Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I want to express my heartfelt thanks for your continued collaboration with the Associated Colleges of the Midwest. Participation in our programs by faculty, staff, and students across the consortium, along with the support we receive from our partners and funders, are key to our success. Together, we have developed new ways of working, communicating, and collaborating in support of the mission of our 14 member campuses. We appreciate you and your contributions to our community.

In this report, you’ll read highlights of how we came together in 2021 to drive impact for the faculty, staff, and students who are the heartbeat of our consortium. Faculty and staff gathered in virtual workshops to advance our commitments to anti-racism and to supporting mental health and well-being on our campuses. Students participated in a variety of ACM programs, including our Tuition Remission Exchange Program (TREP) and our new series, Foreign Policy in Practice, presented in partnership with the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. We provided connections, facilitating over 20 Administrative Leadership Groups that stepped up to support each other through the pandemic, and we provided funding for collaborative projects that will strengthen liberal arts teaching and learning.

The last two years have presented unique opportunities and challenges for higher education, raising new questions about how best to deliver an empowering education, the lifelong value of college degrees, and the state of equity and inclusion on and off campus, among others. The ACM is responding, engaging with the ACM Board and Advisory Board of Deans in a strategic planning process to sharpen our focus over the next three years. We look forward to sharing the strategic framework with the broader community in the coming months.

I hope the contents of this report fill you with a sense of pride about what we have accomplished and optimism about what is to come. As we have done since our founding in 1958, the ACM will continue to serve by building community, driving innovation, and enriching liberal arts education and scholarship for our member campuses. Thank you for your participation and support.

With my best wishes,

Sonya Malunda
President of the ACM
ACM at a Glance

2021 By the Numbers

138
Unique participants across two workshops on Student Mental Health

1,182
Unique participants in faculty and staff Anti-Racism Workshops

125+
Consortial Meetings, Workshops, and Events

$970K+
Funds distributed by ACM to the 14 member colleges for faculty development programs in FY21

715
High school students who attended Midwest College Showcase admissions virtual events

51
New students enrolled at an ACM college through the Tuition Remission Exchange Program (TREP)

Through TREP, over 150 eligible dependents of faculty and staff at participating colleges currently attend other ACM colleges with a portion of the tuition waived.

ACM Stats

23,000+ Students
1,700+ Faculty
4,500+ Staff
in the ACM community

20+
Administrative Leadership Groups
Role- and topic-based groups from across the consortium meet regularly to collaborate, problem-solve, and share best practices.

197
Graduate School Exploration Fellows
A two-year fellowship that helps underrepresented students learn about and prepare for graduate study.

27
Mellon Faculty Fellows
Tenure-track appointments at ACM colleges for faculty whose backgrounds and life experiences enhance campus diversity.
About the ACM

Mission
The Associated Colleges of the Midwest enriches residential liberal arts education and strengthens members through collaboration.

14 Liberal Arts Colleges in the Consortium

5 States with ACM Colleges
Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin

ACM Office in Chicago, Illinois
Networking and Collaboration

The ACM facilitates over 20 role- and topic-based groups from across the consortium who meet regularly to collaborate, problem-solve, and share best practices. During the pandemic, these consortial groups served as a resource for others in a similar role at campuses and continued to build community across the ACM. Here are some of the ways members have benefited from the network.

Career Services
“Over the last two years, as our department faced policy-making decisions, I regularly turned to the cohort to ask for opinions or best practices. Some of our career center’s recent decisions have been fashioned from existing practices or thoughtful input from my fellow ACM career services leadership. It has been a genuine pleasure to create relationships with people who can relate to our mission, who have similar goals, and derive joy from similar experiences.”
Nanci Young, Director of Careers, Coe College

Admissions Systems and Operations
“The Admissions Systems and Operations group has been a valuable professional resource as we have been tasked with creating and implementing new policies and practices on the fly. Being able to raise issues we are facing, and engaging in thoughtful consideration across institutions, has been very helpful to us. Beyond serving as a sanity check, it’s been helpful to clarify our challenges and determine paths forward.”
Matt Bosner, Director of Admission, Colorado College

Foundation Relations
“It was useful to have an opportunity to discuss anti-racism and DEI among the ACM foundations and government relations officers—and perhaps even more useful to continue checking in about these issues at our monthly meetings. I really valued that we didn’t solely focus on funding anti-racist work (though this is important!)—we also discussed how our offices’ procedures and practices can contribute to structural racism in our institutions, and how to approach our work in the spirit of equity and reducing barriers.”
Susan Ferrari, Assistant Dean and Director, Office of Corporate, Foundation, and Government Relations, Grinnell College

Diversity
“The group has been tremendous help! The support working through issues on campus and even personally has been a true blessing!”
Hemie Collier, Senior Diversity Officer & Director of Intercultural Life, Cornell College

Deans of Students
“The wide variety of academic year calendars within the ACM meant our institutions were planning and reacting to COVID related issues at very different junctures. Learning from ACM colleagues, sharing lessons learned, while also discussing regional and national trends proved to be incredibly helpful as we together encountered unchartered waters.”
Christopher Ogle, Vice President and Dean of Students, Ripon College

Advisory Board of Deans
“Beyond the generous exchange of ideas, experiences, and plans during our frequent pandemic ACM deans meetings, those meetings with my peers made me a more productive leader and healthier human.”
Eric Boynton, Provost and Dean of the College, Professor of Philosophy, Beloit College

Title IX
“Especially during a time when work crucial to the success and well-being of our colleges and universities was facing the challenges of a pandemic, the consistent but otherwise undemanding camaraderie of our shared experience allowed collaboration through the transition to providing best-practices virtual support and adjudication options for our communities.”
Kimberly K. Schrader, Title IX Coordinator, Knox College
INCLUSIVE EQUITY

Addressing Racism at Multiple Levels

Through September 2021, as part of its Anti-Racism Initiative, the ACM hosted monthly professional development workshops for faculty and staff on topics including coalition building and policy change, inclusive discourse, culturally responsive mentoring for students and faculty, cultural taxation, and allyship. In all, nearly 1,200 unique attendees participated, with over 70 percent attending multiple workshops. The workshops are continuing to be offered quarterly.

ACM staff also facilitated a series of workshops for consortial groups consisting of 131 leaders from 14 administrative divisions on and across the ACM campuses. The Spring 2021 workshops, which focused on equity-based policy and procedure, intent vs. impact, accessibility, bias, and other topics, were intimate conversations customized for each division and the role it plays in supporting student learning on the campuses.

“The ACM Anti-Racism workshops have featured both expert speakers willing to share their work and fruitful, thought-provoking interactions with my colleagues at other ACM schools. I have found the resulting resources and community invaluable as I strive to challenge my own assumptions and make my pedagogy more inclusive and equitable.”

Anna Trumbore Jones
Associate Dean of the Faculty and Professor of History, Lake Forest College

“Through our variety of programming, the ACM has been able to work on inclusive equity and anti-racism efforts in ways that transform the norms of campuses at multiple levels,” said Allen Linton II, Director of Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives at ACM. “Our professional development offerings aim to be reflective about the status quo and take tangible steps to actively combat the challenges of systemic racism. Meeting leaders across the ACM enforces the shared commitment to ensure all students can thrive while at our institutions.”

Allen Linton II

COOPERATIVE ADMISSIONS

Increasing Access to the Liberal Arts

The partnership between the ACM and the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA) on the Midwest College Showcase (MCS) gained momentum in 2021. MCS provides students, parents, and high school counselors the opportunity to explore and learn more about the 27 private residential colleges that make up the two consortia. During the pandemic, attendance at virtual programming grew significantly, with nearly 250 unique attendees for the September welcome sessions, almost double the previous year. The website has become a valuable resource and includes videos on navigating the college admission process, the importance of the liberal arts, and financial aid. More fairs and counselor events are being planned for spring 2022.

The ACM also facilitates the sharing of admissions data among its member colleges and manages the Tuition Remission Exchange Program (TREP), whereby students who are eligible and admitted receive tuition remission at one of 13 participating ACM campuses. For fall 2021, 51 students joined the program, bringing the total number of participants to over 150.

“We have gained tremendous value from participating in the Midwest College Showcase and collaborating with the other 26 institutions in the ACM and GLCA consortia. Even though, on the surface, we are very similar institutions, the MCS gives us the opportunity to communicate what makes us each distinctive to a national audience interested in private liberal arts colleges.”

Michael Elliott
Associate Director of Admissions, Luther College
MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

What COVID-19 Has Meant for Mental Health in Higher Ed

In April 2021, the ACM held a two-part workshop aimed at positioning faculty and staff to better support their students, first by sharing how the pandemic affected student mental health, then exploring strategies and resources to assist ACM colleges as they shape their mental health and well-being strategies for the coming years.

Here, the ACM follows up with one of the speakers, Sara Abelson, Senior Director, Education and Training at the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice at Temple University Lewis Katz School of Medicine, and Terry Mason, Dean for Health and Wellness at Grinnell College, about what’s changed—and what hasn’t—around mental health for students, faculty, and staff.

What has been most concerning, alarming, or unexpected to you about the impact of COVID-19 on mental health in higher education?

TERRY MASON: The devastating effect of students feeling isolated. Their support systems were majorly disrupted and for some, totally disrupted. This led to an increase in depression, stress and anxiety, and an overwhelming feeling of not being safe.

SARA ABELSON: My greatest concern about the ongoing impact of the pandemic is its role in likely widening mental health inequities. There is evidence that the pandemic and isolation from campus services has disproportionately negatively impacted the mental health of sexual and gender minority students. Students of Asian and Pacific Islander descent have encountered discrimination and xenophobia during the pandemic. And disparities underlying social determinants of health caused by structural racism have led Black, Latinx, American Indian and Pacific Islander communities to be disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and associated stressors.

What is the most significant development you have seen regarding the landscape for mental health and wellbeing in higher education since our April 2021 workshop sessions?

TM: When Grinnell College went to a remote learning model, it limited what services our counselors could provide to students living out-of-state due to the restrictions of our licenses. Being able to provide a telehealth option via our contract with the Virtual Care Group was tremendous.

SA: There has been an enormous expansion and uptake of telehealth services and platforms, and growing investment by institutions in digital platforms and services to support student mental health. Twenty-two states introduced Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT) legislation in the past year, expanding the students’ opportunities and ability to seek and receive mental health services across state lines. This is helping to improve continuity of care for students as they move between school and home, sometimes in different states.

Has COVID-19 changed the way schools—and society—think and talk about mental health?

TM: There is much more discussion of mental health and I think, to some degree, the stigma around mental health has lessened. It appears that people are much more willing to seek out services to help with their mental health than ever before. And now, there are more resources available to manage mental health.

SA: College presidents have consistently ranked student mental health as their number-one concern since the pandemic began. The Surgeon General just released a great report on the topic. Yet, I think schools and society continue to struggle with bridging research and practice in this arena, understanding and investing in evidence-based practices to address mental health, and changing systems, structures, policies, and practices to better support mental health promotion, prevention, and equity.

There has been an enormous expansion and uptake of telehealth services and platforms, and growing investment by institutions in digital platforms and services to support student mental health.”

Sara Abelson
Senior Director, Education and Training; Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice; Temple University Lewis Katz School of Medicine

Terry Mason
Dean for Health and Wellness; Grinnell College
**Program Highlights**


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**What new resources available to support students, faculty, and staff?**

**TM**: We have contracted with Neolth to provide an electronic program and app to help students manage their stress and anxiety. For faculty and staff, Grinnell College has been able to provide telecounseling via our agreement with the University of Iowa.

**SA**: I recently published a comprehensive, multidisciplinary review of the current evidence-base for public health interventions to address college student mental health with my colleagues, which I hope is a useful tool for readers. We provide guidance and action steps for college leaders and task forces seeking to comprehensively address student mental health.

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**Grant-Funded Initiatives**

**Equitable Civic Engagement Institute**

The Equitable Civic Engagement Institute initiative focuses on how civic, business, and other dimensions of the communities in which colleges reside affect students’ sense of belonging and well-being, their persistence toward graduation, and other issues contributing to academic success. In 2021, the ACM began planning a full year of virtual workshops beginning in spring 2022, the first of which on April 6 will focus on understanding and clarifying what student well-being means across all dimensions of a student’s experience on member campuses and in their surrounding communities. This virtual series will build a community of practice among ACM faculty and staff in preparation for the in-person ACM Institute in spring 2023.

*Supported by the Spencer Foundation*

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**Institutionalizing High-Impact Practices in the Liberal Arts**

The 14 ACM colleges are collaborating to determine and institutionalize the best, most high-impact practices in liberal arts education. In November 2021, ACM staff distributed a survey of faculty perceptions related to community-based learning, community-based research, and undergraduate research to the Provosts and Deans offices on each ACM campus. ACM staff will use the survey responses to plan a conference for Summer 2022, during which the best practices and perceived challenges can be shared and discussed among ACM faculty and staff. The conference will lead into a competitive regranting opportunity for faculty and staff to submit collaborative projects designed to enhance the adoption and institutionalization of these high-impact practices on their campuses.

*Supported by the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations*

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1 Hawk et al., 2021; Chang et al., 2021; Hunt et al., 2021; Gilbert et al., 2021; Salerno et al., 2020; Kamal et al., 2021

2 Hahm et al., 2021; Zhou et al., 2021

3 Hooper et al., 2020; Kakol et al., 2020

Mellon Faculty Fellowship

In February 2021, ACM hosted a virtual writing workshop for Mellon Faculty Fellows to support their research and grant planning for the 2021-22 academic year. The virtual gathering also served as a space for ten fellows to come together as a community across disciplines and institutions. Mellon Faculty Fellowships offer tenure-track appointments at one of the ACM colleges and other resources to new PhD or terminal master’s degree graduates whose backgrounds and life experiences will enhance diversity on the ACM campuses. The ACM hosted a Faculty Fellow Writing Retreat and Pre-Tenure Workshop in March 2022.

The ACM Mellon Faculty Fellows program completely transformed how I envision and carry out my roles as a scholar and teacher. The program nourishes fellows with timely professional development opportunities and resources that allow us to transition deliberately from the scarcity mindset and practices of graduate and postdoctoral training and into new roles as creative faculty members with purpose. For BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and other individuals from underrepresented groups within higher education, this hard reset is simply invaluable.... The financial support of the Mellon Fellowship affords us autonomy within our campus and professional contexts, and the biannual development opportunities offered at ACM headquarters provide necessary retreat time and resources to recalibrate so that we can continue to thrive.”

Sonya Maria Johnson
Mellon Faculty Fellow and Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Beloit College

Graduate School Exploration Fellowship

Since beginning in 2016, the Graduate School Exploration Fellowship (GSEF) has helped underrepresented students in the humanities, humanistic social sciences, and the arts learn about and prepare for graduate study. Through GSEF, Maya Rogers, a senior at Carleton College majoring in psychology, spent the summer researching motivated misperception at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. She was accepted into four psychology PhD programs to begin in fall 2022.

Was GSEF helpful in your decision to apply to PhD programs?

MAYA ROGERS: GSEF is really what made me consider graduate school at all and see that I have what it takes to be in academia. If I didn't have GSEF, I would not be applying to grad school. Prior to college, I couldn't tell you what a PhD was. I never met anyone who was pursuing a PhD. Through GSEF I’ve gotten to talk to grad students—something I don't easily get to do going to a small liberal arts college.

What do you hope to focus on in graduate school?

MR: I'm really interested in social psychological perspectives on health behavior. I've been interested in vaccination for a long time, and how people see the world differently—that relates to the work I did at the Regulation, Action, and Motivated Perception Lab at Rutgers. There are good things and bad things we can be doing to motivate vaccination, and it's not a one-size-fits-all, which is where the social psychological aspect comes in. I'm also interested in open science and cognitive social psychology.

What's been the most valuable takeaway for you from GSEF?

MR: Finding out that there are people like myself from marginalized backgrounds who are in academia while also being who they are. There's people like myself in these places that I didn't know existed or didn't know I could be part of, and they're doing things that are interesting, that help themselves and help others, and working to change a system from the inside out. And they're supportive. There's so much support that you can find through GSEF.

Supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
New Partnerships

CHICAGO COUNCIL ON GLOBAL AFFAIRS

New Series Brings Foreign Policy to the Midwest

The ACM and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs have joined together to curate and host a yearlong series on Foreign Policy in Practice. The series includes three virtual, interactive discussions during the 2021-2022 academic year for ACM faculty, students, and staff interested in foreign policy issues.

Additionally, each event includes a session for students to network with speakers and attendees, with the goal of helping students translate their academic and professional interests into career opportunities in the world of foreign policy.

The first two workshops, “Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Does It Matter, and if So, How?” and “Career Conversations: Career Trajectories and Types in Foreign Policy,” took place in October 2021 and February 2022, respectively; the third is scheduled for April 21, 2022.

ACM staff plan each session with Chicago Council staff Elizabeth Shackelford, former US diplomat and Senior Fellow for US Foreign Policy, and Brian Hanson, Vice President of Studies at the Chicago Council and Grinnell College alumnus. An Advisory Group of ACM international relations and political science faculty also contributed to the conversation, offering insights into topics and opportunities most relevant to their students and institutions.

As the Chicago Council on Global Affairs looks to reach new audiences and cultivate an interest in foreign policy careers in the Midwest, we are thrilled to partner with the ACM. Foreign policy has implications well beyond Washington DC, and we look forward to meeting with the ACM community to discuss the issues as they relate to the Midwest."

Elizabeth Shackelford
Senior Fellow on Foreign Policy, Chicago Council on Global Affairs

AUGSBURG UNIVERSITY RIVER SEMESTER

An Educational Journey Down the Mississippi

The ACM will expand its place-based course offerings through a partnership with Augsburg University Center for Global Education and Experience to offer their River Semester program to ACM students.

The River Semester is a unique educational expedition where students spend 100 days traveling down the Mississippi River from Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico, camping, cooking meals, conducting field research, holding classes, visiting sites, and hearing from guest speakers along the way.

The curriculum, primarily based in environmental studies and interdisciplinary social science, draws on critical, democratic, and place-based pedagogy, allowing student input into the program’s structure. In addition to learning course content, students gain leadership skills and a greater sense of self-confidence, resilience, and vocational discernment.

In addition to student participation, ACM faculty can apply for the position of Visiting Faculty, with responsibility for being the instructor of record for one course of their choice and design, as well as assisting with the overall educational programming, curricular design, and mentorship of students on the journey. ACM faculty will also have the opportunity to spend anywhere from 2 to 14 days with the program as a visiting lecturer.

Applications will be available in March 2022 for the Fall 2023 course offering.

Augsburg is excited about the opportunity to work with the ACM and its member colleges on providing this unique, place-based, and highly educational experience. We look forward to helping ACM students achieve a deeper understanding of the diverse history, literature, food, music, and culture of the American Heartland along the Mississippi River.”

Joe Underhill
River Semester Program Director
ACM Leadership & Staff

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ACM SPECIALISTS

In 2021, the consortium began recruiting ACM faculty to serve as specialists, during their sabbaticals, on specific short-term projects and initiatives where subject-matter expertise is required.

Devavani Chatterjea
Professor of Biology, Macalester College, ACM Specialist in STEM Leadership

Devavani Chatterjea is an immunologist and environmental health scientist studying the intersections of allergies and chronic pain. She teaches cell biology, immunology, public health, and neuroimmunology and serves as the Associate Director of the Jan Serie Center for Scholarship and Teaching at Macalester College. Her research, teaching, and administrative work foreground access, equity, and justice in STEM, health sciences, and higher education.

Eric Popkin
Associate Professor, Sociology, Colorado College, ACM Specialist in Collaborative Program Design

Eric Popkin teaches courses that focus on the sociology of global development and migration. His field-based courses in the southwest United States and in Latin America emphasize community-based scholarship and social change. Popkin currently directs the Colorado College Summer Immigration Institute, a program that offers students the opportunity to intern with community organizations confronting criminalization of BIPOC communities and to explore social change career trajectories.

As of April 1, 2022
Byerly became the 12th president of Carleton College in August 2021. She most recently served as president of Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, where she launched a 10-year strategic direction to more than double the financial aid budget. Under her leadership, Lafayette launched and completed its largest-ever fundraising effort, which raised $426 million, and opened a five-story integrated sciences center, the largest capital project in the college’s history. She previously was provost and executive vice president at Middlebury College. She is the author of two scholarly books—Are We There Yet? Virtual Travel and Victorian Realism and Realism, Representation, and the Arts in Nineteenth-Century Literature— and has written and spoken extensively on the role of technology in higher education.

Carter became Lawrence University’s 17th president in July 2021. She most recently served as president of Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania, where her tenure focused on prioritizing student success, telling the university’s story, building a relationship with the community, enhancing overall quality, and strengthening diversity and inclusion. Her diversity and inclusion efforts were recognized by Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, which named her as one of 25 outstanding women in higher education. Prior to Shippensburg, Carter served as executive vice president and university counsel for Eastern Kentucky University. Her extensive leadership experience in higher education also extends to the performing arts, including 25 years of service at The Juilliard School.

Hayes became Coe College’s 16th president in October 2021, after serving as interim president. His previous role was vice president for advancement and professor of business administration and economics. He directed the Make Your Move Campaign, securing nearly $15 million of external support for Coe. Under his fundraising leadership, the development of C3: Creativity, Careers, Community earned recognition as one of the Princeton Review’s Best Schools for Internships four years in a row and the distinction as having a Best Alumni Network. Hayes worked as an attorney before joining Coe in 2001. A member of Coe’s faculty, he directed Coe’s pre-law and environmental studies programs and led courses at Coe’s Wilderness Field Station before transitioning to the role of vice president in 2014.

McGadney became the 20th president of Knox College in July 2021. Prior to this appointment, he served as Vice President and Dean of Student Advancement at Colby College, following three years as Colby’s Vice President and Secretary of the College. While at Colby, McGadney provided strategic vision in realizing the College’s signature initiative, DavisConnects, a global liberal arts model that affords every Colby student a set of integrated research, internship and global experiences designed to enhance the academic experience and prepare students for post-graduate success. Previously, he was Vice President for University Advancement at Clark University in Worcester, MA, where he led fundraising efforts and instituted new infrastructure to plan, launch, and execute a $125 million comprehensive campaign.

Richardson became Colorado College’s 14th president in July 2021. Before coming to CC, she was the dean and chancellor’s professor of law at the University of California, Irvine School of Law. At the time of her appointment there, she was the only woman of color to lead a top-30 law school. Richardson’s research uses lessons from social psychology to study implicit bias, decision-making, and judgment. Her scholarship has been published by law journals at Harvard, Yale, and Berkeley, among others. Her awards include the Association of American Law Schools’ Derrick Bell Award and the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association Trailblazer Award. In honor of her accomplishments, the Thurgood Marshall Bar Association created the L. Song Richardson Legacy Award.
Visit Us Online

In 2022, the ACM launched a new website with an improved user interface, dedicated sections for faculty, staff, and students, and easier access to the latest ACM news and events.

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