



2025 ACCT Leadership Congress sessions featuring speakers from Texas community colleges

Wednesday, October 22

1:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Building Momentum for Innovative Dual Enrollment Pathways Policies

Free for all Congress attendees (must register in advance)

This session will highlight how two leading states—California and Texas—are advancing innovative state policies to broaden access to dual enrollment pathways, particularly for students who have been underrepresented in college-level coursework. Texas recently adopted House Bill 8, legislation that includes a dynamic community college funding formula that rewards institutions for outcomes tied to student completion of a postsecondary credential of value in the labor market. A core component of the formula incentivizes helping high school students complete 15 or more college credits. HB 8 also made dual enrollment courses free for lower-income students. California has heavily invested in dual enrollment pathways over the past decade. It set ambitious statewide goals for students to earn 12 college credits upon graduation from high school, introducing students to college-level coursework as early as 9th grade, and creating new pathways for early college and career exposure. Community college leaders from both states will share insights into the policy development, including how momentum was built for these policy changes, their early impacts, and what college trustees and presidents can learn from their approaches.

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Special Session: New Trustees and First-Time Attendees Welcome

Studio 2, 2nd Floor

A must-attend session for new trustees and/or first-time ACCT Congress attendees. This session is designed to accelerate and enhance your experience, and it is an opportunity for meeting other new trustees. We will provide an overview on how to navigate through all the meetings, sessions, and exciting opportunities offered during the 2025 Congress. Information will also be provided on how to get involved and participate in the ACCT membership and business meetings.

Vernon Jung, Jr., Trustee, Moraine Park Technical College, WI

Randall “Mack” Jackson, Trustee, Midlands Technical College, SC

Robert Proctor, Trustee, Lansing Community College, MI

Lydia Santibanez, Trustee, Temple College, TX



Thursday, October 23

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Building a Strong Partnership through Board Assessment and Evaluation

Mardi Gras Salon G/H, 3rd Floor

Board self-assessment and CEO evaluation are considered standards of good practice. Periodic assessment and CEO evaluation provide an opportunity for the board to reflect on its own performance and contributions and to evaluate how well the president/CEO is carrying out the board's priorities. It also an opportunity to establish goals and priorities and can strengthen the Board-CEO relationship. Panelists will share strategies, suggestions, and lessons for how they engage their boards in these important processes.

Cindy Miles, Facilitator, ACCT Consultant

Rebecca K. "Becky" Rosley, President, Santa Fe Community College, NM

Carol Scott, Chair, Del Mar College, TX

Greg Taylor, Chair, Pima Community College, AZ

Star Rivera-Lacey, Superintendent/President, Palomar College, CA

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Operation Ronin: An Innovative Solution Made Partially with AI

Studio 7, 2nd Floor

When resources are limited, innovation becomes essential. With the rise of AI, low-code development platforms have become powerful tools for creating in-house solutions. This session explores how citizen developers can harness AI to build impactful applications quickly and efficiently. We'll share how one idea grew into a systemwide solution using tools like ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot. You'll see a live demo of the finished app, hear how it was developed, and gain insights into costs, challenges, and lessons learned. We'll also preview our next step: Ronin 2.0, as we continue our AI-driven transformation.

Pablo E. Alcantara, Director, Business Operations, Lone Star College, TX

Joan A. Garza, Chief Business Officer, Lone Star College, TX

Michael Sullivan, Board Chair, Lone Star College, TX

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Navigating Student Success from Pathways to Possibilities, Every Student, Every Path (Made for You)

Galerie 6, 2nd Floor

Alamo Colleges District Transfer Advising Guides (TAGs) provide clear, efficient pathways for students transferring from community college to university. TAGs help students explore options, plan coursework, and complete degrees faster by minimizing excess credits and confusion, supporting timely graduation, cost savings, and academic success through structured, goal-oriented guidance.

Anna U. Bustamante, Trustee, Alamo Colleges District, TX



Community College Association of Texas Trustees

Angela Guadian-Mendez, Director of Student Completion, Alamo Colleges District, TX

George Railey, Vice Chancellor for Academic Success, Alamo Colleges District, TX

9:15 AM – 10:15 AM

From Vision to Reality: A Collaborative Workforce Hub for the Future

Balcony I, 4th Floor

In response to regional demand for skilled workers in biotechnology, healthcare, and public safety, the College brought together leadership, industry, and economic development partners to build a cutting-edge facility. Featuring state-of-the-art labs, a virtual reality training arena, and a collaborative innovation space, the site reimagines workforce training for tomorrow's economy.

Jim Crumm, Trustee, Alvin Community College, TX

Stacy Ebert, Vice President, Instruction and Strategic Initiatives, Alvin Community College, TX

Robert J. Exley, President, Alvin Community College, TX

9:15 AM – 10:15 AM

Preparing a Globally-Competent Workforce: ACCT Opportunities and Lessons Learned

Balcony J, 4th Floor

This interactive session will feature insights and lessons learned from trustees and other leaders at colleges that have participated in ACCT's global education programs, including the India-US Workforce Partnership Lab and the US-UK Community College and Technical Education Exchange. Join us for a discussion of the skills and competencies students need to succeed in an interconnected world, trustees' role in facilitating student global success, and opportunities for your college to get involved in upcoming ACCT global initiatives.

Robin Matross Helms, Vice President, Membership and Educational Services, ACCT, DC

Lisa Avery, President, Linn-Benton Community College, OR

Reza Jafari, Board Chair, Chesapeake College, MD

Anantha Babbili, Board Member, Del Mar College, TX

Deb Casey, President, Wor-Wic Community College, MD

9:15 AM – 10:15 AM

Steady Hands in the Storm: How Trustees, CEOs, and Executive Assistants Navigate Crisis Communication Together

Studio 6, 2nd Floor

Learn how trustees, presidents, and executive assistants can strengthen crisis communication through trust, coordination, and role clarity. This panel explores real-world lessons from campus crises and offers practical strategies to ensure calm, consistent, and effective leadership communication, even when a separate PR team or PIO is involved.



Community College Association of Texas Trustees

Reatha Bell, Executive Assistant, Board Services Office, Houston Community College, TX
Shelby Foster, Assistant to the President/Board of Trustees, Ohlone College, CA
Caitlin Murphy, Special Assistant to the President, Johnson County Community College, KS
Andrea Wittig, Director, Office of the President, Government Relations, Trustee Services, & Strategic Initiatives, Cerritos College, CA
Jose Fierro, President/Superintendent, Cerritos College, CA
Suzanne Lee Chan, Trustee, Ohlone College, CA
Charles S. Sasaki, President/Superintendent, Ohlone College, CA

9:15 AM – 10:15 AM

Kids on Campus: Supporting Student Parents through State-Level Collaborations

Mardi Gras Salon D, 3rd Floor

An increasing number of states are supporting student parents through efforts to expand access to affordable child care, which can be a barrier to student success. This session presents statewide collaborations with Kids on Campus to co-locate more Head Start classrooms on community college campuses and support strategic priorities.

Steve Jurch, Associate Vice President, Center for Policy and Practice, ACCT, DC
Miya T. Simpson, Director, Kids on Campus, ACCT, DC
Rachel Brasell, State Coordinator, Kids on Campus-Texas Initiative, TX
Maureen Maillard, Manager of Child Care Grants and Services, State University of New York

9:15 AM – 11:15 AM

Community College Lawyers Roundtable

Mardi Gras, A-C, 3rd Floor

An interactive roundtable discussion of legal challenges facing community colleges. The session will include overviews of higher education legal issues associated with recent developments regarding student athletes and artificial intelligence. Two hours of continuing legal education (CLE) credit are available for licensed attorneys.

Ira Shepard, ACCT General Counsel; Partner, Saul Ewing LLP, DC
Carolyn Pellegrini, Partner, Saul Ewing LLP, PA
Andrew Laine, Association Counsel, ACCT, DC
Jeff White, Chief Legal Officer & Senior Vice President – Internal Affairs, NJCAA, NC
Cobby Caputo, Partner, Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta LLP, TX
Augustin “Augie” Rivera, Jr., General Counsel, Del Mar College, TX

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Conducting an Effective CEO Search

Mardi Gras Salon G/H, 3rd Floor



Community College Association of Texas Trustees

Nearly one in four community colleges is undergoing a transition in executive leadership, making it critical for boards to understand today's rapidly changing leadership landscape. Is your board preparing to initiate a presidential search? This session will explore how both the board and the college can effectively prepare for a CEO transition. Learn best practices for designing an open, equitable, and nationwide search process, how to recruit diverse and strong candidate pools, and common pitfalls boards should avoid.

Cecilia Cervantes, ACCT Consultant

Charlene Dukes, ACCT Consultant

Bradley Eversole, ACCT Consultant

Julie Golder, Vice President of Search Services, ACCT, DC

Jackie Ramos, Trustee and Board Officer, Laredo Community College, TX

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

From Insight to Impact: Using Student Financial Wellness Survey Data to Support Students

Galerie 1, 2nd Floor

Discover powerful insights from the 2024 Student Financial Wellness Survey by Trellis Strategies, featuring responses from 26,954 students across 55 two-year colleges. Then, hear from a moderated panel of community college leaders as they share real-world strategies, lessons learned, and bold ideas for transforming student support through data-driven action.

Allyson Cornett, Director of Research, Trellis Strategies, TX

Steve Jurch, Associate Vice President, Center for Policy and Practice, ACCT, DC
College Representatives, TBD

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Trustee Roles and Behaviors that Support Policy Governance and Active Board Involvement

Studio 6, 2nd Floor

Explore with a College President/Chancellor and two seasoned Board Members (with over 35 years of Board experience) board member roles and behaviors that support policy governance and yet allow board members to ask the hard questions to advance the college and support the President/Chancellor.

Gigi Edwards Bryant, Trustee, Austin Community College District, TX

Russell Lowery-Hart, Chancellor, Austin Community College District, TX

Barbara P. Mink, ACCT Consultant, TX

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Integrating an Ecosystem of Support through Mental Health and Wellbeing at Dallas College

Studio 7, 2nd Floor

Dallas College's Student Care Network advances student success by integrating mental health, well-being, and social support for 120,000+ students. Modeled after coordinated



Community College Association of Texas Trustees

healthcare, it addresses social determinants of health and academic outcomes. Presenters will share best practices and scalable strategies for community colleges and universities.

Carlos E. Cruz, Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Wellbeing and Social Support,
Dallas College, TX

Justin Lonon, Chancellor, Dallas College, TX

Phil Ritter, Trustee, Dallas College, TX

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

ACCT WESTERN REGIONAL CAUCUS AND MEETING

Voting Delegates to Attend

Galerie 5, 2nd Floor

Presiding Officer – Carol Scott, Western Regional Chair: ACCT Board of Directors

Teller – Raymond Lewis, Jr., Trustee: Galveston College, TX

Assistant Teller – TBD

Sergeant-At-Arms – Arlen Leiker, Trustee: Colby Community College, KS

3:15 PM – 4:15 PM

Transforming Higher Ed: The Dual Impact of Affordable Access on Student Costs and Academic Success

Studio 6, 2nd Floor

Affordable access programs are reshaping higher education by reducing student costs while significantly improving retention and completion rates. This model not only addresses financial barriers but also supports academic success, making it a powerful strategy for institutions like Dallas College aiming to increase persistence and outcomes across diverse student populations.

Jennifer Becker, Vice President of Strategic Partnerships, McGraw Hill, TX

Greg Morris, Senior Vice Provost, Academic Services, Dallas College, TX

3:15 PM – 5:15 PM

SPECIAL SESSION - Leadership Strategies and Approaches for Student Success: Leveraging SNAP Employment & Training at Your College

Mardi Gras Salon E, 3rd Floor

Are you interested in new and innovative ways to support your students? Would you like to offset the costs for services you are already providing?

Community Colleges play a vital role in helping students achieve economic mobility and SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) is a program for which community colleges can serve as providers. If your institution is covering the costs of student expenses for those who need it, as a SNAP E&T provider you would be eligible for reimbursement of 50% of those expenditures. Some of the student supports that would qualify include:

- Course tuition and fees
- Supplies such as books, uniforms, tools, equipment
- Testing and credentialing fees
- Public transportation, gas, auto repairs



Community College Association of Texas Trustees

- Childcare

Join us to learn from leaders who have reimagined solutions for student supports and are embarking on the journey at their respective colleges to serve as SNAP E&T providers.

Leah Barrett, President, Northeast Community College, NE

Alison Buckley, President, Ulster County Community College, NY

Lynda Villanueva, President, Lee College, TX

Kathi Medcalf, Managing Senior Consultant, Seattle Jobs Initiative, WA

Linda Rhoads, Senior Project Associate, Association of Community College
Trustees, DC

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM

TEXAS DELEGATION RECEPTION

Registration through CCATT required

St. Charles, 41st Floor

Friday, October 24

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

A Comprehensive Approach to Online Teaching and Learning

Studio 8, 2nd Floor

Sixty percent of community college students enroll in online courses, making quality online learning environments critical to success. Blinn's holistic quality assurance program for online classes maintains well-designed courses and well-trained faculty and students, ensuring greater student success where online learners outperform their face-to-face counterparts.

Dennis Crowson, Trustee, Blinn College District, TX

Rebecca Ehlert, Trustee, Blinn College District, TX

Diane Kettler, Trustee, Blinn College District, TX

Katie Larocca, Instructional Design Specialist, Blinn College District, TX

Michelle McGehee, Dean for Academic Affairs, Blinn College District, TX

8:30 AM – 10:30 AM

ACCT SENATE MEETING

Voting Delegates to Attend

Mardi Gras Salon E & D, 3rd Floor

The ACCT Senate meeting is the official annual meeting of the association. As defined by the association Bylaws, the ACCT Senate has the full authority of the membership and is composed of the delegates of the Voting Members of the association. All Voting Delegates should plan to attend this meeting. During the ACCT Senate meeting, the Voting Delegates will elect Directors-at-Large to the ACCT Board of Directors and vote on any proposed resolutions and amendments to the ACCT Bylaws. A state-of-the-association report and financial report will also be shared during the meeting.



Community College Association of Texas Trustees

9:15 AM – 10:15 AM

Elevating Board Effectiveness Through Data-Informed Governance

Galerie 2, 2nd Floor

Learn how trustees can strengthen oversight by using data to guide policy decisions, set expectations, and monitor progress. This session introduces tools that help boards balance metrics with mission, align with CEOs, and apply data-informed practices to improve student outcomes, institutional effectiveness and advocacy efforts.

Elizabeth Chivers, Senior Director of Strategy & Policy Analysis, Texas Association of Community Colleges, TX

Nicole Eversmann, Director, Community College Association of Texas Trustees, TX
Clint Kingsbery, Board Chair, Alamo Colleges District, TX

Paul R. Rodriguez, Trustee, South Texas College, TX

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Outcomes Based Funding: Advancing Credentials of Value and Workforce Preparedness

Galerie 6, 2nd Floor

From this panel discussion, learn how trustees can support programs leading to in-demand jobs, strengthen partnerships with business and industry, and promote economic mobility. Using TXHB8 as a case study, learn applicable framework for engaging in policy conversations, setting measurable goals, and aligning college missions with workforce and community needs.

Brian Haggerty, Board Chair, El Paso Community College, TX

Keri Moe, Associate Vice President of External Relations, Communication & Development, El Paso Community College, TX

Carmen Olivas Graham, Trustee, El Paso Community College, TX

William Serrata, President, El Paso Community College, TX

Bonnie Soria Najera, Trustee, El Paso Community College, TX

2:15 PM – 3:15 PM

Fast Track to Talent: The Power of Short-Term Credentials in Manufacturing

Balcony I, 4th Floor

Short-term credentials provide fast, focused training for in-demand manufacturing skills. They offer flexible pathways for learners to quickly enter or advance in the workforce, helping employers fill urgent talent gaps while supporting economic mobility and career growth. Community Colleges are at the center providing a qualified workforce quickly.

Justin Lonon, President, Dallas College, TX

Randall Vanwagoner, President, Mohawk Valley Community College, NY

Deb Volzer, Director of Government and Workforce Partnerships, SME, MI

2:15 PM – 3:15 PM

The 2025 Bellwether Award Honorees: Achieving Exceptional Results in Enrollment and Success Outcomes, Pre-College Student Preparation, and Workforce Revitalization

Balcony K, 4th Floor



Community College Association of Texas Trustees

This year's Bellwether Award recipients will share their innovative, scalable, replicable, and equity-focused programs that established impactful accountability measures and strategic practices for college success, expanded the college-going pipeline, and transformed a coal-focused complex into a training center for high-demand jobs. Engage with these three award-winning institutions.

Carrie Cortez, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Workforce Initiatives,
Fletcher Technical Community College, LA
Cynthia S. Kelley, President & CEO, Madisonville Community College, KY
Clint Kingsbery, Board Chair, Alamo Colleges District, TX
Rose Martinez, Director, Alamo Colleges District/Bellwether College Consortium,
TX
Janet N. Spriggs, President, Forsyth Technical Community College, NC

3:30 PM – 4:30 PM

If It's Good for the Region, It's Good for the College

Galerie 1, 2nd Floor

Based on the premise “if it's good for the region, it's good for the college,” San Jacinto College leads the Houston region in recruiting and retaining industries. The College's workforce development includes developing pathways to address teacher shortages, leveraging risk and partnerships in biomanufacturing, and redesigning business and entrepreneurship programs.

Allatia Harris, Vice Chancellor, Strategic Initiatives, San Jacinto College, TX
Brenda Hellyer, Chancellor, San Jacinto College, TX
Dan Mims, Board Chair, San Jacinto College, TX
Laurel Williamson, Deputy Chancellor and College President, San Jacinto College,
TX

Saturday, October 25

8:15 AM – 9:15 AM

Leading Together: How Laredo College Grew Enrollment Through Mission-Driven Strategy and Board Collaboration

Galerie 2, 2nd Floor

Laredo College President Dr. Minita Ramirez, Board Chair Esteban Rangel, and Ellucian's Ellen Mayes share how unified leadership and bold strategy helped grow enrollment and retention. Learn how 8-week terms, OER, wraparound support, and tech modernization came together to create a mission-aligned, student-first experience.

Ellen Mayes, Director of Strategic Programs, Ellucian, VA
Minita Ramirez, President, Laredo College, TX
Esteban Rangel, Board President, Laredo College, TX