pitfall, and they should constantly ask themselves whether what they are doing is in the interest of the college or serving a personal agenda. If it is serving a personal agenda, then the trustee must realize that what is in his or her best personal interest is to set the agenda item aside — as trustees who are disruptive for reasons that don’t serve the mission, vision, or goals of the college tend to undermine their own aims in the end by alienating themselves from the board.

Rigorous Debate

To avoid individual members going rogue, boards should allow for respectful, rigorous debate. Practicing civility and transparency in their debates in the boardroom, board members can balance their rights to free speech along with their responsibilities to their colleges’ values and those of their communities. Board discussion, either at a public meeting or in executive session, should allow for thoughtful questions and discussion by its members. After rigorous debate, individual opinions must be set aside. Once a decision has been made, ethically the dissenting board member is obligated to support the decision.

For some trustees, this is difficult. Smith writes, “Disagreements are inevitable among any group of people — but disharmony is not.” While some personality and
perspective-based challenges are found to arise from time to time, “these should be viewed as opportunities to consider diverse points of view that can be anchored and tempered by always keeping in mind the college mission, vision, and goals.”

When it comes to board members, free speech issues concern the trustee who publicly disagrees or breaks confidentiality. When a public employee has restrictions to speech in their official duties, “the employees are not speaking as citizens for First Amendment purposes, and the U.S. Constitution does not insulate their communications from employer discipline.” (Garcetti v. Ceballos, 2006). The same holds true for unprotected speech, such as issues of harassment, threats, incitement, obscenity, or defamation.

ACCT’s first standard of good practice, “act as a unit,” comes to mind immediately. For both elected and appointed board members, the traditional board code of behavior of publicly going along with the board’s decisions does, in essence, prohibit individual trustees’ “free” speech. ACCT’s principles emphasize that boards should get along as colleagues, allow the president or the board chair to be the primary spokespersons on any key issue, and basically keep one’s own differing opinion confidential and out of the headlines. Those actions protect the institution.

Smith writes, “Even with the best of intentions, trustees may clash over differences of opinions about what they believe is best for the college. But when discussions and decisions are guided by a thorough understanding of the community and the higher education sector, and informed by data, it is always possible to function as an effective team.”

Sometimes this stance is simply not tenable to an elected board member who both supports free speech and feels his allegiance is to the people who elected him, not to the board. Sometimes board members feel that the right thing to do is to speak out against what they thought was both unethical and unlawful, which leaves them open to censure by the board.

According to Terry J. Malone, a free-speech advocate who served 20 years as a trustee for Dodge City Community College in Arizona, “I think there are conflicts between policy and freedom of speech issues which are more prevalent in colleges where the trustees are elected and must answer directly to the people who provided the vast majority of the funding for the college they own.” As an elected board member who was censured for going against the position of the board regarding resource allocation, Malone argues against speech restrictions.

In its Guide to Ethical Governance, ACCT has developed a model code, parts of which are cited below. Boards of trustees are encouraged to use this model as a starting point for discussion and exploration by trustees of expectations for their own behavior. For the discussion at hand, relevant parts are cited below:

**Collaboration**
- Work with my fellow board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that arise during vigorous debates of points of issue;
- Base my personal decision upon all available facts in each situation; vote my honest conviction in every case, unswayed by partisan bias of any kind; and abide by and uphold the final majority decision of the board.

**Authority**
- Remember at all times that as an individual I have no legal authority outside the meetings of the board, and to conduct my relationships with the community college staff, the local citizenry, and all media of the community on the basis of this fact.

**Ways to Request Information**
Members of boards should not have to resort to filing official open information requests. These should be honored in study sessions, or in executive sessions if the request relates to college or board personnel or other confidential information. Confidentiality is expected of board members regarding certain classified information and should be part of each board’s code of conduct. Breaking confidentiality is egregious trustee behavior.

To avert official filings, both college presidents and board chairs should do everything in their power to be transparent and forthcoming. Board members should be able to ask questions — not to micromanage, but to assure that the
board and the college is ethical and has the community’s interests (and not self-interest) at heart. All trustees have a requirement to work in cooperation and harmony with the entire board, and the college leaders and board chairs have a responsibility to practice transparency.

According to John Lombardi, former university president and author of *How Universities Work*, “When trustees have concerns about mismanagement, they should first speak to the chair of the board, and then the two together should speak with the president or chancellor of the college.” Effective boards should work with the president to resolve questions. If the executive can’t resolve the issue, it may be that the board needs to take up the issue in executive session. “When boards do not resolve these issues in executive session, but individual board members seek out alternative forums in public to attack the institutional management or each other, it may well indicate mismanagement of the board’s responsibilities.” When board members cannot get answers to legitimate questions, they do not need to go rogue or go it alone. They should insist on the board using board agreed-upon protocols of full disclosure.

**Free Speech Board Policies**

Boards have many ways to prepare for and to accommodate strong differences of opinion among board members. First and foremost is policy. Board bylaws comprise board policy about individual and group behavior. The free speech of boards can be limited by board policies and the need for public harmony.

Using the “no surprises” rule, trustees should be transparent with the board, the president, and other board members. Whether elected or appointed, board members should know what their responsibilities are and follow through according to their bylaws and codes of conduct, and many trustees take an oath saying they agree to follow the prescribed bylaws. Effective board governance requires that they do so.

**Guidelines**

Here are some strategies to think about implementing if your board has not already done so.

- **Board Bylaws and Codes of Conduct** are agreements about board processes, procedures, and principles and should be updated each year. They need to address controversial conflicts of interest and free speech such as expressive conduct or expressive association.

- **Legal Counsel.** Before any board bylaws or code of conduct is adopted, it is critically important that boards and colleges seek expert legal advice from a First Amendment practitioner or expert, including their general counsel.

- **Communications and Transparency.** If board policies do not cover communication and speech protocols, these should be added. Accreditation agencies and site visitors look at such controversies, and transparency is important to protect the integrity of the college and of the board.

- **Onboarding.** Each time a new president or board member comes on board, board members need to review and update board bylaws. This review should be an essential part of orientation and onboarding processes.

- **Neutrality.** Some governing boards prefer to remain neutral on issues of public controversy, leaving debate to individuals and encouraging a wide range of opinion and dialogue. Such tolerance displays the ideal that the board is a forum for rigorous examination of issues. During the open public comment period at board meetings, it is important for board members to listen and not immediately react to guest speakers. Responses to topics brought up in the public forum should be discussed by board members if they have not already done so. Again, the no surprises rule allows all board members to have their say before anything official comes from the board. Boards can go into a 10-15 minute executive session to discuss an important, urgent, or controversial topic brought up at an open session and then return to continue the public meeting.

- **Free speech ethos.** Boards can set an example for their institutions by respectfully demonstrating free speech and debate during their meetings. This is particularly important for board chairs to establish precedent — allowing board members to ask their questions and provide different points of view over an issue. Such transparency can indicate the thoroughness and dedication of board members about making good decisions about an issue. Civil and open dialogue also can advance learning, improve the understanding of different perspectives, and model the ability to present well thought-out arguments.

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NEW REPORT:
BRIDGING
STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC AND WORK EXPERIENCES
IN MARCH, ACCT, WITH SUPPORT FROM GUARDIAN LIFE, released the second report in a new four-part series detailing critical issues and strategies related to community colleges’ roles in workforce development. Make It Count focuses on the need to better bridge students’ academic and work experiences by using prior learning assessments, the practice of awarding credit for learning out of the classroom. These experiences frequently include prior work and employer-based training, military experience, and skills-focused courses and bootcamps.

The report also highlights how prior learning assessments have become an important component of community college and business partnerships. The report highlights three examples of prior learning assessment initiatives at Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College and the Dallas County Community College District.

“Many community college students who embark on their studies bring a wealth of life experience and knowledge from outside the classroom,” said ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown. “By awarding credits for knowledge gained from work and other experiences, community colleges help students complete their degrees. Doing so also supports business needs for talent development by marrying real-world experience with their coursework. The prior-learning assessment strategies presented in Make It Count offer community college leaders tools to enhance student supports and workforce development efforts.”

Major takeaways from the report include:

• The nearly 70 percent of community college students who work while enrolled and the 50 percent of community college students who are age 25 and older could benefit from prior learning assessment credits for their work experiences outside the classroom.
• The use of prior learning assessments has expanded through federal and state policies that encourage colleges to bridge students’ academic and work experiences.
• Community colleges can use prior learning assessments to strengthen business partnerships. According to consumer research from Strada Education Network and Gallup, 33 percent of American adults without degrees are more likely to seek additional education directly from an employer than a college or university.

“Employers have a great need to ensure that their current and future employees are continually learning and growing their skill sets,” said Michael Carren, head of corporate social responsibility at Guardian. “Experiential learning and the use of prior learning assessments helps workers leverage their career experience and gain credentials that are vital to the success of companies and set them up to be lifelong learners.”

Last year, with support from Guardian, ACCT released a comprehensive report on community colleges’ role in workforce development, Partnerships for a Future-Ready Workforce, and a brief on supporting working students, The College-Work Balancing Act. Make it Count is the latest in this series, which provides an in-depth look at critical issues and strategies related to community colleges’ roles in workforce development. Over the next year, ACCT will publish two additional reports on the topics of meeting needs for upskilling and adapting to automation in the workforce.

Download these and other resource publications at acct.org/term/reports-and-white-papers.

“MANY COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO EMBARK ON THEIR STUDIES BRING A WEALTH OF LIFE EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE FROM OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM. BY AWARDING CREDITS FOR KNOWLEDGE GAINED FROM WORK AND OTHER EXPERIENCES, COMMUNITY COLLEGES HELP STUDENTS COMPLETE THEIR DEGREES.”

– J. Noah Brown, ACCT President and CEO
Executive Searches

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

College of Southern Idaho, Idaho
Dr. L. Dean Fisher
President

Los Angeles Trade Technical College, Los Angeles Community College District, California
Dr. Katrina VanderWoude
President

Dakota County Technical College & Inver Hills Community College, Minnesota
Michael Berndt
President

Norco College, Riverside Community College District, California
Dr. Monica Green
President

Estrella Mountain Community College, Maricopa Community Colleges, Arizona
Dr. Manuel Gomez
Vice President of Academic Affairs

North Hennepin Community College, Minnesota
Dr. Rolando Garcia
President

Linn-Benton Community College, Oregon
Dr. Lisa Avery
President

Western Piedmont Community College, North Carolina
Dr. Joel Welch
President
BOARD RETREATS, BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENTS, AND CEO EVALUATIONS

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

Aims Community College, Colorado
Community College of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Crowder College, Missouri
Dallas County Community College District, Texas
Howard Community College, Maryland
Los Angeles County Community College District, California
Middlesex County College, New Jersey
Monterey Peninsula College, California
Montgomery County Community College, Pennsylvania
Pima Community College District, Arizona
San Bernardino Community College District, California
Tarrant County College District, Texas
Western Nebraska Community College, Nebraska

UNPARALLELED EXPERIENCE | UNPARALLELED SUCCESS

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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Engage Your Board. Advance Your College.

ACCT Board Services provide opportunities to strengthen the unique role of board members and to develop an effective board.

**Services Include**

- Retreats
- Board self-assessment
- Presidential evaluations
- Succession planning
- Institutional leadership analysis
- Board policy review
- Mediation and conflict resolution

Call to learn more about ways to engage your board and make use of each trustee’s skills and expertise.

**Contact:**
Colleen Allen  
*Director of Retreats and Evaluation Services*  
callen@acct.org

202-775-6490 | www.acct.org/services
A Lifetime of Appreciation

ACCT LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

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

A lifetime membership is a perfect way to...

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

7 REASONS TO BESTOW A LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

For more information and to submit an application, go to www.acct.org/product/lifetime-membership or contact ACCT’s Member Services at 202.775.4667 or acctinfo@acct.org.
Self-Care is More Important Than Ever

By Jeannie Moton
Portland Community College

WE ARE AT AN UNPRECEDENTED TIME IN HISTORY. THE YEAR 2020 will go down in the books as the year that movies such as Outbreak and Contagion became true stories. It will also no doubt change the face of higher education in the nation. While most of our institutions offered online and hybrid classes, these offerings cannot replace the face-to-face daily interactions with instructors and peers. As humans, most of us need that interaction to thrive; our mental and physical health depend on it.

At my college, I am lucky enough to work in an environment with a wonderful team. I miss that team! From the college president to part-time staff working at the front desk, they all make a difference in how I approach my days. Without those folks to interact with daily, I am finding myself unsure of my work productivity, quality, and flow. Having a team around to engage with is a key element to my work style.

Besides not having your team, working from home poses so many challenges and distractions. The first few weeks are the most demanding, especially for those who have children or parents to care for — the typical 8:00 – 5:00 routine doesn’t always work. While my children are older and can understand the boundaries I have created, I understand that this isn’t the case for all households.

Then comes the question of self-care. Do you wake up and immediately start your workday? Do you get your house settled and then start your day? Do you work an altered schedule in order to deal with your household, leaving you working into the night? When do you take your “me time”? This is what I struggle with daily. I say, I’ll go for walks at 10:00 and 2:00. Do I do it? No, something always intercedes. I say, I’ll take a whole hour for lunch. Do I? Again, no. Other demands pull at my time. You may find yourself in a similar situation.

For me, making time for a short walk is essential. For the days that I do make it out of the house, I am grateful. I also feel less stress and find it easier to fall asleep. It is vital that we do, though — other people depend on us too much for us not to ensure we are in good working order.

While it may take some time to get settled, I have found some tricks that have helped. Be sure you have a workspace. Your couch doesn’t count. You need a space where you won’t be easily interrupted, where you can have a conference or video call and have what you need as you would at work. Natural light in that space is ideal; it keeps you connected with the day happening around you. This can be challenging depending upon your household. Studies recommend against putting a workspace in one’s bedroom, but in my case, it is the only place to have quiet uninterrupted work time. We all have to make compromises based on our situations,

continued on page 46
but we should do what we can to minimize the stresses that come with working at home.

Being at home, for example, I am struggling with snacking! I find myself looking for something to snack on more often now that I am home. I noticed this the first week home and it hasn’t stopped, but at least I recognize it. I have started stocking healthier options, and I have turned to more fruits and vegetables. (I still sneak in the unhealthier options, but less often.)

Working late into the night is tempting, as it may be the only time you feel you have to work interrupted or catch up from the day. This is a big no-no. While you won’t have a commute to worry about, getting a good night’s sleep increases productivity. If you find yourself having a hard time dozing off in the evenings, try meditating. Reflecting on the busyness of the day and planning for the day to come through meditation is a calming way to bring your thoughts together. Using essential oils while meditating also helps. I find lavender or chamomile are the most beneficial to me. If you must work into the night, be sure to use the dark mode option on your device. It will help when it’s time for bed, as it allows your mind to calm down and transition more easily into sleep.

And last but not least, staying connected socially with your peers is essential. My colleagues and I have scheduled virtual happy hours, and they are amazing. I look forward to Fridays at 5:00 with my team. Being on video chat with everyone reenergizes me for the next week. We do chat a bit about work, but we also check in to make sure we are all doing well and thriving in our new normal, for now.

In closing, I want to express how vital our roles are in supporting our boards and presidents. We are in unchartered water and not sure how long it will last. If we aren’t taking care of ourselves, we won’t be able to care for others. Please be sure to take the time you need for a healthy balance.
ROBERT MCKEE SAID, “TRUE CHARACTER IS REVEALED IN the choices we make under pressure. The greater the pressure, the deeper the revelation.” During this unprecedented time, COVID-19 has put our true characters on display. Community colleges across the country have risen to the occasion with determination, creativity, resourcefulness, and resilience in finding alternative ways to serve their students. They are working hard to complete the spring semester and offer summer classes while preparing for online fall classes.

Many students’ educational and life plans have been disrupted. Graduating seniors may not walk across the stage, scholarship award programs have been canceled, prom dresses won’t be worn, final years of sports will not be played, and many summer job opportunities will be lost. Many college seniors had to move out of their dorms and return home to live with their parents. On top of all these hardships, many also have experienced tragic deaths during this time. Our students need us to come through for them more than ever.

As they experience uncertainties, many students may look to our community colleges to help them achieve their educational and life goals. Many students who had other plans to attend a university out of state may attend our colleges. Community colleges are working hard on how they will deliver instruction. At Lansing Community College, we have come together in ways in ways I never imagined. Our faculty members have been working diligently to stay engaged with students and to prepare them for an uncertain future. They have transferred their classes to online instruction and made them engaging.

PBSN members have helped each other navigate conducting board meetings by Zoom or Webex and understand how to conduct public comments in an orderly manner. We have called each other day and night to help and to share ideas and lessons. Our IT staff has worked tirelessly to connect online classes and meetings, as well as to troubleshoot technology issues. Many of us have worked longer hours to serve and solve problems.

In a moving speech by our president, Dr. Brent Knight, he encouraged us to “let this be our finest hour”:

“We can all contribute to making this our reality: Let's help students enroll and be successful at our respective community colleges. Let's help students to select courses that will transfer as credit for their program at a university. Let's help students find meaningful advising. Let's help them enroll, and let's offer support services that will help them to succeed. Let's help students to achieve connectivity and understand how to study and achieve in an all online format. Let's stay connected with our students as they need coaching and human interaction more than ever. Let's be resilient and flexible during these challenging times as we work to provide the best educational experience possible for our students. Let this be our finest hour.”

Dr. Knight’s speech really moved me. COVID-19 has made me appreciate the faculty and staff I work with more than ever. We have greater compassion and understanding for one another. I am proud of the fortitude and character that has emerged over these past few weeks at Lansing Community College. LCC has donated more than 60,000 gloves, nearly 8,000 face masks, disposable gowns, and hundreds of bottles of hand sanitizer and other essential supplies to area hospitals and first responders.

Community colleges may not know what their future holds, but as a community we can control the conduct of our character by letting this be our finest hour.
2021 Candidates for the ACCT Board Of Directors

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

Central Region
James Cooksey*
Moberly Area Community College, MO

Northeast Region
Sheetal Ranjan*
Bergen Community College, NJ

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

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

Western Region
Rose Benavidez*
South Texas College, TX

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE
(3) Three-Year Terms
The following is the slate of nominees:

Amanda Howland*
College of Lake County, IL

John Lukas*
Lakeshore Technical College, WI

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

Nominations must be received by July 1, 2020 in order to appear in the fall 2020 issue of Advisor.

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

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

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

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

Central Region
No Nominees

Northeast Region
Diane Dixon-Proctor*
Anne Arundel Community College, MD

Pacific Region
Richard Fukutaki*
Bellevue College, WA

Southern Region
No Nominees

Western Region
Carolyn Thomas Morris*
Navajo Technical University, NM

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

Nominations must be received by July 1, 2020 in order to appear in the fall 2020 issue of Advisor.

NOTE: Nominations will be accepted from the floor on all elections.

NOMINATIONS FOR DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE
Deadline for Receipt is July 1, 2020
You are encouraged to submit your nomination via e-mail to nominations@acct.org.

Director-at-Large Nomination Process
Each member of the Board of Directors at the time of election must be a member of a Voting Member. Voting Members are defined as governing and advisory boards of accredited not-for-profit community-based postsecondary educational institutions that primarily offer programs other than baccalaureate, graduate, and professional degrees, including boards of state systems that include such institutions. According to the ACCT Bylaws, no more than one (1) member from any member board may serve as an elected member on the ACCT Board of Directors at the same time.

If you wish to run for a Director-at-Large seat during the 2020 ACCT Leadership Congress and appear in the Advisor, you are required to notify the ACCT President at the Washington, D.C., office in writing of your intent to run. Your notification must be received with a postmark date of July 1, 2020, or by electronic mail (preferred method) by close of business on July 1, 2020. The President will send candidate information received within the prescribed postmarked deadline to the ACCT membership in September.

Official notification from candidates shall consist of:
- A letter of declaration to run for office;
- A letter of support from the individual’s board;
- A one-page résumé that should focus on community college-related service and other civic activities and may include brief information on education and occupation;
- A narrative statement, not to exceed 150 words, on qualifications (electronically preferred), for inclusion in voting materials to be printed;
- A 5” x 7” head-and-shoulders photo, preferably color (photos will not be returned), or a color electronic version (preferred) — 300 dpi or higher; and
- An optional single letter of support from an ACCT member board. This letter of support must be limited to one page.

You are encouraged to submit your nomination online. Please e-mail your nomination to nominations@acct.org. ACCT will respond to your submission via e-mail within three working days. Please contact ACCT Senior Vice President Jee Hang Lee at jhlee@acct.org if you do NOT receive a response within three working days. Nominations will also be accepted via standard mail (return receipt requested). Mail nominations to: ACCT President, 1101 17th Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036.
Do You Remember... your last board retreat?

If it’s been more than a few years, you probably have work to do.
An annual board retreat can support team building, strategic planning, and good governance.

ACCT’s Retreat & Evaluation Services are designed to help trustees effectively carry out their responsibilities in an increasingly complex and litigious world. We are committed to assisting boards by enhancing their capability to provide effective lay governance and leadership to strengthen the capacity of community colleges to achieve their mission on behalf of their communities.

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

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

Classic Topics

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

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

For more information or to schedule a retreat, contact Colleen Allen at callen@acct.org / 202.775.6490.
SEPT. 30–OCT. 3, 2020
CHICAGO, IL
HYATT REGENCY CHICAGO

TO REGISTER AND FOR MORE INFORMATION:
CONGRESS.ACCT.ORG

SECOND TO NONE
COMMUNITY COLLEGES
MEET STUDENTS WHERE THEY ARE