



JOINT STATEMENT of COMMITMENT to EQUITY, DIVERSITY, and EXCELLENCE in STUDENT SUCCESS and LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) represent more than 1,100 community, junior, and technical colleges throughout the United States. Both AACC and ACCT are committed to fostering the advancement of community colleges, in part, by applying principles of equity and diversity within their organizations and promoting these values within member colleges.

This responsibility can be achieved best when colleges are governed and led by individuals who are attuned to the fact that programs designed for a multicultural student population can help them overcome an environment where discrimination and poverty can serve as deterrents to social and educational mobility, and economic prosperity.

Community Colleges are the most diverse and inclusive segment of higher education in the United States. These colleges serve a larger proportion of women, African Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Hispanic/Latino, Native Americans, LGBTQ students and students with disabilities than any other segment of higher education. Therefore, Community Colleges are positioned uniquely to foster an environment that honors, respects, and embraces the variety of students attending the Nation's colleges and universities. And as such, has been entrusted with creating educational environments that are safe, respectful, and responsive; and, where the potential of students can be attained at the highest level possible.

As the leading organizations that promote student success, leadership development, and Board governance, AACC and ACCT are dedicated to assisting the community college in successfully carrying out this responsibility. AACC and ACCT remain committed to programs that improve educational outcomes for all students, especially those representing various socioeconomic backgrounds including, but not limited to, race, gender, and age. ACCT and AACC reaffirm a commitment to promote and support programs and initiatives that develop diverse leaders at the Board and CEO levels and in the administrative and faculty ranks. Historically, both organizations have made this a priority.

AACC and ACCT offer professional development programs for CEOs and staff along with providing board development and conducting presidential searches that identify and prepare more women and individuals of color for these positions. AACC and ACCT will monitor and update this statement together and, where needed, reframe it to reflect current efforts that promote greater diversity and equity and propose how these efforts can be implemented.

The values of diversity, equity, and inclusion are firmly embedded throughout the history and programs at AACC and ACCT. However, even with this historic focus and the current Joint Statement, both associations acknowledge that much work is required to provide programs for diverse students and equip current and future leaders with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in an increasingly diverse and demanding higher education environment. Together, AACC and ACCT commit to strengthening their collaboration to making this work a continued priority.

Endorsed by the AACC Board of Directors on September 15, 2016.

Walter G. Bumphus, Ph.D.
AACC President & CEO

Endorsed by the ACCT Board of Directors on October 5, 2016.

J. Noah Brown
ACCT President & CEO