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In This Issue

- ACI Virtual Benefit Reception Raises Critical Funds Despite Pandemic
- ACI Initiates Career Mentoring Program for College Seniors
- ACI Board Elects New Leaders, Prepares for Future Amid Pandemic
- Eureka College Student Joins ACI Board of Trustees
- Knox College Students Win 150 Media Stream/ACI Contest for Digital Art
- ACI Distributes CIC/UPS Scholarship Funds to Members
- Expense Reduction Analysts Becomes ACI Corporate Partner
- ACI Board Member to Edit Prestigious Higher Education Publication
- From Sikich, an ACI corporate partner: Composite Score Changes and Their Impact on Your Institution
- Please Save These Dates
- Financial Gifts are Needed to Support Students at ACI Member Colleges and Universities!

ACI Virtual Benefit Reception Raises Critical Funds Despite Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic forced ACI's annual Benefit Reception to become a virtual event, which launched in early May. The resulting [Virtual Benefit Reception](#) helped the organization raise about \$60,000 net through donations, greetings and sponsorships, said Mick Weltman, ACI executive director.

"We thank the companies and individuals who donated funds to support students attending ACI member colleges and universities," Weltman said. "This event is critical to our fundraising efforts which support ACI member schools and the important work we do. Support for our member schools and students has never been needed more."

Nearly all of ACI's [27 member colleges and universities](#) have announced plans to reopen campuses this fall with in-person and online classes, while observing health and safety measures. Returning students, affected by family unemployment and other concerns, are expected to seek significant financial aid to help fund their college educations. ACI provides scholarship funds to members to make available to students in need, as well as emergency financial aid, peer mentoring and other forms of support.



ACI thanks the speakers who presented during the Virtual Benefit Reception, from the upper left to right:

- **Frank D. Cella**, chair, ACI Board of Trustees
- **Lyn Bulman**, chair, Program Committee, ACI Board of Trustees
- **Melissa B. Donaldson**, vice president and chief diversity officer, Wintrust Financial Corporation
- **Montse Cancino-Aguilar**, Michele and Peter S. Wilmott, Student Leadership Fund scholarship recipient, Knox College
- **Chandler Claudé**, ACI Peer Mentoring Program, Monmouth College
- **Chloe Overstreet**, ACI Peer Mentoring Program, Eureka College
- **Jamel SC Wright**, president, ACI Board of Trustees and president, Eureka College
- **J. Vincent Williams**, corporate trustee, ACI Board of Trustees

Sponsors were Aon, Fidelity Charitable, Gallagher, Husch Blackwell and Robbins Schwartz. Next year's ACI Benefit Reception is planned for April 16, 2021, at the University Club of Chicago.

ACI News

ACI Initiates Career Mentoring Program for College Seniors

Organization partners with Mentoring Complete to help seniors as they enter the workforce

This fall, ACI is expanding its [College-to-Career](#) offerings to include a [Career Mentoring Program](#) which matches college seniors with business mentors who will help guide the students as they launch careers. The new mentoring program will be available through career services offices at ACI's [27 member colleges and universities](#).

ACI's Career Mentoring Program is funded in part through a National Venture Fund grant from the [Council of Independent Colleges](#), Washington, D.C.

ACI's Career Mentoring Program is a partnership with [Mentoring Complete](#), a St. Louis-based firm with considerable experience in successful business and corporate mentoring programs. Among its clients are Enterprise Holdings, New York Power Authority, OhioHealth and Reach International.



"We're designing the Career Mentoring Program to help get college seniors engaged at a high level with mentors in their chosen career fields, and to help them begin successful careers and be productive citizens," said Mick Weltman, ACI executive director. Career mentoring complements other components of ACI's College-to-Career programs, he says. The program includes Work and Life Skills Boot Camps, and ACI's Career Development Conference and Career Expo, which help students prepare for careers; micro-internships through Parker Dewey, which help students get valuable work experience while in college; and ACI's [job-postings page](#), which announces positions available for alumni of ACI-affiliated schools.



Students and their career mentors can have honest conversations about the areas of development most important to the student, says Aaron Adams, partner and mentoring expert with Mentoring Complete. "The design of the program creates consistent interactions, so the mentor and mentee have opportunities to assess how things are progressing, and make adjustments along the way," he says. "Mentees (students) develop a better understanding of how to translate what they've learned in the classroom into the workplace." In some cases, mentors can help mentees find future career opportunities.

Career Mentoring Program dates for the fall term are Sept. 15, 2020 to Dec. 15, 2020. Spring program dates are Jan. 15, 2021 to April 30, 2021. ACI will work with career services teams at member colleges and universities to publicize the new program and recruit mentees, who will be placed with potential mentors as available.

Meanwhile, ACI will reach out to corporate sponsors and strategic partners to recruit experienced mentors. People interested in becoming mentors should apply though the [career mentoring website](#) by Sept. 1. Mentors will be paired with mentees for one semester based on availability. For more information, please contact ACI Executive Director Weltman at 312-263-2391, ext. 1, or write to mweltman@acifund.org.

ACI Board Elects New Leaders, Prepares for Future Amid Pandemic



The [ACI Board of Trustees](#) elected Lyn Bulman, left, retired executive vice president of global human resources, Fellowes Brands, to a two-year term as board chair, effective June 1. Bulman, Oak Park, Illinois, has served as the board's Program Committee chair. She was elected at the board's annual meeting May 15, held via videoconference because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The board also elected Angela T. Allen, right, of Mitchell Titus, as treasurer and Finance Committee chair. Allen, who was already serving as a board member, succeeded Clifton L. Fenton, who served several years in both roles and remains a corporate trustee. Fenton is a retired investment banker. The board's other officer, Dr. Jamel SC Wright, president of Eureka College, remains as ACI president.

Bulman succeeded Frank D. Cella, who was elected chair in 2017. Cella, managing director, Marsh USA, Inc., remains a corporate trustee of ACI. She thanked Cella for his service and noted that he had made important improvements in the way the board operates.

"I am delighted to be taking this role," Bulman told the trustees. "I think ACI is a great organization. I'm very proud of the work that we do, and I think there's a lot of great progress going on that we can continue." Bulman also noted significant issues facing the organization and the board, starting with the pandemic and the uncertainty it has created for higher education and ACI. "We don't know what programs we can run in person or what we can't run at all. Nobody knows what the impact on charitable giving is going to be. So, we're going to definitely have to be adaptable," she said.

She cited a critical need for fundraising for scholarships and program support to assist students attending ACI member colleges and universities, and she asked board members to be more engaged to help ACI's success.

New committee chairs, vice chairs elected

The board elected chairs and vice chairs of its five standing committees. Each was elected to a two-year term, beginning June 1. Committee chairs serve as members of the board's Executive Committee. Chairs and vice chairs are:

- **Advancement:** Anthony LoBello, Chicago, chair, and Donald A. Campbell, Jr., retired from Campbell & Co., vice chair
- **Communications:** Angie Winschel, Almanac, Inc., chair, and Holly Bartecki, Jasculca Terman Strategic Communications, vice chair
- **Finance:** Angela T. Allen, Mitchell Titus, chair; Bradley Summers, Wells Fargo, vice chair
- **Program:** Debora L. Osgood, Hogan Marren Babbo & Rose, Ltd., chair; Justin Lee Allen, BDJ Trucking Co., vice chair
- **Trusteeship:** Jerry Murphy, retired from DeVry Education Group, chair; and Barry C. Mastin, Jr., Liberty Mutual Insurance Co., vice chair

Strategic plan, business plan and provisional budget approved

To fund ACI, trustees authorized the Executive Committee to approve a \$1.36 million provisional budget, about \$160,000 less than the budget approved for the previous fiscal year, due mostly to the effects of the pandemic. Board leaders plan to closely monitor ACI's budget this year and make adjustments as needed.

The Executive Committee also approved a revised three-year strategic plan, beginning June 1, 2020 to May 31, 2023, and business plan for the next year, June 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021. The strategic plan is focused on two key drivers: building financial support and growing participation in ACI programs. The business plan outlines the organization's action plans for the new fiscal year. The plan includes advancement, communication, operations and program activities, with goals, objectives, strategies and contingency plans.

Eureka College Student Joins ACI Board of Trustees

Chloe Overstreet is the organization's first student board member

The ACI Board of Trustees elected Chloe Overstreet, a student at [Eureka College](#), Eureka, Illinois, as the board's first student representative in ACI's 68-year history. Overstreet, from Stillman Valley, Illinois, will begin her junior year at Eureka College this fall, majoring in history and political science, and business administration.

Overstreet was elected May 15 at the board's annual meeting, held via video conference. She was nominated by the board's Trusteeship Committee, which began discussions earlier this year about adding a student representative to further diversify the board, said Mick Weltman, ACI executive director. Currently, the board has 37 corporate members, plus the presidents of ACI's 27 member colleges and universities.

Overstreet is a first-generation college student, who started her college career at Eureka shortly after her father died in a work-related accident. One reason she chose Eureka is because her college recruiter reached out after the accident and assured Overstreet the school would help her, she says. Once at Eureka, she joined ACI's Peer Mentoring Program, aimed at helping first-generation college students through their critical first year. She began as a mentee and is now a mentor to incoming first-generation students.

"The program offered both guidance and financial relief as I was beginning college," Overstreet wrote in a letter to the board. "Access to emergency funds provided the relief that I needed to start college." As a mentor, she says she has had "an incredible opportunity" to watch classmates grow and be successful. Serving as an ACI board member will provide a student perspective and help other students access opportunities that ACI provides, Overstreet added.

"Chloe is amazing, amazing student," said Dr. Jamel SC Wright, Eureka College president and ACI president. "She came in as a first-generation student and immediately engaged with the ACI program. She's very outgoing, she is collaborative and demonstrates great ethical skills."

In May, Overstreet appeared in a video about her experience at Eureka College and the Peer Mentoring Program for ACI's Virtual Benefit Reception. Her video can be viewed at <https://acifund.org/2020-aci-virtual-benefit-reception/>



Knox College Students Win 150 Media Stream/ACI Contest for Digital Art



Two students from [Knox College](#), Galesburg, Illinois, won the digital art contest sponsored by [150 Media Stream](#), Chicago, and organized by ACI. Odessa Sagli, second from left, Portland, Oregon, and Patrick Steppan, third from left, Chicago, who both recently graduated, will be awarded a total of \$3,000 by 150 Media Stream to complete their collaborative project. Their project will be featured on the 150 Media Stream art installation sometime this fall, with a launch date to be announced.

Located in the lobby of 150 N. Riverside Plaza in Chicago, 150 Media Stream is a unique public media art installation with 89 LED blades, the largest structure of its kind in the city, said Yuge Zhou, left, curator. Launched in 2017, the 150 Media Stream showcases commissioned work by emerging and renowned media artists on a monthly basis.

The students' project focuses on ecological concerns and the loss of species, Zhou said. "The goal of this contest was to practice students' skills in creating digital art, to acquire experience in producing art in public space and to provide a prestige platform to showcase their work," she added.

This spring, Sagli earned a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art, with a minor in design. Steppan earned a Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science, with minors in art history and design. Tim Stedman, right, visiting professor of art, Knox College, supervised the students' project. Students at each of ACI's 27 member colleges and universities were invited to submit proposals for the contest.



ACI Distributes CIC/UPS Scholarship Funds to Members



ACI distributed \$81,000 in CIC/UPS Scholarships to assist students studying at ACI's 27 member colleges and universities. Member schools were sent \$3,000 each, thanks to a grant from the [Council of Independent Colleges](#) (CIC) through the CIC/UPS Educational Endowment.

Called the CIC/UPS Scholarship, each member will present a \$3,000 scholarship to a student whose background reflects one or more of the characteristics of these student populations: first-generation, low-income, minority or new American students.

"The CIC/UPS Educational Endowment is a significant contributor to ACI and the students we serve throughout Illinois," said Mick Weltman, ACI executive director. "We are grateful for their continuing support. These funds are critical this year as students return to campuses this fall in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic downturn that has resulted."

Nationally, CIC provided more than \$1.6 million in student scholarships through state-based associations such as ACI to make private colleges and universities more affordable and accessible to underserved students. The CIC/UPS Scholarship Program has made a private college education possible for more than 21,000 low-income and first generation students.

Expense Reduction Analysts Becomes ACI Corporate Partner

ACI welcomed [Expense Reduction Analysts](#) (ERA) this month as our eighth corporate partner. Corporate partners provide significant funding for ACI's professional development conferences, and they offer products and services relevant to higher education.



For more than 25 years, ERA has helped educational institutions reduce costs without compromising quality or service. The company's higher education group focuses on finding savings in cost or profit centers in areas such as food service, telecommunications, janitorial supplies and service, printing and production services, office supplies, facility maintenance, payroll processing and credit card fees, and many more. Based in Northbrook, Illinois, ERA operates in more than 25 countries with more than 650 consultants.

In addition to ERA, ACI's corporate partners include Baker Tilly, Bon Appetit, Michael Best, Paycor, PNC, RBO PrintLogistix and Sikich.

ACI Board Member to Edit Prestigious Higher Education Publication



Congratulations to Dr. James L. Applegate, an ACI Board of Trustees member, chosen to lead [Grapevine](#), one of the nation’s most trusted, longest-standing reports on state funding for higher education. He will succeed Dr. Jim Palmer, who retired.

Applegate becomes the fourth editor in Grapevine’s 60-year history, according to a news release from [Center for the Study of Education Policy](#) (CSEP), Illinois State University, Normal. Since 2010, Grapevine has been a joint effort between the Center for the Study of Education Policy and the State Higher Education Executive Officers.

Applegate joined Illinois State in 2017 to serve as a visiting professor and researcher for CSEP while supporting Palmer’s work on Grapevine. He previously served as executive director for the [Illinois Board of Higher Education](#) (IBHE) and senior vice president of the [Lumina Foundation](#).

Did You Know?

From Sikich, an ACI corporate partner Composite Score Changes and Their Impact on Your Institution



The Department of Education’s (DOE) composite score is a measure of the relative financial health of an institution, introduced as part of the Higher Education Act of 1965. While it measures the financial health of an institution, it does not indicate or evaluate educational quality of the institution. The composite score is a combined score of three separate ratios.

[Read more](#)

Please Save These Dates

- **Friday, July 3:** Independence Day (observed), ACI office closed
- **Tuesday, Aug. 18 to Thursday, Aug. 20:** Midwest Roundtable on Talent, Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island, Michigan
- **Friday, Nov. 6:** ACI Fall Conference, location TBD
- **Friday, April 16, 2021:** Presidents Forum
- **Friday, April 16, 2021:** Board of Trustees Annual Meeting
- **Friday, April 16, 2021:** ACI Benefit Reception, University Club of Chicago

Financial Gifts are Needed to Support Students at ACI Member Colleges and Universities!

Students in need are seeking immediate help for fall 2020



**Associated
Colleges
of Illinois**

Students in need are seeking immediate financial help to enroll in member colleges and universities this fall. Many parents and students are unemployed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. ACI welcomes your financial gifts, which it sends to member colleges and universities for scholarships, emergency financial aid and programming to support these college students.

ACI is a charitable organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to ACI are tax-deductible, as described in the Code. ACI welcomes cash gifts, online giving by credit card and gifts of stock. Be sure to consult your tax advisor/preparer for definitive guidance before engaging in any transaction.

To make an online gift, visit [ACI's Giving webpage](#) and choose how you prefer to designate your donation. Or, contact Mick Weltman, ACI executive director, at 312-263-2391, ext. 1, or write to mweltman@acifund.org.



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ACI Member Colleges and Universities

Augustana College - Aurora University - Benedictine University - Blackburn College
Concordia University Chicago - Dominican University - Elmhurst College - Eureka College - Illinois College
Illinois Wesleyan University - Judson University - Knox College - Lewis University - McKendree University
Millikin University - Monmouth College - North Central College - North Park University
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St. Augustine College - Saint Xavier University - Trinity Christian College - University of St. Francis - Wheaton College

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