



Preamble

Two-year colleges provide an on-ramp to degree attainment, skilled careers, and family-supporting wages. With a focus on access, affordability, and flexibility, community colleges have and continue to make significant contributions to meet the needs of the 21st-century economy. A post-secondary credential is not just a pathway to the middle class. It also ensures that the country is globally competitive, and that a skilled citizenry is equipped to perform jobs of the future. Since 2012, the nation's two-year colleges have had a singular focus on restoring the United States to being first-in-the-world in degree attainment by focusing on college access, student success, and completion.

Community colleges deliver educational and economic opportunity for more than 12 million diverse students in search of the American Dream, and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) serves as their collective voice. Located in Washington, DC, AACC advocates for these not-for-profit, public-serving institutions to ensure they have the resources and support they need to deliver on the mission of increasing economic mobility for all.

Goal 2020

AACC will provide high-quality, just-in-time resources to support community colleges in educating 5 million more students with degrees, certificates or other credentials by 2020.

STRATEGY 1

Increase the Value of AACC Membership

1. Continue facilitating the implementation of the 21st-Century Initiative and Implementation Guidelines across the nation's community, junior, and technical colleges.
2. Deliver high-quality customer service, increase touchpoints,¹ and ensure member satisfaction and retention.
3. Showcase cutting-edge innovation with proven outcomes that improve student success.
4. Study current trends to predict future directions for the sector so that the association and its members are knowledgeable about and aligned with those changing trends and issues.

STRATEGY 2

Maximize Sustainable and Diversified Resources to Community Colleges

1. Collaborate with philanthropic organizations, government, and the private sector to drive investment in the nation's community colleges.
2. Pursue critical resources for institutions and students from the federal government and philanthropic organizations.
3. Support legislation and member-driven efforts to create new incentives that make student success and completion a priority while preserving open access.

STRATEGY 3

Position AACC as the Preeminent Voice for Information Regarding Community Colleges

1. Establish, showcase, and sustain the AACC 21st-Century Center to benefit all community colleges.
2. Provide timely research on current and emerging trends and issues facing community colleges to internal and external audiences.
3. Generate and maintain currency and relevance of information and resources provided by AACC.
4. Offer affordable, high-quality technical assistance in areas that support student success.
5. Convene thought leaders, think tanks, and affiliated organizations to shine a national spotlight on advancing student success initiatives on behalf of the nation's community colleges.

STRATEGY 4

Contribute to Leadership Capacity and Strengthening the Pipeline by Integrating the Competencies for Community College Leaders into Professional Development

1. Sustain and enhance AACC's Leadership Suite to provide emerging leaders and new and seasoned CEOs with professional development and renewal opportunities.
2. Support diversity in the recruitment and hiring of leaders.
3. Provide resources to colleges interested in developing grow-your-own leadership programs.

¹ Touchpoints – Interactions between AACC board members or AACC staff with member colleges. This interaction may be in the form of an AACC visit to the field or a college's participation in an AACC-hosted event.

21st-Century Commission Recommendations

- Increase completion rates of students earning community college credentials (certificates and associate degrees) by 50% by 2020, while preserving access, enhancing quality and eradicating attainment gaps associated with income, race, ethnicity, and gender.
- Dramatically improve college readiness: By 2020, reduce by half the number of students entering college unprepared for rigorous college-level work, and double the number of students who complete developmental education programs and progress to successful completion of related freshman-level courses.
- Close the American skills gaps by sharply focusing career and technical education on preparing students with the knowledge and skills required for existing and future jobs in regional and global economies.
- Refocus the community college mission and redefine institutional roles to meet 21st-century education and employment needs.
- Invest in support structures to serve multiple community colleges through collaboration among institutions and with partners in philanthropy, government, and the private sector.
- Target public and private investments strategically to create new incentives for institutions of education and their students and to support community college efforts to reclaim the American Dream.
- Implement policies and practices that promote rigor, transparency, and accountability for results in community colleges.

AACC's Strategic House

