

October - November 2021

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Virtual ACI Fall Conference Set for Dec. 1-2

Conference includes four tracks with three sessions each



The ACI Fall Conference is Dec. 1-2 via Zoom. This virtual event was designed exclusively for staff of [member colleges and universities](#), as well as other ACI affiliates.

The conference will cover four unique tracks on corresponding dates and times shown below. Each track offers three 45-minute sessions. For specific sessions and speaker lineups, please visit the [ACI Fall Conference webpage](#). Online registration opens Nov. 1.

Wednesday, Dec. 1

- Advancement track: 9 a.m. to noon
- Finance track: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 2

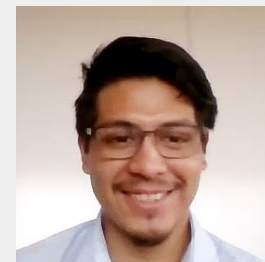
- Public Relations and Marketing track: 9 a.m. to noon
- Student Engagement track: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

This conference is sponsored by [BKD CPAs & Advisors](#).

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ACI Scholars

Juan Rios-Narciso Illinois Wesleyan University *ACI General Scholarship*



Juan Rios-Narciso is an entrepreneur and business owner who also happens to be a college student majoring in philosophy at [Illinois Wesleyan University](#) (IWU). Rios-Narciso, one of three brothers in the family, says his mother, a housekeeper, and his father, a farmhand whom he worked with during summers, dreamed of owning a business. Inspired by their dream, Rios-Narciso has opened related businesses in Colfax, Illinois: "Azteca Pan," a bakery he operates with his mother, and most recently, "Sabor de Mexico" or "Taste of Mexico," a restaurant that serves authentic Mexican food.

At the bakery, Rios-Narciso and his mother bake Mexican sweetbread, a favorite of his growing up. Over the years, his mother perfected her recipe. "We'd get it from the stores every week. But now, I don't have to. I can go talk to my mom, and then we'll make bread together. That's really what the bakery is," he says. The restaurant idea is Rios-Narciso's way of preserving traditional Mexican food, not the same as "Tex-Mex" food commonly served in the U.S. "I wanted to try to find a way to preserve Mexican tradition, and of course, preserve my mother's cooking as well. I always said she has the best food. Now I'm going to prove it," Rios-Narciso says.

[Read more of Juan's story.](#)

ACI News

Illinois College Joins ACI Peer Mentoring Program

ACI now operates the program on 12 member campuses

[Illinois College](#), Jacksonville, recently became the 12th ACI member to join the [ACI Peer Mentoring Program](#) (PMP).

The Illinois College program, managed by Olivia Raya, director of TRIO Student Support Services, will focus on retention efforts for first-generation and low-income students through peer-to-peer activities that promote self-reflection, and social and academic enrichment.

"Our goal is to train peer mentors from similar backgrounds to provide intentional and personalized connections to the campus community, creating a culture of engagement and



belonging that will improve the four-year graduation rate for minority and first-generation students," Raya said.

The ACI Peer Mentoring Program's overall goal is to help underserved students attending ACI member institutions stay in school and earn degrees, said Constance Willoughby, ACI director, programs. This academic year, the program supports 26 mentors and 130 mentees, a total of 156 students statewide, she said.

Foundations supporting the Peer Mentoring Program include the BNSF Railway Foundation, ITW Foundation, Siragusa Family Foundation and an organization that wishes to remain anonymous, said Lauren Holhut, ACI director, foundation relations and grants.

Two Foundation Grants Awarded to ACI



Two organizations awarded funds to ACI for scholarships, according to Lauren Holhut, ACI director, foundation relations and grants. The scholarships are the Carole Whitcomb Scholarship, for \$3,500, and the Aileen S. Andrew Foundation Scholarship, for \$10,000.

The Carole Whitcomb Scholarship is awarded by the [Council of Independent Colleges](#), Washington, D.C. The scholarship is named in honor of Carole B. Whitcomb, who was president of the Foundation for Independent Higher Education from 1992 to 1999. The scholarship's purpose is to "provide financial aid for one deserving undergraduate student who has demonstrated both financial need and academic promise."

The [Aileen S. Andrew Foundation](#), founded in 1947, is a private foundation based in Orland Park, Illinois. Its parent company was the Andrew Corporation, an independent manufacturer of hardware for communications networks. It was purchased in 2007 by CommScope, a network infrastructure provider. In 2021, the foundation provided funding for the scholarship. It previously provided funding for the College Readiness and Completion Initiative.

S. Georgia Nugent Elected ACI President, At-Large Executive Committee Members Reelected

The [ACI Board of Trustees](#) elected [President S. Georgia Nugent](#), right, of [Illinois Wesleyan University](#), Bloomington, as ACI president for the next two years. Nugent succeeds President Jamel SC Wright of Eureka College, who had served as ACI's president since 2018.



In her role as ACI president, Nugent will serve as vice chair of the board and of the ACI Executive Committee, presiding at meetings of the board or committee in the absence of the board chair, as well as other designated duties.

Nugent, Illinois Wesleyan's 20th president, was appointed to the position by the university's board of the trustees in November 2019 after serving briefly as interim president that year. She previously was president at Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio, and interim president at The College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio. Nugent has worked in faculty and administrative roles at Princeton University. She taught classics on the faculties of Brown University, Cornell University, Swarthmore College and Kenyon College.

She is currently a senior fellow at the [Council of Independent Colleges](#) (CIC). A widely published scholar of the classics and of higher education, Nugent earned a bachelor's degree from Princeton University and a doctorate from Cornell University.

Executive Committee reelects at-large members

Board members reelected [President Eric W. Fulcomer](#) of Rockford University, [President Gene C. Crume, Jr.](#) of Judson University, and [Leslie J. Sawyer](#), president and CEO of Environmental Design International, Inc., as members at-large of the ACI Executive Committee. The board determined that terms for Fulcomer and Sawyer will end May 31, 2022, and the term for Crume will end May 31, 2023. All three have served as Executive Committee members since 2018.



New ACI Board of Trustees members are, from left, Ruben Abarca, Toya Garcia-Bradow, Christopher Miceika and Patricia Mota.

ACI Welcomes Four Board of Trustees Members

The ACI Executive Committee approved four new members who joined the ACI Board of Trustees this fall. The new members are:

- [Ruben Abarca](#), principal consultant of his own company, CorpEdPartners, a subsidiary of Vislario, Inc.. He launched the company in 2019.
- [Toya Garcia-Bradow](#), environmental, social and governance (ESG), and inclusion and diversity (I&D) senior marketing and communications professional at William Blair. She has worked at William Blair since 2018.
- [Christopher Miceika](#), market director with PNC Institutional Asset Management. He has worked at PNC since 2019.
- [Patricia Mota](#), president and CEO of the Hispanic Alliance of Career Enhancement (HACE). She began as interim CEO in 2014 and one year later, was named permanent CEO.

With their addition, the board now includes 34 corporate board members, plus the 26 presidents of ACI's [member colleges and universities](#).

Did You Know?

From ACI Corporate Partner Michael Best

Top Issues in Higher Education for the Remainder of 2021 and Beyond



While many higher education institutions have reassessed, restructured, and evolved, continuing to move forward in 2021 and beyond will require even more resilience. The following is a list of top issues and considerations that colleges and universities should expect to continue to face during the remainder of 2021 and beyond.

Privacy, Security, and Online Learning

Privacy and cybersecurity risks have significantly increased due to greater security vulnerabilities surrounding the fast evolving legal and regulatory landscape governing the protection of student records and personally identifiable information. Although online learning itself is not new and can present risks absent a pandemic, the unprecedented move online eradicated the luxury of time to conduct adequate due diligence of the software solutions.

[Read more](#)

Upcoming Events

- **Wednesday, Nov. 10:** ACI Trusteeship Committee, 1:30 p.m., via Zoom
- **Thursday, Nov. 11:** ACI Advancement Committee, 3 p.m., via Zoom
- **Friday, Nov. 12:** ACI Program Committee, 9 a.m., via Zoom
- **Friday, Nov. 12:** ACI Communications Committee, 11 a.m., via Zoom
- **Wednesday, Nov. 17:** ACI Finance Committee, 10 a.m., via Zoom
- **Thursday, Nov. 18:** ACI Board of Trustees, 4 p.m., via Zoom
- **Thursday-Friday, Nov. 25-26:** Thanksgiving holiday, ACI office closed
- **Wednesday-Thursday, Dec. 1-2:** ACI Fall Conference, via Zoom
- **Tuesday, Dec. 7:** Advancement officers, 3:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **Wednesday, Dec. 8:** Presidents quarterly meeting, 3:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **Thursday, Dec. 9:** Communications officers, 3:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **Friday, Dec. 10:** Provosts quarterly meeting, 3:30 p.m., via Zoom
- **Friday, Dec. 17:** Presidents/corporate trustees quarterly meeting, 11 a.m., via Zoom
- **Friday, Dec. 24-Monday, Jan. 3:** Christmas/New Year's Day holidays, ACI office closed
- **Monday, Jan. 17:** Martin Luther King Jr. Day, ACI office closed

Help a College Student Through End-of-Year Giving

Don't forget to include ACI in your end-of-year charitable plans! A named scholarship is the best way to make an impact and support a first-generation or low-income student this giving season. For named scholarship opportunities, visit our [website](#).

Your gift makes a difference for the many students attending ACI-affiliated institutions across Illinois. To see the impact your gift can have on these students, [watch them tell their stories](#) and see how ACI scholarships make a difference in their lives. Visit our website to [make a gift today](#). Thank you for your support!



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ACI Member Colleges and Universities

Augustana College - Aurora University - Benedictine University - Blackburn College
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Illinois Wesleyan University - 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
Saint Xavier University - Trinity Christian College - University of St. Francis - Wheaton College

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