

Board Considers Research Findings and ACI's Future, Approves Budget, Reelects Members

May 2, 2023

Participants at ACI's 2023 Annual Meeting focused on research findings and the organization's future, while also approving a budget for the fiscal year beginning June 1, plus reelecting and appointing board members and Executive Committee members. The meeting was led by Lyn Bulman, chair, [ACI Board of Trustees](#).



Lyn Bulman

The board spent most of the meeting discussing findings from two research studies: A member survey, conducted by David Schreier and Associates, reported by board member Kimberly Marshall, FORVIS, LLP, and a benchmarking survey of five state councils that, like ACI, are fundraising councils, reported by board member Leah Wallace, retired from Citi. The councils included the Iowa College Foundation, Michigan College Alliance, Missouri Colleges Fund, Inc., Ohio Foundation of Independent Colleges and Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges. Board members also heard updates from each of its five committees.

The post-pandemic environment has given many organizations the opportunity to review their programming and delivery on mission. As a result of shifting dynamics in the economy and on members campuses, the future ACI leads must also shift to be responsive, said April Arnold, ACI executive director.

"We have many unique decisions to make, more questions to ask and more research to do. We're building a new bike while riding it," Arnold said, noting that member schools also face challenges.

As a result of ongoing discussions by board members and findings from the research studies – with more to be reported and considered – the board approved a \$1.2 million budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Budget considerations included aligning expenses with members assessments, focusing on programs most important to members and that yield funding, and learning from state councils, Arnold said.

The adopted budget includes realignments of staff and a plan to investigate ways to allocate expenses and funding for an annual fundraising event in a different way, with permission from existing corporate sponsors and contributors Arnold added. The organizational focus for the coming year will remain on scholarship support, mentoring opportunities and internship development.

Board members reappointed

Board members reappointed six members to new two-year terms. They are Elizabeth Cook, MiCat Group, LLC/CME Group board member; Robert J. Dow, Graystone

Consulting; Nichole Johnson, Gallagher; Raymond E. Krouse, Jr., Sikich, LLP; Leslie J. Sawyer, Environmental Design International, Inc.; and Nicholas A. Simpson, Jackson Lewis, P.C.

Two presidents were named to the Executive Committee. President S. Georgia Nugent, Illinois Wesleyan University, was reappointed ACI president for the next two years. President David J. Livingston, Lewis University, was appointed to the Executive Committee as a member-at-large.