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Community College Associations Join Forces to Prepare Future CEOs
Professional Development Model to Emphasize Student Success, Board–CEO Collaboration

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) today announced a new collaboration that will focus on presidential leadership and community college governance. The two national associations, which represent the presidents and governing boards of more than 1,200 community colleges nationwide, are uniquely positioned to make the necessary commitment to address the leadership challenges facing this sector.

The new collaboration is designed to address three trends that have the potential to erode community college leadership at a time when the country is calling on community colleges to address completion and student success, and to do more with fewer resources. These trends are the graying of the pool of current and future community college presidents, the shrinking pool of potential presidential candidates, and the continuous rotation and recomposition of governing boards.

As a first step, AACC, in collaboration with ACCT, will offer a new leadership training program for CEOs. “Surviving the First 120 Days in the Presidency,” which will be launched in fall 2012, is a leadership development program designed to provide new CEOs with the skills necessary to successfully transform the culture of their institutions. Key topics to be covered in the program will include understanding the work that must be accomplished prior to the first day of work; the establishment of effective and sustained engagement with the board of trustees, faculty, and collective bargaining groups; communication and setting goals with the board of trustees; and how to effectively engage the business community.

In addition, AACC has announced the enhancement of its leadership offerings to support “grow-your-own” leadership programs offered by its member institutions. AACC will develop curricula and unveil a toolkit to enable community colleges to build new leadership programs and enhance existing programs on their campuses and via statewide programs. Later this year, AACC also will launch a training program for those who have taken nontraditional routes, but who are interested in community college leadership.

ACCT will also build upon its existing online trustee-education service, a new series of webinars and interactive video conferences. ACCT will create a new topical series of educational webinars and teleconferences that focus on board–CEO relationships, set to launch later this year.

The associations have also agreed to work together to create an updated compensation survey of CEOs, which will be launched in late February.

Trustees can support innovation and implement strategies to break the logjam of developmental education and ultimately increase student success, equity, and completion. With this in mind, ACCT has proposed the expansion of the nationally recognized Governance Institute for Student Success, a collaboration between
ACCT and the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin initially funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The Governance Institute for Student Success blends the proven elements of effective governance with data and policy to identify key decisions, actions, and opportunities for institutional transformation. To date, institutes have taken place in Ohio, Texas, and Washington, with a second Ohio institute slated for spring 2012. The expansion of the model to other states will educate trustees and presidents using similar curricula and with common priorities so that the community college sector will move forward cohesively, led by those who have the competencies to make great advancements.

ACCT is also expanding its publications series to include information for presidential candidates and expanding the breadth of the association’s Virtual Leadership Academy for aspiring presidents to include topics of value to those who are working toward a career as a president or vice president.

“As the leading associations representing community colleges, we are uniquely positioned to offer quality leadership development programs to our memberships,” said AACC President and CEO Walter G. Bumphus. “We are pleased to work with ACCT, an organization that is a leader in presidential searches and trustee leadership training, to offer this opportunity to new CEOs. We have a vested interest in growing the leadership pipeline for our institutions—from foundational skills, through middle management, to senior-level administration, and to equip senior leaders to be successful after getting the job. We provide leadership development solutions for student success.”

“ACCT has the resources and expertise to identify the highest caliber leaders to serve our community colleges. We are an organization that cares deeply about boards, effective governance, and stewardship for the future. We take very seriously our obligations to identify, recruit, train, and retain the highest caliber leaders to meet the demands of the future,” said J. Noah Brown, president and CEO of ACCT.

The leaders of AACC and ACCT have already made significant progress on establishing the foundation for some of these initiatives and will undertake a planning process during the next 6 weeks to explore other initiatives related to community college leadership.

For more information about the AACC/ACCT leadership development collaboration, contact AACC: Dr. Angel Royal, 202-728-0200, ext. 255.
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About AACC
Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the American Association of Community Colleges is the leading advocacy organization representing close to 1,200 community, junior and technical colleges nationwide. Community colleges are the largest sector of higher education, enrolling 13.4 million credit and noncredit students each year. To learn more about AACC, visit www.aacc.nche.edu.

About ACCT
Founded in 1972, the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) is the nonprofit educational organization of governing boards, representing more than 6,500 elected and appointed trustees of community, technical, and junior colleges in the United States and beyond. ACCT’s purpose is to strengthen the capacity of community, technical, and junior colleges and to foster the realization of their missions through effective board leadership at local, state, and national levels. For more information, visit www.acct.org. Follow ACCT on Twitter at twitter.com/CCTrustees.