ACCT Chair Emily Yim stands beside the students at Edmonds Community College — and their millions of peers attending community colleges across the nation.
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 2018 ACCT Leadership Congress this October in New York, New York.

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 18, 2018.
IT IS A REAL HONOR TO BE ELECTED AND serve as the Chair of ACCT. I am humbled and energized by what is possible for our Association in service to our member boards. While we will have many challenges facing us in the new year, we also have real opportunities to push forward and achieve new heights.

As I told many of you who attended the Leadership Congress in Las Vegas, I will continue to highlight that the success of our students, many of whom are not “traditional students,” require that same grit, determination, and resilience from all of you, our trustees. I intend to work with the ACCT Board, the ACCT Team in Washington, and frankly, all of you around the country to focus on key partnerships, including:

- **K-12 partners**, producing 3.1 million high school graduates, 61 percent of whom need remediation when they enter our colleges;
- **Industry partners**, who will create more than 10 million jobs in the next few years — including 740,000 in my home state of Washington — with new and different skill sets that are yet unimagined; and
- **Nonprofit and community partners**, assisting our students who face mental health, homelessness, food insecurity, poverty, childcare, and a host of other challenges.

These are just a few of the opportunities available to us. It certainly makes our jobs interesting and vital, but it also creates difficult choices that require courage and conviction as we move forward together.

But we cannot go forward alone — we need to build many more strategic linkages if we are going to do justice to our students in our efforts to propel them to completion and prepare them for the opportunities that lay ahead. No organization can meet these complex needs alone — it’s just not possible. That is why there is such promise and power in partnerships.

As I told the audience in Las Vegas, I intend to use this year to identify and realize many more relationships that can drive positive change in student success, and position our Association to engage more of you and our colleges in that work while continuing to strengthen community college governance and leadership excellence.

Successful entrepreneurs never go it alone. They create what’s known as the crazy quilt — a patchwork of partners and resources that together drive innovation and success. We need to do the same.

The sculptor Michelangelo said, “I saw an angel inside the stone, so I carved the angel to set it free.” We must recommit ourselves to the power of partnerships to set as many of our students as we can free.

Thank you for your support and for being a part of our Association.

EMILY YIM
CHAIR
Redoubling Our Efforts

OUR NATION HAD TO DEAL WITH MOMENTOUS challenges in 2017, with the sea change in Washington, hurricanes, wildfires, and increased insecurity and threats from around the globe. As we head into 2018, our community colleges and the boards and CEOs that lead them have opportunities — and frankly, obligations — to redouble efforts to ensure that our national leaders in Washington understand and appreciate the role and necessity of our colleges.

We face many challenges to be sure, and ACCT works hard every day to help identify and equip our membership with the knowledge, tools, and strategies to navigate an increasingly more complex and fast-moving society. This installment of Trustee Quarterly continues our tradition of providing the best and most timely information boards need at their fingertips.

Leadership matters now more than ever. We are pleased to profile ACCT’s new Chair, Emily Yim, who will focus us on the importance of partnerships and their untapped potential. Additionally, we have an article addressing the importance of onboarding a new CEO and the role of trustees in establishing the right tone for the board/CEO relationship.

Our colleges are resource squeezed, and we need to think differently about finding new and more sustainable sources of revenue. I had the pleasure of interviewing Timothy Nelson about a new and potentially powerful model for fundraising. I urge you to read it and explore fundraising at your own colleges, all while asking tough questions about whether you are doing the best you can do for your students and communities.

Meeting manufacturing demands and high skills requirements is paramount for businesses and our communities’ economic health. Read about how Mt. Hood Community College is using a charitable fund to address next-generation manufacturing training.

Change is difficult, particularly when boards confront hard decisions about reallocating resources. The Nevada System of Higher Education has employed new ways for ensuring fiduciary oversight, while strengthening relationships and connecting the dots.

And finally, college readiness continues to be a vexing and critical issue for young people and our colleges. Read about how New Jersey’s community colleges are helping students “catch up” and “speed up” for success and integrate their efforts with the state’s economic and workforce pipelines.

As you will see, this issue of Trustee Quarterly is chock full of useful information and insights. And as always, I welcome your feedback and opportunities to chat with you about the issues of vital importance to the success of our students.

J. NOAH BROWN
ACCT PRESIDENT AND CEO
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We Say Farewell to a Valued Colleague at ACCT

ACCT Executive Vice President of Board Leadership Services, Education, and Research Dr. Narcisa A. Polonio stepped down from her position on December 31, 2017, to pursue new opportunities.

Narcisa served ACCT for more than 17 years, during which time ACCT enjoyed a solid track record providing high-quality services and unmatched educational opportunities to trustees throughout the country. Among the many accomplishments and initiatives shepherded during Narcisa’s tenure were expanding and upgrading the Executive Search Services and Retreat and Evaluation Services, helping lead the Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS), the Governance Leadership Institute (GLI), and coordinating the Annual ACCT Leadership Congresses and many other educational and research projects.

Because of Narcisa’s dedication and commitment to the mission of community colleges, ACCT has served hundreds of boards, college presidents and chancellors, vice presidents and deans, while working to elevate the visibility and impact of community colleges serving the more than 12 million students that pass through their doors every year.

ACCT is grateful for the leadership Narcisa has provided over her years of service, and we wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

J. Noah Brown
ACCT President and CEO

2017 ACCT Association Awards

The 2017 ACCT Association Awards were presented on Wednesday, September 27, during the Annual ACCT Awards Gala in Las Vegas, Nevada. For photos and videos of the Association and Regional Awards, visit www.acct.org/awards.

2017 Charles Kennedy Equity Award
Trident Technical College, S.C.

2017 M. Dale Ensign Trustee Leadership Award
Lee Lambert
Pima Community College District, Ariz.

2017 Marie Y. Martin Chief Executive Award
Lee Lambert
Pima Community College District, Ariz.

2017 William H. Meardy Faculty Member Award
Matthew Lewis
San Jacinto College District, Texas

2017 ACCT Professional Board Staff Member Award
Melanie Toles
Clark State Community College, Ohio

For more information about the ACCT Awards program, contact awards@acct.org.
According to the College Promise Campaign, 11 states and an estimated 200 local communities presently operate College Promise programs — a huge increase over the approximately 50 programs in place in 2015.

As College Promise initiatives have increased steadily in popularity, so have questions about how to sustain these programs financially and programmatically beyond startup and seed funding. On October 4, the College Promise Campaign and ETS released a new report that offers five different models that their designers propose may keep established and emerging programs viable indefinitely.

The five models discussed in Designing Sustainable Funding for College Promise Initiatives include:

1. Children’s Savings Account (CSA) models;
2. State-funded models;
3. Privately funded models;
4. Federal financial aid redesign models; and
5. Outcomes-based financing models.

Speaking at the unveiling of the report, Christopher Coons (D-Del.) told the college leaders and policymakers in the room that “the policy, evaluation, and the research you’re reviewing today is critical to helping us get in place models that make sense, that are sustainable, and that will make a real difference.”

“It is valuable [and] important to have validated… that kids from low-income backgrounds really can succeed… in K-12 and higher education,” Coons added.

Of the financing models presented, Coons said that he was “particularly struck by the Children’s Savings Account policy report.” Reports suggest that CSAs raise educational expectations, improve academic performance, increase postsecondary enrollment, increase postsecondary education completion, and increase post-college asset accumulation, he added.

Coons, who along with Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) reintroduced the American Dream Accounts Act last May to increase access to higher education for low-income students, affirmed his commitment to advancing the bill in Congress — while candidly admitting to complications in moving the legislation. Primary obstacles, Coons said, include the fact that the legislation was “embedded in much larger, more complicated pieces of legislation,” one involving comprehensive immigration reform and the other within the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 2015.

In addition to describing different funding models, Designing Sustainable Funding recommends policy strategies through which these models can be incorporated into existing and new College Promise programs. The authors of the Children’s Savings Account analysis, for example, suggested:

1. Connecting Promise models with existing Children’s Savings Account programs;
2. Opening Children’s Savings Accounts for all College Promise participants;
3. Transforming scholarship programs into early commitment asset-building programs; and
4. Opening Children’s Savings Accounts for all children and youth, including College Promise participants.

The full report can be downloaded at collegepromise.org. For more information about the College Promise Campaign, contact Andra Armstrong at andra@civicnation.org.
U.S. Department of Education Announces ‘Next Generation’ FAFSA

Technology improvements may ease students’ experiences with federal financial aid.

By Allison Beer

During the annual Federal Student Aid (FSA) Conference in November, FSA Chief Operating Officer Dr. A. Wayne Johnson and Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced the Trump Administration’s plan to modernize the federal student aid application and repayment process. A key feature of the planned “Next Generation Financial Services Environment” (Next Gen), set to begin in 2018, is a new app that will allow students and their families to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) using a smartphone or other mobile device. In addition, the Department of Education Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) is planning several technology changes intended to improve students’ financial aid experiences, including a more integrated StudentAid.gov and creating a single website for borrowers to repay their loans.

The national FAFSA completion rate has been on the rise for several years; however, low-income and first-generation students — many of whom attend community colleges — continue to face obstacles to completing the form and accessing financial aid. According to an analysis by the National College Access Network (NCAN), approximately 60 percent of high school seniors complete the FAFSA by graduation — a necessary step to receive federal grants and loans to pay for postsecondary education. Yet there is still room for improvement.

Carrie Warick, NCAN Director of Policy and Advocacy, describes how the new mobile app can make completing the FAFSA easier for these students, “Many low-income students only have access to the internet in their high school or on their smartphones,” Warick says. “Many do not have computers at home and likely don’t have wi-fi either. A mobile app makes it much easier for students to sit down with their parents to complete the form.”

While increasing mobile access and creating easier-to-navigate websites are much needed steps towards easing students’ experiences with financial aid, there are further steps FSA can take to improve the process. For example, it has been reported that the number of income verification requests for the current FAFSA application cycle has increased, especially for low-income students with a zero-dollar expected family contribution. Income verification requests create a burden for financial aid administrators responsible for reaching out to families for additional documentation and often deter students and families from completing the process. FSA states it is working to fix the issue and attributes the increase in verifications to both the new October application start date and ongoing security concerns with the Internal Revenue Service Data Retrieval Tool. For the Next Gen of financial aid, FSA will need to make it a priority that changes to their technology do not create unintended obstacles for the students most in need of financial aid services.

In addition to FSA’s plans for modernizing the financial aid process, Congress also has proposed steps to modernize and simplify the FASFA, as part of the PROSPER Act (see p. 8). For more information, read ACCT’s summary of the bill at now.acct.org.

Allison Beer is ACCT’s senior policy analyst.
College of DuPage Tackles Student Financial Literacy

Through the use of interactive activities, the Illinois community college is working to help students better understand their financial situation.

By Jacob Bray

College students have a lot on their plate. Between going to class, studying for tests, engaging in extracurriculars, and, for many, working one or more jobs, little time is left over. Given that financial literacy training is not a standard requirement, students can enroll and graduate from college unsure of how to budget, plan financially, and repay loans. College of DuPage in Illinois is working to ensure that their students are ahead of the curve.

In the fall semester, College of DuPage hosts a program called “Life Happens.” Students participate in a modified game of LIFE designed to increase knowledge of budgeting techniques and a variety of financial situations they might find themselves in. For example, if you have two children and earn $50,000 a year, can you afford to buy a luxury car, or would a used car make more sense? Students work their way around the room making these decisions just as game pieces move around the board in LIFE. During a presentation at ACCT’s annual Leadership Congress, presenters from the College of DuPage described the event and distributed a sample of the materials available.

Some of the tips for students offered by DuPage include:

1) Research interest rates and savings programs at various banks to see what is going to be most convenient and beneficial to you. Some banks offer programs designed to help you save, often rewarding you with bonuses if you reach a set amount in a certain time.

2) Set yourself up for success by making a goal for yourself and deciding ahead of time how much money you are going to contribute to your savings account. It can either be a specific dollar amount or a percentage of your salary, but it’s easiest to put money away when you’ve budgeted to do so.

3) Put a portion of your pay into savings automatically through direct deposit with your employer or set up an automatic transfer to happen at the same time every pay interval. By doing this, the money will be out of your checking account before you have the opportunity to miss it.

The Wisconsin HOPE Lab and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) released a report in March titled “Hungry and Homeless in College.” The report contains the results of a survey of 33,000 students at 70 community colleges nationwide and finds food insecurity rates ranging from 20 to 40 percent and housing insecurity rates reaching as high as 50 percent. All of these instances of food and housing insecurity cannot be directly attributed to a lack of financial literacy, but any effort made to increase students’ understanding of their financial situation and plan for the future will be a considerable help.

Jacob Bray is an associate writer with ACCT. He can be reached at jbray@acct.org.
Will the Higher Ed Act PROSPER in 2018?
A decade after its last reauthorization, HEA moves forward with provisions that could dramatically increase accountability for community colleges.

By Jee Hang Lee

Recently, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce passed out of committee a Higher Education Act reauthorization bill, the Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform (PROSPER) Act. HEA reauthorization has been pending for several years, with the last reauthorization occurring in 2008.

The PROSPER Act would overhaul the federal student loan and institutional aid programs, as well as eliminating several regulations focused on for-profit colleges. The PROSPER Act also would dramatically increase accountability for community colleges, including financial penalties and the creation of completion and transfer thresholds for grants assisting minority serving institutions.

For the past several years, several bills introduced in Congress have been aimed at creating financial penalties for colleges based upon their students' performance in repaying their loans. The PROSPER Act, however, eschews legislative proposals on risk-sharing schemes focused on student loans, instead opting to modify existing requirements under Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4).

Currently, any student who withdraws prior to completing a semester or quarter must return a portion of Title IV aid (including both Pell Grants and loans) received under R2T4. The percentage to be returned under R2T4 is dependent upon when the withdrawal occurred. If a student completes less than 60 percent of his or her coursework, then a proportion of aid must be returned based on when the student withdrew. If the student completes more than 60 percent, the institution may keep the aid. It is the responsibility of the student to repay the necessary portion of aid that was disbursed if he or she withdraws prior to completing 60 percent of the semester. In many instances, however, the institution ends up responsible for paying the student's portion if it is unable to recoup the funds.

The PROSPER Act shifts the burden of repaying R2T4 funds onto the institution, with the student responsible for up to 10 percent of the amount owed. It also creates new tiers of penalties.

• If a student withdraws between zero and 24 percent of the enrollment period, then all Title IV funds are owed back to the government.
• 25 percent of aid may be retained if the student completes 25 to 49 percent of the enrollment period.
  • If a student completes between 50 and 74 percent of an enrollment period before withdrawing, then 50 percent of aid may be retained.
  • 75 percent of aid may be retained if the student withdraws between 75 and 99 percent of the enrollment period.
  • Only completing 100 percent of the enrollment period will allow full retention of Title IV aid.

While this model will simplify the calculation of R2T4 for our colleges, based upon initial results from a sampling of community colleges, it appears institutions will have a substantially larger financial penalty under the new R2T4 proposal. And unlike prior risk sharing proposals, this penalty would be aimed at both federal loans and Pell Grant awards.

The PROSPER Act would overhaul the federal student loan and institutional aid programs, as well as eliminating several regulations focused on for-profit colleges. The PROSPER Act also would dramatically increase accountability for community colleges, including financial penalties and the institution of graduation requirements for grants assisting minority serving institutions.

The PROSPER Act also makes changes to the current accreditation system to provide greater focus on student learning and outcomes. The bill does not create a bright line federal completion rate requirement, but it does give individual accrediting agencies the ability to create outcome and learning standards based on institutional mission. Additionally, it would allow for differentiated review, meaning that institutions that are at greater risk of not meeting standards of accreditation would be subject to more rigorous or frequent reviews.

Lastly, the PROSPER Act would create an undergraduate completion and transfer threshold of 25 percent for colleges to receive grants supporting minority serving institution programs. This includes grants supporting Hispanic Serving Institutions, Predominantly Black Institutions, and Asian-American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions. This provision does not apply to institutional grants supporting Historically Black Colleges and Universities or tribal colleges.

As the full House considers the PROSPER Act and the Senate begins consideration of HEA, we need the voices of trustees, presidents, administrators, and students on these critical issues. Please visit www.acct.org/fact-sheets-and-summaries for more information about the PROSPER Act. Make your voice heard by visiting with your member of Congress and talking about these key issues. To keep updated on key legislative times, sign-up for Legislative Action in Washington alerts at publicpolicy@acct.org.

ACCT Vice President for Public Policy and External Relations Jee Hang Lee can be reached by email at jhlee@acct.org, or by phone at 202-775-4677.
PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY

THE 2017 ACCT CONGRESS REDOUBLED THE EMPHASIS ON PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED.

BY MARK TONER
DEVASTATING HURRICANES, UNCERTAINTY FOR YOUNG immigrants, and growing economic inequality — the 48th annual ACCT Leadership Congress was held this past fall in the wake of storms, both literal and political. “We have endured a lot of tragedy and hardship in this country in recent weeks and months. It’s very easy to get discouraged,” ACCT President & CEO J. Noah Brown told Congress attendees. “[But] we still have in this room everything we need to surmount these problems. You’re going to find the solutions, the best practices, the passion, and the compassion to tackle all the things our citizens so desperately need us to tackle on their behalf.”

More than 1,600 trustees, presidents, staff, education experts, and community college advocates attended the 2017 Congress. The theme — Pathways to Prosperity — reflected a redoubled emphasis on community colleges’ vital role serving those at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. ACCT last year recommitted to student access, equity, and inclusion in its mission, vision, and values, 2017 ACCT Chair Bakari G. Lee, a trustee of Hudson County Community College in New Jersey, told attendees. “We have much to be proud of,” he said.

The 2017 Congress was held in fast-growing Las Vegas, where the burgeoning Hispanic population is driving economic growth that mirrors demographic changes nationwide.

“We’re no longer predicting a future when Hispanics become the new mainstream,” said Cesar Conde, chairman of NBCUniversal International Group and NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises. “We’re standing in the middle of it.”

Conde urged support for the nearly 800,000 young immigrants impacted by the Trump Administration’s September decision to curtail the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA). Pointing to projections that Latinos will contribute fully one-quarter of the nation’s economic growth in the coming years, Conde said, “the fact is we have facts. The facts support our shared mission.”

Technology pioneer Lonnie Johnson, president and founder of Johnson Research and Development Co., also urged community college leaders to help address disparities in high-demand STEM fields, where white and Asian workers still represent 90 percent of the workforce in top technology companies. “We can’t succeed, we can’t lead in the world if we’re leaving large segments of the population on the sidelines,” Johnson said. “We’ve got to get everyone involved.”

Congress sessions largely focused on ways to better serve minority, low-income, and first-generation college students. More than 4 million community college students are now considered low-income, and one in three have family incomes of less than $20,000. In response, more and more institutions are providing emergency aid and other nonacademic supports, according to Amelia Parnell, vice president of policy and research for NASPA, an association of student affairs administrators.

“At a time when higher ed is being criticized for not being responsive to student needs, this is something they’re doing,” she says.

Providing a broad range of supports is important for both students and their institutions, Congress speakers said. “When you follow your data and listen to your students, you have to respond,” said Russell Lowery-Hart, president of Amarillo College in Texas, where completion rates increased 22 percent after implementing a comprehensive student support strategy.
that recouped many times over the investments made by the college and community partners through increased retention. “It doesn’t make financial sense for you to ignore the financial barriers your students face,” Lowery-Hart added.

Carol D’Amico, executive vice president of mission advancement and philanthropy for Strada Education Network, unveiled research that points to critical gaps in how low-income and first-generation students make decisions about attending college and the programs of study they take. These students rely less on the informal sources of information that drive the majority of college decisions, in large part because their families may have limited experience with higher education, she said. Information from work-related settings such as internships, job shadowing, and mentorships was found to be both valuable and often absent for these students, suggesting a need for greater investments in these areas, according to D’Amico.

“This is a call to action to increase work-based experiences into the curriculum,” D’Amico said.

The focus on underserved students began ahead of the Congress, when more than 100 community college leaders, researchers, and policymakers convened for the eighth annual pre-Congress Invitational Symposium on Student Success. Sponsored by ACCT in partnership with the Kresge Foundation, Lumina Foundation, Strada Education Network, and Great Lakes, the 2017 Symposium focused on economic inequality, as researchers presented papers focused on intergenerational mobility, economic stratification, and the challenges faced by minority males and rural students.

One oft-overlooked area of focus involved mental health issues, particularly among students of color. While studies have shown that nearly half of all community college students have faced mental health issues, “much of the [research] has not attended to the very specific needs of that population,” said Stephanie Bell-Rose, senior managing director and head of the TIAA Institute, who founded The Steve Fund to support the mental health and emotional well-being of students of color.

“We need community colleges to be much more aware and much more capable of attending to the needs of students’ mental and emotional health,” she added. “Important conversations should be taking place at your institutions about how far your college can go to support its neediest students.”

Another key area of focus was the growing attention being paid to apprenticeship programs. Apprenticeships are of particular importance to the 63.8 million Americans who have never had any postsecondary education, including displaced workers and the formerly incarcerated, for whom they may represent a crucial first step towards postsecondary credentials. They also may become a key workforce priority of the Trump Administration, speakers said. “When [administration officials] say they are interested in apprenticeships, we have a responsibility to listen and help shape the conversation,” said Narcisa A. Polonio, former ACCT executive vice president for education, research, and board leadership services.

In the absence of federal initiatives, college promise programs also continue to proliferate. More than 200 promise programs now exist, said Martha Kanter, the former U.S. Department of Education undersecretary and executive director of the College Promise Campaign. As the college promise movement matures, the focus is shifting to sustainability through broad-based financial support,
according to Kanter. “You can’t do it alone,” she said. “We need the financial stability to be led by trustees in partnership with their presidents… using this entire network to reach those individuals with the means to invest. We don’t want to live in communities where doors are shut.”

With Lumina Foundation and ACCT announcing a partnership to explore the role trustees play in ensuring and supporting quality at their institutions during the 2017 Congress, accreditation was another major area of focus.

In order to meet postsecondary attainment goals, it is vital that community colleges and their accreditors focus on ensuring both quality and equity by providing students from all backgrounds with credentials with equal value in present-day employment and future educational opportunities, Lumina Foundation Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer Danette Howard told attendees. “There’s no way we’re going to reach the goal [without] those who have been underrepresented in our completion cohorts… the students who have found hope and opportunity at your community colleges since their inception,” she said.

In wide-ranging conversations during keynote and breakout sessions, accreditation organization leaders stressed the vital role trustees play in accreditation, the importance of accreditation in creating cultures of continuous improvement on community college campuses, the ways in which accreditors are responding to innovative models of learning, and the limitations of how policymakers view completion data. Mary Ellen Petrisko, president of the WASC Senior College and University Commission, urged community college leaders to have students share their experiences with policymakers.

“This is a human enterprise serving humans who… often have one choice, and they deserve the absolute best,” Petrisko said. “These institutions serve them really well. Getting that across by letting them tell their story is very impressive.”

Congress speakers also pointed to the roiling pace of disruption in the 21st century economy and the role community colleges play as “first responders” to changing industry needs.

“Community colleges [are] always at the inflection point when the economy changes,” said Michael J. Brown, president of Barrick USA, the world’s largest gold mining company. Brown stressed the importance of partnerships. “For many of you as trustees, that’s really the complicated part of the job,” he said. “Engaging the community, being the advocate, being the face for the business community and the partner for everyone the community college touches is such a critical role for the trustee.”

Partnerships also will be a key emphasis across ACCT in the coming year. Taking the gavel during the closing session, 2018 Chair Emily Yim told trustees that she would focus on highlighting student success and fostering strategic partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders.

With community colleges focused on equity, completion, and workforce issues, continuing to foster partnerships with K-12 systems, industry, state and local governments, and community organizations will be critical, added Yim, a trustee at Edmonds Community College in Washington (see profile, p. 20).

“We cannot meet these complex needs by ourselves, which is why there is such promise and power in partnerships,” Yim said. “We are stronger together.”
COLLEGE READINESS IN ACTION

NEW JERSEY’S COMMUNITY COLLEGES ARE HELPING STUDENTS ‘CATCH UP’ AND ‘SPEED UP.’
THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A MORE IMPORTANT TIME TO BE A community college trustee. But these are challenging times, too. The fiscal climate in most states is making it tough for trustees (and their presidents) to find the necessary funding to support important student success initiatives.

This is why the 21st-Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges, in its landmark report *Reclaiming the American Dream*, called for more collaboration between and among colleges in their efforts to better serve students.

New Jersey's community colleges, through a strong trustee-led state organization, have a compelling story to tell in this regard. We have figured out ways to work together that have increased student success in dramatic ways. In the middle of one of the toughest state budget climates in the entire country, we have been able to find and target new dollars to student success initiatives that are making a difference.

From the beginning, college readiness partnerships with local high schools have been a top priority of our statewide Center for Student Success, with two purposes in mind. The first is to provide extra help to high school students who need to “catch up” in order to become more fully ready for college. The second is to offer college courses (dual enrollment) to those high school students who are ready to “speed up” on their path to a college degree.

“Providing college readiness and dual enrollment programs to students while they are still in high school has served many purposes,” said New Jersey Council of County Colleges Chair Helen Albright. “One of the most important is saving students money on a college education by eliminating or significantly reducing the need for remediation and by giving students a head start on earning college credits.”

Over the past few years, we have been able to raise over $5 million in public and private funding to support these efforts. This includes a $1 million annual appropriation in the state budget, which was highlighted by the governor in his State of the State message, plus significant private funding from foundation partners.

“The ability of the NJ Council of County Colleges to work on behalf of all 19 community colleges to secure funding for college readiness programs demonstrates the good that can come from community colleges working collaboratively in the best interests of their students,” said Bakari G. Lee, Esq., immediate past chair of the ACCT and vice chair of Hudson County Community College. “I have seen this kind of collaboration here in New Jersey and throughout the country, and this is one example of how community colleges are incredibly responsive to local, statewide, and national needs.”

Are these new community college partnerships with their local high schools making a difference? In a word, yes.

• We increased the number of high school partners from 65 in the first year to 158.

• In the most recent cycle, more 1,000 high school students did “catch up” and were deemed fully college ready in English and/or math.

• Almost 20,000 New Jersey high school students earned college credits before graduating.

We are taking an especially innovative approach in the coming year, offering a combined “catch up and speed up” program called Accelerated Learning Programs (ALP) to high school students. ALP allows students who are not yet college ready to enroll in college-level courses, often with college ready peers, while receiving a high level of academic support. ALP has had tremendous success at the college level, but to our knowledge New Jersey is the first state to incorporate this promising approach into college readiness programs with high school students.

Because of these and other student success initiatives, New Jersey’s community colleges have already increased the number of annual graduates by 48 percent. In short, good things can and do happen when community colleges work together to increase student success — especially when trustees are active leaders in these statewide collaborations all along the way.

Dr. Lawrence Nespoli is the president of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, the state association for New Jersey’s 19 community colleges. Dr. Christine Harrington is the executive director of the New Jersey Center for Student Success, funded by the Kresge Foundation, the Prudential Foundation, and the PSEG Foundation. It is one of 14 state-based student success centers working with community colleges nationally to improve student success.
PROMISES AND PITFALLS

OREGON’S LEGISLATION TO MAKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE FREE HAS HAD A MIXED IMPACT.

BY ANDREA HENDERSON
IN CRAFTING THE OREGON PROMISE, SEVERAL KEY POLICY CONSIDERATIONS WERE IDENTIFIED AS CRITICAL BY THE STATE’S COMMUNITY COLLEGES. FIRST, THE PROGRAM HAD TO BENEFIT LOW-INCOME STUDENTS. SECOND, THE PROGRAM NEEDED TO SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS EFFORTS. FINALLY, THE PROGRAM NEEDED TO INCREASE PELL GRANT MONEY INTO THE STATE, AS WELL AS INCREASE THE ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS DIRECTLY OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL.

IN 2015, OREGON PASSED LEGISLATION CREATING THE SECOND statewide “Promise” program offering free tuition for community college students. Yet in Oregon, the tuition isn’t free. Nor are all students eligible.

Two years later, the impact of the Oregon Promise on students has been mixed. The program’s experiences to date offer suggestions for policy changes, both in Oregon and for other states considering implementing their own promise programs.

The Oregon Promise is a state grant available to high school students who have graduated within the last six months. It is also available to undocumented students and recent GED students. While the grant pays for up to the average tuition cost at the community colleges, for many students, the grant doesn’t cover the full cost of tuition. To qualify for the grant, students must have a GPA of 2.5 or better graduating from high school. To continue to receive the grant, students must maintain a 2.00 GPA and complete a first-year experience course.

In crafting the Oregon Promise, several key policy considerations were identified as critical by the state’s community colleges. First, the program had to benefit low-income students. Second, the program needed to support student success efforts. Finally, the program needed to increase Pell Grant money into the state, as well as increase the enrollment of students directly out of high school.

The structure of the program accomplished the first goal. While technically a last-dollar program that aided middle income students who were not Pell eligible, the legislation ensured that all students applying for the grant receive a minimum award of $1,000. Students whose expected family contribution on the FAFSA was zero thus benefited from the Oregon Promise.

The program also addressed student success efforts in several ways. The legislature provided funding for new advisors and startup costs for a first-year experience course. Each recipient’s continued eligibility for the Oregon Promise is also predicated upon their completion of that first-year experience course. The results have been impressive. Fall-to-winter term retention was 87 percent, while year-to-year retention of eligible students was 84 percent.

Finally, the Oregon Promise has increased the number of students who complete their FAFSA. In 2016, Oregon led the nation in increased FAFSA filings among high school seniors. The program also increased the enrollment of graduates directly from high school. After the start of the Oregon Promise, the percentage of recent high school graduates enrolling for the fall term increased from 20.3 to 23.3 percent.

While the Oregon Promise accomplishes many important policy goals, its success has been marred by a lack of sustainable funding. In the 2017 legislative session, the cost to continue the program was estimated at $48 million. However, only $40 million was appropriated, necessitating changes to eligibility. Faced with a difficult decision just two months before the start of the fall term, the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission instituted an income cap on recipients. Those students whose expected family income exceeded $18,000 lost the grant, an unfortunate decision which affected more than 2,000 students.

Another pitfall of the program is the requirement that high school students achieve a 2.5 GPA. Colleges in Oregon have identified this policy as a top priority for change, citing fears that the GPA limitation will have a disparate impact on some students. Future advocacy efforts will focus on making the grant available for all high school graduates.

Based on the experiences of the Oregon Promise to date, states seeking to implement a promise program should consider the following:

- Is the program designed to target low-income or middle-income students?
- How might the program be structured to ensure equity?
- What sources of dedicated funding might be available?
- How will the program increase retention and completion?
- What impact will the program have on enrollment?

Lessons learned from Oregon will hopefully guide other states to grapple with these important policy questions as we seek to increase the access and success of all community college students.

Andrea Henderson is the executive director of the Oregon Community College Association. She can be reached at andrea@occa17.com.
Driving Change Through the Audit Committee

TO IMPROVE FIDUCIARY OVERSIGHT, THE NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION STRENGTHENED RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTED THE DOTS.

IN 2015, THE NEW CHIEF INTERNAL AUDITOR (CIA) FOR THE Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), Joe Sunbury, met for the first time with the new Board of Regents Audit Committee Chair, Allison Stephens. At that time, the System Internal Audit Department and the Audit Committee had been operating the same way for decades. The audit work plan was driven primarily from historical data, and meetings elicited minimal engagement, which was not an effective use of audit resources or committee time. The two leaders committed to changing the way that the board handled its audit responsibilities.

Relationship Development
One of their primary focuses was to modernize the Audit Committee structure, starting with solidifying the relationship between the chair and the CIA. “We focused on building a positive and proactive relationship by aligning our goals, creating a strategy, and executing that strategy,” Sunbury said. Meeting early and often helped both Sunbury and Stephens come to reasonable expectations about what the committee wanted from Internal Audit, and what support Internal Audit needed from the committee. While formal discussions happened during every quarterly committee meeting, one-on-one discussions between meetings enhanced goal alignment.

Committee Agenda Structure
The committee agenda structure became an integral part of reaching those goals. For example, the committee decided to spend less time on standard assurance items and to hyper-focus on higher and emerging risk areas. To facilitate this, the chair and CIA transformed the structure of the committee agenda to expedite the discussion of traditional deliverables. Standard follow-ups were moved into a bundled consent item to be approved along with meeting minutes and other routine business.

Historically, Internal Audit had presented findings in a long, narrative format. Moving forward, Internal Audit now provides a summary table of key findings, so committee members could see the important issues right away and review details as needed. Standing items were added to create specific time to highlight the new risk assessment process and emerging risks.

Enterprise Risk Management
The next structural change was updating the committee name to Audit & Compliance. Typically, the Audit Committee is tied to Internal Audit; however, there may be other assurance functions that would be appropriate for the committee to oversee. It is becoming more commonplace for Internal Audit and areas like risk management or compliance to collaborate by sharing resources and expertise. The Board updated its bylaws to allow for this cross-functional collaboration.

Committee Engagement
When the annual audit plan was presented to the committee, Internal Audit provided a high-level overview of the risk assessment process, including the inputs and risk factors.
considered. This discussion was important to get committee member perspectives on risk considerations based on constituent feedback to ensure priority alignment with the committee. This holistic approach was used in finalizing the audit work plan.

Committee Communications
Continuous committee member engagement requires clear communication, drawing attention to the most critical factors for each item. The components of this targeted communication strategy include committee orientation, board development, data presentation, and an Internal Audit scorecard.

Committee Orientation
NSHE committee members may rotate on and off of the audit committee annually. Recognizing this continuous membership change, Internal Audit conducted an orientation for each new committee member, which also served as a refresher for the rest of the committee. Topics for these individual sessions included strategic direction, best practices, overall NSHE alignment, and questions and answers. Sessions were augmented by a formal orientation from the CIA during the committee meeting. Orientation included the committee’s bylaws, the state of the Internal Audit department, and the types of items within the committee’s purview. The process met with positive feedback from committee members, other board members, and institution representatives.

Board Development
Leading audit firms provide thought leadership that is insightful and serves as a resource for proactive risk management. The CIA builds on its initial orientation by distributing resources to committee members. Doing so provides ongoing board development and some assurance that the direction of the committee is aligned with the industry as a whole. Recently, the chair added a standing agenda item for board development featuring a thought leadership tool.

Data Presentation
Modernizing deliverables is key for committee members to make connections. For example, the Audit Committee was provided periodic updates on Internal Audit’s activities and exceptions. Instead of the standard report, the Audit Committee suggested more visually appealing summary tables so committee members could compare and contrast institutions, open exceptions, and other data quickly. The ancillary benefit of this approach was increased accountability. With the measures front and center, the committee could see which exceptions were open, and for how long, more efficiently and effectively. Ultimately, the number of open exceptions has decreased by 68 percent to date.

Internal Audit Scorecard
For the committee to perform its oversight duties, it needs to be able to measure the Internal Audit department’s performance to ensure proper direction. After discussion with the committee to identify key metrics, the team implemented a six-month internal audit scorecard, covering standard items like the percentage of audit plan completed, but also areas like audit cycle time, the number of project requests from management, and an aggregate status of the audit team’s certifications/degrees.

Connecting the Dots
Internal Audit is like the committee’s paintbrush. The committee is given information before its meeting, and Internal Audit must paint the picture of each individual audit and NSHE overall. The committee meetings are set-up to facilitate board oversight as follows:

- Since agenda overlap is common, follow-ups remind committee members of what happened previously and which processes have been improved.
- The committee sees what is currently on the radar of Internal Audit with deliverables and status reports.
- The committee has the opportunity to discuss emerging and future risks through a standing agenda item.
- Committee members continuously expand their knowledge of industry trends and best practices through intentional board development.

The CIA and chair have used these methods to connect the past, the present, and the future for Audit & Compliance Committee members, enabling informed decision-making in this critical area of fiduciary oversight.

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Joseph Sunbury is chief internal auditor of the Nevada System of Higher Education. Allison Stephens is a member of the Nevada System of Higher Education Board of Regents, serving as chair of the Audit and Compliance Committee and vice chair of the Business, Finance and Facilities Committee.
Shifting the Focus
ACCT CHAIR EMILY YIM STANDS BESIDE THE STUDENTS AT EDMONDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE – AND THEIR MILLIONS OF PEERS ATTENDING COMMUNITY COLLEGES ACROSS THE NATION.

BY MARK TONER

EMILY YIM IS QUICK TO POINT OUT that she’s never been a “one-person shop.” “Who I am and how I’ve grown has always been through the influence of others,” she says.

When Yim was recently photographed on the campus of Edmonds Community College in Washington, where she has served as a trustee since 2007, she asked a group of students to step into the picture. It’s her way of shifting the focus toward her students, as well as their millions of peers nationwide hoping for better lives.
Community colleges provide “a real opportunity to give everybody a chance to develop and grow,” Yim says. “We don’t want some of the students to be successful, we want all of them to be successful.”

Last fall, Yim became the first Asian American to serve as ACCT Chair. As befits her focus on students, she has emphasized finding new opportunities for the Association and its member colleges to offer a wider range of supports to meet their growing needs. “If we look at the power of our collective body, there are many things we can do together to create that success for our students,” she says.

But one thing that will not work, Yim says, is going it alone. That’s why partnerships are the cornerstone of her mission as ACCT chair, a charge which she urges other trustees to take on at their own campuses. “Whether in K-12 or higher education, there’s a tendency to work within the footprint of your geographic area or your own sector,” she says. “To meet the needs and opportunities that exist in the job market, now and into the future, we can’t continue to work in silos. We really need to be able to leverage the resources of our entire community. When it comes to higher ed and ACCT, I feel strongly there’s a phenomenal opportunity around partnership.”

As a first-generation immigrant who came to the United States with her parents from Korea at the age of 4, education has deep roots within Yim’s family. Her grandfather was a principal who was rounded up with his teachers during the Korean War. After coming to the United States, her parents sacrificed to ensure that she would be the first in her family to attend college. “The importance of education runs deep in my family history,” she says. “My grandfather gave his life for what he did, and some of the greatest lessons I learned were from my parents. Their example of humility, grit, and resilience helped shape me.”

While working her way through the University of Washington as an insurance agent, Yim wasn’t focused on education as a career. It was through her desire to help others that education ultimately found her.

First, she became a loaned executive to the United Way of King County, where she helped lead fundraising efforts that brought in $100 million and expanded partnerships with other companies. That led to work with software giant Microsoft’s community affairs department, where just down the hall from Bill Gates’ office, she helped raise another $25 million across the company’s global operations.

After becoming a parent, Yim noticed hate-filled graffiti in her neighborhood in the city of Lynnwood. Getting involved in addressing the graffiti ultimately led her to become the founding director of the city’s neighborhood and community affairs department. There, she worked closely with local schools, community groups, and companies to create citywide diversity events, including Lynnwood’s first Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration. The city also opened its first emergency cold weather shelter and created a community grant program under her leadership.

Yim’s work with the city included partnerships with area K-12 school districts, which ultimately led to her current role as executive director of the Washington Alliance for Better Schools, a collaboration of districts serving 250,000 public school students. “The Alliance wanted someone to help connect the dots around workforce, nonprofits, local government, and regional industry in order to have a greater impact on serving our kids,” Yim says.

One of her goals was to help districts emphasize initiatives focused on science, technology, math, and engineering (STEM), a critical need given the 740,000 jobs in related fields opening up across Washington state in the coming years. Yim co-designed and founded the Snohomish County STEM Network, which builds partnerships between K-12 districts, and employers, higher ed, government, and nonprofit leaders to support STEM pathways.

A key element of these partnerships involves placing teachers in summer assignments or co-developing curriculum with the state’s high-tech employers, including Amazon, Blue Origin, Boeing, and Microsoft. “These teachers take those unique experiences back to the classroom, while working with higher ed and content experts. We want their students to learn real-world challenges and relevant connections focused on 21st century skills,” she says. “We’re pulling in the resources, talent, and intellectual capital of these groups to help K-12 systems and their students.”

Together, these experiences have shown Yim “the importance of seeing multiple views and the impact of collaboration that’s really critical to move anything forward faster,” she says.

It was when she was working for the city of Lynnwood that Yim first became involved with Edmonds Community College. “It resonated so much with who I am and what I work for,” she says. “That’s when I fell in love with our community college system.”

Yim was appointed by the governor to Edmonds’ Board of Trustees in 2007. During her time as a trustee, Yim took part in hiring Edmonds’ first female and first woman of color president and raising more than $1 million for its veterans center. Edmonds also obtained National Science Foundation funding for the college’s Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center (WATRC), which provides short-term certificate programs and training in such fields as mechanical and electrical assembly, composites, quality assurance, and tooling.

Within the board, Yim says, Edmonds has become one of only two community colleges in Washington that includes student trustees. “We’ve really embraced the concept as a board,” she says.
When Yim began attending ACCT events, her perspective expanded. “Through your local board, you see the local impact your college has within your footprint, and you see what happens at the state level,” she says. “But to see the national impact community colleges have on students through my role at ACCT is pretty phenomenal.”

Yim has served as chair of ACCT’s Public Policy and Advocacy Committee and the affiliated Asian, Pacific Islander and Native American Trustees Association. She also became the first Asian American to serve on ACCT’s executive committee.

“ACCT is the right body to learn about and share best practices across the country,” she says. “It’s about the passion we share for students, the dedication to student success, the legislative impact we can make, as well as the friendship and respect among peers.”

Taking the gavel as the new ACCT Chair at the 2017 Leadership Congress in Las Vegas, Yim quickly turned to the complex needs of today’s community college students and the power of partnerships in addressing them.

Many community college students face a growing range of nonacademic challenges, she told Congress attendees. “We cannot meet these complex needs by ourselves, which is why there is such promise and power in partnerships,” she said. “We are stronger together.”

Yim says a key area of focus will be working with nonprofits at all levels. “If you’re taking a holistic approach to student success, access and enrollment cannot be the sole focus. You have to look at the bigger picture,” she says. “Issues of mental health, homelessness, food insecurity, among others — all of these challenges are the realities of many of our students that we have to acknowledge and help address.”

Along with work at the national level, Yim says individual boards and colleges “need to develop partnerships for services that address the broad needs of our students.”

Another key area of focus that she knows well through her leadership of the Washington Alliance for Better Schools is the K-12 pipeline. Colleges must work with their secondary partners to help accelerate student progress to ensure they don’t become mired in noncredit, remedial coursework, Yim says. “This has an enormous impact on a student’s frame of mind and his or her sense of self,” she says. “And the incredibly low completion rate for these students is absolutely staggering. We have to do better.”

Yim’s third area of focus, workforce development and partnerships with the business community, were brought into sharper focus by a visit to community colleges in the United Kingdom in December, she says. In particular, the strong systemwide apprenticeship programs she saw reinforced the importance of closer working relationships with industry. “That hand-in-glove approach with industry is where we need to go if we’re going to have our students successfully compete for those same global jobs,” she says.

Yim stresses the importance of developing stronger connections with government, corporate partners, workforce development boards, and industry. “We need to find ways to strengthen those relationships,” she says. “There are many colleges that are great at that, but I think we all could do more.”

Having helped develop the Association’s new mission, values, and strategic plan as a member of the ACCT Board of Directors, Yim will help oversee their implementation as Chair. “I will work closely with the ACCT team on the work plan so it’s not just a strategic plan sitting on the shelf,” she says.

Above all, Yim will work to ensure that the focus remains on students, with a strong emphasis on equity and success. Recently asked to speak at the state community college system in Louisiana, Yim made a point to refer to the students there as “our students.”

“They’re not one college’s students, they are ours as a whole,” she says. “We’ve got to think that way to support all of our students across the nation.”
IT’S BECOMING INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT FOR COLLEGES TO COUNT ON FUNDING FROM PUBLIC sources. Last fall, a panel of presenters at the ACCT Leadership Congress discussed new approaches to fundraising that community colleges can adopt. Among the presenters was Timothy Nelson, chief advisor and founder of Nelson Fundraising Advisors, a former senior executive at Fortune 500 companies including IBM and General Electric who now has set his eye on helping community colleges sustain themselves through previously untapped markets. Trustee Quarterly spoke with Nelson about how individual donors can serve as an invaluable source of sustainable income for community colleges.
Why is it that universities are successful in raising funds from individuals, while community colleges so rarely do it?

Universities are very aware of the statistics on giving. People in this country are philanthropic by nature. They like to give. On average, American people give about 4 percent of their earnings, regardless of their socioeconomic status. Last year that was almost $400 billion, with about $60 billion in giving to education. And about 88 percent of philanthropy in the country comes from individuals when you include family foundations and bequests.

The biggest pool of donors is individuals, and four-year colleges embrace this opportunity… I hate to say it, but the reason universities track alumni isn’t just because they love for you to wear team colors and come to the game. They need your support. Successful four-year colleges excel at understanding what prompts alumni to donate to their colleges. Colleges want alumni who have an affinity to and love for their alma mater. This is foreign to community college leadership.

Community colleges still look to corporations, which last year gave less than 5 percent to all charities. It’s time to rethink the model.

Do you think that many community college leaders aren’t aware of these statistics, or is there another reason community colleges often don’t solicit donations from alumni and other individuals in their communities?

Community colleges historically didn’t have to worry about fundraising because state and local governments took care of them, whether through the tax base or other support. It wasn’t uncommon for community colleges to get 70 to 80 percent of operating capital from the local tax base and government, so the need to raise money simply wasn’t there. It wasn’t until the money from taxes and government support started going away that some two-year colleges started to pay attention. They started foundations. However, even today, these foundations that were initially started to provide scholarships still are not addressing the issue of operations at all because, again, operations were covered. Presidents didn’t have to worry about that. It was a paradigm whose time has passed.

Why do you think community colleges don’t seek donations from alumni?

An ongoing argument at community colleges is who are the alumni? Part of the reason why graduation rates are so low at community colleges is because students transfer to a four-year university and never bother to graduate and earn that degree at the community college. It’s an unfair assessment of success for two-year institutions.

So it’s a fair question: What is a community college alum?

I’ve sat in on many debates among two-year college staff. I’ve heard people say, “Well, it’s somebody who’s completed 15 hours.” Or it’s somebody who is a degree holder. Or it’s somebody with a successful outcome — who transferred credits or earned a certificate. So you have to make a decision. There’s no one-shoe-fits-all scenario with this. It’s a proactive decision — make a decision about who alumni are and then reach out.

Once you decide, you have two approaches to collecting demographic or contact information on your alumni. The first approach is to go “all-in.” The cost to identify and to keep up with alumni can be very expensive — and surprisingly effective in terms of the results.

I’ll give you an example: I decided to try to track as many student records as possible. We had three sources. One was microfiche. One was a spreadsheet of students who had taken a class — even a class in photography. And the third was the current student database. When I added these all together, there were over 756,000 students. How could there be so many students when the whole community was about a million people? So then you have to peel back the layers — look for duplicates, etc. By the time we peeled it back, we had less than 100,000 records of legitimate people. This is where the fun begins — then you do searches through national databases, which is also costly, then outreach (visits, mailers, etc.) We saved a good deal of money “cleaning” the data. Imagine the costs of outreach to 700,000-plus instead of 100,000.

Another approach is to be selective and add only those records you know are more likely to have accurate demographic data. I do feel this second approach is a stopgap measure until you raise funds to cover the full costs of complete records.

Regardless of the approach, you must stay on top of it, and you must be proactive with the database. When we launched an alumni association, we provided benefits to participating alumni at a minimum cost to the school. And that allowed us to be able to get people to register and gave them a reason to stay active. Building your database is doable and worth it.
Are there any data about returns on investment for individual fundraising?
Alumni giving is all over the board, even for the most prestigious institutions. For example, U.S. News & World Report reports that 63 percent of Princeton alumni in 2015 were donors, while only low single digits of alums donated at many other schools.

You’d often be surprised at how difficult it is to target what that is. I can tell you, however, that alumni giving is a critical component to four-year institutions, which is why they do it.

There’s probably a significant up-front investment, but how important are infrastructure and staff to a quality development operation?
From a development perspective, I would probably do what I need to do — take whatever measures — to close individual gifts as soon as possible. Whatever return I get, I would then invest that into building more data, building quality operations, and seeing more prospects face-to-face. So if your community college reaches out to you, and you say yeah, I can give a thousand dollars... if a hundred people say that, then you’ve got a hundred thousand dollars. As tempting as it is to give students scholarships with that money, take that $100,000 and plow at least some of it back into the operation to keep building it. It may take time, it may also happen quickly, but in time, those donations will multiply — giving you more money to support and serve students.

What are the qualities of the type of person who would make fundraising a successful effort?
This can be very interesting at community colleges. Because the focus has never been on major gift development, you could potentially have people who are really good at grant writing now being asked to do a job they are simply not comfortable or qualified to do. My good friend Dr. Bill Crowe said to me once, “you may think a retired local coach, or someone who was a fantastic insurance agent, or just your local good person should be your development person, but that doesn’t mean that they necessarily understand fundraising.”

I feel that there are the three elements to being a quality fundraiser at a community college. First, a college is a business. Think about it. You have a product, education, and you have revenue and a cost side. Development leaders need to be part of the president’s leadership team, and they need to work hand in hand with college leadership to understand the entire business of the college. Also, it would be great if you were entrepreneurial and you knew what needs to be built to run an effective operation and what can wait. For example, I guarantee that 90 percent of people who come in would say you need a customer relationship management (CRM) system — maybe so, but maybe not in the beginning. An entrepreneur may come in and say, yeah, you do need that, but not necessarily yet. And lastly, you need to understand true relationships. Too many people leave money on the table because they think there’s a process you’ve got to go through. A relationship is about listening and about empathy. It’s about communicating the passion of the college and those you serve. You are the conduit between the college and the donor prospect. It has to develop. And so yes, a history of effective grant writing is great when you need to apply to a request for proposals and secure a grant. But effective fundraising, and particularly individual fundraising, is really about understanding the college as a business, having an entrepreneurial perspective, and about understanding, relating to, and engaging with people. Some fundraising efforts fail to take off because people don’t understand the difference between securing grants and this type of effort.

Are there any potential liabilities a board or executive team should be concerned with related to individual fundraising?
The first liability may be that you poke a stick at it rather engage in it fully. I believe a college should go all in, then smile as success happens. Number two, you may have the wrong people in place to lead it. Too many people hire the wrong people to raise money. If you’re going to raise money, then do it right.

How would establishing an individual outreach fundraising program at an institution benefit students?
It will radically change the way that you are doing business. As I said earlier, college is nothing more than a business. At successful four-year institutions, a nice percentage of revenue comes from philanthropic giving. When you look at two-year institutions, on a per-student basis, it’s abysmal. In order to do better to provide the things you need, whether it’s reasonable increases in salary, better student services or scholarships, programmatic changes and additions, you’re going to need to ask folks to step up philanthropically. If you make any effort toward a four-year model of seeking individual donations, you will see an increase in revenue. Period. It just will happen. It cannot not happen. And remember, a big reason two-year colleges do not get money is because they never ask.

If you don’t take action, nothing’s going to change in your situation — constant worries of penny taxes, property values, enrollment woes, asking your people to do more with less, worrying about whether you can do the maintenance on the ground. Or can you even afford to keep the doors open? You name the issue, one thing is for sure: nothing is going to change if you do nothing to change it.

J. Noah Brown is president and CEO of the Association of Community College Trustees. Tim Nelson is chief fundraising advisor at Nelson Fundraising Advisors in Lexington, South Carolina. He can be reached at tim@fundraisingdev.com.
A FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT COURSE HELPS COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS PERSIST.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS, ON AVERAGE, BORROW less money and less frequently than their peers at four-year institutions, but they default at a higher rate. Often older and working students, they face different challenges than four-year college students, taking more time to complete their education due to family and financial obligations.

Many of these students stop or drop out because they owe their colleges small amounts of money that they cannot repay to remain enrolled. This is costly for the student and the institution. Students who have a loan default and go to collections suffer from damaged credit scores and a limited ability to get financing for other life needs. Even more troubling is that failing to complete their degrees can cost them significantly in future earnings.

In 2013, Guardian Life Insurance launched its Money Management for Life (MMFL) program, designed to address the financial acumen and capability of students in need. The program started as a personal financial management course offered in three colleges with a pledge to serve 3,000 students by the end of 2017. It has since expanded to 14 colleges across the country.

The program quickly grew from an exercise in knowledge transfer to an effort to support students in persisting in their education and attaining their degrees without the barriers of avoidable financial pressure. Its success is predicated on not just providing students with financial knowledge, but also support, coaching, and opportunities to share what they have learned.

The partner colleges took the plan further and built significant programs beyond the classroom. Capital Community College of Connecticut, for example, created the FIRST Center, which offers financial management information and services to all students enrolled at the college. Graduates of the MMFL course are enlisted to help guide and coach others to manage their finances, understand their rights and responsibilities as consumers, and build plans for life success.

Northampton Community College in Pennsylvania, Berkshire Community College, and Springfield Technical and Community College in Massachusetts discovered that many students were unable to continue enrollment because of debts of less than $500. These small debts were forgiven for all students that satisfactorily completed a personal financial management course and built a personal financial plan to address their educational and career goals.

Financial capability is more than financial literacy or education. It comprises the entire ecosystem of the student experience and the college’s support systems. The programs that are successful draw on resources across the campus, from faculty and administrators to financial aid offices and student associations.

It is not a natural act for students to seek financial learning opportunities unless they face a challenge or crisis. By incorporating this work across the campus experience for students, they are allowed to enter into this journey without stigma. It is a win-win for the students and the colleges.

To learn more about Guardian’s Money Management for Life Program, please visit our website at www.guardianlife.com/about-guardian/corporate-social-responsibility.

Michael Carren is Head of Strategic Philanthropy at Guardian Life Insurance Company of America. He can be reached at michael_carren@glic.com.
The Illinois Community College Board is developing a draft adult education strategic plan. A state senate resolution created a task force on adult education and literacy charged with developing a five-year strategic plan focused on adult education programs.

Lansing Community College in Michigan opened an 11,000 square-foot laboratory and classroom space made possible, in part, by a $5 million grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. The space will be used to help the school train students for careers in manufacturing.

Kentucky’s public and independent colleges and universities conferred a record 70,146 degrees and credentials during the 2016-17 year, up 6.6 percent from the previous year and a 34.8 percent gain from 10 years ago. A report shows one-year increases for career-oriented certificates and degrees at the associate, bachelor, master and doctoral levels.

Ivy Technical College in Indiana experienced a 36.9 to 49.6 percent increase in fall-to-fall retention rates attributed to the expansion of the school’s coaching program. Students in the 21st Century Scholars Program are assigned coaches who help them navigate both college and personal struggles.

Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb created a new state agency, The Office of Apprenticeship, to help fill jobs across the state by showing high school students that opportunities exist for advancing their education outside of four-year institutions.

Eastern Iowa College was awarded a $187,226 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor Mine Safety and Health Administration. The purpose of the grants is to reduce mining accidents, injuries, and illnesses by supporting health and safety courses and other programs.

A Boston, Massachusetts, program, Boston Uncornered, is working to help former gang members attend college. The program offers members, whom they call “core influencers,” social, emotional, and education support to give them the best chance of success outside the criminal justice system, as well as financial and academic support for those who decide to enroll in community college.

Bowie State University in Maryland has become the first institution to offer business administration programs at the Laurel College Center, following a signed partnership agreement with the higher education center and Howard and Prince George’s community colleges. Beginning next fall, students attending either community college can take courses at the Laurel College Center as part of Bowie State’s bachelor’s degree in business administration.

California Gov. Jerry Brown charged California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley with developing a plan for an online-only community college to serve the 2.5 million state residents who have some college but are unable to obtain certificates or degrees because of work or family obligations.

“[We] seek to reach cannot stop working to get the education they need to get ahead, and many of them juggle multiple jobs to feed their families,” Oakley said in a press release. “As much as we would like to, we cannot will them onto our campuses. We need to rethink traditional delivery models and pedagogies and meet this population where and when they are ready to gain skills and credentials.”

Highline College in Washington started the Puente Program, an initiative focused on increasing completion among Hispanic and Latino students. Students are grouped in cohorts of 25 and learn together in pursuit of transferring to a four-year institution.
The California Community College Chancellor’s Office declared October 16-20 the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Advocacy Week, in support of the over 200,000 young Californians impacted by the program. In conjunction, the San Diego Community College District and San Diego Continuing Education hosted a week of free workshops and information sessions, which were open to the public.

**The Tennessee Board of Regents on Thursday approved a new policy that will allow graduates of technical college programs to go back to school if they fail state or national licensing exams within one year of graduating. The “warranty” policy, unanimously approved by the board, also guarantees that if employers feel recent graduates’ skills are not up to par, they can go back to the school and get retrained for free.**

**South Carolina** is seeing success attracting manufacturing with the readySC program. A division of the South Carolina Technical College System, the program seeks to supply companies with skilled workers at little to no cost for the future employee. BMW, Boeing, and Michelin all have factories in the state.

**Mississippi** Gulf Coast Community College established the Wrap-Around Support fund to cover small expenses for students in need. The college hopes that initial contributions to the fund will serve as seed money for the community as a whole to begin chipping in to help vulnerable students.

**Forsyth Technical Community College in North Carolina** received a gift of $2.8 million from Robert Strickland, the former chair of Lowe’s, and his wife to endow a newly created director position at the college’s career center.

**Rowan-Cabarrus Community College in North Carolina** received a donation of nearly $2.7 million from local philanthropists Fred and Alice Stanback. The funding will be used to complete solar energy projects on campus and train students in the process.

**Florida** State Rep. Shevrin Jones is pushing to establish a new taxpayer-funded grant that would help low-income Floridians earn certificates and associate’s degrees. The so-called “Sunshine Scholarship” would pay students’ remaining tuition balance at trade schools and community colleges after they utilize other federal and state financial aid.

**El Paso Community College in Texas** was awarded a $327,501 grant by the National Institutes of Health for the project Rise to the Challenge Bridge. A collaborative effort by EPCC, the University of Texas at El Paso and New Mexico State University, the project is intended to increase transfer and retention for students seeking to graduate with a bachelor’s degree in biomedical sciences.

**Warren Village**, a neighborhood in **Colorado**, has a College to Career program providing pathways for single-parent, low-income families. Supported by a $200,000 Neighborhood Builders award from the Bank of America, the program serves residents of the community.

**Johnson County Community College in Kansas** received a $10 million gift from the Sunderland Foundation. The school plans to use the funds to help cover renovations of the school’s Career and Technical Education Center.

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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.
IN MECHATRONICS WE TRUST

MHCC FOUNDATION TRUSTEES EARMARK FUNDS FROM AN INNOVATIVE CHARITABLE FUND FOR NEXT-GENERATION MANUFACTURING TRAINING.

BY NICHOLAS GOSLING
IN MT. HOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE’S (MHCC) NEWLY SET up mechatronics lab, students work in pairs on six-foot-tall, pale-blue Amatrol trainers to create and test electrical circuits. They’re learning and applying basic electrical concepts and developing the skills necessary to work in the growing field of automated manufacturing.

These 16 students represent the first cohort of a new program at MHCC designed to prepare workers to procure, install, operate, and troubleshoot 21st century automated technologies, like the robotic machinery used to build a car, create a silicon microchip, and process and package food and other consumer goods. Upon completing the two-year program and earning an associate of applied science in mechatronics, graduates will work as automation technicians, machinery maintenance workers, and similar roles at major employers throughout the Portland region, among them ON Semiconductor, Boeing, and Teeny Foods.

“For years, we’ve been hearing from area employers that they’ve been having problems finding maintenance workers with the systems understanding to properly repair and maintain their manufacturing equipment,” explained Jarrod Hogue, executive dean of workforce, CTE, and partnerships at MHCC. “In 2015, we invited a lot of these manufacturing partners to an employer breakfast at the college, where they restated the same concerns: Many of their manufacturing workers were retiring, leaving lots of open positions, and their industrial technology was changing, becoming more automated and demanding new worker skill sets.”

“A lot of these employers said there and then they’d support MHCC if we moved forward with a training program to supply automation technicians,” Hogue added. “So we knew there was an obvious interest in this type of advanced manufacturing training.”

Over the course of their educations, mechatronics students at MHCC will train on electrical, mechanical, pneumatic, hydraulic, and robotic trainers, giving them a feel for working on industry-standard equipment. The purchase of many of these trainers was made possible through a $300,000 gift made in March 2017 by the MHCC Foundation Board. The donation represents the foundation’s largest individual gift to an academic program. Another $40,000 Foundation Board gift was set aside to fund scholarships for mechatronics students. The foundation’s $340,000 investment was made possible through a charitable remainder unitrust, or CRUT, established in 1989.

Investing in Education

MHCC’s CRUT has its roots in the sale of timber. In 1989, Marvin and Jean Allen of Oregon City, Oregon, sought to invest $500,000 made from the sale of timber on their property. Their financial advisor referred them to MHCC’s Foundation, with which they established a CRUT, a type of trust that distributes (usually annually) a percentage of its assets to a non-charitable beneficiary over the course of a specified time period. Upon expiration of that timeframe (often ending with the death of the beneficiary), any remaining balance reverts to the nonprofit through which the CRUT is established. Donors can establish CRUTs with a variety of assets, including cash, stocks, or real estate.

“It’s typically a win-win situation for donors,” noted Al Sigala, executive director of development and district communications at MHCC. “Not only do trust beneficiaries receive a guaranteed return, they also enjoy the tax savings. And it’s a great way for donors to make a difference in the lives of our students by providing funding in the support of higher education.” Some of the key advantages of CRUTs to beneficiaries include:

• No capital gains tax paid upon its sale.
• Receive a charitable income tax deduction off a percentage of the contributed asset.
• Convert the appreciated asset into a lifetime source of income.
• Remove the asset from taxable estate upon death.
• Make a sizeable gift to a preferred charity.
  Jean Allen passed away in 2016, upon which MHCC’s foundation received the $360,000 remaining in the trust. Sigala estimates that over their lifetimes, the Allens received close to $1 million in income through the CRUT.

The Role of Trustees
Throughout 2016, Hogue led a team at MHCC focused on finding funding for the new mechatronics program. The team worked with Ellucian Grant Services to secure a $453,000 grant from the Oregon Talent Council (OTC), making MHCC the first community college to receive an OTC grant. MHCC also received a $405,000 federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education grant. Other organizations contributed to MHCC’s Advanced Manufacturing Certification Center (the certification training arm of the mechatronics program). The City of Gresham donated $75,000, funds gained through the city’s economic-zone tax abatements.

“We had enough money to get the program started,” said Hogue. “But we still needed some additional capital for equipment to really make this a top program.”

In stepped the MHCC Foundation. Board members were interested in not just adding the funds from the Allen trust to the foundation’s normal pool of accounts, but rather investing it in a lump sum into something tangible, significant, and cutting edge, explained Stan Hymel, foundation treasurer and chair of the MHCC Foundation Finance Committee.

“Mechatronics was just coming online, and they needed some resources to get them up and running this calendar year,” Hymel added. “So here was this great opportunity where we were looking to invest a large sum of money to kick start a program. Mechatronics is cutting edge, so it just fit really well.”

By splitting the trust funds — $300,000 towards program equipment, $40,000 to student scholarships — the MHCC Foundation achieved all its intended goals of providing student scholarships, classroom equipment, and program funding.

“Our foundation’s goal is to really look to the future of the college and how we can help our school, and this region, to innovate and contribute to student success,” said Angela Mckenzie-Tucker, MHCC Foundation Board member. “We saw this program as having a lasting impact, not just on the school but on the community too, and for its potential of setting MHCC apart from other higher education institutions around the state.”

Mechatronics 101
John Dryden serves as program director and instructor of the mechatronics program at MHCC. He points out that the foundation donation has allowed the program to provide better training to students by purchasing more training equipment.

“The Foundation donation has really allowed us to provide our students with better educations,” said Dryden. “Through the donation, we could provide students with more direct hands-on experience working on standard industry equipment. Plus, through the mechatronics-specific scholarship, more students overall can access this program. We’re incredibly grateful for this gift, and we know our students are too.”

Back in the Mechatronics 131 class, Blake Stinson and Adara Elliott are creating a control circuit on one of the Amatrol trainers. Both employed at Microchip Technology, Stinson and Elliott heard about the Mechatronics program through their employer. They view this program as an opportunity to move from entry- and mid-entry-level roles at Microchip to better paying, in-demand jobs as maintenance technicians.

“We spent our first week touring partner facilities and job sites and learning about some of the opportunities for graduates,” said Stinson. “In every single place we visited, they said, ‘If you get your degree, we’ll hire you.’ So, they’re ready for us — they need people.”

Nicholas Gosling is the Marketing and Communications Coordinator for Community Development at Mt. Hood Community College. He can be reached at Nicholas.Gosling@mhcc.edu.
ACCT provides opportunities to strengthen the Board-CEO partnerships and to develop an effective board.

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THE FOLLOWING ARE RECENT LEGAL issues and court actions of interest to community colleges and their leaders.

U.S. Court of Appeals to reconsider role of salary history in setting employee pay as some local jurisdictions ban the practice. While it is common to base an employee’s starting salary, in part, on his or her salary history, this practice is coming under close scrutiny following accusations that it perpetuates salary discrimination based on sex.

The Ninth Circuit Federal Court of Appeals, covering the states of California, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Arizona, Idaho, and Montana, will be taking another look at whether a school district’s decision to base starting salary on a worker’s past salary history is a “factor other than sex” and a violation of the Equal Pay Act, which prohibits paying men and women different salaries for the same work (Rizo v. Yovino, 2017 BL 303715, 9th Cir., No. 16-15372 en banc review granted, 8/29/17). The decision vacates the appeals court’s prior decision to send the case back to the trial court.

In reconsidering the decision, the court could possibly determine that basing an applicant’s salary on his or her past salary is by itself perpetuation of sex discrimination because women are traditionally paid less than men for the same work. The entire 9th Circuit will reconsider this issue en banc (the entire Court) rather than the traditional three-Judge Court of Appeals panel.

Several state and local governments have recently passed laws barring salary history inquiries as part of the employment process. Oregon, California, New York City, and Philadelphia are among the jurisdictions which have enacted local ordinances barring salary history inquiries.

Adverse reaction to employee’s accent may be grounds for illegal national origin discrimination and retaliatory discharge litigation. A heavily accented employee who had received positive employee evaluations but was allegedly mistreated by a supervisor who did not like or understand her accent recently filed national origin discrimination litigation in federal court under Title VII. In Kaur v. Ford Motor Co. (E.D. Mich., No. 17-13234, 10/3/17), the employee alleges retaliatory discharge, stating she was fired after raising a national origin discrimination complaint internally.

Born in India, the plaintiff worked for Ford in accounting positions for more than 10 years and had received positive employee evaluations throughout her tenure. She alleged that her supervisor would “bark” at her in a “loud and condescending manner,” suggesting that she did not understand English. She transferred jobs and continued to receive positive employee evaluations, but the same supervisor eventually followed her and repeated the conduct. The supervisor allegedly discharged the employee after

Legal Issues Impacting Community Colleges
Recent developments include salary histories, biometrics, and the role of pregnancy and anxiety in disability law.

By Ira Michael Shepard, ACCT General Counsel

“In five years, I see myself with the same job title, about the same salary, and significantly more responsibilities .”
she complained of national origin bias. According to U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission statistics, almost 11 percent of all discrimination charges filed with the agency are based on national origin discrimination allegations.

**New Massachusetts state law expands pregnancy disability coverage beyond federal Title VII and ADA protections by defining all pregnancies as grounds for reasonable accommodation.** Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker recently signed into law a statute designed to provide pregnant workers in Massachusetts with protections beyond those found in Federal Title VII law or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). While the ADA does not classify all pregnancies as a disability — just those with a “pregnancy-related disability” — the new Massachusetts state law expands that coverage by requiring employers to provide reasonable accommodations to all pregnancies when requested.

Employers in Massachusetts will need to review applicable policies to make sure they are consistent with the new mandate in that state. Commentators suggest that the new law represents the beginning of a new wave of state activism, spurred by Congress’ apparent reluctance to expand worker protections.

**New Illinois law supporting biometric privacy spurs class action and individual litigation.** The Illinois Workplace Biometric Information Privacy Act (BIPA), which became effective September 1, 2017, has resulted in a series of class action and individual lawsuits in Cook County, Illinois. Most commonly targeted with litigation are employers who use fingerprint or handprint machines for time clock use and recording records for overtime purposes. The new law requires that workers be notified of and consent to the collection of biometric information, including fingerprints and handprints.

Two other states, Texas and Washington, have passed similar laws, but the Illinois statute goes further in terms of employee protections. It prohibits the collection of biometric information unless the employer informs the employee that the information is being collected, explains in writing the reasons for the collection and how long the information is being stored, receives written consent from the employee, and adopts written retention and destruction policies. Employers also are prohibited from selling, leasing, trading, or otherwise profiting from biometric data.

Illinois’ BIPA law allows individuals to file complaints on their behalf and on behalf of classes of other similarly situated persons, including coworkers. It also provides for the collection of plaintiffs’ attorney fees and fines of $1,000 per violation for negligent violations and $5,000 per intentional violation. By contrast, the biometric privacy laws in effect in Texas and Washington do not allow individual lawsuits or impose statutory fines.

**EEOC’s year-end surge in cases demonstrates a focus on disability and LGBT discrimination.** The EEOC closed out its fiscal year on September 30, 2017, with a flurry of new cases. The EEOC filed at least 88 cases in September, three times the number it filed during the same month the previous year. Disability cases appear to be the focus of many of the new lawsuits. The EEOC also appears to be emphasizing LGBT cases. In its most recent Strategic Enforcement Plan, the agency announced that LGBT discrimination would remain one of its priorities through 2021. While increased litigation appears to be in conflict with what one would expect from a Trump Administration EEOC, commentators have suggested that decisions in the field may not be immediately be affected by administrators in Washington. At the same time, commentators suggest that with new Trump Administration appointees in place, the numbers of newly filed cases this year may not be as high as in 2017.

**Plaintiff alleges that anxiety associated with panic attacks is a disability covered by the ADA.** A hotel worker sued her employer in federal court for violating the Americans with Disabilities Act after being discharged following a panic attack at work (Skinner-Jones v. Merriville Lodging Inc., N.D. of Ind., No. 2:17-cv-00340, 8/21/17). The plaintiff was fired two days after the incident, which led her to be taken to the hospital by ambulance after exhibiting slurred speech. The employee says she was told “she should step down and take care of her health” and that “she needed to quit because having a panic attack in front of guests could not be tolerated.”

The plaintiff alleges that because her employer fired her without attempting to determine whether an appropriate accommodation could be made, it further violated the ADA. The plaintiff also argues that if her condition is not a disability covered by the ADA, her employer fired her because it “perceived her to be disabled,” which is also a violation of the ADA.

Ira Michael Shepard is a partner with the law firm of Saul Ewing, LLP, in Washington, D.C., and ACCT’s general counsel.
HALIFAX COMMUNITY COLLEGE, A MEMBER OF THE NORTH Carolina Community College System, recently selected a new president/CEO after a careful and comprehensive search and onboarding process. “We realized that the selection of our new president/CEO would be critical to the future success of our institution,” said Michael Felt, chair of the Halifax Community College Board (HCC). “The outgoing president/CEO served with distinction, received outstanding performance reviews from the board, and was extremely involved and loved in the community. Our board needed to find the right president, and we needed to have an effective search and onboarding process to continue the good success at HCC.”

Choreographing and Orchestrating Presidential Change
The board chair’s role in choreographing and orchestrating a presidential change while ensuring complete transparency can be a daunting task. The outgoing president/CEO gave ample notice; however, the board of trustees still had a number of challenges to overcome and critical decisions to make in a short time. They included:

• Should the board hire a consultant?
• What will be the current president’s involvement (if any)?
• How do we involve stakeholders who supported the college?
• How do we select search committee appointees and determine media involvement?
• How do we have transparency while respecting the confidentiality of the applicants? (Transparency was a paramount concern — this bears restating.)

The board designated its chair to work directly with the presidential search committee and report to the board. The presidential search committee was diverse, including faculty, staff, students, business and industry, the economic development board chair, and many other community leaders. In short, the board determined that the new president/CEO — much like the outgoing president/CEO — would need to serve as a sort of president to the whole community.

Managing Expectations Among Stakeholders
The incumbent president/CEO and board chair both agreed that the outgoing president/CEO would have no role in the process other than preparing materials and documents for review by the new president/CEO. Moreover, the chair of the board made it clear that the board of trustees would determine the job description of the new president and make the final selection. The board also developed a website for posting updates on the search process and provided the opportunity for students, faculty and staff, community members, and media to have separate input toward the final decision. The board of trustees’ search firm narrowed the 38 completed applications down to 24 in order for the presidential search committee to begin its work.

The presidential search committee made specific recommendations to the board of trustees, including:

• The search committee should review the 24 remaining applicants and recommend 12 semifinalists.
• The search committee should review and submit comments based on the video presentations of the 12 semifinalists answering the same set of questions.
• After reviewing all the documents and video presentations, the search committee should recommend six finalists to the board of trustees for the board’s consideration.
• After completing background checks, the board would begin its interviews, deliberations, and selection of the new president/CEO.

The board of trustees set up “meet and greet” schedules for each of the six finalists and invited the entire community to
attend on- and off-campus presentations. The six finalists also had separate interviews with electronic and print media that provided additional opportunities for the community to give their impressions of the candidates. During this process, all comments were made available to the board of trustees for review. After all the input was reviewed, the board made the final selection and made an offer of employment. The board chair then negotiated a new contract with the assistance of legal counsel, which the board subsequently approved.

Ensuring a Smooth Transition

With the presidential search process completed, the onboarding process between the incumbent and incoming president/CEO began in earnest. The incumbent president established several protocols to ease the onboarding process, including:

- Providing the opportunity for the incoming president/CEO to speak at the outgoing president's retirement ceremony, allowing for broad exposure to faculty, staff, students, and the community at large.
- Inviting the incoming president to attend a board meeting to have the opportunity to see how the board of trustees handled their business and the role of the president in carrying out the same.
- One-on-one meetings with the incoming president to discuss specific files prepared by the incumbent president. The files consisted of various critical projects and cost centers with budget information for special initiatives.
- Working with the Spirit of the Roanoke Valley Magazine published by the local newspaper, which profiled both presidents in an article entitled “The Spirit of Leading the College.”
- Presenting the new president with an official HCC Jacket with the presidential seal.
- Both presidents shared the stage when HCC received the 2017 AACC Community College Safety, Planning, and Leadership Award of Excellence.
- The incumbent president presenting the incoming president his official academic regalia before leaving office.

Onboarding Complete

Michael Elam, the new president of HCC, recently noted that “as I climbed the career ladder, there was always a supervisor or some other accountable individual to assist with the onboarding and training process… Unfortunately, now at the pinnacle of my career, that same onboarding process is usually nonexistent. The president emeritus, board chair, and others have been valuable resources for me during this selection process. The onboarding process at HCC has been the most beneficial and the smoothest I have experienced. I am much better prepared to lead, collaborate, and address the challenges facing the college as a positive result of this process.”

Effective onboarding of new leaders involving key stakeholders can be one of the keys to a successful search and presidential tenure. The Roanoke Rapids Daily Herald noted in a recent editorial concerning the college’s 50th anniversary celebration…”This week, and every day to follow, is time to look forward to what the next 50 years hold for HCC. We see Elam and the college have done well to master those lessons… Now is the time to put the past in the rearview mirror and move full speed ahead to see what the future holds. And we believe Elam is the perfect person to be at the helm.”

Onboarding at HCC is now complete. The board of any college undergoing a presidential transition should make the time and effort to support the incoming president throughout the onboarding process. Conscientious onboarding orients the new president to the college’s and community’s needs, giving him or her the best possible chance of “moving full speed” toward the future.

Dr. Ervin V. Griffin, Sr., is president emeritus of Halifax Community College in Weldon, North Carolina.
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STRATEGIC SUPPORT | INTEGRITY | LEADERSHIP SOLUTIONS
The Board Leadership Services staff and consultants of the Association of Community College Trustees are pleased to have assisted in the search for the following community college executive officers.

**Riverside Community College District, Calif.**

**Wolde-Ab Isaac, Ph.D.**

*Chancellor*

*Former President, Riverside City College, Riverside Community College District, Calif.*

“Being one of the larger community college districts in the State of California, we knew our search for a Chancellor would have challenges finding an experienced and visionary leader capable of handling our complexity of programs. The professional and experienced staff of ACCT Executive Search Services provided the exact guidance that we needed to know: that the perfect person was someone whom we ourselves had developed for the past 12 years. As a result, the response from the college district and the general community on the selection of Dr. Wolde-Ab Isaac as RCCD Chancellor has been one of complete support and excited anticipation.”

—Mary Figueroa, Board Secretary and Co-Chair, Chancellor Search Committee

“Dr. Isaac’s long-time commitment to our district as an education leader and partner is evident in the communities that our district serves. He embraces collaboration through shared governance with the district stakeholders and uses research-based evidence to support new initiatives.”

—Tracey Vackar, Board President and Co-Chair, Chancellor Search Committee

**Southeast Arkansas College (SEARK)**

**Steven Bloomberg, MA**

*President*

*Former Executive Vice President, Oklahoma City Community College, Okla.*

“We are excited about the experience, vision, and leadership that Mr. Bloomberg brings to Southeast Arkansas College. Throughout this entire process, Mr. Bloomberg has impressed the board not only with his knowledge, but also with his genuine interest and care for the students that the college serves.”

—Paul Bennett, Chair, Board of Trustees and Chair, Board Presidential Search Committee

**College of Eastern Idaho**

**Rick Aman, Ed.D.**

*President*

*Former Interim President, College of Eastern Idaho*

“The College of Eastern Idaho has a bright future. In the unanimous opinion of the trustees, Dr. Aman is the right person to lead the institution, and we are fortunate he has enthusiastically accepted the challenge.”

—Park Price, Chair, Board of Trustees
Executive Searches

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

Nunez Community College, Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), La.
Tina Tinney, Ph.D.
Chancellor
Former Vice Chancellor of Strategic Initiatives and External Affairs, Northshore Technical Community College, LCTCS, La.

“We were impressed by the knowledge and experiences of each finalist. After a thorough vetting process, we believe Dr. Tinney is the perfect fit for the students, the college, and the community it serves, and she will continue leading our efforts to deliver world class academic and workforce training.”

—Mickey Murphy, LCTCS Board Supervisor and Chair of the Search Committee

“We are proud to have ACCT as a strategic partner. In addition to providing board member development services and sharing best practices in governance, they have also successfully assisted us in the management of several chancellor searches. Most recently, they managed the search for Nunez Community College. Their team of executive search consultants are thorough and among the best in the industry.”

— Monty Sullivan, LCTCS president

BOARD RETREATS, POLICY REVIEW, BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENTS, AND PRESIDENTIAL EVALUATIONS

ACCT would like to thank the following colleges which have recently held a Board Retreat or conducted a Board Self-Assessment and/or Presidential/Chancellor Evaluation.

- Alamo Colleges (Texas)
- Essex County College (N.J.)
- Illinois Central Community College (Ill.)
- Los Angeles Community College District (Calif.)
- Mercer County Community College (N.J.)
- Montgomery County Community College (Pa.)
- New Mexico Junior College (N.J.)
- Northeast Community College (Neb.)
- Northwest College (Wyo.)
- Roanoke Chowan Community College (N.C.)
- Sheridan College (Wyo.)
- SUNY Erie Community College (N.Y.)
- SUNY Broome Community College (N.Y.)
PBSN Members Answer the Call to ‘Meet Me in Las Vegas’

By Margaret Lamb
San Diego Community College District, California

PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF MEMBERS FROM AROUND THE country came together in September to attend the Professional Board Staff Network (PBSN) workshop and activities, held as part of the ACCT Leadership Congress in Las Vegas, Nevada. This afforded a wonderful opportunity to meet new board staff members who attended the PBSN workshops for the first time, to reunite with familiar colleagues and friends, and to say farewell to a few who will be leaving us due to retirement.

Our activities began with a fun-filled meet-and-greet at Planet Hollywood on Monday, which provided time to network with colleagues in a relaxed setting. Due to popular demand for more sessions, a three-hour workshop was scheduled on Tuesday, followed by a one-and-one-half-hour workshop on Wednesday. Tuesday’s workshop began with three rotating roundtable discussions, which provided an opportunity for participants to share best practices on requested topics including board portal software, board retreats, leadership transition, emergency preparedness and response, new trustee orientation/board training, and board travel. Additional workshop sessions included a demonstration of the new ACCT Member Portal and excellent information for both the body and the mind — a session on ergonomics, which delivered professional tips on proper sitting and standing, and a session on mindfulness, which provided valuable information on how to maintain a healthy mental balance in the workplace. The second day featured a presentation on the effective use of social media and a professional panel on preparing for meetings with local, state, and national legislators.

The PBSN annual business meeting featured the accession of officers and the election of new and returning Executive Committee members. During the meeting, Heather Lanham was recognized for her excellent service as PBSN President during 2016-17. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Heather and the other members of the Executive Committee for their willingness to give of their precious time and energy to serve in these voluntary positions.

According to the PBSN bylaws, “the duties and functions of the PBSN Executive Committee will consist of, but are not limited to: guiding the affairs of the organization, coordinating proposals and presentations for the annual ACCT Leadership Congress, … and other initiatives deemed appropriate for further advancement of the Professional Board Staff Network.” To that end, the Executive Committee will be meeting in conjunction with the ACCT National Legislative Summit in Washington, D.C., in February in order to begin planning for the PBSN fall workshop, which will be held in October in New York City. If you have suggestions for workshop topics or are interested in presenting, please feel free to contact myself or any member of the Executive Committee listed on this page.

Again, we thank all those who were able to attend the 2017 PBSN workshop and meetings. While it is true that “what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas,” we hope that what you learned in Vegas doesn’t stay there — be sure to share your knowledge and best practices with others.

We look forward to another great year of activity and hope to see you in New York this fall!
“HIGHEST DEGREE OF PROFESSIONALISM,” “EXEMPLARY SERVICE,” “ROBUST WORK ETHIC,” “STRIVES FOR PERFECTION,” “institutional change agent and champion,” “ability to think outside the box,” “unparalleled commitment,” “professional problem-solver.” These are just a few of the qualities that are used to describe the 2017 ACCT Professional Board Staff Member regional award recipients.

Since 2001, the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) has recognized the key role and extraordinary contributions of professional board staff members. Five regional awardees were recognized at the ACCT Leadership Congress in Las Vegas, Nevada, in September 2017.

2017 Professional Board Staff Member ACCT Regional Award Recipients: From left: Sandra Mora, Alamo Colleges, Texas; Kimberly Mack, Halifax Community College, North Carolina; Alonia Sharps, Prince George’s Community College, Maryland; Janet Reaume, Centralia College, Washington; and Mellanie Toles, Clark State Community College, Ohio.
This year's honorees are:

**CENTRAL REGION**

Mellanie Toles  
*Clark State Community College, Ohio*
Mellanie has served with distinction for 19 years as assistant to the president at Clark State Community College. She is well-known and respected for her excellent technical and organizational skills and is the “go-to” source for college information. She is a passionate advocate for students and leaves no stone unturned to find solutions to problems.

**NORTHEAST REGION**

Alonia Sharps  
*Prince George’s Community College, Maryland*
Alonia has served in various positions at Prince George’s Community College for over forty years. She has provided support for three presidents and more than 50 board members since 1999. Her commitment to the board, administration, students, faculty, and staff is unparalleled. Alonia has also served on the PBSN Executive Committee. She will soon be retiring and we wish her the best in her retirement!

**PACIFIC REGION**

Janet Reaume  
*Centralia College, Washington*
Janet has served in various roles at Centralia College since 2008. Her strong work ethic, exceptional writing ability, and wonderful people skills have served her well in her role as executive assistant to the president and board of trustees. She is well-known and respected for her ability to “think outside the box” and is sought after for help and advice.

**SOUTHERN REGION**

Kimberly Mack  
*Halifax Community College, North Carolina*
As executive assistant to the president and board of trustees for the past five years, Kimberly is recognized for being “an institutional change agent and champion for the president, board, students, administrators, faculty, staff, and community partners.” She unselfishly gives of her time and talents to improve efficiency and enhance collaborations at her institution.

**WESTERN REGION**

Sandra Mora  
*Alamo Colleges, Texas*
Sandra has provided over 22 years of outstanding service to the Alamo Colleges District. She is described as a “student leader at heart,” and her innovative and creative spirit lends well to her work as board liaison. Sandra strives for perfection in her work, yet she embraces change and works collaboratively and patiently with all stakeholders.

In addition, one of the regional awardees is recognized as the national recipient of the Professional Board Staff Member ACCT Association Award.

We congratulate Mellanie Toles, from Clark State Community College in Ohio, for being the recipient of this very prestigious honor.

We extend our warmest congratulations to all of the professional board staff award recipients for their exemplary service to their boards, districts, colleges, and the communities that they serve.
2017-2018 ELECTION RESULTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair
Emily Yim
Edmonds Community College, WA

Chair-Elect
Connie Hornbeck
Iowa Western Community College, IA

Vice-Chair
Dawn Erlandson
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, MN

Secretary-Treasurer
David Mathis
Mohawk Valley Community College, NY

Immediate Past Chair
Bakari G. Lee
Hudson County Community College, NJ

REGIONAL CHAIRS

Central Regional Chair
Gregory Knott
Parkland College, IL

Northeast Regional Chair
Debra Borden
Frederick Community College, MD

Pacific Regional Chair
Stephan Castellanos
San Joaquin Delta College, CA

Southern Regional Chair
Tamela Cullens
South Florida State College, FL

Western Regional Chair
Kent Miller
Mid-Plains Community College, NE

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

(3-year terms)

John Lukas
Lakeshore Technical College, WI

Larry Meyer
Lansing Community College, MI

Gilbert Wong
Foothill-De Anza Community College District, CA

DISPATCH DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

(2-year terms except where noted)

Central Region
Jay Nardini
Hawkeye Community College, IA

Northeast Region
Mary Zimmerman
Union County College, NJ

Pacific Region
Judy Chen Haggerty
Mt. San Antonio College, CA

Southern Region
Betty Holness
Daytona State College, FL

Western Region
Art Fierro
El Paso Community College, TX

APPOINTED BOARD MEMBERS

Diversity Committee Chair
Benjamin Wu
Montgomery College, MD

Tommy Lewis
Diné College, AZ

REGIONAL DIRECTORS

(3-year terms)

Central Region
James Cooksey
Moberly Area Community College, MO

ACCT DEADLINES

► ACCT Leadership Congress Call for Presentations
   May 4, 2018

► ACCT Awards Nominations
   June 18, 2018

► Director-at-Large Candidate Nominations
   July 1, 2018

► Amendments to ACCT Bylaws
   July 1, 2018

► Submitting Resolutions
   July 1, 2018

RETIRED ACCT BOARD MEMBERS

Mary Figueroa
Riverside Community College District, CA

Jim Harper
Portland Community College, OR

Vernon Jung
Moraine Park Technical College, WI

Clare Ollayos
Elgin Community College, IL

Roberto Zárate
Alamo Colleges, TX
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