



ACI Reporter

Summer 2017

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From the Executive Director

Dear ACI Friends,

Welcome to the summer issue of *ACI Reporter* and the start of our new fiscal year.

We had a successful Benefit Reception and annual meeting April 21, and we have a very ambitious agenda for the coming months as outlined in our new, approved three-year strategic plan and annual business plan.

Our key focus is raising more scholarship and program support from a variety of sources including foundations, corporations and individuals. We are expanding our Peer Mentoring Program, growing our professional development conferences and building our communication efforts around the state to enhance our messaging about the value of the liberal arts.

In addition, we are in the early stages of creating our first ACI Career Fair for spring 2018, which we hope is the first of many in years to come. We are planning our Wealth Advisors Breakfast and HR and Diversity & Inclusion Officers Breakfast, both to take place in the fall.

Finally, please join me in welcoming Mercedes Lake, our new administrative assistant. Mercedes joined us June 19. We're pleased she is part of the ACI staff.

Thank you, friends, for your continued support this past year, and we look forward to a very exciting new fiscal year for ACI.

Mick Weltman
Executive Director

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ACI Scholars

Collin Tatone

University of St. Francis



Collin Tatone is keenly interested in the business world. He watches business-oriented shows on TV, and reads about business. He participates in business organizations. He's interested in how businesses work and how they become successful. When he graduates from the [University of St. Francis](#) (USF) in 2018, with a major in management and finance minor, this senior is thinking about being a business consultant.

"One thing I like is helping people grow and understand their businesses," he says. "I like helping them make their dreams come true and to start their own businesses." While a student at USF, Tatone has gotten plenty of practice, consulting for nonprofit organizations as part of his classwork. Or helping Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Joliet with a bowling fundraiser and raffle, organized by USF's Student Business Association and one of his classes. Or through participating in Financial Research in Education through Experience (FREE), a USF club that also does service-learning projects and teaches about personal finance.

This summer, Tatone is working as an intern for LearnCore, a Chicago company that provides training for sales people and managers, to help improve their work performance. Tatone sees it as a great opportunity to get a foothold in business. He has also worked other jobs, such as landscaping and construction. He's helped pay for his USF education by working in the athletic department in game operations, selling tickets and maintaining athletic venues.

Tatone grew up in Streamwood, Illinois, and now lives in Lake in the Hills, Illinois. What originally brought him to USF was a football scholarship. Tatone is a fullback on the USF Fighting Saints' team. Also helping to finance his education is a Call One Future Innovator Scholarship, from the Chicago-based technology company, awarded through ACI. The Call One/ACI scholarship is among scholarships and loans Tatone has put together to help finance his own college education. "This helps out by taking away stress, and lets me focus more on my education, rather than having to worry about whether I can afford going to school next year," he says. "This is something I'm grateful to have."

Beyond business and sports, Tatone sees value in attending USF. "I really liked the smaller school, and I like the one-on-one type of education," he says. "I thought it was a great opportunity for me to go to USF and get a good education."

The liberal-arts education that USF offers is also important to Tatone. "Employers want you to have a broad understanding of many different things. They don't want you to know about one specific thing. It's nice to know a little bit about history or art. It's helpful to have a wider range of knowledge rather than just one specific area," he says.

Tatone has made the most of the opportunities USF has offered him. His grade point average is 3.6, and he's been on the dean's list many times. When he graduates, Tatone will be the first in his family to earn a college degree.

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Sarah Fosnaugh

Olivet Nazarene University

Sarah Fosnaugh spent most of her growing-up years overseas, the daughter of Church of the Nazarene missionaries. Fosnaugh was born in Papua New Guinea where she spent most of her early years, followed by three years with her family in the Philippines and one year in Haiti, while she was in high school.

Her father, Lane, was a pastor working in leadership development, and her mother, Janelle, reached out to people living in mountainous areas of Papua New Guinea through a radio ministry. Her childhood experiences were formative in Fosnaugh's life, leading her to pursue a degree in social work at [Olivet Nazarene University](#).

Though she went to college unsure of a possible major and career, Fosnaugh found her calling through an introductory class in social work. Now, she thinks about possible careers, including "working in the foster care system with the aging population, working with homeless population and helping them rebuild their lives, and also working with refugees," she says. "I'd love to work with refugees."

Fosnaugh is a junior at Olivet Nazarene. She chose the school because it was nearby at the time she began college, plus her parents went there and so did her two older sisters. Being able to visit the school while her sisters were students there made a difference, and so did the quality of the community and the Christian atmosphere, she says.



Fosnaugh's social work classes are small, and students get to know professors through constant interaction and discussion. Students in the social work program work several hours in the community with groups such as secondary school students and nursing home residents. "This past semester, I was in a class about social work with the aging. We went to a nursing home in the area, and we worked one-on-one with residents in nursing homes," Fosnaugh says. "We get really great experience by getting out there. Social work is such a broad field, and we can explore different areas."

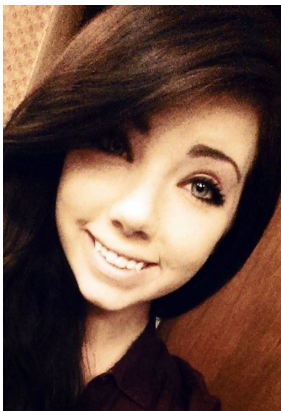
When she began her college experience, Fosnaugh wasn't so sure she'd be able to stay. Her mother had died tragically in a car accident when Fosnaugh was a senior in high school. Her family struggled. "It was a financially, emotionally and physically taxing situation," Fosnaugh recalls. "At one point, I assumed I wouldn't be able to go to school. My dad talked to Olivet, and they helped us with extra funds through the ACI scholarship."

Since, then Fosnaugh has been on the dean's list at Olivet Nazarene. She is a member of Olivet Nazarene's Orpheus Choir, an elite choir of the university's music program. Fosnaugh has also participated in MuKappa, an international club for students from international missionary and military homes, been a camp counselor and was an intern at an equine therapy ranch.

Fosnaugh says her dad was very determined that she would attend college. "My parents always valued the college experience. The ACI funds made a huge difference in reducing stress on my family, as I was trying to figure out how I would come up with the money for school," she says.

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Callie Ellis Knox College



This summer, you'll find Callie Ellis at New Jersey's Rutgers University, working on a research project with an economics professor on the topic of labor economics. It's part of a fellowship awarded to her from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation by [Knox College](#). She will also learn about graduate school and prepping for the Graduate Record Exam, another aspect of the fellowship. Ellis credits an A. Montgomery Ward Scholarship from ACI for motivating her.

Ellis, from the small town of Belle, Missouri, is an economics major entering her senior year at Knox. She first learned about Knox through a letter the school sent her because of an early interest in studying architecture. Eventually, her interests changed to finance and economics, thanks to participation in a business club in high school, an advisor who encouraged Ellis' math and accounting abilities, and influence from her mother, who works in a bank. Ellis remained interested in Knox, and it offered academic programs that interested her. "That's really how I chose Knox," she said. "I liked the school, and I wanted to make it work." Since then, she has learned to appreciate the 10-week trimesters and the rigorous academic experience at Knox College.

At Knox, Ellis has focused on topics such as financial risk, probabilities and actuarial science. She is also part of Knox's Graduate School Exploratory Fellowship, which helps students explore teaching and research opportunities.

So how did this first-generation college student get connected to such a significant program of study and start thinking about graduate school? "The ACI scholarship really helped me consider graduate school because it's what gave me the motivation to even apply for the Mellon fellowship," she says. "Because without that, I don't think I would have had the means to support myself. The ACI scholarship was really a catalyst in that sense because it really motivated me to do these things. I'm extremely thankful for the investment in my future and how I'm going to pay that forward." In addition, mentors such as Mariangela McGuire of Knox's Vovis Center for Research and Advanced Study, have encouraged Ellis to think about public policy or the Fulbright student program, in which graduates conduct research or teach English in host countries.

Ellis has taken advantage of other learning opportunities at Knox College as well. She was president of the college's student business club this past year. She plans to join a newly established economics club, and she is president of Omicron Delta Epsilon, the honor society for economics, and a member of the Mortar Board Honor Society. When Ellis isn't in class or attending a club meeting, you'll find her working at the college's IT help desk, assisting people with computer-related issues. She learned about computers by working with her dad, who worked a second job troubleshooting computers for people in and around Belle.

Along with her economics interests, Ellis says she still thinks about architecture and interior design. "I was initially interested in architecture because Dad designed showcases for stores and businesses," she says. "One day, I might want to be an architect or interior designer."

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Featured ACI Program

ACI expands Peer Mentoring Program to nine colleges
Matching grant from Council of Independent Colleges helps grow program

[Millikin University](#), Decatur, and [Rockford University](#), Rockford, will join ACI's [Peer Mentoring Program](#) beginning with the 2017-18 academic year. The addition of these two institutions brings the total number of Peer Mentoring Program campuses to nine, including Augustana College, Rock Island; Blackburn College, Carlinville; Concordia University Chicago, River Forest; Dominican University, River Forest; Monmouth College, Monmouth; North Park University, Chicago; and Quincy University, Quincy.



ACI's Peer Mentoring Program matches first-generation college freshmen from low-income and/or minority backgrounds with trained peer mentors – usually upperclass students -- from similar backgrounds. Studies show that "high-touch" peer mentoring, together with other retention-focused interventions, helps students remain in school and increases graduation rates among underserved students.

In 2017-18, ACI's Peer Mentoring Program will serve a total of 132 students, including 22 mentors and 110 mentees. Students are organized into teams of one mentor to every five mentees, and each participating campus hosts at least two teams and may host as many as five teams. Mentors are required to develop a "success action plan" with each mentee and to maintain regular contact with them through in-person consultations, phone calls, texts and email. The goal is to help mentees navigate the challenges of freshman year by learning how to access and use campus resources that support their success and by developing productive relationships with peers, faculty and administrators.

A \$30,000 First Opportunity Partners grant from the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC), with support from the UPS Foundation, was awarded to ACI this spring. The grant to expand and enhance ACI's Expanded and Enhanced Peer Mentoring Program was awarded conditional on ACI raising matching funds. To secure the grant, ACI raised \$50,000 in pledges and gifts designated to peer mentoring by March 31 through fundraising associated with ACI's Annual Benefit Reception.

"We are grateful to our corporate, foundation and individual supporters who helped us achieve this important step," said Mick Weltman, ACI executive director. "The Peer Mentoring Program is a significant piece of our outreach efforts with members and first-generation students. We're looking forward to expanding this program in the years to come."

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Meet ACI Members

Elmhurst College prepares for the future with a new leader, an energized campus and growing programs



This spring, an Elmhurst College alumna gave the college an extraordinary gift of \$750,000. The anonymous donor's gift – the largest of its kind for Elmhurst -- is intended to help honors program students with financial need to study abroad.

While about 20 percent of the college's students typically do study abroad, including nearly half in the honors program, not all can afford it. Thanks to this donor, many more can have such a transformative experience, including deserving students with specific financial need, said Dr. Troy D. VanAken, president of Elmhurst College. Read [more](#).

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Millikin University maintains its founder's traditions: combining disciplines and focusing on performance-ready education model

Decatur's Millikin University is not your typical liberal arts institution. In fact, its academic tradition is a sort of hybrid in which founder James Millikin, a Pennsylvania-born businessman, cattleman and banker, wanted to bring together technical knowledge and skills with the humanities and sciences, theory with practice, and contemplation and reflection with active engagement in the world. When Millikin founded the University in 1901, he committed its future to what the university calls performance learning, education that is both grounded in doing, in practice and performance, and is made manifest to a larger public. Read [more](#).



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Did You Know?

BLDD Architects, an ACI Corporate Partner

Higher Education Design: Heightened design for higher learning

In an effort to recruit and retain today's student, higher education institutions must provide environments that support and encourage 21st century learning. That's why **BLDD Architects** developed the Higher Education Design Group: proven experts who are committed to designing cutting-edge environments that enable students and faculty to meet and exceed your educational mission.



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Michael Best, a full-service law firm and ACI Corporate Partner

Navigating Higher Education



Leaders of higher education institutions today face challenges and opportunities unlike anything their predecessors encountered. As student and faculty populations grow more diverse, the rules and values governing campus life are evolving and becoming increasingly complex. As traditional streams of resources constrict and historical enrollment patterns shift, new funding avenues are emerging.

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ACI News

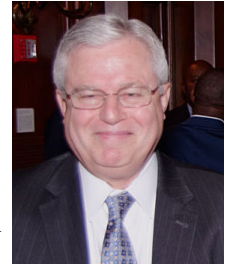
65th anniversary reception focuses on scholars, independent higher education

Nearly 200 people representing Illinois higher education, corporations and foundations, as well as individual supporters, attended ACI's 65th Anniversary Benefit Reception April 21. The annual event is a celebration of independent, private higher education in Illinois.

Held at the University Club of Chicago, the event generated financial support for ACI's Scholarship Program and its Peer Mentoring Program at participating member campuses. Both support underserved students at ACI's 24 member colleges and universities.

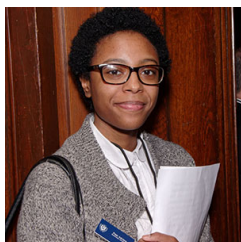


Keynote speaker was [Dr. Richard Ekman](#) (right), president of [The Council of Independent Colleges](#), Washington. Supporting private higher education is critical for America's future and society's needs, he said. Private higher education is accessible to underserved students, and graduation rates are better than graduation rates in other higher education sectors, he said. Private colleges are also affordable. "The reason why it's entirely affordable is because of the commitment of our colleges and universities and people like you in this room," Ekman said. "Scholarships make it possible for our students to succeed."



Education is a "noble mission" made "more noble" when extended to students who don't have the opportunity to attend college, said Dr. David L. Parkyn, president of [North Park University](#), Chicago. Parkyn was the first in his family to attend college and graduate, with significant help from mentors and instructors.

"We as ACI own an obligation," he said. "We claim a moral responsibility to open wide the doors to higher education, the doors that were closed to my family, and that too often remain closed for so many students and families across our nation."



KhayLeen Wright (left), a mentor and leader in ACI's Peer Mentoring Program at [Dominican University](#), River Forest, joined as a mentee in her freshman year. "Entering into college was a huge source of anxiety for me as I had no idea how college was supposed to look or feel," she told the attendees. Now a junior majoring in English, she supports incoming freshman students from similar backgrounds as a mentor in ACI's Peer Mentoring Program.

Terri Diggs Norman of AT&T, a corporate member of ACI Board of Trustees, said she and her husband, Art, veteran news anchor and reporter at WMAQ-TV, Chicago, are both first-generation college students. The Normans are excited about ACI's efforts to increase college graduation rates, she said. "We need graduates. We need a generation that doesn't come up to a podium and say 'we were the first in our family.' That should be a thing of the past," she said.

"I want to thank this organization for opening many doors," said Art Norman. He noted that any student can succeed in college, regardless of background or experience. "We want to mentor them every chance we get," he said. "You are a part of a solution."

Dr. Barbara A. Farley, president of [Illinois College](#), Jacksonville, and ACI president, thanked ACI supporters "for your enduring support for the students attending and graduating from our colleges and universities. These students need your support more than ever, so they can go on to do great things in their professional careers, their personal lives, their communities and the world."



Chicago Sinfonietta's Project Inclusion Ensemble (right) performed at the Benefit Reception. Event sponsors were [Aon](#), [Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.](#), and [UPS](#).

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Wheaton College joins ACI



The [board of trustees](#) of Associated Colleges of Illinois approved [Wheaton College](#), Wheaton, as ACI's 24th member, effective June 1, 2017. The board acted at its annual meeting this spring at the University Club of Chicago.

"Wheaton College is a Christian liberal arts college and graduate school noted for its rigorous academics, integration of faith and learning, and consistent ranking among the top liberal arts colleges in the country," according to a description provided by the college. "Since its founding in 1860, Wheaton has been guided by its original mission to provide excellence in Christian higher education. The College offers more than 40 undergraduate degrees and 16 graduate degrees, as well as a diverse range of co-curricular activities that develop students 'For Christ and His Kingdom.'" The college enrolls 2,400 undergraduate students and 450 graduate students.

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New ACI mission statement, plans and budget OK'd

The ACI Board of Trustees this spring adopted a new [mission statement](#), replacing a temporary mission statement approved in 2016. The new statement says:

"Associated Colleges of Illinois helps member colleges and universities advance independent liberal arts and sciences education and supports underserved students to succeed in college, career and life."

Board members approved a three-year strategic plan, which focuses on fundraising, returns to members and students through [scholarships](#), [peer mentoring](#) at nine member colleges and universities, [professional development conferences](#) and communications.

Also approved was a \$1.6 million budget and business plan for the new fiscal year. The plan focuses on services to members through scholarships and peer mentoring, conferences for professional staff, building and enhancing relationships with corporations and foundations, and greater public visibility. New initiatives include a wealth advisors breakfast program to help foster financial giving to ACI and a career fair to build relationships with Illinois employers for the benefit of students at ACI-affiliated colleges and universities.

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Board of trustees elects new leadership

Members of the ACI Board of Trustees elected Frank D. Cella of Marsh, Chicago, as chair, succeeding James S. Wylie, also of Marsh, who concluded a two-year term May 31. Cella said he was honored to be elected to the post, and noted he has devoted most of his professional career to higher education.

Board members also reelected two officers. President Barbara A. Farley of Illinois College, Jacksonville, was elected to a second two-year term as ACI president, and the board reelected Clifton L. Fenton, Chicago, as secretary/treasurer.

ACI leaders, from left, are president, Dr. Barbara A. Farley; chair, Frank D. Cella; and Mick Weltman, ACI executive director.



Joining the ACI Executive Committee is Interim President [Jamel SC Wright](#) (left) of Eureka College, Eureka. In her new executive committee role, she will succeed President David L. Parkyn of North Park University, Chicago, who retires June 30, and was honored by the board. She joins President John L. Comerford of Blackburn College, Carlinville, and Chipu Nyambuya, Virgil LLC, as members-at-large of the executive committee.

Board members also reelected committee chairs, including Bill Powell, Arthur J. Gallagher & Co., Advancement; Fenton, Audit/Investment; Lyn Bulman, Fellowes, Inc., Programs; and Jerry Murphy, St. Charles, Trusteeship.

In addition, new corporate board members were approved and added. They are Angela T. Allen, Washington, Pittman & McKeever, LLC, Chicago; Patrick H. Dominick, formerly of U.S. Trust, and joining PNC Chicago Wealth Management later this summer; and Simon Reeves, PNC Capital Advisors, LLC, Chicago. James Applegate, Springfield, former executive director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education and former vice president, Lumina Foundation, was approved by the executive committee this month.



New corporate members of the ACI Board of Trustees are, from left, Angela Allen, James Applegate, Patrick Dominick and Simon Reeves.

The board also honored Robert A. Gervasi, president of [Quincy University](#), Quincy. Gervasi, a former ACI president, left Quincy this summer to become president of Ohio Dominican University, Columbus.

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ACI awarded career fair matching grant by Council of Independent Colleges

The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) conditionally approved a [National Venture Fund Challenge grant](#) of \$21,750 to ACI in support of the first ACI Career Fair. The fair is designed as an annual event exclusively for students attending ACI member institutions. The first fair is to be held in early 2018.



ACI colleges and universities recognize the challenges their graduates face in connecting with employers. "In partnership with our member colleges and universities, we believe the career fair is an effective means for these students to obtain a job, or to improve their employment opportunities, including learning about the skills valued by employers and the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the job search process," said Mick Weltman, ACI executive director.

Under the terms of the grant agreement, ACI is required to raise at least \$21,750 in new gifts by mid-September to earn the CIC funds.

"We're proud to support ACI and its member colleges and universities through CIC's National Venture Fund grant program," said Richard Ekman, CIC president. "Designed to support collaborative approaches to solving major issues faced by private colleges, as well as to strengthen the role of [State Councils](#), projects coordinated by State Council members under this initiative have had a tangible impact on the strengthening of independent colleges and universities for 17 years."

For information about how to contribute the ACI Career Fair initiative, please contact Mick Weltman at mweltman@acifund.org or call 312-263-2391, ext. 0523.

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Putting your tax-deductible gift to ACI to work



Your personal gift to ACI can make a difference for Illinois students who seek a liberal arts education. Contributions help provide scholarships for underserved students attending ACI colleges and universities.

ACI serves 60,000 students attending 24 member colleges and universities in Illinois. Since its founding 65 years ago, the organization has provided more than \$70 million in scholarships to Illinois students, thanks to corporations, foundations and individuals. Your gift makes it possible for students to complete their college educations and enter the Illinois workforce ready to contribute

and succeed.

To provide financial support for ACI scholarship and peer mentoring programs, please visit <http://acifund.org/giving/> or contact Mick Weltman, ACI executive director, at 312-263-2391 or mweltman@acifund.org.

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ACI Annual Report recognized by PRSA Chicago chapter



We were pleased to be recognized this spring by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), Chicago chapter. ACI's [2015-2016 Annual Report](#) earned an Award of Excellence in the chapter's annual Skyline Awards competition.

The annual report was the first published by ACI in several years. The report was developed and edited by John Brooks, APR, ACI's communication director, and designed by ef Design Group Inc., Chicago. Photographers were Jim Pearson, Chicago, and Emma Stough, Augustana College.

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Dominican University - Elmhurst College - Eureka College - Greenville University - Illinois College
Judson University - Knox College - Lewis University - McKendree University - Millikin University
Monmouth College - North Central College - North Park University - Olivet Nazarene University
Principia College - Quincy University - Rockford University - Trinity Christian College
University of St. Francis - Wheaton College*

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