Spring 2023

CCLE - Newsletter

Community College Leadership

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

College of Education & Health Professions



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Woo Pig Sooie

The University of Arkansas Community College Leadership program is excited to announce that 2 annual newsletters will be published in the Fall and Spring semesters.

As our second attempt at offering a newsletter, we want to hear from you and get your ideas of what we might include. Keep in touch with us!

Also, look for your CCLE faculty at the upcoming CSCC annual meeting in Chicago and send us names of potential students!



Success Story

Dan Kenney, Ed.D.



Dr. Dan Kinney, the current president of Iowa Western Community College and a graduate of our HIED program has had a lifelong connection to higher education. Both of his parents worked in the field, with his mother a professor and his father a college president. Despite his initial reluctance to follow in their footsteps, Kinney eventually found his own passion for education and has since spent over 30 years working in the field.

Kinney's journey began as an admissions counselor for Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. From there, he went on to work at the University of Kansas and later became the Director of Admissions at Allen County Community College in Southeast Kansas.

Kinney's career in community college education really took off from there, as he moved on to become the Dean of Students and Athletic Director at Allen County. It was during this time that Kinney realized his ultimate goal was to become a college president. He knew that in order to achieve this, he needed to continue his education and earn a doctorate. After researching various programs, Kinney decided on the University of Arkansas and completed his EdD in 2008.

After completing his doctorate, Kinney took on a new challenge as the Vice President of Student Services at Western Nebraska Community College. However, he continued to seek new opportunities and eventually became the president of Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge, Iowa. In 2019, he was appointed as the president of Iowa Western Community College, following in the footsteps of his father, who had served as the college's president for 27 years.

Reflecting on his journey, Kinney notes the importance of making connections and building relationships in the field of higher education. He never applied for a job, he credits his success to the encouragement and recommendations of colleagues and mentors.

Success Story

Kinney is proud of his career in community college education and emphasizes the importance of these institutions in providing accessible and affordable education to students. As he continues to serve as a college president, Kinney remains committed to the mission of providing high-quality education to students from all backgrounds.

Community colleges are facing both challenges and opportunities in the coming years. The increasing competitiveness in the market, the decline in enrollments, and the unfunded mandates for reporting and accountability are some of the challenges that community colleges will have to face. On the other hand, there are opportunities for community colleges to think outside the box and change education, especially as we see a shift towards credentialing rather than degrees.

Dr. Dan emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning for professionals in community college administration. He believes that continuing education can help professionals build a strong foundation in leadership, budget and finance, governmental relations, and other critical areas.

Dr. Dan also highlights the role of community colleges in helping individuals acquire the skills and credentials needed for good-paying jobs, which may not require a bachelor's or master's degree. He notes that community colleges can provide hands-on experiences and career-focused education, making them an ideal option for those seeking a skill set that requires certification.

Dr. Dan's advice to students interested in advancing their careers is to know the importance of getting to know your students and being involved in their lives, as well as recognizing the potential for changing lives and making a difference in the community. He encourages students to consider the community college system as a great educational system, with strong opportunities for growth and development. He also notes that sometimes, making connections and networking can be just as important as what you know, in terms of discovering opportunities within the field.

Remembering Dr. James C. Underwood



August 11, 1944 - January 4, 2023

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Dr. James C. Underwood. Dr. Underwood was a beloved member of our community and a distinguished scholar in the field of [insert field]. He made significant contributions to the academic community through his research, teaching, and service.

Dr. Underwood will be deeply missed by his colleagues and students. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends during this difficult time. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

Here is a link to his obituary.

Rest in peace, Dr. James C. Underwood.

Faculty Spotlight

Kenda Grover, Ed.D.



Tell us about your educational and professional journey and how you ended up here at the University of Arkansas.

My journey started at Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College, which was then known as a junior college. I loved my experience at NEO, partly because the residential halls, a strong athletics program, and a broad array of student organizations and activities made it feel like a small four-year college or university. I transferred to Northeastern State University and completed my bachelor's degree in Psychology. Because I was on an athletics scholarship and had eligibility left, I immediately entered a master's degree program at NSU in Counseling Psychology.

My first job was as an academic counselor and instructor at a community college. The vice president I worked for there encouraged me to get my doctorate if I intended to remain in higher education. I took his advice and applied to what was then the doctoral program in Adult Education here at the U of A. When I graduated, I was offered a job in the program, and here I am today.

What inspired you to pursue a career in education and specifically in community college leadership?

It was a person who inspired me to consider a career in education. I have always said that my career has happened to me rather than me intentionally pursuing it. As I mentioned, my master's degree is in counseling, and I was considering working in corrections or hospice care. I really had no idea what I wanted to do. One day this person randomly told me I should go into higher education. Of the six members of my immediate family, five of us work or have worked in education and four of us in higher education. Somehow, though, I had yet to consider this career path. I expanded my job search and eventually landed a position at a community college in Oklahoma. I loved (almost) everything about my job. I still believe it is a wonderful environment to work in. I don't work in community college leadership, but I work with others who do.

Meet Dr. Kenda Grover

Do you have a mentor? If so, tell us about them.

Larry Gipson was a Division I basketball coach, and he was the person who encouraged me to go into higher education. When I was in high school, he asked thoughtful questions about what I wanted to do with my life, and he always listened and offered his musings about my teenager-oriented responses. This made a lasting impression on me. So, when he suggested I should consider higher education, it was my turn to listen. Two faculty members and colleagues here at the U of A also serve as mentors. Kit Kacirek and Mike Miller have modeled how to mentor students in ways that make them feel valued and respected for their personal and professional experiences. They are both so generous with their time and energy. I have come to understand this is what is essential about faculty roles. Over the years, they have helped me navigate all things higher education, and were it not for their support, I am not confident I would be in this role today.

Can you tell us about a project or initiative you are currently working on that you are particularly excited about?

I'm in the beginning stages of a project related to human trafficking with state organizations in Arkansas providing service to HT survivors. This field is entirely unfamiliar to me, so I'm learning a lot. The piece that aligns with adult and lifelong learning is the training and education service providers, law enforcement, first responders, and healthcare providers receive to respond to victims' needs. Another research project is related to adult learning and community development. Mike Miller and I are collaborating on this, building on work we have done previously. What excites me about these initiatives is my interest in quality of life in broad contexts. I'm tapping back into my master's work, which I have veered away from.

What advice do you have for students interested in pursuing a career in community college leadership?

I loved working at the community college because it was small enough to establish great relationships with staff and faculty members across campus. There truly was a spirit of collegiality on our campus. Most people there were involved in more than one aspect of college life, whether it was strategic planning, recruitment, or athletic events. What a great environment to work in. From my perspective and what I hear from our students, there are many opportunities for advancement. I encourage students interested in community college leadership to take advantage of professional opportunities to advance their skills and position themselves for these opportunities.

Meet Dr. Kenda Grover

What do you spend your time on when you are away from work?

I spend a lot of time with friends and family. I run the road and trail, and I love cycling. A few years ago, I returned to tennis after a 30-year hiatus. It's one of the most humbling of all my endeavors, but I am glad to be back.

What are you reading right now?

Like many, I have a terrible habit of reading several books simultaneously. There are about twelve books on my nightstand right now. I'm reading Johnny Marr's (guitarist for the band The Smiths) biography titled Set the Boy Free, and I just finished Chronicles: Volume One by Bob Dylan. Since I'm fumbling around again with tennis, I'm reading The Inner Game of Tennis, hoping it will help me stop choking during every match.

Faculty Publications

Miller, M. T. (2023). A presidential perspective on the practice of fundraising in community colleges. Community College Journal of Research and Practice. https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2023.2192690

Morris, A. M., & Miller, M. T. (2023). Teaching better: A community college's faculty development needs. Journal of Education and Training, 10(2), 1-11.

Miller, M. T. (2022). An inventory of community college short term training programs in the US. *Journal of Education and Training*, 9(2), 118-125. Doi: 10.1002/cc.370

Miller, M. T., & Grover, K. S. (2022). An initial review of adult leisure education in community colleges. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, doi: 10/1080/10668926.2022.2064375

Miller, M. T., & Grover, K. S. (2021). The considerations of a classification scheme for community college workforce development programs. Journal of Public Administration and Governance, 11(4), 1-11. doi: 10.5296/vpag.11i4.18948

Smith, E. A., & Miller, M. T. (2023). Diversity in development: Community college practices involving diversity in fundraising. Journal of Applied Research in the Community College, 29(1).

Nachman, B. R., & Brown, K. R. (2022). Crip places: Dismantling disability discourse in the 2-year college literature. Journal of Diversity in Higher Education. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000443

Nachman, B. R. (2022). Assessing the effectiveness of a peer mentoring program for first-generation community college students. Journal of The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition, 34(2), 9-26.

CCLE Students Get to Know...

Shawna Bittle



My name is Shawna R. Bittle, and I have been working towards my Master of Community College Leadership (CCLE) from the University of Arkansas since October 2021. I graduated from Henderson State University with honors and received my Bachelor of Integrated Studies in 2018. I have two great sons and a fantastic husband who always supports my decisions. I am a first-generation student and proud of it! Being able to go to college and earn my bachelor's and now my master's in education makes me proud because I am leading by example to my kids. They have seen me put the time in and submit the late-night assignments that will ultimately help them see my vision for myself. Excellence in Everything I Do & Set My Mind Too". Making a difference in this world and reaching your dreams is possible.

Since 2019, I have worked as an Educational Specialist at the University of Arkansas of Hope Texarkana in the TRIO Student Support Services department. TRIO SSS is a grant-funded program that helps low-income and first-generation students with career choices and student workshops such as budgeting and time management. It helps give our TRIO SSS students cultural experiences that will help them to have different perspectives on life. In my current role, I help supervise and facilitate tutoring services on campus, determine participants' academic, transfer, and support needs, develop an educational and social support plan and monitor academic progress, provide academic advising and counseling, and make referrals to the TRIO SSS students on campus. Organizing, scheduling, and teaching educational and social-related workshops and events on and off campus is a regulated and gratifying part of my job. Provide financial and economic literacy information to participants throughout the academic year. Planned, monitored, and supervise participants to attend multicultural events on campus and in the community.

The CCLE program has helped me have different perspectives on change and implementation on our campus. The CCLE program has shifted my mindset and has helped me learn the abundance of resources and knowledge on my campus, whether that be an institutional report, utilizing the experience and expertise of our administrative or institutional officers on campus, or learning about the history of community colleges and connecting history to the present. I have enjoyed being in the program and having the opportunity to use the various teaching methods that I have learned and share some of these instrumental reflections with my coworkers and students.

CCLE Students Get to Know ...

One of the things I love about my job is getting to know these students and hearing about their stories. I thoroughly enjoy being a part of their academic and personal journey and saying, "I know what you're going through," and "You can do this." I have been going to college since I graduated high school and have experienced everything in my life comparable to my TRIO SSS students. Being able to impact these students' lives in many ways is rewarding. It truly helps me go to work every day and live for every moment.

One of my favorite books is Refuse to Lose: 6 Ways to Overcome Obstacles & Win the Game of Life by Odell A. Bizzell II. I love this book because it emphasizes the importance of knowing your purpose in life, the best ways to positively impact people you interact with, and knowing that you intend to perpetuate goodness.

Last summer, TRIO SSS took our students to Atlanta, GA, as one of their cultural experiences. On this trip, we went to the following: The Aquarium, The Coca-Cola Factory, the Martin Luther King Museum, the College Football Hall of Fame, The Varsity, and an Atlanta Braves game. I will be traveling to Virginia Beach, VA, this summer to visit my sister and see her new house! I can travel only a little bit to have a great time. A few years ago, one of my favorite experiences was in Hot Springs, Ar. A few of my friends on campus and I rented a house and had a wonderful time all together. We each had a designated day to cook our favorite meals, watch movies, tell stories, and enjoy each other's company.

I plan to continue to work with students in some capacity and keep implementing positive change on our campus. Lead by example and help support the students while preparing them for their next academic journey!

Meet the Faculty



Michael Hevel

Interim Associate Dean for Research, Strategy, and Outreach Associate Professor

Ph.D., Educational Policy and Leadership Studies, University of Iowa

M.A., College Student Personnel, Bowling Green State University

B.A., Political Science, University of Kansas

Michael T. Miller

Professor

Ed.D., Community and Human Resources, University of Nebraska

M.S., Higher Education, Southern Illinois University

B.A., Political Science, Southern Illinois University





John W. Murry, Jr.

Associate Professor

Ed.D., Higher Education Administration, University of Arkansas

J.D., University of Arkansas, School of Law

M.B.A., Marketing and Management, University of Arkansas

B.S.B.A., Finance and Banking, University of Arkansas

Leslie Jo Shelton

Assistant Professor

Ph.D., Higher Education, Michigan State University

M.Ed., College Student Personnel, Ohio University

B.A., Sociology and Criminology, Ohio University





Brett Nachman

Assistant Professor

Ph.D., Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, University of Wisconsin

M.S., Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, University of Wisconsin

B.A., Journalism and Mass Communication, Arizona State University

A.A., Journalism, Scottsdale Community College

Kenda Grover

Associate Professor

Ed.D. Adult Education, University of Arkansas

M.S. Counseling Psychology, Northeastern State University

B.A. Psychology, Northeastern State University

A.A. Journalism, NEO A&M



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Support the Program

It is with great pleasure that we dedicate this first edition of the CCLE Alumni Newsletter to our CCLE alumni and students. Professionals in this field are critical to the daily operations of an institution, and the faculty, staff, and current students in the CCLE program thank you for your dedication and serving at numerous institutions across the country. As a graduate and student at the CCLE Program, we are proud of your accomplishments and the work that you do every day.

As the program continues to grow and our network of alumni expands, we always appreciate the willingness of alumni to support and serve our current CCLE students. Make sure your information is updated so that we can contact you throughout the year for the following opportunities:

- Resume reviews
- Mock interviews
- Mentorship
- Guest speaking
- Alumni spotlights

To support the CCLE program financially, please make donation checks payable to the University of Arkansas Foundation (memo line: COEHP Community College Leadership)

Mail to:
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C/O Tory Gaddy, Director of Development
Graduate Education Building, Room 311
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Fayetteville, AR 72701

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We thank you for your continued support of the program!