AACC’s Commitment to Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity

Reflecting the core values of the colleges it represents, the American Association of Community Colleges is committed to access and equity for and the inclusion of every person. The association demonstrates this commitment in its hiring and business practices, its steadfast efforts to develop and support diverse leaders, and its implementation of programs to ensure opportunity and success for the most diverse student body in higher education.

Walter G. Bumphus
President and CEO, AACC

October 2011
American Association of Community Colleges
www.aacc.nche.edu
**Introduction**

AACC promotes increased access and success for the diverse community college population by securing federal and private support for colleges and providing opportunities, resources, and information related to persistence, retention, program completion, and transfer.

AACC is committed to diversity in its policies, programs, and relationships, as well as in its efforts to build, maintain, and promote a culture of equity and inclusion.

**Core Value**

AACC’s commitment to diversity is articulated in AACC’s mission statement as a core value:

“AACC affirms that diversity is crucial to a democratic society, that diversity enriches the educational experience, and that diversity respects and celebrates differences among institutions and individuals alike.”

AACC leads collaborative efforts with the Association of Community College Trustees, Center for Community College Student Engagement, League for Innovation in the Community College, National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development, and Phi Theta Kappa to advance the completion agenda nationally. *Democracy’s Colleges: Call to Action* reaffirms the value of diversity, inclusion, and equity in these key points:

- We believe that completion matters and that every student counts.
- We commit to courageous conversations and openness regarding diversity, equity, and evidence reflecting student success and institutional performance.
- We commit, while increasing success rates for all students, to eliminating the attainment gaps that separate student groups on the basis of race, ethnicity, and family income.

**AACC Position Statements**

- 4/26/2010: [Statement on Immigration](#)
- 11/2008: [AACC Endorsement of the National Council for Student Development Welcoming Initiative](#)
- 7/28/2008: [AACC/ACCT Joint Statement on Leadership and Diversity](#)
- 10/29/2005: [AACC Resolution on Closing the Equity Gap](#)
- 11/12/2001: [AACC Position Statement on International Education](#)
- 3/31/2001: [AACC Position Statement on Inclusion](#)
- 12/31/1994: [AACC Position Statement on Affirmative Action](#)
- (Undated): [Diversity in Higher Education](#)

**Legislative Advocacy**

See [AACC’s website](#) for further details of AACC’s advocacy efforts.

**Budget and Appropriations**

AACC pursues legislation and funding to ease economic barriers for community college students and enable colleges to better serve the needs of the students. Funding for the federal Pell Grant program remains the top priority. Approximately 3 million financially disadvantaged community college students rely on Pell Grants to pay for tuition, books, and living expenses annually. AACC’s advocacy efforts have contributed to an increase in the maximum Pell Grant from $4,731 to $5,550 during the past two years.
AACC also supports increased funding for vital higher education programs that enable institutions to assist minority and historically underrepresented populations. Two important Higher Education Act programs are Strengthening Institutions and Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions. The Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 included additional mandatory funding for minority-serving institutions, through the following programs: Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Predominantly Black Institutions, American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, Native American-Serving Non-Tribal Institutions, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions, and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions. The Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions program also receives mandatory (entitlement) funding from the budget reconciliation act.

Federal workforce training priorities for AACC include the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, the Workforce Investment Act, and the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, particularly the TAA Community College and Career Training program, which will provide $2 billion over 4 years for innovative training and education programs. Together these programs enable colleges to provide critical job training for millions of Americans each year. AACC advocates for additional funding for the National Science Foundation’s ATE and STEM programs as well as for federal investments in programs that promote college persistence and assist veterans.

**Higher Education Tax Incentives/American Opportunity Tax Credit**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act made significant changes to the $1,800 Hope Scholarship Tax Credit for tax years 2009 and 2010. The American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC) that replaced the Hope credit provides a credit of up to $2,500 for tuition and course materials and allows 40% of a student’s calculated credit to be refundable. Congress recently extended AOTC through 2012 providing benefits for thousands of low-income students.

**The DREAM Act**

Community colleges continue to press for passage of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, which would provide some undocumented students with a pathway to citizenship.

**Communications and Media**

**AACC’s Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Website**

AACC devotes a program and [website](#) exclusively to diversity efforts. AACC’s senior program associate for diversity, inclusion, and equity serves as liaison between AACC and all of the organizations, programs, and initiatives that share AACC’s commitment to advancing diversity, inclusion, and equity; represents AACC at numerous conferences and meetings; and helps keep the AACC website current and informative.

**News and Events**

- News and events related to diversity, inclusion, and equity are regularly posted under the "Hot Issues" tab on AACC’s website and announced in the biweekly electronic newsletter, the [AACC Letter](#).

- [AACC Annual Convention](#). AACC infuses diversity at all levels of its annual convention. Keynote speakers, spotlight sessions, forums, and roundtables embrace AACC’s long-standing commitment to showcase the diverse and inclusive nature of our membership.

- [Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service](#). Each year, the Corporation for National and Community Service honors the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by asking Americans to make the holiday a national day of service. Since 2009, under the direction of AACC’s program director for service learning, AACC has provided school supplies for local students. AACC encourages member institutions to participate nationally in efforts to honor King’s legacy and commitment to service.
Publications
Topics related to diversity, inclusion, and equity receive regular coverage in the Community College Journal and Community College Times. Hundreds of articles can be located in the Times online by entering search terms such as minorities, diversity and inclusion, international students, veterans and service members, and adult learners. Additionally, these issues are spotlighted in books, monographs, and reports published by AACC and its partners annually, such as:

- An American Mosaic: Service Learning Stories
- Creating a Climate for Service Learning Success
- A Data-Driven Examination of the Impact of Associate and Bachelor’s Degree Programs on the Nation’s Nursing Workforce (Policy Brief 2011-02PBL)
- Enriched and Inspired: Service Pathways to College Success (for students with disabilities)
- Global Development of Community Colleges, Technical Colleges, and Further Education Programs
- Promoting Educational Opportunity: The Pell Grant Program at Community Colleges (Policy Brief 2011-03PBL)
- The Road Ahead: A Look at Trends in Educational Attainment by Community College Students (Policy Brief 2011-04PBL)

Programs
Highlighted here are some major programs that exemplify AACC’s commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity.

Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count
As a founding partner of Achieving the Dream (ATD), AACC is dedicated to helping more community college students, particularly low-income students and students of color, stay in school and earn a college certificate or degree. Evidence-based, student-centered, and built on the values of equity and excellence, ATD is closing achievement gaps and accelerating student success nationwide by (1) improving results at institutions, (2) influencing public policy, (3) generating knowledge, and (4) engaging the public. ATD today is the largest nongovernmental reform movement for student success in higher education history. With 160 community colleges and institutions, more than 100 coaches and advisors, and 16 state policy teams—working throughout 30 states and the District of Columbia—ATD helps 3.5 million community college students have a better chance of realizing greater economic opportunity and achieving their dreams.

AACC manages the ATD website and national database, develops analytical data tools and hosts the annual Strategy Institute, whose theme is “Equity and Excellence.” Examples of recent diversity-focused sessions include

- Using ATD Tools to Advance Equity and Reduce Achievement Gaps
- And Still They Rise: A Panel Discussion—featuring diverse students from Ivy Tech Community College
- Critical Strategies for Academic Excellence and Retention of Minority Males

The 2011 Strategy Institute featured opening keynote speaker Toby Daughtery, a young African American whose experience at Pulaski Technical College, Arkansas, propelled him from the streets to become a 4.0 student at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. His presentation received a standing ovation and inspired program organizers to invite students to serve as opening speakers at future institutes.

AACC staff serve on the ATD Structural Inequity Team and in its Equity Resource Center, which contains tools and resources to help colleges reduce achievement gaps on their campuses and promote success for all their students. The Equity Resource Center houses resources produced by ATD partners. The ATD 2012 Strategy Institute will be held February 28–March 2 in Dallas, Texas. Registration begins in early October.
Advanced Technological Education
Through its MentorLinks program, AACC provides mentoring, technical assistance, networking, and professional development to community colleges seeking support to develop or strengthen technician education programs in STEM fields. A cohort of 16 colleges was recently selected to participate in the 2-year program. Examples of college activities supported by the grant include recruiting, supporting, and retaining students, particularly students of color and low-income students.

Future Leaders Institute
AACC provides leadership development through the Future Leaders Institute (FLI) and FLI Advanced. Each 5-day institute features a half-day session on diversity and equity. Experienced college presidents of color and with diverse backgrounds serve as speakers and highly regarded one-on-one career coaches for participants. AACC regularly seeks support from members of its board and councils to recruit rising leaders from minority groups to participate in this leadership experience. The next FLI and FLI Advanced will be held June 2012.

International Programs and Services
Committed to the principle that the appreciation of global diversity is paramount to promoting social responsibility in multicultural communities, AACC’s International Programs and Services department assists community colleges in developing and enhancing campus internationalization and globalization endeavors; study-abroad programs; international student recruitment efforts; and faculty, staff, and student exchanges.

Job Shadow Day
Job Shadow Day is an annual academically motivating activity designed to give students an opportunity to see firsthand how skills learned in school relate to the workplace. AACC hosts 10 students from local high schools to follow mentors as they go through a normal day on the job.

Minority Male Student Success Database
Launched in January 2010, this searchable database enables AACC member colleges to upload profiles of their programs that focus on minority male student recruitment, mentoring, persistence, and completion. It serves as a resource for member colleges interested in developing similar programs; 70 profiles are currently posted.

Plus 50 Completion Strategy
It takes older workers longer to find jobs than their younger counterparts, and workers with limited education have higher rates of unemployment and greater difficulty finding and securing employment. The Plus 50 Completion Strategy leverages and scales up promising Plus 50 Initiative practices by teaming them with workforce training and retraining for students 50 years of age and older—particularly those who have earned prior college credit without earning a credential—to ensure that they obtain the degrees, certificates, and not-for credit credentials sought by employers in high-demand, high-growth fields that meet local workforce needs and increase the plus 50 student’s competitiveness.

Collaborations and Partnerships
AACC leverages its commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity through numerous working relationships with other organizations, programs, and initiatives that have an equity agenda.

AACC Affiliated Councils
AACC works closely with four affiliated councils that represent minority groups:

- American Association for Women in Community Colleges
- National Council of Asian and Pacific Islanders
- National Council on Black American Affairs
- National Community College Hispanic Council
AACC’s support of councils includes promoting leadership and other events, assisting with logistics and member inquiries, and attending board meetings and professional development programs. AACC has supported councils at its annual convention by assisting with sessions, including the preconvention workshop, “Breaking the Stained Glass Ceiling,” and sustaining the spotlight session, “Diversity in Leadership and Navigating the Pipeline,” for which members of the AACC board and Commission on Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity participate as resource facilitators.

**Black, Brown and College Bound Summit**
In support of the Black, Brown and College Bound Summit, AACC helps organize sessions and provide speakers for this annual conference organized by Hillsborough Community College and other Florida community colleges to examine the personal, social, economic, and academic factors that affect Black and Hispanic male students.

**Casey Family Programs**
AACC actively supports the work of Casey Family Programs, which focuses on providing high-quality services and advocacy for youth who have been in foster care, many of whom come from minority groups. AACC assists the Casey Family Foundation in its outreach efforts to this diverse student population and is represented in the Casey Family Programs Education Consortium. AACC assisted in promoting Casey’s new publication, *Supporting Success: Improving Higher Education Outcomes for Students from Foster Care (Version 2.0)*.

**Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education**
Founded in 2008, the Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education (CCCIE) is a catalyst for change in the field of immigrant education. AACC is a member of the CCCIE Blue Ribbon Panel, which works to raise the visibility of immigrant education on the national and state levels through strategic partnerships, education, and advocacy initiatives and a database of promising practices in community colleges.

**Spectrum Initiative**
With the Association of Community College Trustees and 10 other higher education associations, AACC participates in the American Council on Education’s Spectrum Initiative, which focuses on increasing diversity among presidents of U.S. colleges and universities. The initiative brings together key stakeholders to develop processes and structures to identify and tap the talent needed to lead higher education institutions in the 21st century.

**White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities**
AACC works closely with top officials to strengthen the capacity of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to provide excellence in education. AACC hosted a session with 10 of the 14 two-year HBCU presidents and provided speaker and logistical support at the most recent HBCU conference in Washington, DC.

**Other Ongoing Relationships**
AACC collaborates with other organizations that advance the equity agenda nationally, including:

- American Indian Higher Education Consortium
- Excelencia in Education
- Institute for Higher Education Policy
- National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education
- National Council of La Raza
- National Urban League
- United Negro College Fund, Institute for Capacity Building
Diversity Within the Ranks

AACC is committed to a policy of equal opportunity employment and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, citizenship, national origin, marital status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristics protected by federal, state, or local law. Furthermore, AACC strives to achieve diverse representation on its board and advisory commissions.

AACC Staff

Composition of All AACC Staff, September 2011

- Women—66.1%
- Men—33.9%
- White—52.5%
- Black—37.3%
- Hispanic—6.8%
- Asian/Pacific Islander—3.4%

Composition of AACC Vice Presidents and Directors, September 2011

- Women—45.0%
- Men—55.0%
- White—70.0%
- Black—30.0%

AACC Board and Executive Committee

Composition of AACC Board of Directors, September 2011

- Women—53.0%
- Men—47.0%
- White—36.7%
- Black—46.7%
- Hispanic—9.9%
- Asian/Pacific Islander—6.7%

Composition of AACC Executive Committee, September 2011

- Women—50%
- Men—50%
- White—37.5%
- Black—37.5%
- Hispanic—25.0%
Current and Future Community College CEOs
As evidenced in the “AACC/ACCT Joint Statement on Leadership,” AACC advocates diversity, inclusion, and equity at the community college leadership level. In maintaining its membership database, AACC regularly gathers demographic data on community college CEOs. To promote diversity among the future leaders of community colleges, AACC also works actively to encourage member colleges to value diversity in nominating candidates for attendance at AACC’s premier professional development program, the Future Leaders Institute.

Composition of Community College CEOs, 2009

Composition of Future Leader Institute Participants, 2003–2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender and Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>FLI</th>
<th>FLI Advanced</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Total number of participants</td>
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Note. Data are based on FLI and FLI/ADV alumni from all classes to date. Alumni who completed both classes are counted in each class.

Minority Business Vendor Relationships
AACC has implemented the use of vendor authorization forms to improve the visibility of business conducted with minority vendors. Vendors provide information that helps AACC track its business with firms owned by minorities, women, veterans, and veterans with disabilities, as well as small businesses and disadvantaged small businesses. As of June 2010, approximately 41 vendors in these categories provided services to AACC; 78% were women-owned, and 22% were minority-owned. Overall, this represents 8% of AACC’s discretionary spending.