

Pathways and Partnerships for Impact

IMPACT REPORT 2022-23



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To Our Community



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

This year marks 65 years since the establishment of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest by 10 of our colleges' presidents who saw the opportunity to work together to advance shared interests. Today, our enduring collaboration is the pathway to collective impact for 14 outstanding liberal arts institutions across five states.

Every day, the liberal arts and higher education face new challenges. But as we've done since our founding, we will collaborate to address these as we create more opportunities for those in our community. Our new strategic plan, "Your Pathway to Collaboration," guides our activities and ensures we are creating the greatest impact for our members, now and well into the future.

One of our key contributions as a consortium comes through the power of convening—and this role has become even more valuable in the wake of the pandemic. During the 2022-23 academic year, ACM provided the pathway to reconnecting across our campuses by facilitating more than 100 consortial meetings, workshops, and events, many of which were in person for the first time in more than three years.

Another great strength is our ability to provide pathways for ACM students, faculty, and staff to grow as people and as leaders. This year, we resumed important events like our Graduate School Exploration Program summits. We also launched new leadership development opportunities, including the Student Leadership Summit and the ACM Mellon Academic Leadership Fellows Program with a cohort of 10 faculty members.

None of this work could have been accomplished without our members and partners. We are strong because of our wonderful member institutions and their commitment to the liberal arts. We are grateful for the financial support of foundations, the partnership of other nonprofits, and the collaboration of fellow consortia.

The liberal arts prepare us to participate in civic life, and they are as vitally important as ever. ACM member institutions are a force for good in this world and will continue to be. I am humbled and honored to have contributed to this mission as ACM's president for the last six years. I could not have done it without the dedicated team at ACM, who bring integrity, a collaborative spirit, and a strong commitment to our work each day and in every interaction.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve and for your ongoing support of ACM.

With my best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sonya Malunda". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue background that shows a blurred image of hands writing on a document.

Sonya Malunda
President of the ACM

ACM At a Glance

2022-23 BY THE NUMBERS

100+

Consortial Meetings,
Workshops, and
Events

25

Graduate School Exploration
(GRADx) Fellows

*GRADx helps underrepresented
students learn about, visit, and prepare
for graduate school*

26

ACM students attended the
ACM Student Leadership Summit,
facilitated by Common Purpose

\$560K+

Grant funds distributed by
ACM for the direct benefit of
faculty, students, and staff

53

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.*

142

High school counselors attended
information events sponsored by Midwest
College Showcase in partnership with
Great Lakes Colleges Association

ACM Stats

21,500+ Students

1,900+ Faculty

4,700+ 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.*

10

Mellon Academic Leadership
Fellows

*Tenured humanities faculty who
have shown leadership capabilities, a
commitment to diversity and inclusive
equity, and the potential to have a
transformative impact through leadership.*

33

Mellon Faculty Fellows

*Tenure-track appointments at
ACM colleges for faculty whose
backgrounds and life experiences
enhance campus diversity.*

Strategic Plan

The complexity of today's challenges demands educated citizens and leaders with the skills and abilities a liberal arts education confers—asking incisive questions, understanding history and context, connecting different modes of analysis and fields of expertise, and grounding decisions in ethics and values. ACM embarked on a new strategic planning process in 2021 to ensure the consortium would provide the most significant value to our members at this pivotal time. In fall 2022, the Board of Directors approved five Strategic Areas of Focus that will frame ACM's activities over the next three years:



Develop and Cultivate Leaders

The quality of an institution's faculty, staff, and leadership is at the heart of its ability to deliver an excellent educational experience for students. To support our colleges' ability to operate effectively and find creative new ways to deliver on their missions, ACM will provide opportunities for faculty and administrative professionals to be engaged, knowledgeable, and strategic in their careers while preparing students to lead.



Foster Inclusive and Equitable Environments

Education is the gateway to opportunity in American society, and higher education institutions have an obligation to ensure that the pathways we create are equitably distributed. ACM will enhance and expand its portfolio of diversity and inclusive equity initiatives and, following the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on race in admissions, continue to support our members and their work in advancing all forms of diversity and inclusion among their student populations.



Build Community and Advance Well-being

Mental health and well-being have been challenged by the social isolation, illness, and loss brought on by the pandemic; the disproportionate burdens that fell on caregivers; and social injustices that create lasting harm for so many members of our communities. ACM will work to support the mental, physical, social, and emotional health of faculty, staff, and students so they can benefit fully from the educational and scholarly environment that ACM campuses provide.



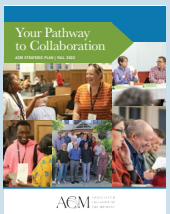
Incubate Innovative Ideas

Higher education and the residential liberal arts sector have undergone wrenching change in the past 20 years, with the pace of change accelerating during the past two years. To assist our colleges in navigating this rapidly changing environment, ACM will foster a collaborative space for them to explore and experiment with new models and pilot efforts that reaffirm the value of a residential liberal arts education for the 21st century.



Refine and Enhance Existing Programs

ACM is built on a long history of collaboration among its member institutions and with external partners. Current collaborations include the Collaboration to Institutionalize High-Impact Practices in the Liberal Arts with the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, the Foreign Policy in Practice Series with Chicago Council on Global Affairs, and the Midwest College Showcase with Great Lakes Colleges Association. ACM will coordinate with our members to ensure our programs are advancing the member colleges' collective aspirations.



Learn more and read the strategic plan, *Your Pathway to Collaboration*, [here](#).

Develop and Cultivate Leaders

STUDENT LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Helping Young Leaders Deepen Their Skills



Daniel O. Ash, president of the Field Foundation, spoke at the ACM Student Leadership Summit.

In spring 2023, Associated Colleges of the Midwest hosted its first-ever [ACM Student Leadership Summit](#), a weekend experiential learning program focused on leadership development, cultural and emotional intelligence, and career preparation. For 26 ACM students, the Chicago-held Summit was an opportunity to collaborate across member campuses, form relationships and network with peer student leaders, communicate across difference, and learn from community leaders across the ACM, Chicago, and the greater Midwest.

Facilitated by Common Purpose, a non-profit organization that runs student leadership programs in 25 countries, the Summit kicked off with a welcome dinner, where students had the opportunity to talk with alumni from ACM colleges and local leaders about their leadership paths. The following day, students worked on developing leadership skills, mindsets, tools, and approaches, such as cultural and emotional intelligence, that they can apply in their roles on campus. They also engaged in café conversations with city leaders on working across boundaries and in diverse teams to shape change.



“I am positioned very well to take the skills I learned in the program into my future. I think the way we learned about cultural intelligence as not just knowing about others but challenging ourselves and our own viewpoints is something that I can consider in my everyday actions as a leader on my campus.”

Donivan Jones
Student Body President, Cornell College

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP FELLOWS

Building a Pipeline of Leaders Committed to Diversity

ACM received a \$1.5 million grant from the Mellon Foundation to establish the ACM Mellon Academic Leadership Fellows Program. The fellowship aims to familiarize humanities faculty with academic leadership at the highest level through immersion in the workings of upper-level academic administration on each host campus. Ten faculty at eight ACM colleges were designated as [ACM Mellon Academic Leadership Fellows](#) for two-year terms beginning in June 2023. The program commenced with a Summer Institute hosted by ACM and two other consortia who established similar programs: Associated Colleges of the South and New York Six (see page 8).

Fellows are tenured ACM faculty who have demonstrated leadership capabilities, a commitment to diversity and inclusive equity, and the potential to have a transformative impact through leadership at their current or future institutions. Each Fellow will lead a discrete project or portfolio of responsibilities as identified by the host college’s senior leadership team. Through these experiences, the ACM Fellows will develop leadership skills and capacities, gain a better understanding of institutional cultures and the complexities of academic leadership, and explore how their backgrounds in and commitments to diversity and inclusive equity can enhance their leadership potential. The host colleges benefit by building leadership pipelines among faculty with demonstrated commitments to enhancing the diversity of experience and inclusivity of educational outcomes on their campuses.



“This opportunity—and especially the community of Academic Leadership Fellows I will enter—will allow me to gain new perspectives about leadership in higher education as well as the skills to plan, design, and implement systemic change in a liberal arts setting.”

Mary Unger
Academic Leadership Fellow, Associate Professor and Chair, English, Ripon College

Foster Inclusive and Equitable Environments

FACULTY FELLOWS

Over 30 Faculty Appointed Who Enhance Campus Diversity

In fall 2022, six new faculty joined ACM institutions as the [final cohort of Mellon Faculty Fellows](#), part of a nine-year initiative that appointed more than 30 new tenure-track faculty who enhance diversity on the campuses. Funded by the Mellon Foundation, the fellowships provide funds to support two years of each fellow's salary and benefits. Fellows also receive a reduced teaching load, mentoring by a more senior ACM professor, targeted professional development, and opportunities to network with other faculty and undergraduate Fellows at ACM member colleges.

2022 MELLON FACULTY FELLOWS

Lillian Brown, Assistant Professor of Theater, Ripon College

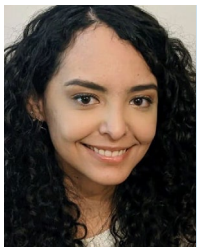
Emmanuel Cudjoe, Instructor/Assistant Professor of Dance, St. Olaf College

Allan Farrell, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Beloit College

Gana Ndiaye, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Beloit College

Marcy Quiason, Assistant Professor of Gender Studies, Lawrence University

Mariana Reyes, Assistant Professor of Spanish, St. Olaf College



"I saw during the hiring process that the department was also looking to create a good community, not just amongst them, but also for Latinx students."

Mariana Reyes

Assistant Professor of Spanish, St. Olaf College

EQUITABLE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT INSTITUTE

Understanding Local Communities' Impact on Student Success

Through a grant from the Spencer Foundation, ACM established the [Equitable Civic Engagement Institute](#), an initiative focused on better understanding how civic, business, and other dimensions of the communities in which colleges reside affect students' sense of belonging and well-being, persistence toward graduation, and other issues contributing to academic success. To explore the topic, ACM hosted three virtual workshops in 2022-23: Exploring Belonging and Well-being for BIPOC College Students; Race, Public Safety, and Civic Engagement; and Balancing the Engagement Needs of Our Students, Campuses, and Communities Post-COVID. The Institute will culminate with a summit in November 2023 that convenes workshop participants as a community of practice to discuss the initiative and share ideas for future collaboration.

GRADUATE SCHOOL EXPLORATION PROGRAM

Expanding Student Access to Graduate Study

The [Graduate School Exploration](#) (GRADx) program provides students from underrepresented backgrounds an immersive opportunity to learn about graduate study through two summits at partner Big Ten Academic Alliance campuses. The most recent GRADx cohort had its summits at Purdue University and the University of Iowa, which included sessions on financing graduate education, the application process, and other logistics related to enrolling in a program of graduate study. The final cohort of GRADx Fellows will participate in 2023-24 Summits at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the University of Minnesota.



"GRADx made graduate school seem less intimidating. As I went through the program and visited Purdue and Iowa, I was able to see people who looked like me and identified with similar experiences as myself."

Trinity Bias

2023 Coe College Graduate

Build Community and Advance Well-being

One of the ways ACM helps ensure community and well-being is through the operation of over 20 consortial groups organized around administrative areas. The groups meet on a regular basis to share best practices, ask others for advice, discuss current topics of interest in their field, and provide a sounding board for ideas, resources, and community building. Here are some recent highlights.

BUSINESS OFFICERS

The ACM Business Officers, made up of campus chief financial officers and controllers, held their annual meeting in March 2023 at Lake Forest College.



MUSEUM DIRECTORS



"Many of the ACM museums and galleries are managed by a single staff person who does all of the administrative and curatorial work. Needless to say, this is a daunting task. As a means to ease these challenges, the ACM has formed a new Museum Directors Group which has been meeting this past year to share knowledge on policies and practices. We plan to use this valuable consortial relationship to inform and advise each other on a variety of issues that will enhance our programming. We are also hoping that our discussion of mutual goals will lead to more active forms of institutional collaboration and a sharing of resources."

Gregory Gilbert
Professor of Art History and Art Museum Studies, Knox College

ADMISSIONS



"As a relatively new admission leader in the ACM, I've appreciated the opportunity to interact with colleagues in both formal and informal settings. We have shared challenges and abundant opportunities, and the Admission Dean/Directors group is a perfect place to discuss both. I come back from meetings with a renewed sense of purpose, not to mention a list of people I can call if I need help."

Karen Kristof
Assistant Vice President and Dean of Admission, Colorado College

CAREER DEVELOPMENT



The Career Directors gathered in August 2023 at the Sanger Center for the Sciences at Beloit College. The meeting included conversations on staff professional development, embedding career development in the curriculum, career outcomes for domestic minority students, and artificial intelligence in career development.

DIVERSITY



The ACM Diversity Consortium Group met in Chicago in June 2023 to discuss building capacity for DEI offices and centering them in the campuses' missions, DEI strategic planning, and best practices around student and non-student events/programming.

Incubate Innovative Ideas

COLLABORATIONS WITH HIGHER ED CONSORTIA

Convening Academic Leaders Across Consortia

ACM and two peer organizations—Associated Colleges of the South and New York Six—hosted a joint three-day Summer Institute in June 2023 for the three consortia’s 26 Mellon Academic Leadership Fellows. Held in Atlanta at Emory University, the institute explored the theme “Understanding Academic Leadership: Institutional, Personal, and DEI Contexts.”

The institute gave the fellows the opportunity to build community across their institutions and consortia, to learn from the experiences of speakers who have transitioned from faculty to academic leader, and to consider the intersection between one’s underrepresented identity and their leadership within education landscapes. Sessions were presented or facilitated by Kendrick Brown, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, Morehouse College; Kimberly Griffin, professor and dean of the College of Education, University of Maryland; Marjorie Hass, president, Council of Independent Colleges; and Kate McCaffrey, executive coach and consultant, Paradigm Twist.

For Ross Elfine, ACM Mellon Academic Leadership Fellow and associate professor of art history at Carleton College, the toolkits and examples provided by presenters had an immediate, tangible impact. “I can kind of imagine now a path that would lead me from the academic scholar hat that I wear most of the time into something that would be more of a leadership role,” he said. “Over the course of the day, there were a couple of moments where I’m just like, ‘Oh, I could do this. This doesn’t seem impossible.’”



“Just knowing that so many of our institutions are facing and attempting to actually solve so many of the same sorts of issues gives me both hope that not only are we not alone in facing these issues, but we now, by virtue of being in a space like this, we’re creating relationships that are possibly going to enable us all to collectively address them.”

Ron Watson

ACM Mellon Academic Leadership Fellow

Associate Professor, Health & Society and Political Science, Beloit College



Top left: Admissions panel at one of two Midwest College Showcase breakfasts for high school counselors. Bottom left: ACM Mellon Academic Leadership Fellows. Top and bottom right: Scenes from the GRADx summit at the University of Iowa. Middle right: Scenes from the ACM Student Leadership Summit with Common Purpose in Chicago.

Refine and Enhance Existing Programs

COLLABORATION TO INSTITUTIONALIZE HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES IN THE LIBERAL ARTS

Increasing Opportunities for Community-Based Pedagogies

ACM awarded \$133,000 in funding to support [nine collaborative, faculty- and staff-led projects](#) designed to institutionalize community-based pedagogies at liberal arts colleges. The projects are part of ACM's Collaboration to Institutionalize High-Impact Practices in the Liberal Arts, funded by the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations. The initiative aims to identify the best practices for high-impact teaching in the liberal arts and understand how colleges can institutionalize these to maximize student learning.

One such project, the [Prison Learning Initiative](#) (PLI) at Coe College, aims to provide educational experiences for incarcerated learners and experiential learning opportunities for campus-based students across all areas of the liberal arts. PLI will coordinate opportunities for faculty to work with existing community programs that allow Coe students to learn with and support incarcerated people and returning citizens, and it will provide the necessary infrastructure for Coe to partner directly with the Iowa Department of Corrections to develop educational experiences.

"These projects will enable dedicated groups of faculty and staff on the ACM campuses to identify sustainable ways residential liberal arts colleges can enhance these practices on their campuses to advance teaching and learning while also benefiting their community partners," said Brian Williams, vice president for strategic initiatives.



"Creating the Prison Learning Initiative has given us the means—not just funding but institutional identity and sense of purpose—to turn some ideas for events into a coherent, multi-modal program focused on building supportive communities for those incarcerated and returning from incarceration....The response on campus and in the community has been electric."

Gina Hausknecht
John William King Professor of Literature and Creative Writing,
Coe College

COOPERATIVE ADMISSIONS

Showcasing the Benefits of Liberal Arts Colleges

The Midwest College Showcase, a collaboration between ACM and Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA), resumed in-person programming in 2023 by hosting nearly 150 high school counselors over two days to discuss topics relevant to students applying to liberal arts colleges.

At each of the two Chicago-area events, counselors gathered for breakfast and informal conversation with admissions officers from among ACM and GLCA's 27 colleges, panels from the consortia speaking on admissions and financial aid topics, and a college fair. Panelists spoke of the benefits of attending a small residential liberal arts college, including the individual attention students receive, a topic of particular importance as mental health concerns have risen on campuses following COVID-19.

"This collaboration between the ACM and GLCA builds on decades of both consortia separately organizing 'joint admission' events and activities," said Betsy Hutula, Chief Operating Officer and Vice President for Administration at ACM. "After a successful pivot to virtual activities during the pandemic, these breakfasts were the Midwest College Showcase's first foray back into in-person gatherings. We tailored the program to cover topics that were of most interest to counselors and their students, and we were thrilled that so many counselors joined us." Hutula said.

TUITION REMISSION EXCHANGE PROGRAM (TREP)

TREP Program Gains Full Participation

In November 2022, Carleton College announced it would join ACM's Tuition Remission Exchange Program, beginning in Fall 2023. With that addition, all ACM members now participate in the program, through which eligible dependents of ACM faculty and staff attend other ACM colleges with a portion of the tuition waived. More than 100 students applied to the program in 2023-24. ACM TREP also introduced an online application system which will streamline the process for participants and campus coordinators. The new system is available now for those applying for admission in Fall 2024.

Refine and Enhance Existing Programming

NICK ADAMS SHORT STORY CONTEST

Recognizing Student Fiction Across ACM

The [annual Nick Adams Short Story Contest](#), which held its 50th competition in 2022, returned in 2023 with award-winning author Lan Samantha Chang, author of *The Family Chao* and director of the Iowa Writers' Workshop, as the final judge. Students at the 14 ACM member institutions participate by submitting short stories to their college's English department. Two faculty from within the consortium select up to six finalists, and the final judge selects the winner.



Lan Samantha Chang
(Image: Ife Oluwa Nihinlola)

Chang gave the top prize of \$1,000 to "Phantom" by Carling McQuinn, a second-year student at Macalester College. "This story really moved me," said Chang. "Luna's observations of her beloved sister Sophie's struggle with anorexia are skillfully detailed. The story unflinchingly renders the claustrophobia and pain of family love."

McQuinn, who is from Austin, Texas, is pursuing an English major and minors in French and economics. "I've been writing stories since I learned how to use a pencil," she said. "I've also been an avid reader my whole life; if I'm in the middle of a really good book, I find it hard to go back to the real world when I put it down. It's always been my dream to write stories that provide readers with the escape that all my favorite books have given me."



"Macalester's English classes have introduced me to many new books I wouldn't have otherwise reached for. They've also helped me hone my writing in both academic and creative settings; I've learned to think critically about texts in an entirely different way."

Carling McQuinn
Nick Adams Short Story Contest Winner,
Macalester College

FOREIGN POLICY IN PRACTICE SERIES

Introducing ACM Students to Foreign Policy Careers



Shackelford, Stewart, and Nelson spoke about Russia's war in Ukraine at Monmouth College.

ACM continued its [Foreign Policy in Practice Series](#) with the Chicago Council on Global Affairs with hybrid events on ACM campuses that were open to all ACM campuses both in person and virtually.

Knox College hosted the first hybrid session, in partnership with Monmouth College, in February 2023. The session, "Russia's War in Ukraine at One Year – Local, Regional, & Global Impact and Prospects," commemorated the one-year anniversary of the war in Ukraine. Michael Nelson, associate professor and co-chair of political science at Monmouth College, moderated a panel discussion during which Elizabeth Shackelford, senior fellow, US foreign policy at Chicago Council on Global Affairs, and Katie Stewart, assistant professor of political science at Knox, offered observations.

During her time at Knox and Monmouth, Shackelford also joined three separate classes to engage with students on issues related to foreign policy, policy analysis, and authoritarianism. In addition, the colleges hosted lunch meetings during which Shackelford talked with students interested in careers in foreign affairs.

In April 2023, Colorado College hosted the second hybrid session, "Balancing US Interests and Values in a Complex World," during which Shackelford joined students to talk about her path to a career in foreign affairs and what advocating for US interests and values looks like from the front lines of our global engagement.

ACM Leadership and Partners

As of September 1, 2023

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ACM Leadership and Partners

NEW PRESIDENTS IN THE CONSORTIUM



Jill Baren
*President,
Lake Forest College*

Baren became Lake Forest College's 14th president in July 2022 and is the first woman president in the college's history. A medical doctor, educator, and researcher, she previously served as provost and vice president of academic affairs at University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, where she helped create initiatives to improve recruitment and retention of a more diverse faculty. As president of the American Board of Emergency Medicine from 2019 to 2020, Baren established the very first diversity, equity, and inclusion task force and changed the executive committee composition to 67 percent women and underrepresented minorities. Baren's faculty career began at UCLA School of Medicine and also included roles at Yale University and University of Pennsylvania. She has published more than 90 scholarly articles and several books in the field of emergency medicine.



Eric Boynton
*President,
Beloit College*

Boynton became Beloit College's 12th president in July 2023, having served as Beloit's provost and dean since 2019. He oversaw all college operations related to academic programming, faculty, and academic administration, including student-centered programs and initiatives such as advising, athletics, student services, career services, and residential life. In his first few months as provost, Boynton helped launch strategic initiatives expanding college-to-career pathways and teaching and mentoring. He took the lead in establishing Impact Beloit, the student career hub. Before joining Beloit, Boynton chaired the philosophy and religious studies department and directed the interdisciplinary studies, Black studies, and honors programs at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania. He has co-edited three books and written and presented numerous scholarly papers.



Victoria N. Folsie
*President,
Ripon College*

Folsie became Ripon College's 14th president in July 2022 and is the first woman president inaugurated in the college's history. She was at Illinois Wesleyan University for 20 years prior to coming to Ripon and served as the Caroline F. Rupert Endowed Chair of Nursing and the director of the School of Nursing and Health Sciences since 2009, and as executive director of Counseling and Health Services since 2019. Folsie also served as interim director of the School of Music. She doubled student enrollment, with an emphasis on diversity and retention of at-risk students, and hired diverse faculty to mirror the student population. Folsie also taught at Bradley University for three years and provided 15 years of eating disorder treatment with 10 years of nursing management practice at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria, Illinois.



Susan Rundell Singer
*President,
St. Olaf College*

Rundell Singer became St. Olaf College's 12th president in June 2023 and is the first woman president in the college's history. Previously, she served as vice president for academic affairs and provost at Rollins College; was recruited to lead the Division of Undergraduate Education at the National Science Foundation (NSF); and served as the Laurence McKinley Gould Professor of Biology at Carleton College, where she directed the Perlman Center for Learning and Teaching. At NSF, Rundell Singer was charged with implementing holistic, evidence-informed approaches to increase persistence and success of all undergraduates. She led 14 federal agencies in achieving the undergraduate goals of the first Federal STEM Education 5-year Strategic Plan, including producing one million more STEM graduates by 2018. Her scholarship focuses on partnerships and networks collaboratively advancing undergraduate STEM education.

ACM ASSOCIATED COLLEGES OF THE MIDWEST



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