

Board of Directors Meeting

October 9, 2025
Washington, DC



ASSOCIATION OF
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
EXECUTIVES

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Board of Directors Briefing Book

October 9, 2025

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ACCE Board of Directors Meeting

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

Georgetown University

AGENDA

7:45 a.m. Breakfast and Reconnecting

8:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions

8:20 a.m. Governance

- Review and Approve Minutes – July 22, 2025 Meeting
- Consent Agenda – New Members for Approval
- Treasurer’s Report
 - Financial Report
 - Investment Strategy Update
- Audit Update
- FBI Governance – Annual Stockholders Meeting

8:40 a.m. Foundation Update

8:45 a.m. President’s Report

An update on the state of ACCE, strategic initiatives, convention and other key priorities.

9:15 a.m. Horizon Influences Session: Mega Trends Impacting Economic Growth

Hear from a senior executive from Brookings’s on their just-released research on how regions are building out new civic infrastructure to catalyze inclusive economic growth, plus other trends impacting our work. This highlights what is essential to driving regional transformation.

Presenter:

Xavier de Souza Briggs, *Senior Fellow*, Brookings Metro

10:00 a.m. Break

10:15 a.m. Horizon Influences Session: Civility & Talent Development at the Speed of Business

The ACCE Horizon 2035 report points to the role of chambers as unifiers, with a key opportunity existing for chambers to lead the way in building community dynamics where disparate voices can disagree better. Additionally, talent development continues to dominate our work portfolio. Hear from a C-Suite leader at Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and national expert on the role

that employers and chambers can play in cultivating cultures of civility and meeting current and future workforce and talent needs.

Presenter:

Emily M. Dickens, J.D., *Chief of Staff, Head of Government Affairs & Corporate Secretary, Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)*

11:00 a.m. Roundtable Discussion with Board

12:00 p.m. Networking Lunch

12:45 p.m. Fireside Chat: The State of Federal Politics and Policy

As a seasoned journalist with extensive background covering national politics, hear her perspective on the current political environment, insights on the federal landscape and Administration, plus the latest on key issues that impact the business community nationally.

Featuring:

Jackie Kucinich, *Washington Bureau Chief, The Boston Globe*

Moderated by:

Jim Rooney, *President & CEO, Greater Boston Chamber*

1:30 p.m. Resilience as an Essential Leadership Skill

Uncertainty calls for trusted leadership, and resilience is a defining leadership skill for today's dynamics. This session explores why the ability to adapt, recover, and lead with steadiness is essential for guiding others through uncertainty. Together, we'll discuss practical strategies to build resilience within ourselves, foster it across our teams, and inspire it in our members and community leaders.

Presenter:

Brooks C. Holtom, Ph.D., *Professor of Management, McDonough School of Business, Georgetown*

2:15 p.m. Closing Remarks

2:30 p.m. 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
(location TBD)**

*Finance Committee	April 22 (virtual)	1:30-2:30 pm EDT
*Executive Committee	April 29	2:30-4:30 pm EDT
Board Reception	April 29	6:00-8:00 pm EDT
Board of Directors	April 30	8:00 am-2:30 pm EDT

**July | ACCE26
New Orleans**

*Finance Committee	July 9 (virtual)	1:00-2:00 pm EDT
*Executive Committee	July 20	12:30-2:00 pm EDT
Board of Directors	July 20	2:30-4:00 pm EDT

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	6:00-8:00 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

July 22, 2025 | 2:30 p.m. EDT
Philadelphia, PA

MINUTES

Present: Lance Allison, Brian Anderson, Sara Armstrong, Sandra Baker, Sara Barnett, Becky Bartoszek, James Bell, Carl Blackstone, Candace Boothby, Chellie Cameron, Omar Cuevas, Kim Dahlsten, Sarah Davasher-Wisdom, Nikki Devitt, Bob DuBois, Bob Durkin, Natalie English, Ian Fletcher, Ferlanda Fox Nixon, Angela Franco, Eric Godet, David Griggs, Robert Heidt, Jaime Henning, Andrew Hoan, Pammie Jimmar, B Kyle, Jessica Linder Gallo, Sandra Lombana Lindquist, Nick Masino, Belinda Matthews Stenson, Sherry Menor-McNamara, Steve Millard, Derek Miller, Charlie Moore, Matt Morrow, Tim Murray, Buckley O'Mell, Jodi Owczarski, Mark Owens, Corey Parks, Amanda Payne, Carlos Phillips, Brittany Quick-Warner, Sara Ray, Joe Reardon, Keitha Robson, Jim Rooney, Maria Salinas, Justin Saunders, Kevin Sheilley, Amy Shuttle, Cassie Stoner, Ernest Strickland, Tiffany Tauscheck, Ryan Unger, Heather Valudes, Tony Vedda, Kevin Walker, Kami Welch, Becki Womble and Samira Zimmerly

Excused: Juliet Abdel, Alisha Benson, Kati Capozzi, Adrienne Cole, Barbara Jean Garza, Joshua Gunn, Katie Kirkpatrick, Ali Rauch, Rory Ring, Mary Beth Sewald, Baiju Shah and Nancy Spivey

Staff: Sheree Anne Kelly, Stacey Breslin, Jacqui Cook and Karen Rose

Chair Jim Rooney called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to Philadelphia. Convention host Chellie Cameron also welcomed the group and shared more about the week ahead.

Rooney recognized Jaime Henning and Charlie Moore for 25 years of service in the chamber industry.

Rooney then welcomed and introduced new board members. Quick introductions followed.

The board reviewed the minutes from the April 30, 2025 meeting. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Natalie English and seconded by Sandra Lindquist. *Motion carried.*

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

Rooney called on Treasurer Maria Salinas for the financial report through March 31, 2025. She noted that our cash position is strong, with total net assets at \$4.8 million. Membership revenue is 2% higher than budget. Convention revenue fell just shy of budget related to aggressive goals around sponsors, exhibitors and registration. However, there is a net profit of \$141k which exceeds the budgeted net revenue. Expenses from operations are lower than budget. Overall, ACCE's net income for the fiscal year exceeds budget and the foundation and FBI also have a positive net income. Bob Durkin made a motion to accept the financial report which was seconded by Kevin Sheilley. *Passed.*

Salinas then presented the finance report through May 31, 2025. Membership revenue is slightly below our budget figure, with fiscal uncertainty having an impact in this area, especially among smaller member organizations. Expenses for the first two months of the fiscal year are lower than budget. Net income for ACCE exceeds budget. FBI has a positive net income and ACCEF is ahead of budget. A motion to accept the finance report was made by Nick Masino; seconded by Tony Vedda. *Passed.*

CEO Kelly provided an update on ACCE's investment plan.

Rooney called on Nominating Committee Chair Carlos Phillips for a report. Phillips thanked members of nominating committees and shared confidence in the leadership slate for the coming year. He presented the slate of officers for 2025-26. Tony Vedda made a motion to approve, and Pammie Jimmar seconded; there were no nays. *Passed.*

Phillips moved on to the Board Nominating Committee and noted that the due diligence process was very thorough, and a number of self-nominations were submitted and selected. The electronic ballot was sent out in June and closed on June 30. The slate was approved by the membership. There were no nays.

Rooney called on CCE Commission Chair Tony Vedda to present the 2025 class of CCEs and commissioners. Vedda made a motion to approve the candidates which was seconded by Carlos Phillips. *Passed.*

Rooney gave a chairman's update and reflected on the challenges, insights and strides made during the past year.

CEO Kelly provided the president's report on the state of ACCE.

Foundation Chair Ian Fletcher provided a report on the foundation. Bob DuBois will succeed Fletcher as the chair effective this month.

A brief overview of the Benefits Trust offerings was provided by Tracey Osborne, who is a member of the Benefits Trust.

Chair Rooney recognized departing officers and board members and thanked them for their service.

Rooney made closing remarks. *Meeting adjourned.*

New Members for approval

Chamber Name	Location	Join Date
Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce	Ottawa, OH	06/11/2025
Royal Gorge Chamber Alliance	Cañon City, CO	06/06/2025
Preble County Chamber of Commerce	Eaton, OH	06/17/2025
The Bill of Rights Institute	Arlington, VA	06/17/2025
Plexus LGBT & Allied Chamber of Commerce	Cleveland, OH	06/23/2025
Your Part Time Controller	Philadelphia, PA	06/20/2025
Rare Blue Moon Marketing	Boca Raton, FL	06/24/2025
National Purchasing Partners	Seattle, WA	06/24/2025
Wyandot County Chamber of Commerce	Upper Sandusky, OH	06/25/2025
Monterey County Business Council	Salinas, CA	06/25/2025
Franklin County Chamber of Commerce	Deerfield, MA	06/25/2025
Ontario Chamber of Commerce	Toronto, Ontario	06/27/2025
ChildCareOwner	Greensboro, NC	06/30/2025
Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce	Bar Harbor, ME	07/03/2025
Washington County Economic Alliance	Greenville, MS	07/10/2025
Millbrook Area Chamber of Commerce	Millbrook, AL	07/11/2025
Young Entrepreneurs Academy, Inc.	Pittsford, NY	07/17/2025
Greater Georgetown Chamber of Commerce	Georgetown, DE	07/31/2025
*Madison Chamber of Commerce	Madison, AL	07/31/2025
CSR Privacy Solutions, Inc.	Jensen Beach, FL	08/07/2025
Virginia Chamber of Commerce	Richmond, VA	08/05/2025
Gulf South LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce	New Orleans, LA	08/01/2025
*Forsyth County Chamber of Commerce	Cumming, GA	08/05/2025
Swansboro Area Chamber of Commerce	Swansboro, NC	08/12/2025
BetterTracker	Fort Lauderdale, FL	08/12/2025
Greater Newton Area Chamber of Commerce	Newton, IA	08/12/2025
Howell Studios - Chamber Connect	Ontario, NY	08/13/2025
Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce	Farmers Branch, TX	08/19/2025
Helena Area Chamber of Commerce	Helena, MT	08/20/2025
Chazin	Germantown, MD	08/20/2025
Maywood Chamber of Commerce	Maywood, IL	08/20/2025

*Horizon Investor upgrade

Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives
Consolidated Projects
For the Four Months Ending July 31, 2025

JC-09CONSBS
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	ACCE	FBI	Foundation	Eliminations	CONS
Consolidated Balance Sheet					
ASSETS					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,443,156.79	252,408.23	703,288.24		3,398,853.26
Investments	2,101,512.64	62,145.04	-		2,163,657.68
Investments - 457B	392,786.37	-	-		392,786.37
Investment in Subsidiary	461,049.64	-	-		461,049.64
Accounts Receivable - General (net)	126,227.79	97,057.07	50.00		223,334.86
Accounts Receivable - Trust	119.66	453,451.71	-		453,571.37
Grant Receivable	-	-	14,298.37	-	14,298.37
Due from Related Entities	-	12,032.68	33,625.11	(45,657.79)	-
Prepaid Expenses	86,128.52	101,480.76	162.00		187,771.28
Prepaid Expenses - Convention	14,691.17	-	-		14,691.17
Deposits	2,950.00	2,950.00	-		5,900.00
Fixed Assets, Net	56,349.03	24,063.05	-		80,412.08
Right of Use Asset	45,648.00	-	-		45,648.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 5,730,619.61	\$ 1,005,588.54	\$ 751,423.72	\$ (45,657.79)	\$ 7,441,974.08
LIABILITIES					
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	315,001.93	4,418.07	-		319,420.00
Accounts Payable - Trust	99.12	418,949.87	-		419,048.99
457B Liability	392,786.37	-	-		392,786.37
Due to Related Entities	45,657.79	-	-	(45,657.79)	-
Deferred Dues	716,510.15	-	-		716,510.15
Deferred Other	68,450.00	(139.43)	428,167.84		496,478.41
Lease liability	49,279.00	-	-		49,279.00
Deferred Convention	-	-	-		-
Deferred Revenue - National Sponsors	34,638.33	-	-		34,638.33
Capital Lease Obligations	-	-	-		-
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 1,622,422.69	\$ 423,228.51	\$ 428,167.84	\$ (45,657.79)	\$ 2,428,161.25
NET ASSETS					
Net Assets - Unrestricted	3,865,063.72	531,643.48	311,801.19		4,708,508.39
Net Assets - Temporarily Restricted	-	-	-		-
YTD Change in Net Assets	243,133.20	50,716.55	11,454.69		305,304.44
TOTAL NET ASSETS	4,108,196.92	582,360.03	323,255.88	-	5,013,812.83
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$ 5,730,619.61	\$ 1,005,588.54	\$ 751,423.72	\$ (45,657.79)	\$ 7,441,974.08

Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives
Consolidated Statement of Activity
For the Year to Date Period Ending July 31, 2025

	July 25 YTD ACTUAL	July 25 YTD BUDGET	2025-26 Annual Budget	July 25 Actual vs. Budget YTD \$\$ Variance	July 25 Actual vs. Budget YTD % Variance
FBI					
Total FBI Revenue	432,482.30	437,084.00	1,311,252.00	(4,601.70)	(1%)
Total FBI Expense	381,765.75	406,587.67	1,219,763.00	(24,821.92)	(6%)
FBI Net Income	\$ 50,716.55	\$ 30,496.33	\$ 91,489.00	\$ 20,220.22	66%
Foundation					
Total Revenue	255,531.63	383,615.67	1,150,847.00	(128,084.04)	(33%)
Total Expense	244,076.94	383,289.67	1,149,869.00	(139,212.73)	(36%)
Foundation Net Income	\$ 11,454.69	\$ 326.00	\$ 978.00	\$ 11,128.69	3,414%
ACCE					
Revenue					
Annual Convention	1,061,012.28	1,115,500.00	1,115,500.00	(54,487.72)	(5%)
Awards/COY Revenue	14,500.00	13,600.00	33,450.00	900.00	7%
Certification	729.04	1,000.00	15,750.00	(270.96)	(27%)
Chamber Education	28,110.00	15,750.00	282,500.00	12,360.00	78%
Chamber Executive Magazine Rev	17,635.00	17,500.00	80,510.00	135.00	1%
Executive Search	-	1,250.00	5,000.00	(1,250.00)	(100%)
Executive Speaking Engagement	3,950.00	4,000.00	25,000.00	(50.00)	(27%)
Membership Revenue	531,796.97	531,333.33	1,594,000.00	463.64	0.1%
Metro Cities Revenue	-	-	77,070.00	-	(27%)
Misc Income	11,316.90	8,333.33	25,000.00	2,983.57	36%
National Corporate Sponsors Revenue	138,080.00	142,721.67	205,480.00	(4,641.67)	(3%)
Publications & Research Revenue	2,147.00	6,666.67	20,000.00	(4,519.67)	(68%)
Total ACCE Revenue from Operations	\$ 1,809,277.19	\$ 1,857,655.00	\$ 3,479,260.00	\$ (48,377.81)	(2.6%)
Expense					
Admin (Operations, Occupancy, Governance)	131,225.13	137,188.47	387,565.40	(5,963.34)	(4%)
Admin Personnel Costs	183,090.91	212,037.70	660,113.11	(28,946.79)	(14%)
Annual Convention	918,728.77	1,070,918.46	1,070,918.46	(152,189.69)	(14%)
Awards/COY Expense	49,556.84	46,635.28	50,035.28	2,921.56	6%
Certifications Expense	18,749.40	18,802.05	27,806.15	(52.65)	(0.3%)
Chamber Education Expense	38,545.10	43,388.20	259,814.58	(4,843.10)	(11.2%)
Chamber Executive Magazine Expense	17,801.87	15,105.39	60,421.56	2,696.48	18%
AskACCE	15,392.27	17,232.69	51,698.07	(1,840.42)	(11%)
Membership Expense	147,359.39	163,034.00	489,101.99	(15,674.61)	(10%)
Metro Cities Expense	2,492.92	3,546.57	59,939.71	(1,053.65)	(30%)
National Corporate Sponsors Expense	37,378.98	79,360.51	238,081.52	(41,981.53)	(53%)
Publications & Research Expense	27,223.90	24,621.40	61,864.20	2,602.50	11%
Web Expense	13,615.40	20,385.74	61,157.21	(6,770.34)	(33%)
Total ACCE Expense from Operations	\$ 1,601,160.88	\$ 1,852,256.44	\$ 3,478,517.24	\$ (251,095.56)	(14%)
ACCE Net Income from Operations	\$ 208,116.31	\$ 5,398.57	\$ 742.76	\$ 202,717.74	3,755%
Total ACCE & Affiliates Revenue	2,497,291.12	2,678,354.67	5,941,359.00	(181,063.55)	(7%)
Total ACCE & Affiliates Expenses	2,227,003.57	2,642,133.77	5,848,149.24	(415,130.20)	(16%)
Total ACCE & Affiliates Net Income	\$ 270,287.55	\$ 36,220.90	\$ 93,209.76	\$ 234,066.65	646%
Interest-Ameriprise	\$ 22,654.88				
Realized & Unrealized Gain/Loss from Investments	\$ 12,362.01				
ACCE Total Change in Net Assets	\$ 243,133.20				



ACCE Finance Report

July 31, 2025, Financial Statements (4 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 July is \$1.7 million, which exceeds that minimum.
- **Opportunity Fund** – Created April 2023 with \$600,000 of seed money, 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 2024, the Finance Committee added an additional \$150k and in April 2025, the Finance Committee added another \$100k to this account.

In addition, we currently have \$2.1 million in short term/long term investments. Deferred Dues is up to \$716K and total net assets stand at \$5 million.

Consolidated Statement of Activity

Four months into the fiscal year it is too early to assess fiscal trends, as several revenue-generating programs start later in the year.

Convention Revenue – With over 900 attendees, 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. As we finalize expenses, we anticipate that net income may decrease slightly, but we still anticipate exceeding our budgeted net income target. In the face of growing meeting costs, we continue to consider how we can maintain affordable registration rates; current registration rates are 20 – 30% less than what similar national associations charge for their annual conferences. We are committed to continuing to deliver a strong return on investment for the ACCE Convention experience and to make the conference as accessible as possible to the industry.

Membership Revenue – This line item is slightly higher than budget. Collections have continued to improve since the last report, allowing us to recover the earlier deficit and shift into a revenue-positive position. 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 four months of the fiscal year are lower than the budget. This is primarily due to prudent spending.

Net Income – Four months into the year the ACCE net is better than budget. The Foundation is ahead of budget 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.

Cash Flow – Cash flow as of July 2025 is strong.



Q3 Technology Update

Emma Griffin, Sr. Manager, Technology Projects

Fonteva Payments 3.0: We upgraded our Salesforce payment gateway. This new version addresses some issues we had with earlier versions and streamlines operations by automating sync jobs, providing a clearer data comparison, and adding action buttons for quicker reconciliation. This improves efficiency, reduces manual effort, and ensures accurate, up-to-date records.

Secure Document Upload - ACCE Member Portal: We launched the Secure Document upload feature in the ACCE Member portal. This feature enables insurance and retirement plan administrators at our member organizations to upload documents securely directly to Salesforce.

Professional Development Programs

Amy Shields, Vice President Programs

October 2025

Division Updates

Communications Division: In August, the division held a roundtable call focused on wins and challenges. Topics ranged from digital magazines to large community Facebook group takeovers and crisis communication plans and resources. The division newsletter went out on September 12, and the next roundtable call is November 13.

Economic Mobility and Opportunity Division: Division members met twice this quarter for open discussions. Members discussed measuring impact, sponsorships and popular program formats. The ACCE Foundation released the [business case for economic mobility and opportunity](#) on Sept. 11. The white paper shares why and how chambers can support economic mobility in their regions.

Economic and Community Development Division: The division held open discussions where chamber professionals discussed partnerships with EDOs, funding economic development and other challenges. Future programming highlights tourism and mergers. ACCE staff also reviewed focus group results with the Advisory Council and will integrate changes to offerings and topics the remainder of the fiscal year.

Education and Talent Development Division: Webinars and roundtable calls this quarter discussed innovative programs like The Dallas Regional Chamber's Talent Labs and upskilling adults. Please see the ACCE Foundation update for additional information on our education and talent development programs.

Events and Programs Division: The division hosted an Awards Roundtable call in August covering tools and software for managing award applications, strategies for analyzing and realigning the awards portfolio and creative engagement approaches. It also hosted a Young Professionals Program Organizer Open Discussion call exploring future trends in YP programs, partnership strategies, methods to recruit and retain Gen Z members, and popular technology tools. The next Events Division call on October 28 will cover strategies for signature events during uncertain times.

Finance and Operations Division: The September division call focused on the Horizon 2035 Influence "Changing Business Models." The call featured two chamber leaders who shared about how their chambers have revamped their business models and how they have structured their processes for success. The division will meet again in November for a roundtable call.

Government Relations Division: The division held a successful in-person meeting during the 2025 ACCE Convention in Philadelphia and continues to hold calls on the fourth Thursday of the month. The September call focused on federal transportation funding and featured guest speakers Adie Tomer, Senior Fellow, Brookings Metro and Brittney Kohler, Legislative Director, Transportation & Infrastructure Services, National League of Cities.

Membership Development Division: In September, the division hosted a CRM Roundtable with breakout rooms focused on four popular CRMs. Groups discussed data hygiene, retention and engagement strategies and best practices for reporting and dashboard use. The next division call is set for October 22 and will be an "Ask Me Anything" session with membership pros who will answer both pre-submitted and live questions from attendees.

Other Professional Development Programming

New Online Learning Management System: ACCE is launching a new learning management system called Brightspace. The new platform will offer a more updated user experience and will allow ACCE to extend professional learning opportunities beyond our current membership. The new platform will launch in late 2025.

Sales Contest: The 2025 Sales Contest is currently underway with 56 participants ([view Q2 leaderboard](#)). Participants will complete Q3 submissions by October 10.

CCE Program: ACCE welcomed 26 new CCEs as part of the class of 2025. It's the biggest class according to our records. Recruiting for the class of 2026 has started, with an informational webinar scheduled for late October. Twenty prospects have already submitted their Intent to Apply forms for 2026.

Propel Cohort Program for New CEOs: The inaugural class of the Propel Cohort Program includes 12 new chamber CEOs. Over the next year, they will meet for 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 along with Pravi and three pilot cities, are working to identify needs and refine the upcoming Talent Academy. Initial content modules will focus on communications and critical thinking. The Talent Academy is expected to launch January 2026. Sign up [here](#) to stay informed.

Sales Coach Program: This year's Sales Coach Program will conclude on October 15, wrapping up six months of personalized mentorship for 17 coach-mentor pairs. In August, the cohort participated in a roundtable covering best practices for new member journeys, summer engagement strategies, leveraging AI in membership, and effective time management and organizational techniques for membership professionals.

Certificate in Chamber Management: In 2025, 138 CCM courses have been purchased, and 103 courses have been completed. Six people have completed the entire Certificate in Chamber Management program this 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: ACCE continues to collaborate with IEDC on this program. [Registration is open](#) for the fourth offering. This six-session training is designed for chamber staff and economic development professionals with five years of experience or less in workforce and talent.

Webinars and On-Demand Learning: Recent webinar topics included [scenario planning](#), [talent attraction and retention](#), and [the case for skills-based hiring](#). ACCE also released a [tourism trends eCourse](#). Upcoming topics include economic mobility, tourism as an economic driver, and building strong talent pipelines.

ACCE Convention: The 2025 Convention had more than 900 attendees and received positive feedback from attendees. The event was a financial success and exceeded the budgeted net revenue targets. We continue to monitor the impact of economic uncertainty on chamber professional development budgets as we begin to plan for 2026 in New Orleans. ACCE has secured a location for the 2027 Convention.

ACCE Next Generation Leadership Program: The inaugural NextGen Leadership cohort gathered at #ACCE25 for in-person leadership programming and a networking lunch with their mentors and other industry leaders. The cohort had their first professional development call on leading high impact teams with Jodi Owczarski and Becky Bartoszek in September and are working through the Mindset Leadership curriculum from BetterCulture. The next professional development session will focus on board management.

Regional Conferences and Topical Convenings

Registration is open for the following Fall 2025 conferences:

- [Events and Communications Conference](#): October 15 – 17, 2025 in Huntsville, AL
- [Economic Opportunity Leadership Visit](#): October 28 – 29, 2025 in Tulsa, OK
- [Government Relations Meeting](#): November 9 – 11, 2025 in Cleveland, OH

Save the Date for the following conferences in 2026:

- Membership and Revenue Development Conference: March 11 – 13, 2026 in Des Moines, IA
- Education and Talent Convening: March 25 – 27, 2026 in Charleston, SC
- ACCE Convention: July 20 – 23, 2026 in New Orleans, LA
- Government Relations Meeting: November 8 – 10, 2026 in Portland, OR

Communications & Networks Report

Will Burns, Vice President – Communications & Networks

ACCE Communications





Chamber Executive: The Summer 2025 edition of *Chamber Executive* is online. The issue showcases award-winning chamber programs and features articles that highlight this year's Chamber of the Year winners' high-impact programs and the Awards for Communications Excellence Best in Show winning entries. In a feature on the CCE program, several members of the 2025 CCE class discussed their motivation for earning the credential and the professional impact it carries.

- **Chamber AI Policies:** In the magazine's cover story, three chamber leaders shared their perspectives on artificial intelligence (AI) and how it is being integrated into their organizations. The article provides links to ACCE's new AI policy template and sample AI policies and documents shared by industry peers.
- **The Fall 2025 issue** will be published in November and showcase the 2025 40 Under 40 winners. The issue will also highlight emerging trends in non-dues revenue, communications tactics that drive member engagement, Horizon Investor insights as we head into 2026 and more.





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

- LinkedIn: Follower count grew by 267 | Impressions increased 72% | Engagement rate 3.4% | Click through rate of 19%
- Facebook: Follower count grew by 596 | Impressions 168K | Engagement rate increased 664% | Click through rate 3.16%
- Instagram: Follower count grew by 101 | Impressions grew 176% | Engagement rate increased 138% | Click through rate 2.65%
- Total Follower Count across all channels is 22,302

Top Performing Posts - Facebook

-  2025 CCE Announcement/Album
-  Category 1 Chamber of The Year
-  12 Chamber of the Year Finalists Photos
-  #ACCE25 Photos

Top Performing Posts - LinkedIn

-  2025 CCE Announcement
-  #ACCE25 Awards Reception Photos
-  #ACCE25 Photos
-  Chamber of the Year Finalists Photos

Convention's Impact on Social Media Engagement: ACCE's annual convention is our busiest time of year in terms of social media engagement. We gained 507 new followers during July, and convention content generated 174k impressions. ACCE members amplified our convention messaging with:

3,088 Likes | 341 Comments | 207 Mentions | 138 Posts shared

Research & Benchmarking

New Employee Engagement Resource Guide: ACCE's new [Employee Engagement Resource Guide](#) contains our latest research on employee engagement within the chamber industry. The report highlights the industry's strengths and areas of opportunity, as well as what employees value most about working at a chamber of commerce. The guide also includes practical tools and sample policies to support building a stronger culture and supporting your team.

Chamber Pulse Surveys: ACCE recently explored current [non-dues revenue](#) strategies and tactics, including insights about 501(c)(3) foundations. Our next pulse survey planned for October will focus on chamber professionals' mental health. The results of all previous pulse surveys are available [online here](#).

AskACCE: The team continues to provide Q&A and in-depth research services. From July through September 2025, we responded to 90 [AskACCE requests](#). Satisfaction ratings averaged 5.0/5.0. Inquiries focused on:

- **CEO Resources:** Succession plans, sample contracts, job descriptions, bonus structures
- **Personnel Management:** Compensation structures, staff member succession/transition plans, performance evaluations
- **Membership Development:** Member segmentation, referral programs, remote worker memberships

Dynamic Chamber Benchmarking: Our latest [operations](#) and [salary](#) benchmarking reports are available for sale. Members that have completed the surveys can [log back into DCB](#) to access dynamic reports, metric comparisons and a free copy of each publication.



By mid-December, Dynamic Chamber Benchmarking will be updated to a more intuitive and modern user interface. The transition and refreshed support materials will be announced via email upon completion.

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's September call focused on federal law enforcement action in larger cities and state and local impact of federal funding cuts. The group's fall in-person meeting will be held November 16-18 in Austin, Texas. The group's next call is January 20, 2026, at 2 p.m. ET.

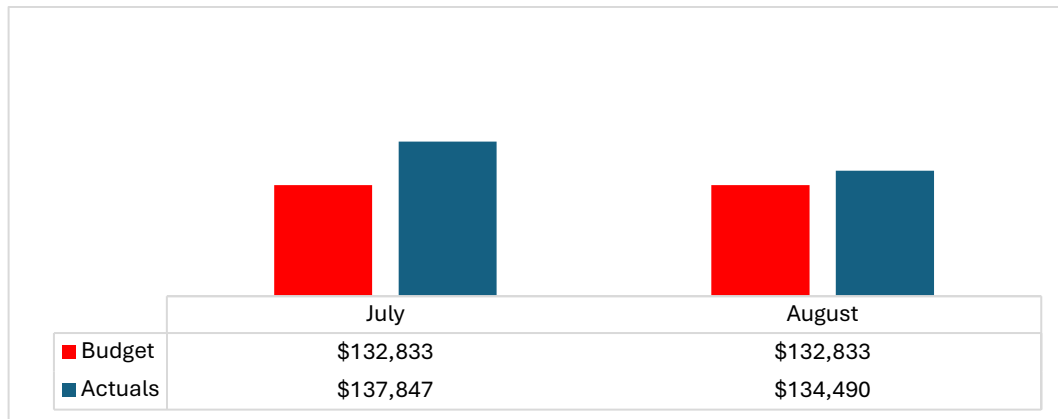
Major Cities Council: ACCE's Major Cities Council's September call focused on board management and engagement. The group's fall in-person meeting will be held November 2-4 in in Plano and McKinney, Texas. The group's next call is November 20 at 2 p.m. ET.

Emerging Cities Council: Emerging Cities Council: Emerging Cities Council is moving to monthly meetings through July 2026. Upcoming discussion topics will include membership models and employment contracts. Recent conversations focused on governance, leadership programs, and workforce and talent initiatives.

Hometown Chamber Council: The Hometown Chamber Council's meeting during the ACCE convention covered a variety of topics, including non-dues revenue, burnout, regional competition and more. The group's next call will be held November 12 at 3 p.m. ET. The council's Google Group remains a valuable resource for information-sharing among members. Recent threads focused on board management, travel policies and workforce programing.

Membership Retention & New Sales:

- We collected \$272,337 in retention revenue across July and August, reflecting strong member engagement. Despite minor renewal headwinds, primarily due to economic uncertainty, renewal performance is steady.
- During that same period, we welcomed 13 new members, contributing \$15,118 in new revenue.
- Last year’s dues audit continues to deliver strong results. By right sizing our membership and reinforcing transparency, we’ve strengthened our financial foundation and positioned ourselves for sustained stability.
- The new dues rate card implementation continues to go well. Approximately 8% of members are on a payment plan, with the vast majority paying at the new membership rate.
- Early in the fiscal year we saw significant late payments (a peak of 22% in April), but that has slowed to 14% in July. This mirrors what many other chambers and membership associations have experienced.



Partner, Convention and Regional Sponsorship Sales:

- Partner Recruitment
 - We attended the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Annual Conference to identify and engage potential new ACCE Partners. Given the strong overlap in audience profiles, the event offered a valuable opportunity for connections. We left with several promising leads and expect to convert these into meaningful partnerships in the months ahead.
- Regional Sponsorship Update
 - Sponsor outreach is well underway for the 2026 Membership & Revenue Conference. Based on the strength of our current pipeline, we’re optimistic about meeting our budget goal.
- 2026 Convention Sponsorship & Exhibit Sales
 - We’ve launched early outreach to secure exhibitor and sponsor revenue for the 2026 Convention ahead of previous timelines. Last year’s participants are being offered a limited-time opportunity to lock in 2025 rates for 2026, driving early commitments and momentum.

ACCE Foundation Updates

Amy Shields, Executive Director

October 2025

Programmatic Work

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 will meet Nov. 13 – 14 in Alexandria, Va.

Equitable Credential Attainment Cohort Program: The ACCE Foundation released updates to its [Equitable Credential Attainment toolkit](#) in late summer. The grant for this work ended in August, and the ACCE Foundation does not currently have plans to run a third cohort of this program, but we are in conversations with a potential partner organization to support a similar program in the future.

Rural Workforce Development: The ACCE Foundation is finalizing a \$300K grant with Ascendium Education Philanthropy to continue developing talent supports for rural chambers. This would include expanding tools and resources, conducting focus groups with rural chambers and sharing the learnings from the Economic Mobility for Rural Workers cohort. The ACCE Foundation also has a proposal in front of ECMC to help rural communities facilitate community-wide planning efforts on workforce and talent.

Skills-Based Hiring: The most recent Complete Skills-Based Hiring Lifecycle series wrapped up in September and had 13 participants – the largest number of participants in a single class to date. The Employer Accelerator for small and mid-sized kicked off in September with six participants. Both programs will be offered again in early 2026. This work is funded by the Rework America Alliance, an initiative of Jobs for the Future.

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

Development Pipeline and Partner Cultivation

Higher Education and Workforce Development

- Received a \$275K grant from Truist Foundation to provide career pathways technical assistance to chambers of commerce
- Received a \$25K sponsorship from Strada Education Foundation to engage chambers in the ongoing research and initiatives of the foundation
- Submitted a \$300K proposal to Ascendium Education Philanthropy to continue supporting rural chambers as they engage with workforce and education partners
- Submitted a \$550K proposal for ECMC to offer workshops on building partnerships across higher education and business

Other

- Continuing conversations with FordNGL on possibilities for expanding participation of chambers in academies
- Refining concept paper with Interise to support small business and entrepreneurship
- Building a comprehensive 2026 fundraising plan to expand the impact of the ACCE Foundation

Candace Boothby, CCE, APR, GCCE, IOM, Chair
Fringe Benefits, Inc.
October 2025

The benefits team is currently working on a project regarding the payroll systems utilized by our 401(k) plan administrators to ensure we have a thorough understanding of each payroll system and provide feedback to for improvements to administrators where appropriate. As part of this, we will also continue our 2024 pilot toward the conversion of all locations to import files directly from payroll providers for employee data updates, contributions, and compensation to Principal. Importing these items should decrease the amount of time each administrator spends on pay date submissions. More importantly, the import process will help to reduce the administrative errors and unanticipated costs associated with fixing errors.

In combination with the payroll project, we will also be addressing the newer 401(k) features that are effective for 2025 and 2026 plan years. Communications will be provided in email and webinars on topics such as high wage earner classification for those forced into Roth catch-up contributions next year – a provision of Secure 2.0 - and the annual reenrollment that takes place each January 1. Reminders will also be provided for 2025 plan features that were announced last year, but do not affect our plan administrators until late 2026. These include Secure 2.0's new super catch-up limits and the FBI true-up match procedures to ensure the administrators have a solid understanding of all newer plan features.

The Benefits Trust cybersecurity audit of FBI on the 401k plan services is expected to be completed by the Benefits Trust at their November meeting. These cybersecurity audits are a new responsibility for retirement plans sponsors resulting from Department of Labor guidance issued in 2022. FBI and ACCE staff will continue to support this effort through our detailed cybersecurity program.

The online enrollment and termination form challenges at the plan administrator level have been remedied. We continue to work on the rollout of the online changes form through the ACCE Member Portal. As a reminder, the move to online insurance administration creates better user experience for the plan administrator, better protection of employee data, and in time may create new efficiencies for the FBI benefits team.

Stacey and our partners at AGIA are in negotiations with the insurance carriers regarding the premium rates effective in 2026. Changes, if any, will be finalized and communicated beginning November 7.

Finally, the team will be meeting online over several Zoom sessions throughout November and December for strategic planning. Areas of focus include a debrief review to identify improvements for 2026 compliance season, plan administrator communications updates, employee communications material updates, a review of plan administrator training procedures to identify necessary updates and other potential enhancements.

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	May '25	St. Paul Area Chamber	Virtual	Presented on mergers to their Partnership Roadmap Committee
Sheree Anne Kelly	May '25	ASAE / Key Assoc. Industry Committee	Washington, DC	Committee meeting and peer-led roundtable; discussed pressing issues impacting trade associations
Sheree Anne Kelly	May '25	Eerie Regional Chamber	Virtual	Board presentation on the public opinion poll and the core services successful chambers are providing
Sheree Anne Kelly	May '25	American Immigration Council	Meeting	Discussed changes and policies impacting the business community
Sheree Anne Kelly	May '25	B2.0 Consulting	Meeting	Discussed best practices for chamber foundation work
Sheree Anne Kelly	May '25	Billings Chamber board retreat	Billings, MT	Facilitated strategic planning retreat
Sheree Anne Kelly	May '25	National Assoc. of Business Political Action Committees	Washington, DC	Panelist for Blue Ribbon Panel Discussion on evolving business and political landscapes
Ryan Keedy	May '25	The Herald Group Alliances & Coalitions Spring Reception	Washington, DC	Attendee
Sheree Anne Kelly	June '25	Babson College Executive Education	Meeting	Met with executive director to discuss partnership opportunities around entrepreneurship
Sheree Anne Kelly	June '25	Babson College	Webinar	Attendee: Thriving Amid Uncertainty: Entrepreneurial Leadership in a Rapidly Evolving World
Sheree Anne Kelly	June '25	North August Chamber	Virtual	Presented to board on The Horizon 2035 Report and the future of chambers
Sheree Anne Kelly	June '25	Greater St. Louis Inc.	Virtual	Presented to regional chambers on The Horizon 2035 Report
Sheree Anne Kelly	June '25	Save the Associations by XYZ University	Podcast	Guest on Associations Advancing Against All Odds

Sheree Anne Kelly & Amy Shields	June '25	Babson College	Meeting	Discussed partnership opportunities
Sheree Anne Kelly	June '25	Association Coalition for AI	Attendee	Quarterly meeting
Sheree Anne Kelly	June '25	U.S. Hispanic Chamber	Meeting	Meeting with CEO and senior staff on potential partnership opportunities
Rumsha Ahmed	June '25	Wichita Chamber Inclusion & Diversity Committee	Virtual	Presented on trends in economic mobility
Amy Shields	June '25	Apprenticeship 2.0	Podcast	Guest on two-part podcast on how chambers support apprenticeships
Amy Shields	June '25	UnidosUS	Virtual	Met to discuss skills-based hiring
Amy Shields & Rumsha Ahmed	June '25	CREC	Arlington, VA	Discussed potential partnerships and data sharing
Sheree Anne Kelly	July '25	Korn Ferry	Webinar	How to Lead with Resilience Amid Constant Change
Sheree Anne Kelly	July '25	Wilmington Chamber	Wilmington, NC	Presented to Chairman's Club members on The Horizon 2035 Report
Sheree Anne Kelly	July '25	Washington County Chamber	Hagerstown, MD	Facilitated strategic planning retreat
Sheree Anne Kelly	July '25	Save the Associations by XYZ University	Broadcast	Part 2: panelist for broadcast
Sheree Anne Kelly	July '25	Greater Louisville Inc. board retreat	Louisville, KY	Facilitated strategic planning retreat
Amy Shields	Jul '25	Achieving the Dream	Virtual	Discussed potential collaboration on foundation work
Amy Shields	Jul '25	Interise	Virtual	Discussed options for partnering on small business supports
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 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 the CCE credential, the application process and program
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

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.