

10-12-2023

To: Dr. Matt Gotschall and CCC Board of Governors

From: John A. Novotny

RE: ACCT National Leadership Congress, Las Vegas, 10-8-2023 to 10-12-2023

I attended this meeting along with administration members Chris Waddle and Kelly Christiansen. It was a very good conference, and I came back with the comforting feeling that we are doing many things right, we have a great board, administration, staff, faculty and of course of most importance, our students. But, there are always “opportunities” to improve and simply continue to thrive in this diverse and rapidly changing and dynamic industry.

I attended the regional luncheon where Dr. Lauren Gillespie was awarded the Western Regional Faculty Member honor, being a former biology instructor at CCC’s Columbus campus. That evening, Chris, Kelly and I, along with Dr. Gillespie and NCCA state association executive director Courtney Wittstruck, attended the national awards. Dr. Gillespie did not win the national award, but CCC was well represented at the ceremony.

I was also able to network with many trustees and administration members from other community colleges from within our state, and also with many who had prior connections in some way to CCC. I participated in the delegate voting sessions where we voted for candidates vying for the leadership of our region.

There were concurrent breakout sessions each day, and I attended the maximum I could for the time allotted. Below is a summary list of the sessions I attended, and I would be happy to visit with anyone in more detail about any of these sessions.

- **The Community College Baccalaureate: An Update on the National Landscape**  
(Of note: 1 out of 10 community colleges offer baccalaureate degrees, in 24 of the 50 states.)
- **Emergency Operations Planning: Ransomware Rehearsal**  
(Of note: a number of colleges have reported paying \$250,000 to \$1,000,000+ for attacks, and live simulations were recommended beyond policy and procedures, and some insurance companies requiring such.)
- **DEI as a Base not a Bucket**  
(Take-home message was that DEI goes beyond “open enrollment”. It ties into the basics of hiring of administration, staff, etc. The Higher Learning Commission and other credentialing authorities may tie future credentialing to DEI policies.)
- **Kids on Campus: Partnering Community Colleges with Head Start Centers**  
(Head Start Centers may or may not be relevant to CCC, but many community colleges reported offering day care on their campuses.)
- **Rightsizing for the Future**  
(Take-home message was that sometimes growth is not the best choice and alternatives or downsizing may be the best path, especially in light of online learning vs. brick and mortar facilities.)
- **Creating a Care Network to Support Student Needs**  
(Many students are in need of mental health services and emotional, social and basic needs. Iowa Western Community College out of Council Bluffs, IA explained their trials and struggles with trying to meet these needs.)

- **The Important Role of Apprenticeships for Employers, Workers and Advancing Equity**  
(The post COVID employer workplace is trying their best to obtain and retain students, and many colleges are finding apprenticeships as a great pathway to achieve these goals.)
- **Closure on a Modern American Crime Story: From Crime & Loss to Recovery and Justice**  
(This was a sequel to the ransomware rehearsal session. Cape Code Community College IT and Information officers described how their system was compromised, what it cost in terms of dollars, time and stress, the pursuit of pursuing and convicting the Russian based operation ring, and the ultimate sentencing and jailing of the perpetrators.)
- **Social Media 2.0: More Meets the Eye**  
(Former CCC Hastings Campus President Jerry Wallace was 1 of 4 panelists that presented about how students use social media, what their expectations are, limitations that community colleges struggle with, and opportunities within.)