



ACI Reporter

July - August 2018

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Eureka College and North Central College Join ACI Peer Mentoring Program



ACI's [Peer Mentoring Program](#) welcomes two additional campuses to its growing statewide network: Eureka College, Eureka, and North Central College, Naperville, will launch peer mentoring teams when the fall semester begins. The colleges secured their places in the program through a grant competition in May 2018. Each college will be funded for two teams of five mentees and two mentors.

ACI's Peer Mentoring Program seeks to increase college graduation rates among low-income, first-generation college students and students of color. To accomplish this goal, the program supports students who arrive at ACI member institutions with risk factors that could prevent them from staying in school and reaching graduation. To counter those risks -- from financial and educational inequities to lack of family experience with higher education -- ACI matches these freshmen with trained peer mentors recruited from sophomores, juniors and seniors who faced similar challenges as freshmen. By building a "relationship bridge" between mentees, mentors, the campus community and its support services, ACI's Peer Mentoring Program provides an early warning system that can anticipate and address the specific challenges these students face -- before those challenges derail a student's college career.

With the addition of Eureka College and North Central College, and the renewal of programs at the campuses already participating, ACI's 2018-19 Peer Mentoring Program will serve 156 students, including 130 mentees and 26 mentors at 11 ACI member institutions in urban, suburban and rural communities across Illinois. The 11 ACI Peer Mentoring Program campuses are:

- [Augustana College](#), Rock Island
- [Blackburn College](#), Carlinville
- [Concordia University Chicago](#), River Forest
- [Dominican University](#), River Forest
- [Eureka College](#), Eureka
- [Millikin University](#), Decatur
- [Monmouth College](#), Monmouth
- [North Central College](#), Naperville

- [North Park University](#), Chicago
- [Quincy University](#), Quincy
- [Rockford University](#), Rockford

Eureka College's director of first generation programming will select students to be mentored based on a combination of factors, including: first generation status, family income and expected family contribution to college costs (based on results of FAFSA), participation in Eureka's summer first generation orientation program and indicators of the need for academic supports, including high school GPA and ACT/SAT scores.

North Central College will focus its Peer Mentoring Program on students who identify as black or African-American. The decision to target assistance to this population arises from research the college conducted recently, which found that its black students had lower retention and graduation rates than other minority populations on campus. ACI Peer Mentoring Program funds, says the college, will supplement existing interventions for a cohort of black students.

ACI's Peer Mentoring Program is funded by grants from the Council of Independent Colleges, the Siragusa Foundation, ITW Foundation and BNSF Foundation, as well as sponsorships and individual contributions secured through ACI's Annual Benefit Reception, which raised more than \$90,000 in 2018 in support of the program. For information about making gifts to benefit ACI's Peer Mentoring Program, contact Executive Director Mick Weltman, 312-263-2391, ext. 0523 or write to mweltman@acifund.org.

ACI Scholars

Vanessa Murillo **Trinity Christian College** **ACI General Scholarship**

[Watch Vanessa tell her story!](#)

"When I did receive that ACI scholarship, it was like, 'Oh, thank the Lord, I don't have to worry about it for this month.' Because it really makes a difference in my tuition, it really does."

Vanessa Murillo came to [Trinity Christian College](#) as a first-generation college student, interested in a career to make a real difference. As she prepares to begin her senior year, Murillo is focused on a major in social work and a possible career working with teenage mothers or in child protective services. Murillo, from Chicago, says she likes the idea of working directly with clients.

"For social work, you can work in school setting, in a hospice setting, foster-care system or nonprofit organization," Murillo says. "So, I wanted to do something where I knew I didn't have to limit myself and also knew that I could work with children, adults or any age group that I wanted to work with in the future. I think social work gives you that experience of real-life issues that every person goes through – connecting people to resources in any kind of environment, in any situation they're in."

Murillo knew teenage mothers when she was in high school and knows the challenges they face. "Teen moms, single moms, need resources, need guidance, and I want to be that person," she says. "I want to help people who are young teen moms."

To make ends meet while she's in college, Murillo works two jobs – in Trinity Christian's Social Work Department and in its fitness center. She also makes monthly tuition payments. With a younger brother and a new baby sister living with her parents at home, Murillo says she doesn't want to ask for family help to pay tuition. "I want to show I can do this on my own," Murillo says.

That's why she was grateful to be selected by the college for an ACI General Scholarship. "When I did receive that ACI scholarship, it was like, 'Oh, thank the Lord, I don't have to worry about it for this month.' Because it really makes a difference in my tuition, it really does."

Murillo says Trinity Christian College is perfect for her because it is close to Chicago, not too big and made her feel at home. "I only visited five colleges, and Trinity was the first one," she says. "I started visiting others just to have perspective, but I knew after visiting the colleges that I wanted to come to Trinity. I felt like everyone was so willing to open their hearts to me."



Murillo has earned academic achievements at Trinity. She has been named to dean's list and was inducted into Phi Alpha, the national honor society for social work. Murillo is also an active participant in Sabor Latino, a club that promotes Latino culture at Trinity Christian.

Jordan Bruster **Rockford University** **ACI General Scholarship**

[Watch Jordan tell his story!](#)

"I was thankful to get the ACI scholarship. For me it's the difference between having books for school and sometimes the difference between coming to school or not."



Jordan Bruster traveled a long way from Corpus Christi, Texas, to be a student at [Rockford University](#). A community college professor in Corpus Christi knew the university's Music Department head and suggested an interview and audition. Bruster chose Rockford, which offered him performing arts talent scholarships, work-study opportunities and an ACI General Scholarship.

For this junior musical theater major, the university has provided him a chance to grow as a musician and actor. Bruster has appeared in seven productions at Rockford. He plays guitar, piano, saxophone and accordion, an instrument he learned to play at Rockford. He sings in the Vocal Collective, a select mixed choral ensemble, and acts.

Bruster's experience at Rockford has opened many doors in music and theater. For example, he has attended Illinois Theatre Association and Ohio Theatre Alliance conferences, meeting people in the same business and getting career advice. For the immediate future, Bruster sees himself working on stage somewhere. "I hope to work this summer with a professional theater company," Bruster says. "This definitely wouldn't be happening without the training I've received here." His plans after

Rockford? Bruster says he wants to attend graduate school, and possibly teach acting or music.

Bruster says his ACI General Scholarship recipient was a big help. "I don't come from a background with a lot of money," he says. "I was thankful to get the ACI scholarship. For me it's the difference between having books for school and sometimes the difference between coming to school or not. There's always that extra thousand dollars, and 'Oh, where am I going to get that?'"

While at Rockford, Bruster says he's learned some things about topics outside his music and theater education. "I never thought I'd be taking a Greek literature class, art history or physical education," he says. "I feel well-rounded."

Meet ACI Members

Lewis University Aims to Educate Students for Careers, While Teaching Curiosity and Broader Thinking

Creating 'Master Learners'



What do students want when they go to college? Many go to learn a particular skill and qualify for high-paying careers. At Lewis University, students are taught to think bigger and beyond earning a degree and getting a job, says Dr. David J. Livingston, president of Lewis since 2016. They are taught to think about participating in broader society and about human and technological changes in the contemporary workforce, so they become "master learners" -- people aware of their surroundings, curious about the world and interested in learning. "That is what companies want," Livingston says. "They want somebody who adds value to their organization now and in the future."

Read the [full story](#).

ACI Welcomes New Presidents to Blackburn College, North Park University and Principia College

When the new academic year opens in August, three of ACI's 25 member colleges and universities will have new presidents.

[Dr. Jennifer L. Braaten](#), left, was named interim president of [Blackburn College](#), Carlinville, effective July 1. Braaten who recently retired after serving as president of Ferrum College in Virginia, was appointed after Dr. John L. Comerford left Blackburn as president to become president of Otterbein University in Ohio. Braaten will serve in the role while a search continues for a permanent president.



[Mary K. Surridge](#), center, will become president of [North Park University](#), Chicago, at the start of the new academic year, succeeding Dr. David L. Parkyn, who retired last year. Surridge, the university's vice president for advancement since 2008, was nominated by the board of trustees earlier this year. Her nomination was approved in June by delegates representing the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC), North Park's founder and sponsoring denomination, at the ECC's Annual Meeting in Minneapolis. Carl Balsam is serving as interim president through Aug. 15.

[Dr. Jolanda M. Westerhof](#), right, became president of [Principia College](#), Elsah, in March, succeeding Dr. Jonathan W. Palmer. Before she became Principia's president, she was associate vice president and director of Teacher Education for the Academic Leadership and Change Division at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in Washington, D.C.

Remembering Jonathan Palmer

Dr. Jonathan W. Palmer, former president of Principia College, Elsah, died peacefully in May at his home in St. Louis. Palmer, a 1978 graduate of the college, served 10 years as its president, beginning in 2008.

He oversaw a number of significant developments at Principia, including accomplishments in academic programs, launching academic centers and institutes, and improvements to campus buildings, according to [Principia Purpose](#), the college's alumni magazine.



Before serving as Principia's president, Palmer was associate dean and professor at the College of William & Mary. His background included experience at Harvard Business School, University of Southern California and the Helsinki School of Economics.

Please Save These Dates for Upcoming ACI Events!

- **Thursday, September 20, 2018:** ACI Board of Trustees meeting. This meeting is intended for corporate board members and others interested in ACI. Meeting is from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. **Location:** TBA
- **Friday, Nov. 2, 2018:** [ACI Fall Conference](#), featuring professional development tracks for member college and university staff working in advancement, finance, public relations and marketing, and student engagement. Featured speaker is [Doug Lederman](#), co-editor and co-founder, *Inside Higher Ed*. Meeting is from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. **Location:** [Microsoft Technology Center](#), Aon Building, 200 E. Randolph St., Chicago, IL 60601.

- **Wednesday, Nov. 7, 2018:** ACI HR, and Diversity and Inclusion Leaders Breakfast. This event highlights higher education and workforce development in Illinois. Those who should attend are leaders in corporate and higher education human resources, career services, as well as diversity and inclusion leaders. Featured speakers are Monika Black, Ph.D., co-founder and chief strategist, and Tomer Yogev, co-founder and chief synergist, both with [TandemSpring](#), Chicago. **Location:** University Club of Chicago, 76 East Monroe Street, Chicago, IL 60603.
- **Thursday, Dec. 6, 2018:** ACI Wealth Advisors Breakfast. This event focuses on investing in ACI's student-development programs, such as the Peer Mentoring Program, Career and Internship Fair and the organization's scholarship programs. Those who should attend are financial wealth advisors and guests. Featured speaker is Carolyn Leonard, CEO and co-founder, [DyMynd](#), Chicago. **Location:** University Club of Chicago, 76 East Monroe Street, Chicago, IL 60603.

ACI to Distribute \$75,000 in Scholarship Funds to Members



THE COUNCIL OF
INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

Thanks to a grant from the [Council of Independent Colleges](#) (CIC), Washington, through its CIC/UPS Educational Endowment, ACI will distribute \$75,000 in scholarship funds this fall to [member colleges and universities](#).

Each of ACI's 25 member colleges and universities will be sent \$3,000 for use during the 2018-2019 academic year as a scholarship to one full-time undergraduate student who is a first-generation, low-income, minority or new American student.

"We're pleased to provide these funds to our member colleges and universities for support of students on their campuses," said Mick Weltman, ACI executive director. "Part of ACI's mission is to support underserved students, and the [CIC/UPS Scholarships Program](#) helps us make a difference." In addition, Weltman said UPS has supported other ACI initiatives.

Since 1985, approximately \$56 million has been awarded in scholarship grants to CIC State Councils, such as ACI, to assist more than 20,000 first-generation, low-income, minority, or new American students at independent colleges across the country.

ACI Welcomes Two Corporate Board of Trustees Members

Two new corporate members joined the ACI [Board of Trustees](#) this summer, following approval by the Executive Committee.

Jason Palmer, left, is senior managing consultant for PFM Asset Management LLC, Chicago. He serves as the multi-asset class strategist for the company's Midwest region. Palmer is experienced in managing outsourced investment strategies, investment consulting and portfolio management.

Donald A. Campbell, Jr., right, formed Campbell & Company in 1976 and guided the company to national prominence as the country's leading not-for-profit fundraising, marketing and executive search firm. He became chairman in 1995 and retired from active management in 2006.



With Palmer and Campbell, there are 34 corporate members of the ACI Board of Trustees, along with the presidents of 25 member colleges and universities.

Congratulations to ACI Corporate Board Member Vince Williams

Vince Williams, ACI corporate board member since 2016, was named to [DiversityMBA's 2018 Top 100](#) under 50 emerging and executive leaders with advanced degrees. The top 100 leaders were selected from a broad spectrum of companies with a global reach. More than 350 people were nominated.

Williams is director of membership and business development for The Executives' Club of Chicago. Honorees will be recognized Sept. 19-20 at DiversityMBA's 12th Annual Elite Business Leaders Conference and Awards Gala in Chicago.



Take Advantage of Job and Internship Listings, Micro-Internships Available Through ACI Website

Employers: Let ACI help you find staff and interns to help you build your talent pipeline!

ACI is posting jobs and internships on the ACI website that will be seen by many of the 70,000 students ACI serves at 25 member colleges and universities. Posting a job or internship is easy -- visit ACI's [website](#), complete the form we've provided for employers, send us your company logo, and we'll post the announcement for free.

In addition, ACI has partnered with [Parker Dewey](#) to provide [paid micro-internships](#) for college students and recent grads. These micro-internships are a great way to gain professional experience through short-term, paid assignments.

Questions about ACI's Jobs and Internships webpage should be directed to ACI Executive Director Mick Weltman at mweltman@acifund.org or by calling 312-263-2391, ext. 0523.



Did You Know?

THINK BIG: Build, Innovate, Grow From BLDD Architects, an ACI corporate partner

From budget cuts to ever-changing educational delivery methods and everything in between, you face BIG challenges on a daily basis.

BLDD Architects wants to make it easy to get the ball rolling on your biggest facility priorities, without breaking the bank. That's why it developed a powerful design process for education: THINK BIG.

Read [more about it](#).



Make a Tax-Deductible Gift to Support ACI Programs

Your gift to ACI can help provide scholarships to underserved students or provide support for peer mentoring for low-income, first-generation college students at ACI-affiliated colleges and universities. Financial gifts are tax deductible as provided by law.

To provide financial support for ACI Scholarship and Peer Mentoring Programs, please visit the ACI [website](#) or contact Mick Weltman, ACI executive director, at 312-263-2391, ext. 0523 or write to mweltman@acifund.org.



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Monmouth College - North Central College - North Park University - Olivet Nazarene University
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