

Board of Directors Meeting

January 28, 2026

Zoom Meeting



ASSOCIATION OF
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
EXECUTIVES

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Board of Directors Briefing Book

January 28, 2026

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ACCE Board of Directors Meeting

January 28, 2026 | 3:00 p.m. EST

Virtual

AGENDA

- 3:00 pm** **Welcome**
- Preview of spring board meeting in Boston with a focus on planning
- 3:15 pm** **President's Report**
- 3:40 pm** **Governance**
- Review and Approve Minutes – October 9, 2025 Meeting
 - Consent Agenda – New Members for Approval
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Financial Report
 - Audit Report
 - Investment Strategy Update
 - Nominations Update
- 4:10 pm** **Foundation Update**
- 4:15 pm** **Interactive Board Discussion: Shifting Chamber Dynamics**
- There has been an uptick in chamber challenges including:
 - CEO – Board Dynamics
 - Bad Actors
 - Negative News Coverage
 - Financial Mismanagement
 - Given that these challenges impact chamber brands everywhere, how can ACCE better serve the community and reinforce essential fundamentals?
- 5:00 pm** **Adjourn**



Board of Directors Governance Meeting Calendar

2026

January (virtual)

*Finance Committee	Jan. 27	1:30-2:30 pm EST
*Executive Committee	Jan. 27	3:00-5:00 pm EST
Board of Directors	Jan. 28	3:00-5:00 pm EST

April/May Boston

*Finance Committee	April 22 (virtual)	1:30-2:30 pm EDT
*Executive Committee	April 30	2:30-4:30 pm EDT
Board Reception	April 30	6:30-8:30 pm EDT
Board of Directors	May 1	8:00 am-2:30 pm EDT

July | ACCE26 New Orleans

*Finance Committee	July 9 (virtual)	1:00-2:00 pm CDT
*Executive Committee	July 20	11:45-12:45 pm CDT
Board of Directors	July 20	1:00-2:15 pm CDT

note: time of day for July 20th meetings may vary slightly

October Alexandria, VA

*Finance Committee	Oct. 20 (virtual)	1:30-2:30 pm EDT
*Executive Committee	Oct. 28	2:30-4:30 pm EDT
Board Reception	Oct. 28	6:30-8:30 pm EDT
Board of Directors	Oct. 29	8:00 am-2:30 pm EDT

***Activities for select committee members only.
Additional committee meetings via conference call announced as needed.**

ACCE Board of Directors Meeting

October 9, 2025 | 8:00 a.m. EDT

Georgetown University
Washington, DC

MINUTES

Present: Lance Allison, Sara Armstrong, Sara Barnett, Becky Bartoszek, James Bell, Sarah Davasher-Wisdom, Nikki Devitt, Bob DuBois, Bob Durkin, Natalie English, Ferlanda Fox Nixon, Angela Franco, Eric Godet, Katherine Grindberg, Reagan Gural, Jaime Henning, Andrew Hoan, Pammie Jimmar, B Kyle, Jessica Linder Gallo, Sandra Lombana Lindquist, Belinda Matthews Stenson, Charlie Moore, Matt Morrow, Buckley O'Mell, Jodi Owczarski, Corey Parks, Amanda Payne, Ali Rauch, Joe Reardon, Jim Rooney, Amy Shuttle, Cassie Stoner, Ernest Strickland, Tiffany Tauscheck, Ryan Unger, Heather Valudes, Tony Vedda, Chad Warmington, Becki Womble and Samira Zimmerly.

Excused: Brian Anderson, Sandra Baker, Alisha Benson, Carl Blackstone, Candace Boothby, Chellie Cameron, Adrienne Cole, Barbara Jean Garza, Robert Heidt, Katie Kirkpatrick, Nick Masino, Sherry Menor-McNamara, Steve Millard, Derek Miller, Mark Owens, Carlos Phillips, Brittany Quick-Warner, Sara Ray, Rory Ring, Keitha Robson, Maria Salinas, Justin Saunders, Mary Beth Sewald, Baiju Shah and Kami Welch.

Staff: Sheree Anne Kelly, Stacey Breslin, Will Burns, Jacqui Cook, Ryan Keedy and Karen Rose

Chair Jim Rooney called the meeting to order and welcomed new officers and board members.

Rooney then asked the board to review the minutes from the July 22, 2025 meeting in Philadelphia. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Heather Valudes and seconded by Tony Vedda. *Motion carried.*

Rooney then presented the consent agenda of new ACCE members for approval since our last meeting. A list is provided in the briefing materials. A motion to approve the new members was made by Matt Morrow and seconded by Angela Franco. *Passed.*

Treasurer Maria Salinas is not able to attend the meeting. CFO Jacqui Cook provided the financial report in her absence. She noted that our cash position is strong, with total net assets at \$5 million. Membership revenue is slightly higher than budget. This year's convention was successful, meeting our registration revenue goals. Sponsorship revenue remained strong, with exhibitor revenue falling slightly short of goal.

Net income for ACCE exceeds the budget. The foundation is ahead of budget and FBI has a positive net income. A motion to accept the financial report was made by Becki Womble and seconded by Charlie Moore. *Passed.*

Rooney noted that ACCE's financial advisor, Anna Behnam, attended the finance and executive committee meetings yesterday to provide an update on ACCE's investments and called on CEO Sheree Anne Kelly for a brief recap.

Audit Chair Pammie Jimmar shared that the annual audit will begin in November, and that an update will be provided at our January governance meetings.

Rooney then *convened* the FBI Annual Stockholders Meeting, a required yearly meeting of ACCE's wholly owned, for-profit subsidiary. Chair Candace Boothby could not attend today's meeting. Stacey Breslin reported in her absence. Rooney then *adjourned* the FBI Annual Stockholders Meeting.

CEO Sheree Anne Kelly provided an update on the foundation and its latest work, in Chair Bob DuBois' absence.

CEO Kelly provided the president's report on the state of ACCE, strategic initiatives and other key priorities.

A presentation followed on mega trends impacting economic growth, centered around Horizon 2035 influences. Xavier de Souza Briggs of Brookings Metro led this presentation.

Emily Dickens, Chief of Staff for the Society for Human Resource Management, led a presentation on civility and talent development, also focused around Horizon 2035 influences.

Small group discussions followed centering on multigenerational workforces. Each group shared feedback from their group discussions.

Chair Rooney led a fireside chat featuring Jackie Kucinich, Washington Bureau Chief at The Boston Globe, on the state of federal politics and policy.

Brooks C. Holtom, Professor of Management at the McDonough School of Business at Georgetown University, presented on resilience as an essential leadership skill.

Rooney made closing remarks. *Meeting adjourned.*

New Members for approval

Chamber Name	Location	Join Date
Jackson County Chamber of Commerce	Marianna, FL	09/06/2025
Greater Vail Area Chamber of Commerce	Vail, AZ	09/11/2025
Monroe City Area Chamber of Commerce	Monroe City, MO	09/14/2025
Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce	Columbus, IN	09/23/2025
Lockport Chamber of Commerce	Lockport, IL	09/24/2025
Getro	Boulder, CO	09/25/2025
Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Chicago, IL	10/03/2025
Pickerington Area Chamber	Pickerington, OH	10/03/2025
Mid-South Latino Chamber of Commerce	Memphis, TN	10/07/2025
Academies of Central Arkansas Foundation	North Little Rock, AR	10/06/2025
Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Washington, DC	10/09/2025
La Grange Business Association	La Grange, IL	10/16/2025
Greater Tomah Area Chamber of Commerce	Tomah, WI	10/16/2025
West Seattle Chamber of Commerce	Seattle, WA	10/24/2025
Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Richmond, VA	10/30/2025
Nevada City Chamber of Commerce	Nevada City, CA	10/30/2025
*Greater New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce	New Braunfels, TX	11/13/2025
Bolivar Peninsula Chamber of Commerce	Crystal Beach, TX	11/14/2025
Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce	Gaithersburg, MD	11/14/2025
Somerset County Business Partnership	Bridgewater, NJ	12/16/2025
Forward Wichita Falls	Wichita Falls, TX	12/16/2025
Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Arizona	Phoenix, AZ	12/16/2025
Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry	Harrisburg, PA	12/17/2025
Fredericksburg Chamber of Commerce	Fredericksburg, TX	12/22/2025

*Horizon Upgrade

Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives
Consolidated Projects
For the Eight Months Ending November 30, 2025

JC-09CONSBS
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	ACCE	FBI	Foundation	Eliminations	CONS
Consolidated Balance Sheet					
ASSETS					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,069,071.48	376,965.93	792,745.04		3,238,782.45
Investments	2,142,644.57	62,850.24	-		2,205,494.81
Investments - 457B	457,289.80	-	-		457,289.80
Investment in Subsidiary	519,344.64	-	-		519,344.64
Accounts Receivable - General (net)	106,174.48	124,675.35	13,125.00		243,974.83
Accounts Receivable - Trust	119.66	595,604.22	-		595,723.88
Grant Receivable	-	-	19,618.72	-	19,618.72
Due from Related Entities	220,475.88	-	-	(220,475.88)	-
Prepaid Expenses	105,724.23	91,299.41	972.00		197,995.64
Prepaid Expenses - Convention	183,853.83	-	-		183,853.83
Deposits	2,950.00	2,950.00	-		5,900.00
Fixed Assets, Net	50,194.28	17,676.08	-		67,870.36
Right of Use Asset	-	-	-		-
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 5,857,842.85	\$ 1,272,021.23	\$ 826,460.76	\$ (220,475.88)	\$ 7,735,848.96
LIABILITIES					
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	195,710.95	7,336.07	-		203,047.02
Accounts Payable - Trust	99.12	526,519.10	-		526,618.22
457B Liability	457,289.80	-	-		457,289.80
Due to Related Entities	-	158,776.44	61,699.44	(220,475.88)	-
Deferred Dues	937,222.17	-	-		937,222.17
Deferred Other	58,490.00	(139.43)	385,708.01		444,058.58
Lease liability	-	-	-		-
Deferred Convention	14,750.00	-	-		14,750.00
Deferred Revenue - National Sponsors	17,609.99	-	-		17,609.99
Capital Lease Obligations	-	-	-		-
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 1,681,172.03	\$ 692,492.18	\$ 447,407.45	\$ (220,475.88)	\$ 2,600,595.78
NET ASSETS					
Net Assets - Unrestricted	3,931,757.76	519,469.13	315,202.69		4,766,429.58
Net Assets - Temporarily Restricted	-	-	-		-
YTD Change in Net Assets	244,913.06	60,059.92	63,850.62		368,823.60
TOTAL NET ASSETS	4,176,670.82	579,529.05	379,053.31	-	5,135,253.18
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$ 5,857,842.85	\$ 1,272,021.23	\$ 826,460.76	\$ (220,475.88)	\$ 7,735,848.96

Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives
Consolidated Statement of Activity
For the Year to Date Period Ending November 30, 2025

	November 25 YTD ACTUAL	November 25 YTD BUDGET	2025-26 Annual Budget	November 25 Actual vs. Budget YTD \$\$ Variance	November 25 Actual vs. Budget YTD % Variance
FBI					
Total FBI Revenue	865,538.86	874,168.00	1,311,252.00	(8,629.14)	(1%)
Total FBI Expense	805,478.94	813,175.33	1,219,763.00	(7,696.39)	(1%)
FBI Net Income	\$ 60,059.92	\$ 60,992.67	\$ 91,489.00	\$ (932.75)	(2%)
Foundation					
Total Revenue	528,983.99	767,231.33	1,150,847.00	(238,247.34)	(31%)
Total Expense	465,133.37	766,579.33	1,149,869.00	(301,445.96)	(39%)
Foundation Net Income	\$ 63,850.62	\$ 652.00	\$ 978.00	\$ 63,198.62	9,693%
ACCE					
Revenue					
Annual Convention	1,062,061.28	1,115,500.00	1,115,500.00	(53,438.72)	(5%)
Awards/COY Revenue	14,500.00	13,600.00	33,450.00	900.00	7%
Certification	8,755.39	9,000.00	15,750.00	(244.61)	(3%)
Chamber Education	79,372.50	79,000.00	282,500.00	372.50	0.5%
Chamber Executive Magazine Rev	53,710.00	52,500.00	80,510.00	1,210.00	2%
Executive Search	2,034.20	3,333.33	5,000.00	(1,299.13)	(39%)
Executive Speaking Engagement	25,562.50	18,000.00	25,000.00	7,562.50	42%
Membership Revenue	1,080,468.96	1,062,666.67	1,594,000.00	17,802.29	1.7%
Metro Cities Revenue	44,273.00	51,410.00	77,070.00	(7,137.00)	(13.9%)
Misc Income	20,991.87	16,666.67	25,000.00	4,325.20	26%
National Corporate Sponsors Revenue	162,939.99	162,721.67	205,480.00	218.32	0%
Publications & Research Revenue	10,853.00	13,333.33	20,000.00	(2,480.33)	(19%)
Total ACCE Revenue from Operations	\$ 2,565,522.69	\$ 2,597,731.67	\$ 3,479,260.00	\$ (32,208.98)	(1.2%)
Expense					
Admin (Operations, Occupancy, Governance)	264,551.41	266,376.93	387,565.40	(1,825.52)	(1%)
Admin Personnel Costs	374,991.86	432,075.41	660,113.11	(57,083.55)	(13%)
Annual Convention	930,628.77	1,070,918.46	1,070,918.46	(140,289.69)	(13%)
Awards/COY Expense	49,568.83	48,635.28	50,035.28	933.55	2%
Certifications Expense	22,639.11	24,604.09	27,806.15	(1,964.98)	(8%)
Chamber Education Expense	124,007.45	126,376.39	259,814.58	(2,368.94)	(1.9%)
Chamber Executive Magazine Expense	40,137.32	42,281.03	60,421.56	(2,143.71)	(5%)
AskACCE	29,381.97	34,465.38	51,698.07	(5,083.41)	(15%)
Membership Expense	320,376.89	326,067.99	489,101.99	(5,691.10)	(2%)
Metro Cities Expense	40,179.20	39,493.13	59,939.71	686.07	2%
National Corporate Sponsors Expense	77,677.24	158,721.01	238,081.52	(81,043.77)	(51%)
Publications & Research Expense	58,696.92	59,842.80	61,864.20	(1,145.88)	(2%)
Web Expense	38,121.92	40,771.47	61,157.21	(2,649.55)	(6%)
Total ACCE Expense from Operations	\$ 2,370,958.89	\$ 2,670,629.39	\$ 3,478,517.24	\$ (299,670.50)	(11%)
ACCE Net Income from Operations	\$ 194,563.80	\$ (72,897.72)	\$ 742.76	\$ 267,461.52	(367%)
Total ACCE & Affiliates Revenue	3,960,045.54	4,239,131.00	5,941,359.00	(279,085.46)	(7%)
Total ACCE & Affiliates Expenses	3,641,571.20	4,250,384.06	5,848,149.24	(608,812.86)	(14%)
Total ACCE & Affiliates Net Income	\$ 318,474.34	\$ (11,253.06)	\$ 93,209.76	\$ 329,727.40	(2,930%)
Interest-Ameriprise	\$ 54,712.27				
Realized & Unrealized Gain/Loss from Investments	\$ 21,436.55				
Expenses to Date from Opportunity Fund	\$ 25,799.56				
ACCE Total Change in Net Assets	\$ 244,913.06				



ACCE Finance Report

November 30, 2025, Financial Statements (8 months into the FY)

Balance Sheet

The ACCE Cash and Cash Equivalents line item on the Balance Sheet is made up of two separate accounts.

- **Operating Checking Account** – This account is used to pay regular operating expenses. The operating account should have a minimum of 5 months of essential operating capital. The current balance in this account as of November is \$1.2 million, which exceeds that minimum.
- **Opportunity Fund** – Created April 2023 this fund is in a liquid, interest-bearing money market account. This account is to be accessed for short-term unplanned expenses or investment opportunities and is not managed or monitored by our investment advisor(s). In April 2025, the Finance Committee added another \$100k to this account based on our year-end performance and audited financials.

In addition, we currently have \$2.1 million in short term/long term investments. Deferred Dues is at \$937K and total net assets stand at \$5.1 million.

Consolidated Statement of Activity

Convention Revenue – The 2025 ACCE Convention was a successful event. Strong last-minute registration revenue helped to meet our budgeted registration revenue goals, and sponsorship revenue remained strong. The only budget line that we fell slightly short on was exhibitor revenue. Despite increasing event costs, we were able to control expenses to exceed our budgeted net income target. In the face of growing meeting costs, we continue to consider how we can maintain affordable registration rates (our current registration rates are 20 – 30% less than what similar national associations charge for their annual conferences) while delivering a high-quality, impactful program.

Executive Speaking Engagement - This line item is higher than budget due to additional revenue received from Sheree Anne's speaking engagements through November.

Membership Revenue – This line item is slightly higher than budget. Collections have continued to strengthen since the last report. While the broader economic environment remains

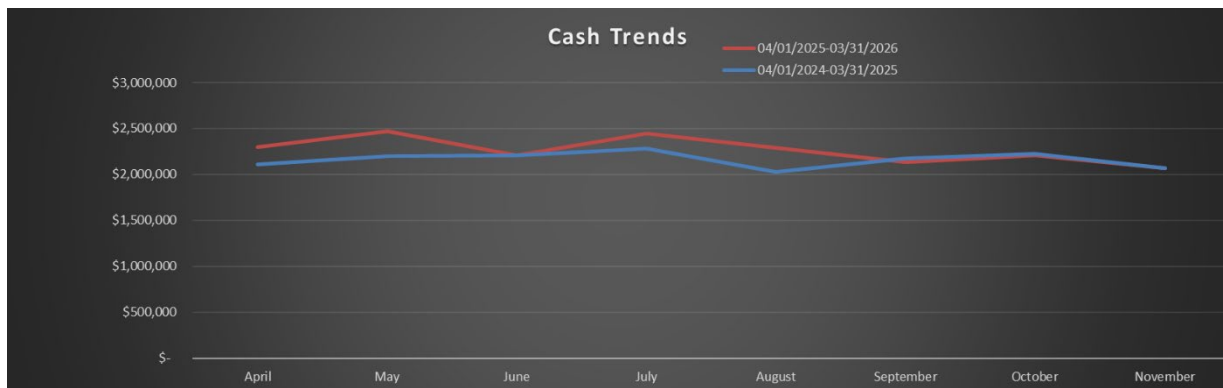
uncertain and challenging, continued process efficiencies and strong pacing presents a positive membership outlook.

ACCE Expenses from Operations – Most expenses for the eight months of the fiscal year are lower than the budget. This is primarily due to prudent spending.

Net Income – Eight months into the year the ACCE net is better than budget. The Foundation is ahead of budget net, and FBI currently has a positive net income. The Foundation, which is dependent on grants, can vary significantly in its short-term revenue due to grant delivery.

Opportunity Fund – Per ACCE’s investment policy, the executive committee pre-approved usage of opportunity funds to support the implementation of a new learning management system. This expenditure is noted at the bottom of the P&L. The new system better serves members, improves user experience and allows access for non-members to ACCE content, programs and resources.

Cash Flow – Cash flow as of November 2025 is as expected.



Professional Development Programs

Amy Shields, Vice President Programs

January 2026

Division Updates

Communications Division: In November, the division held a roundtable call focused on earned media and influencer tactics. The division newsletter went out on January 14, and the next roundtable call is February 12. This joint call with the Membership Development Division will focus on communication tactics that drive member engagement.

Economic Mobility and Opportunity Division: Division members met this quarter to discuss affinity programs. The division also met in Tulsa for the ACCE Foundation's first [Economic Opportunity Leadership Visit](#).

Economic and Community Development Division: The division held open discussions and webinars on tourism trends and tourism as an economic driver.

Education and Talent Development Division: Webinars and roundtable calls covered skills-based hiring and skills development. Upcoming calls will cover Q1 member updates and economic security. In December, we released an issue spotlight of [New Mexico's universal child care program](#). Please see the ACCE Foundation update for additional information on our education and talent development programs and events.

Events and Programs Division: The 2025 Events and Communications Conference was held in Huntsville, AL in October. [This post](#) details the highlights from the event. The division held a Coffee & Connections call in December.

Finance and Operations Division: The November division call focused on benefits beyond salary. The call included a brief presentation about the ACCE Employee Engagement Survey results. The division will meet again in January for a roundtable call.

Government Relations Division: The division continues to hold calls on the fourth Thursday of every month. Recent calls focused on chamber election activities, policy events and 2026 legislative priorities.

Membership Development Division: Registration for the [2026 Membership and Revenue Development Conference](#) (March 11–13 in Des Moines, IA) opened in November. The division's last roundtable focused on renewal strategies, with an emphasis on communication timing and the use of incentives to drive member renewals. The Division held a call January 13 on "The Top 10 Sales Tips for 2026."

Other Professional Development Programming

NEW! Online Learning Management System: The new learning management system launched at the beginning of 2026. The new platform features updates to improve many areas of the member experience, including the login process, online store, user interface and more. The updated system will also allow ACCE to extend professional learning opportunities beyond our current membership.

Sales Contest: The 2025 Sales Contest is currently underway with 56 participants ([view Q3 leaderboard](#)). Participants submitted their Q4 results on January 9, and ACCE will announce the 2025 winners by January 30. Winners will be recognized at the awards luncheon during the 2026 Membership and Revenue Development Conference on March 12, in Des Moines, IA.

Dana Ketterling Lifetime Sales Award: ACCE's career recognition program for sales professionals is now [accepting applications](#), with forms due by May 15. New milestones will be honored at ACCE's annual convention awards show on Tuesday, July 21, in New Orleans, LA.

CCE Program: [Applications](#) for 2026 are due February 6. Nearly 50 people have submitted an intent to apply form. ACCE staff has office hours open through January for candidates who want additional application support as they are preparing their materials.

Propel Cohort Program for New CEOs: The inaugural class of the Propel Cohort Program includes 12 new chamber CEOs. Participants engage in peer learning, professional development and mentorship from a seasoned chamber professional. Participation in the program will be available on the rolling basis, and the next application will open in January 2026.

Soft Skills Training for Chamber Members: ACCE continues to work with Pravi and the three pilot cities to refine the delivery model for the upcoming Talent Academy. Initial content modules will focus on effective communications. The Talent Academy is expected to launch in February 2026. Sign up [here](#) to stay informed.

Sales Coach Program: ACCE's Sales Coach Program is a six-month, structured mentorship program that pairs chamber professionals new to membership development with experienced volunteer coaches for personalized coaching, peer learning and professional development. [Applications are open](#). The program runs April 15-October 15, and applications for the 2026 cohort are due March 31, 2026.

Certificate in Chamber Management: In 2025, 191 CCM courses were purchased. Eight people completed the entire Certificate in Chamber Management program during the year. ACCE staff are working on new "Beyond the Basics" courses in finance, membership and communications, which will come out over the course of the next year.

Workforce Development Fundamentals Certificate: The [fourth cohort](#) graduated from this joint certificate program with IEDC in December. This six-session training is designed for chamber staff and economic development professionals with five years of experience or less in workforce and talent. We are currently evaluating future iterations of this training.

Webinars and On-Demand Learning: Recent webinar topics included [tourism trends](#) and partnering with organizations to vet skills. eCourses covered [tourism as an economic driver](#) and [defining economic mobility](#). Upcoming topics include internal controls and fraud risks, economic security, building a strong chamber PAC and best practices in board governance.

ACCE Convention – SCHEDULE CHANGES: [Registration](#) is open for the 2026 Convention. This year, CEO peer group meetings will take place on the first day of the conference, plus all attendees will be able to take advantage of new content sessions that afternoon. Please review the online materials to see more agenda and scheduling changes. The new format allows participants to maximize their travel budgets and consolidates the conference schedule to three days, while keeping the same amount of content and peer networking. ACCE has secured a location for 2027 & 2028 Conventions.

ACCE Next Generation Leadership Program: The inaugural NextGen Leadership cohort continues to meet every month for both professional development and leadership training. November professional development featured Tiffany Tauscheck, CCE, CDME, IOM, and Jay Chesshir, CCE, IOM, who presented on board management best practices. January professional development focuses on governance and legal considerations. Participants also continue to meet regularly with their industry mentors. Applications for the 2026-2027 cohort will open later this spring.

Chamber of the Year: ACCE convened the awards task force to review and enhance ACCE's awards programs, including Chamber of the Year. As a result of the task force's work, the 2026 award process will feature a shorter and more streamlined application, increased transparency throughout the application and scoring processes, updates to category assignments and changes designed to incentivize applications from smaller chambers. Applications open February 2, with an Interest Webinar scheduled for February 10.

Regional Conferences and Topical Convenings

Events and Communications Conference: 87 chamber professionals met in Huntsville, AL from October 15-17. Topics included elevating signature events, engaging online influencers and generating non-dues revenue through advertising opportunities. Attendees also had the opportunity to review marketing collateral from various chambers. [This post](#) details the highlights from the event.



Economic Opportunity Leadership Visit: Chamber professionals from across the country who are committed to advancing economic opportunity gathered in Tulsa for the ACCE Foundation's 2025 Economic Opportunity Leadership Visit. The two-day event, hosted in partnership with the Tulsa Regional Chamber, offered a look at how chambers can help communities create more inclusive pathways to prosperity. Read more about the visit [here](#).

Government Relations Roundtable: This year's meeting was held November 9-11 in Cleveland. Thirty-seven chamber government relations professionals participated in the meeting, which covered topics including policy priorities, political action, mobilizing members, using AI in your policy work and more. The group also learned about the city's transformational lakefront redevelopment project and toured Playhouse Square, the nation's largest performing arts center outside of New York City. This \$200-plus million restoration project catalyzed Cleveland's downtown renaissance, converting abandoned 1920s theatres into an economic engine.



Registration is open for the following Spring 2026 conferences:

- [Membership and Revenue Development Conference](#): March 11 – 13, 2026 in Des Moines, IA
- [Education and Talent Convening](#): March 25 – 27, 2026 in Charleston, SC

Save the Date for the following conferences in 2026:

- ACCE Convention: July 20 – 22, 2026 in New Orleans, LA
- Economic Opportunity Leadership Visit: October 20 - 21, 2026 in Tampa Bay, FL
- Government Relations Meeting: November 8 – 10, 2026 will be in Portland, OR

Communications & Networks Report

Will Burns, Vice President – Communications & Networks

ACCE Communications

ACCE Year in Review: We released our [2025 Year in Review](#) to highlight accomplishments during 2025 to support our members, including:

- Releasing Horizon 2035 & supporting materials
- Strengthening our industry research
- Launching new programs for emerging chamber leaders and new chamber CEOs
- Creating plug and play tools to help members address practical challenges



Chamber Executive: [The Fall 2025 edition](#) of *Chamber Executive* is online. The issue features ACCE’s annual 40 Under 40, a recognition program that showcases 40 of the industry’s top emerging leaders. The issue also featured articles on non-dues revenue strategies, virtual assistants and communications tactics that drive member engagement.

- **Resilient Leadership:** In her quarterly column, ACCE President & CEO Sheree Anne Kelly explored the topic of resilient leadership. Regardless of where you sit in your chamber’s org chart, we all need to embrace new leadership skills to deal with challenges like the increased pace of change, polarization, information overload and changing stakeholder expectations. [Read More](#)
- **The Winter 2026 issue** will be published in February. It will feature stories on event strategies, economic opportunity and the impact of changing member expectations on membership recruitment and retention.

Social Media Highlights: ACCE achieved growth on our social media channels during the last quarter.

- LinkedIn: Follower count grew by 225 | Impressions 27.6K | Engagement Rate 58.85% | Click through rate of 55.52%
- Facebook: Follower count grew by 221 | Impressions 100.4K | Engagement rate 10.99% | Click through rate of 8.56%
- Instagram: Follower count grew by 72 | Impressions 25.8K | Engagement rate 3.58%
- Total Follower count across all channels is 22,892, up from 20,587 at the close of 2024

Top Performing Posts - LinkedIn

- 2025 40 Under 40 Announcement
- 2025 Events & Comms Photos
- Harris Poll Repost
- Tulsa’s Economic Opp. Leadership Visit

Top Performing Posts - Facebook

- 2025 40 Under 40 Announcement
- Kansas Aids Small Town Chambers
- Fellowship for Talent Development Meeting
- 2025 Events & Comms Photos

Research & Benchmarking

New Revenue Models Resource Guide: ACCE’s new [Revenue Models Resource Guide](#) has been met with great interest. It highlights the latest data, trends and creative approaches to membership and non-dues

revenue, featuring fresh examples from 35 peer organizations. Additional information and related resources are shared on our [Revenue Models landing page](#).

Chamber Employee Engagement Survey: ACCE is conducting its second annual [Employee Engagement Survey](#), the only industry-specific endeavor to understand and transform chamber staff engagement. The deadline to register for the 2026 program is **Friday, March 13**. Surveys will be administered to participating chambers' staff on Monday, March 23 with analysis and reporting to follow.

Chamber Pulse Surveys: This past quarter, ACCE's Chamber Pulse Surveys covered chamber professionals' [mental health](#) and the industry's current [state of membership](#). Survey topics under consideration for early 2026 are event performance, chamber foundations and software solutions. The results of all pulse surveys are available [online here](#).

AskACCE: The team continues to provide Q&A and in-depth research services. From October - December 2025, we responded to 75 [AskACCE requests](#). Satisfaction ratings averaged 5.0/5.0. Inquiries focused on:

- **CEO Resources:** Executive transition resources, sample CEO contracts
- **Membership Development:** Renewal processes, retention rates
- **Governance:** Sample bylaws, partnership agreements, codes of conduct

Dynamic Chamber Benchmarking: [Dynamic Chamber Benchmarking](#) has been upgraded to the latest user interface, which should simplify member participation. Members can access the same core features, now on a more adaptive and user-friendly platform. ACCE updated its benchmarking [support resources](#) and provides office hours with the research staff during peak data collection timeframes.



The deadline to complete the operations survey is **Friday, March 13** and results open in early April 2026. The salary survey will be promoted in April with results to follow in May.

All board members are expected to complete both the operations and salary surveys. More information, including our new [playlist of instructional videos](#) can be found [online here](#).

Customized Research & Special Publications: ACCE can conduct customized projects to elicit data and feedback from select chambers on quantitative (and even qualitative) questions to benchmark how your peers manage operations, fundraising, employee engagement and more. For a reasonable fee, our team can conduct:

- CEO executive compensation reports.
- More detailed benchmarking to compare your chamber to your most relevant peers.
- Programmatic audits to compare your program of work to similar sized chambers.
- Membership dues model comparisons.

Contact [Will Burns](#) for more information.

Community Peer Groups



Metro Cities Council: ACCE's Metro Cities Council met November 16-18 in Austin, Texas. The meeting covered the state of the economy, downtown vitality, community innovation and more. The group will meet again March 1-3 in Washington, DC and have select joint sessions with the Metro Cities Council of International Economic Development Council (IEDC). The next Metro Cities call is April 22 at 2 p.m. ET.



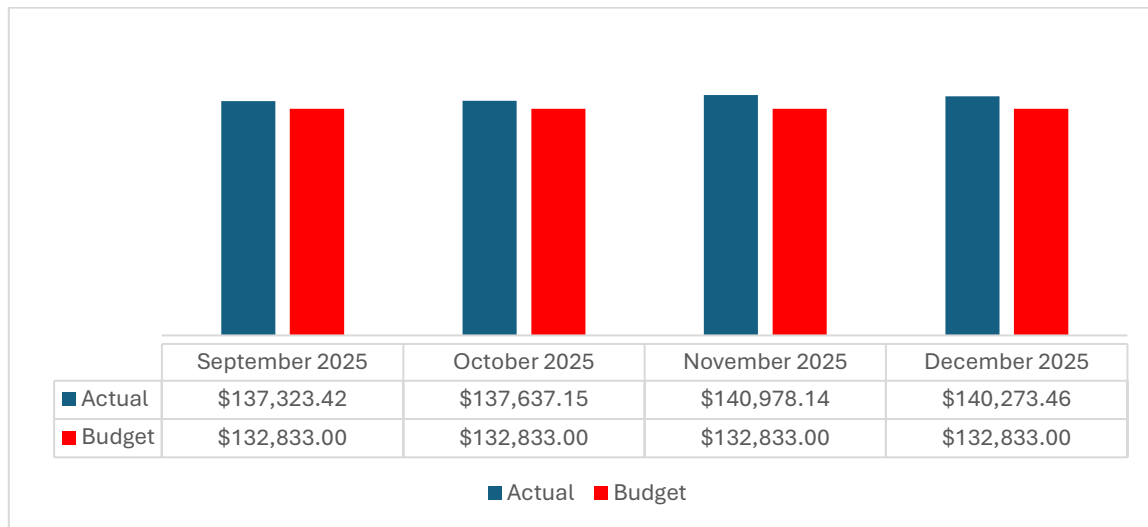
Major Cities Council: ACCE's Major Cities Council's met November 2-4 in in Plano and McKinney, Texas. The meeting covered transformational economic development projects, downtown redevelopment, regional collaboration and more. The group will meet again in Appleton, Wisconsin March 18-20. The next call will be April 16 at 3 p.m. ET.

Emerging Cities Council: Emerging Cities Council's December 2025 call celebrated 2025 successes and looked ahead to new initiatives planned for 2026. Recent conversations focused on membership management software, chamber foundations and fringe benefits.

Hometown Chamber Council: The Hometown Chamber Council's January call focused on practical applications for chambers to use artificial intelligence. The group's next call will be held on March 11 at 3 p.m. ET

Membership Retention & New Sales:

- We collected better-than-budget retention revenue across September to December, reflecting strong member engagement and renewal performance.
- During that same period, we welcomed 22 new members. We continue to see strong financial performance stemming from our now annual dues audits to ensure members are at the correct dues levels, and we remain on track to meet or exceed our budget despite scattered renewal headwinds tied to economic conditions.



Partner, Convention and Regional Sponsorship Sales:

- Partner Recruitment
 - We attended the Professionals for Association Revenue Summit in November, where we connected with a number of current and potential partners and sponsors and are following up on those opportunities now.
- Regional Sponsorship Update
 - We continue to see strong demand for sponsor participation in our signature events that are hosted across the U.S. We currently have one Gold sponsorship remaining for the Membership & Revenue Development Conference and one Bronze sponsorship still available for the Education & Talent Convening in March.
- 2026 Convention Sponsorship & Exhibit Sales
 - We successfully executed a campaign to secure exhibitors and sponsors for New Orleans, offering 2025 pricing to those who committed before year end. We are pleased to report that we achieved our goal of \$40,000 in commitments before the close of the year.

Q1 Technology Update

Emma Griffin, Sr. Manager, Technology Projects

Third-Party Penetration Test: We completed our second independent third-party penetration test of ACCE's Microsoft environment. This assessment simulates real-world cyberattacks to identify vulnerabilities that could be exploited by malicious actors. No critical or high-risk findings were identified. Compared to our Q4 2024 test, moderate-risk findings were reduced by 45%, and overall risk findings were reduced. All remaining action items from this assessment will be addressed in Q1 2026 as part of our ongoing commitment to continuous security improvement and risk management.

Fall Cybersecurity Training: ACCE staff completed their biannual cybersecurity training, which included updated modules aligned with current threat trends and emerging cybersecurity risks. This ensures staff remain informed about evolving attack methods and reinforces our organizational commitment to protecting sensitive data and systems.

ACCE Activities & CCE Points Report (ACCE Member Portal): To support a simpler tracking process for CCE points, the ACCE member portal now features a consolidated, user-friendly overview of each's members engagement activities such as event attendance and eLearning participation. This enhancement also includes a downloadable report designed to streamline the Certified Chamber Executive (CCE) application process.

ACCE Foundation Updates

Amy Shields, Executive Director

January 2026

Programmatic Work

The Business Case for Economic Mobility: The ACCE Foundation released the [business case for economic mobility and opportunity](#) on Sept. 11 and a companion video on [defining economic mobility](#). The white paper shares why and how chambers can support economic mobility in their regions.

ACCE Foundation's Education and Talent Development

Fellowship: ACCE [accepted](#) 20 applicants for the 11th cohort of our Fellowship program. Participants will develop plans to address a key education or talent challenge in their communities. The cohort met Nov. 13 – 14 in Washington, D.C. to discuss top of mind challenges, learn about logic models and brainstorm ideas for their regional action plans. The Foundation is planning for the 12th cohort.



Rural Workforce Development: The ACCE Foundation finalized a closing grant with Ascendium Education Philanthropy for the Economic Mobility for Rural Workers cohort. This will allow the Foundation to create additional tools and resources and engage with other rural and rural-serving chambers. The ACCE Foundation also received a grant from ECMC to help rural communities facilitate community-wide planning efforts on workforce and talent.

Skills-Based Hiring: The next Complete Skills-Based Hiring Lifecycle starts in January and will be offered again throughout the year. The ACCE Foundation is also available to facilitate workshops for employers on adopting skills-first practices. This work is funded by the Rework America Alliance, an initiative of Jobs for the Future.

Career Pathways: The ACCE Foundation is launching work to support chambers in identifying and expanding career pathways that lead to high wage jobs in their communities. More information on participating will be available in February. This work is supported by the Truist Foundation.

Public Health and Private Partnership: The ACCE Foundation co-hosted a virtual convening with the deBeaumont Foundation and the Health Action Alliance on December 2 – 3 that explored ways that public health and businesses can collaborate on challenges that impact workforce and community well-being. This continues work that the ACCE Foundation has done with deBeaumont for the past two years.

Development Pipeline and Partner Cultivation

Higher Education and Workforce Development

- Received a \$300K grant Ascendium Education Philanthropy to continue supporting rural chambers as they engage with workforce and education partners
- Received a \$550K grant from ECMC to offer workshops on building partnerships across higher education and business
- Received a subgrant from Achieving the Dream to support partnerships between chambers and community colleges to increase credential and degree attainment
- Reviewing opportunities to partner on the Department of Labor's forecasted pay-for-performance incentive payments program to expand registered apprenticeships

Other

- Meeting with potential funders in partnership with FordNGL to propose possibilities for expanding participation of chambers in academy models
- Met with AIR to discuss possible research partnership on durable skills

Fringe Benefits, Inc.

Candace Boothby, CCE, APR, GCCE, IOM, Chair

January, 2026

January of each year brings a new 401k compliance season for FBI. This is when we gather the data necessary from the Participating Employers to complete annual review and compliance testing for each location in the 401k profit sharing plan.

The new high-income earner (HIE) classification is in effect for catch-up contributions as of January 1 for all 401k plans. It is critical that each location is updating HIE status promptly per the 2025 total FICA wages for all active employees. This is necessary to ensure all new 2026 contributions are being handled properly. If you are a participant in our 401k program, you have received information on this from our team. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions – accebenefitsteam@acce.org.

Our Fringe Benefits webpages have been updated with the latest versions of Plan Administrator and employee documents. These are here to support participating chambers. Please visit [ACCE/FringeBenefits](#) to ensure you are utilizing current resources.

We are pleased to report that all insurance rates remain unchanged for the 2026 calendar year.

ACCE External Affairs Engagement

As the national association serving and representing the chamber community, it's critical that ACCE staff spend time embedded in the field. This takes the form of chamber visits for strategic guidance and idea-sharing, speaking and facilitation opportunities, attending broad-based events highlighting issues that impact chambers and the constituents they serve, and outreach to other stakeholders, including but not limited to: media; national associations; universities, etc. This list does not include events hosted by or at ACCE:

ACCE Staffer	Date	Event	Location	Description
Sheree Anne Kelly	Aug. '25	Livingston County Area Chamber board meeting	Virtual	Presented on Horizon 2035 Report
Sheree Anne Kelly	Aug. '25	Georgetown University McDonough School of Business EmpowerHER	Virtual	Meeting with members of Georgetown University McDonough School of Business
Sheree Anne Kelly	Aug. '25	Fox Cities Chamber board retreat	Appleton, WI	Presented on Horizon 2035
Sheree Anne Kelly	Aug. '25	Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce Executives	Appleton, WI	Presented on Horizon 2035
Sheree Anne Kelly	Aug. '25	Greater Arlington (TX) Chamber executive committee	Virtual	Presented on Horizon for Business
Sheree Anne Kelly	Aug. '25	IEDC & NAWB	Meeting	Call with CEOs to discuss ongoing partnership opportunities
Amy Shields	Aug '25	WACE Academy	San Francisco, CA	Presented on staff development and management
Ryan Keedy	Aug. '25	ASAE Annual Conference	Los Angeles, CA	Attendee and participated in Community Impact Coalition
Sheree Anne Kelly	Sept. '25	Harrisburg Regional Chamber & CREDC board retreat	Harrisburg, PA	Facilitated strategic planning retreat
Sheree Anne Kelly	Sept. '25	Paducah Area Chamber fly-in	Washington, DC	Presented on Horizon 2035
Sheree Anne Kelly	Sept. '25	Sarasota Chamber board retreat	Sarasota, FL	Facilitated strategic planning retreat
Sheree Anne Kelly	Sept. '25	US Hispanic Chamber annual conference	Atlanta, GA	Moderated panel discussion at opening plenary
Sheree Anne Kelly	Sept. '25	The Great Retention Podcast	Podcast	Featured guest speaker on chamber workforce initiatives and business retention
Sheree Anne Kelly	Sept. '25	WACE	Meeting	Call with CEO to discuss partnership opportunities
Ryan Keedy	Sept. '25	Comcast Connect Event	Washington, DC	Attendee
Sheree Anne Kelly	Oct. '25	ASAE CEO Breakfast Roundtable	Washington, DC	Navigating shifts in federal policy and priorities
Sheree Anne Kelly	Oct. '25	Georgia Chamber podcast	Podcast	Informational podcast on chamber value and CCE

Sheree Anne Kelly	Oct. '25	Wayne County Area Chamber board meeting	Virtual	Presented on Horizon 2035
Sheree Anne Kelly	Oct. '25	CEO Update Women's Roundtable	Washington, DC	Speaker Katherine Tai, United States Trade Representative
Sheree Anne Kelly	Oct. '25	Babson College	Wellesley, MA	Campus visit to discuss opportunities to collaborate
Amy Shields	Oct '25	Oregon State Chamber of Commerce Conference	Canyonville, OR	Presented on Horizon 2035 and Strategic Planning
Amy Shields	Oct '25	Iowa Association of Chambers of Commerce Conference	Virtual	Presented on Horizon 2035
Amy Shields	Oct '25	Workforce Matters Conference	Arlington, VA	Presented on credential alignment
Sheree Anne Kelly	Nov. '25	IEDC	Meeting	Met with CEO to discuss ongoing partnership opportunities
Sheree Anne Kelly	Nov. '25	VACCE (Vermont)	Virtual	Presented on Horizon 2035
Sheree Anne Kelly	Nov. '25	ASAE Academy	Webinar	Beyond Membership: A Revenue Shift Associations Can't Afford to Ignore
Sheree Anne Kelly	Nov. '25	Montgomery County Chamber	Rockville, MD	Annual Business Awards
Sheree Anne Kelly & Karen Rose	Nov. '25	SHRM headquarters	Alexandria, VA	Met with CAO & senior staff to discuss opportunities to collaborate
Amy Shields	Nov '25	PACE Conference	Seven Springs, PA	Presented on Horizon 2035
Sheree Anne Kelly	Dec. '25	McKinney Chamber board retreat	McKinney, TX	Facilitated strategic planning retreat
Sheree Anne Kelly	Dec. '25	WACE	Meeting	Met with CEO to discuss ongoing partnership opportunities
Sheree Anne Kelly	Dec. '25	St. Tammany Chamber board meeting	Virtual	Presented on Horizon 2035
Amy Shields	Dec '25	Private/Public Health Partnerships Convening	Virtual	Presented and facilitated on public health/private sector partnerships
Amy Shields	Dec '25	Greater St. Louis Inc. Chamber Roundtable	Virtual	Presented on chamber foundations
Sheree Anne Kelly	Jan. '25	Tampa Bay Chamber Annual Leading Forward Forum	Tampa, FL	Keynote speaker – Horizon for Business & Chambers
Sheree Anne Kelly	Jan. '25	NASC winter meeting	Naples, FL	Presented on State & Local Chamber Partnerships
Sheree Anne Kelly	Jan. '25	New Braunfels Chamber board retreat	New Braunfels, TX	Facilitated strategic planning retreat
Sheree Anne Kelly	Jan. '25	McKinney Chamber annual meeting	McKinney, TX	Keynote speaker – Horizon for Business & Chambers

Amy Shields	Jan '25	Ohio Chamber Professionals	Virtual	Presented on Horizon 2035
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Do you know of events at which our team should speak? Conferences/virtual meetings where our industry's voice should be heard? Know a chamber that could benefit from customized consulting, training or facilitated retreats? Let us know. Tell Sheree Anne – skelly@acce.org.