ACCT ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES

STATE OF THE ASSOCIATION REPORT
July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012

The ACCT Board of Directors and management are pleased to report that the State of the Association remains strong. ACCT's advocacy, education and board leadership services departments continue to develop greater capacities and offer increased breadth and depth of services for member trustees and colleges. This State of the Association Report lists a number of activities and developments that have taken place over the past fiscal year, though the report cannot detail every initiative that the Association has conducted.

Given the current economic difficulties facing colleges throughout the country, the need to ensure strong support for our members has never been more important. The Association has achieved exceptional success working with the Obama Administration and continuing the national focus on and recognition of community college trustees. It is significant that ACCT's membership and operations have continued to grow while membership and services for many other associations have continued to decline. The effective leadership of the ACCT Board of Directors and the strong commitment and ongoing participation of ACCT's membership are having a major positive impact on the perceptions of boards and community college leaders across the country.

Working Toward the Future: Partnerships, Innovation, and Evidence

The ACCT Board of Directors "Access FOR Success" initiative, revising ACCT's strategic priorities from 2010 through 2015, continues to inform and guide Association efforts to focus on student success and completion. This focused vision places a major emphasis on advocacy, education efforts, and partnerships with relevant stakeholder organizations that facilitate shifting from primarily enrollment-driven policies to a balance of these traditional policies with student success and completion-oriented policies.

ACCT continues to create new partnerships and programs with the Access FOR Success mission in mind, and we are strengthening accountability and student success through governance, with efforts including ACCT's third pre-Congress Symposium on Student Success, held at the start of the 2012 Boston Congress. Supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Symposium brought together key stakeholders from national and state governmental and policy organizations to focus on the role of community college boards in strengthening student success and completion.

Student Success and Completion Initiatives

Significant to ACCT's completion agenda is the continuation of the Association's first-ever major foundation grant. ACCT, in partnership with the Community College Leadership Program (CCLP), The University of Texas at Austin College of Education, and with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is in the midst of a three-year initiative to design, develop, and implement the Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS). The GISS, now in its third year, blends ACCT's esteemed Governance Leadership Institute (GLI) and CCLP's highly-rated Board of Trustees Institute to provide the foundation for transformational work with governing boards of community and technical colleges to increase student success and attainment as governance priorities. Last June, GISS convened in Washington state, and then Texas in August. We revisited Ohio for a follow-up GISS in April, convened new GISS meeting in West Virginia, and are exploring future Institutes in California, Florida, Nebraska, New Jersey, and North Carolina. We are pleased to announce that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation granted $1 million in September to continue this important work through 2014.

ACCT's Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) partnership with the American Association of Community Colleges and The College Board, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Lumina Foundation for Education, was formed to lead the nation's community colleges toward a new and greater system of accountability and continues to progress. The VFA has three parts: measures of student progress and outcomes; measures of workforce, economic, and community development; and an approach for assessing student learning outcomes. After beta-testing the first data elements of the VFA, AACC has made the VFA metrics available to all colleges and will provide an online data display tool in 2013.

ACCT and Single Stop USA also renewed our strategic partnership for 2012–13, continuing efforts to expand sites beyond the 17 community colleges currently operating Single Stop centers. The initiative brings together technology and human services to identify public benefits funds and student aid for low-income and disadvantaged students, while fully integrating student services, advising and guidance, and financial services to create a seamless pathway to success for students. Since the inception of the organization's partnership with ACCT over two years ago, Single Stop USA has provided services to more than 30,000 community-college students across the country, helping them to access more than $70 million worth of benefits and services. Even more compelling, however, is early evidence suggesting that students who receive Single Stop USA services are more likely to persist than those who do not.

In September 2012, the Kresge Foundation awarded ACCT a $400,000 grant to support ACCT's completion initiatives, including the annual Symposium on Student Success, continued development and dissemination of the Student Success and Completion Policy Action Agenda, and ongoing partnership with Single Stop USA.

Finally, ACCT joined with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), National League of Nursing, and the National Organization of Associate Degree Nursing (N-OADN) in a groundbreaking statement of support for the academic progression of nursing. This is the first time such organizations have joined together to support the education preparation and advancement of the nation's nursing professionals.

Advocacy

In response to an enormous funding shortfall projected for the Pell Grant program going into FY 2012, ACCT helped lead a "Stand Up for Pell Grants" campaign. Through our efforts and those of other higher education advocates, Congress included an additional $17 billion in mandatory funding for the Pell Grant program as part of last summer's bipartisan Budget Control Act. This infusion of funds maintained the maximum award at $5,550 and prevented most of that shortfall for the program. ACCT continues to advocate strongly on behalf of the Pell Grant program and support broad access for all our students. Additionally, staff continues efforts to restore Pell eligibility for "ability to benefit" students.

Despite proposals to eliminate the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant (TAA CCCTG) program, ACCT's advocacy efforts helped maintain the program's funding. The $2 billion TAA CCCTG program is a four-year program offering competitive grants to support educational and career-training programs focused on dislocated and unemployed workers. The first $500 million round of awards was distributed in September, and an additional $500 million in awards was announced last month.

The success and demand of the TAA CCCTG program led President Obama to develop and feature a new funding proposal for community colleges. The proposed Community College to Career Fund is an $8 billion three-year investment with the goal of training and placing two million skilled workers in high-demand jobs. Administered dually by the Department of Education and the Department of Labor, the program will focus on innovation and partnerships.

Additionally, President Obama emphasized the infrastructure and modernization needs of community colleges by including a proposed $5 billion for community college modernization in his American Jobs Act. The purpose of the funding proposal is to ensure that community colleges have the equipment and facilities necessary to train workers in highly technical and growing fields.

Board Leadership Services

ACCT's Board Services, which are continuously evaluated and consistently receive high marks by members, offer the highest-quality services and targeted resources available for community college trustees, conveying vital information on effective governance and exemplary trusteeship. The Association's direct services to member boards in CEO searches, retreats, board and presidential evaluations, and interim executive placements are informed by our long history of working with boards and CEOs. Board Services had another exceptional year that exceeded projections, completing 21 president/chancellor searches, 14 vice president/provost searches, and one state association executive-director search contract. In addition, staff held 37 board retreats, and performed 13 board self-assessments and 10 presidential evaluations.

Board Services are being used increasingly to build a knowledge-based approach to effective trusteeship. An example of how knowledge is transferred is our Governance Leadership Institute (GLI), instituted in 2006. In March, The City University of New York and Borough of Manhattan College hosted the 2012 Governance Leadership Institute on their campus. Trustees came from states such as Arizona, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Texas, and Wyoming. And a New Trustee Institute was held in Washington, DC in August. In response to the Diversity Committee's request, we also convened our second Diversity Institute in Tampa, Florida last November, hosted by Hillsborough Community College.

For the first time ever, ACCT and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) announced plans to hold a new leadership program, entitled "Surviving the First 120 Days in the Presidency," The seminar is part of a broader collaboration between the two groups, which will also jointly produce a survey of compensation for community-college leaders, and explore other joint leadership development opportunities.

Meetings/Events

The association has kept its commitment to ensure that members can attend national meetings, keeping base registration for the 2012 Community College National Legislative Summit (NLS) frozen at FY 2007 levels, and raising the base registration fee for the 2011 ACCT Leadership Congress in Dallas only $50. In spite of economic concerns and state travel bans, we managed to slightly exceed projected registration income for the 2011 ACCT Leadership Congress in Dallas, and significantly lowered expenses and contracted service costs without diminishing the quality of the program or staging. We likewise exceeded the projected registration income for the 2012 NLS in February, also with decreased expenses but a strong and effective program and speakers— including our first-ever Capitol Hill forum that featured Congressional leaders and a new pre-NLS Trustee Advocacy Academy. We have reduced printing and event marketing expenses whenever and wherever possible. At the same time, we have maintained our commitment print on recycled paper stocks with sustainable and environmentally friendly soy-based inks, using Forestry Stewardship Council-certified print vendors, and printing methods.

Communications

We are committed to providing the most up-to-date information to help inform decision making and advance effective governance. The ACCT website, *www.acct.org*, continues to offer member publications available for free download and a wide array of training opportunities and educational materials relating to community college trusteeship. Throughout FY 2012, ACCT has been hard at work to redevelop the website with an updated look and, more importantly, more behind-the-scenes functionality to improve users' experiences. The new ACCT.org will launch this fall. And to reflect ACCT's growth, the association has launched several spinoff websites, including *www.trustee-education.org, www.acctsearches.org*, and *www.governance-institute.org* –ACCT's new student-success initiative site, expanded from its initial Governance Institute for Student Success purpose to centrally house all ACCT student success and completion initiative information.

ACCT's electronic public policy updates—Latest Action in Washington (LAW) E-Alerts— disseminate information about developments in Washington as they occur to give members the opportunity to take immediate actions that will positively affect their colleges. To date, over 1,800 individuals have subscribed to the LAW E-Alert system. Due to the success of the LAW E-Alert system, ACCT recently launched a new advocacy e-newsletter, *Capitol Connection*, which is disseminated among all LAW E-Alert subscribers.

Communication and transparency among the Board of Directors, management, and membership remain paramount and continue to be primary goals. ACCT also continuously seeks communications from its members through timely information and feedback made possible by the ACCT State, Province, and Territory Coordinators Network, or directly through the ACCT offices in Washington, D.C. ACCT's efforts to increase the number of Coordinators continue, tightly orchestrated with our membership recruitment efforts, in an effort to secure membership among colleges from all 50 states. The Network continues to expand and become more active— recruiting new members as Associate Committee members, securing nominations for the ACCT Regional and Association Awards, and keeping the membership apprised of activities and opportunities available through the Association.

National Recognition

Newsworthy ACCT developments continue to receive coverage in higher education press, including *The Chronicle of Higher Education, Community College Week, Inside Higher Ed, Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, and non-trade press, including *U.S. News and World Report*. In addition, President Brown represented the nation's community college trustees in a number of media stories, including National Public Radio, *USA Today,* and others to create a greater imperative for supporting community colleges. ACCT also has worked closely with its sister association, AACC, resulting in, among other benefits, coverage of the new AACC-ACCT collaboration to educate and prepare future community college presidents in the *Community College Times* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. President Brown was also interviewed for Higher Education Talk Radio about the role of community colleges in the nation's economy, and about his new book *First in the World: Community Colleges and America's Future*. President Brown will participate in another interview with Higher Education Talk Radio in October, following the 2012 ACCT Leadership Congress.

ACCT was honored in April by Phi Theta Kappa with its prestigious Alliance for Educational Excellence Award. The award, given only six times previously, honored ACCT for its commitment and work around student success and completion. As noted in the PTK press release issued in conjunction with the awards ceremony, "ACCT engaged community college trustees in discussing and developing strategies regarding their role and their institution's role in effectively measuring student success. For these outstanding efforts given to improve student success and college completion, Phi Theta Kappa expresses profound appreciation to ACCT for its commitment to aid all community college students in reaching their dreams for a better life by completing what they start."

Social Media

The Association also has made a strategic foray into social media, including Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Flickr. While the use of all these platforms is relatively new, ACCT has found Twitter to be an excellent public outlet for news and legislative alerts. Already, ACCT's Twitter account (www.twitter.com/CCTrustees) has nearly 850 followers (compared with 450 at this time last year), including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Lumina Foundation for Education, federal officials, journalists, and colleges and individuals, many of which have "re-tweeted" ACCT information. All Twitter information immediately posts to ACCT's Facebook account, which also hosts a number of photos from ACCT and other events, including the Department of Education Regional Community College Summits. All of these outlets have proven valuable and ACCT will continue to develop them through the coming year, including greater incorporation of Flickr photo streams and YouTube videos into the forthcoming website design. Over the past year, ACCT has begun to capture video testimonials and is building its staff's video-production capabilities to adapt to trends in technology users' evolving interactions with websites and other online media. Select student success-related concurrent sessions as well as the entire 2012 Symposium on Student Success will be made available online after the 2012 ACCT Leadership Congress, courtesy of ACCT Corporate Council member Ellucian.

Publications

The traditional member publications continue to provide invaluable information, including exclusive *Trustee Quarterly* articles from higher-education and federal-level legislative experts such as Linda Baer, Cathy Brigham, Major Garrett, The Honorable Martha Kanter, Paul Lingenfelter, and Travis Reindl, in addition to regular columns and features from ACCT staff and affiliates, including leading executives from AACC, ACT, the College Board, TIAA-CREF and others. ACCT continues to develop new forward-thinking publications that will be of use to trustees throughout the country and strengthen the Association's position as the preeminent authority on community college governance. In addition to these member publications, ACCT will issue several new publications this fall, including a pictorial history of ACCT to mark the association's 40-year anniversary and a new report outlining the structures and compositions of community college boards by state. Finally, ACCT President and CEO J. Noah Brown's book, *First in the World: Community Colleges and America's Future*, the first in a new American Council on Education series on community colleges, has just been published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group and is available to ACCT members at a significant discount. While *First in the World* is not an ACCT-published title, President Brown has designated that any royalties resulting from book sales be donated to the association and applied to trustee education initiatives.

Webinar Series

This past year also included the launch of ACCT's leadership webinar series. Based on the success of ACCT's pilot Virtual Leadership Academies for senior community college administrators and university administrators who have a serious interest in advancing to a presidential position at a community college, ACCT has produced a new series of educational webinars for community college trustees. Last year, the ACCT Trust Fund Board and ACCT Board of Directors granted the allocation of funds to produce a national webinar series, expanding our reach to member trustees throughout the country. The first, "Safeguarding Your Institution; the Board's Role in Navigating Disaster," debuted in in March. Forthcoming Webinars include: "The Role of the Chair of the Board;" "The Trustee's Role in Effective Advocacy: Local, State and Federal Levels;" "The Trustee's Role in Fundraising: From Arm's Length to Knee-Deep;" and "What the Board and Trustees Need to Know about the Code of Ethics and Conflicts of Interest." These webinars are available on demand at *www.trustee-education.org*.

In Summary

ACCT's work is driven by the needs of our members and, ultimately, the students they serve. The association continues to be a visionary in support of the critical work trustees do every day on behalf of their communities. In short, ACCT continues to work tirelessly in support of trustees and to ensure that membership in ACCT remains among the best overall investments community college boards can make in their future and that of the communities they serve. We appreciate the privilege of serving as your partner as we strive, together, to make our colleges and our students first in the world once again.

J. Noah Brown

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Washington, D.C.