

**TITLE:** CPE President Report

**DESCRIPTION:** President Thompson will highlight specific initiatives during his report to the Council. This written report serves as his official report for September 19, 2023.

**PRESENTER:** Dr. Aaron Thompson, CPE President

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**Update on Presidential/CEO Searches:** Several of CPE's key partners have appointed new leadership or are in the middle of a search.

- **New KHEAA leadership:** Jo Carole Ellis was named the new executive director and CEO of KHEAA and KHESLC. Ellis worked for KHEAA for 17 years, serving as program director for the Kentucky Education Savings Plan Trust (KESPT) and Kentucky's Affordable Prepaid Tuition (KAPT) programs, student aid branch manager and government relations director. Ellis most recently served as committee staff administrator at the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission.
- **New NKU leadership:** NKU's Board of Regents unanimously voted to appoint Cady Short-Thompson as its seventh president. Short-Thompson is currently the Executive Director/CEO of Breakthrough Cincinnati. She previously served as the Provost of Hope College in Holland, Michigan, and as the Dean of the Blue Ash campus of the University of Cincinnati. From 1996-2010, she was employed at NKU in a variety of roles. She will formally begin her role as president on Oct. 2, and I look forward to working with her.
- **KCTCS Presidential Search:** As a member of the KCTCS search committee, I can share that three finalists have been selected: Dr. Dean McCurdy with Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana; Dr. Beverly Walker-Griffea, president of Mott Community College in Michigan; and Dr. Ryan Quarles, who is Kentucky's Commissioner of Agriculture. The next step is conducting candidate meetings with the board, presidents, and staff. KCTCS hopes to install a new President by the first of the year.

**CPE's faculty mentoring program:** CPE's Academic Leadership Development Institute (ALDI) has named its [latest cohort](#), and professional development and mentoring for this group began earlier this year. In its fifth year, ALDI's goal is to prepare minority faculty and staff members for leadership roles in Kentucky higher education. The 21 participants were chosen from Kentucky's public universities and KCTCS. CPE's Dawn Offutt, who leads this work, will introduce the members of the current ALDI cohort during the meeting.

**Lumina features CPE in national publication:** I was honored to be featured in an article written by Lumina Foundation President Jamie Merisotis, "[On The Value Of College, Higher Ed Has A 'Great Choir' Of Supporters—But Many People Can't Hear The Music.](#)" The article was picked up by *Forbes* magazine, whose readers are an important audience for our "Higher Education Matters" message.

**Update on the Performance Funding Working Group:** The Performance Funding Work Group met earlier this month and has finalized recommendations for adjustments to the model for legislative consideration. Some of those recommendations include an additional metric for adult learners, the modification of the small school adjustment, and increases in the low-income degree premium. I'd like to thank Bill Payne and his staff for the great work they've done in leading this effort. Staff will provide the Council will a full update at its next meetings.

**Advocating for state and federal support:** CPE's executive leadership continue to make concentrated efforts in Washington D.C. The current focus is acquiring a new GEAR UP Kentucky grant and additional funding to help Kentucky's low-income students through enhanced student support services or FAFSA-completion efforts. At the state level, CPE is gaining positive momentum ahead of 2024 legislative session. Staff have had several one-on-one meetings with key legislative leadership and have testified recently in front of several committees. The biennial budget recommendation will be shared with Council members for approval during the Sept. 19 meeting.

**Efforts on the workforce front:** CPE's new Workforce Initiatives Unit has several project updates:

- CPE is working with Jefferson Community and Technical College, Norton Healthcare and the licensure board on establishing a new nuclear medicine program. This is an exciting new program that will be the first one available in Kentucky.
- CPE has begun our work addressing the growing labor needs of our advanced manufacturing sector. We've been meeting with the Ky. Advanced Manufacturing Association and legislators, with the goal of gaining some legislative support in the future.
- CPE continues the push to increase the nursing pipeline, working with Baptist Health and the Kentucky Association for Long Term Care Facilities.

**Healthcare Workforce Collaboratory:** On October 10, healthcare leaders from across the Commonwealth will join CPE and campus leaders for a convening to discuss solutions for Kentucky's healthcare workforce crisis. If interested, more information can be found on [CPE's website](#) or by contacting Heather Faesy.

**New webinar series launched:** CPE staff have launched two new webinar series this fall on topics directly related to our strategic agenda.

- [11-part monthly series from Sept. 2023 to July 2024](#) that features a variety of topics on Early Postsecondary Opportunities (EPSOs) and addresses important issues such as

increasing inclusion for students with disabilities, preparing middle grades for EPSOs and expanding work-based learning and articulated credit options for students.

- [3-part monthly series from Oct. through Dec. 2023](#) on credit for prior learning, featuring sessions that make the case for this practice as well as best practices for implementation.

**Speaking Engagements:** I've represented CPE at several community, state, and national functions, including:

- July 24 – Provided a leadership keynote at Bellarmine University.
- Aug. 7-11 – State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) Policy conference. Opening keynote and participated as a speaker in four sessions.
- August 20 – Governor's launch partnership between St. Claire HealthCare and Maysville Community & Technical College.
- September 5-6 – Spoke at the Annual GEAR UP Kentucky Bootcamp.
- Sept 17-20 - State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) Annual conference representing the Commonwealth.
- Sept 18 – Keynote at the fall seminar of the Governing Board Equity Student Success Academy.

**Staff Shoutouts:** CPE Staff have been traveling the state and nation spreading the message that Higher Education Matters to a variety of audiences:

- *Dr. Jennifer Fraker*, CPE's legislative liaison, and I participated in a variety of meetings with legislators, including leaders of the House and the Senate. Future meetings are scheduled with members of the House and Senate Education Committees during the fall. Over the summer, Fraker attended the Southern Legislative Conference and the National Conference of State Legislatures to discuss potential legislative topics for the upcoming session.
- *Travis Muncie*, head of CPE's data unit, participated in two panels as part of the 2023 SHEEO Higher Education Policy Conference. The first panel featured SHEEOS with leading data strategies, and the second featured the work Kentucky piloted with IHEP and the Coleridge Initiative with the Value Data Collaborative (VDC).
- *Travis Powell*, VP and general counsel, taught a course, "Current Legal Issues in Higher Education," at the 70th annual College Business Management Institution (CBMI). The CBMI is a week-long conference that offers an intensive course of study in business and financial management for administrators of colleges and universities. In addition, Powell provided a continuing legal education (CLE) session on legislative issues at a meeting of Kentucky public university legal counsels.
- *Dr. Leslie Sizemore*, head of CPE's Workforce Initiatives unit, has been traveling the state discussing healthcare workforce initiatives and mental and behavioral health pathways. Specific speaking engagements include a keynote at the KHA Onboarding

Talent Acquisition Summit, serving as a panelist at the Chamber's Inclusive Workforce Summit, and presenting to the KY Courts System, Goodwill and Commonwealth West Group.

- *Dr. Rick Smith*, VP of External Communication and Relations, has participated in a variety of speaking engagements, including the Kentucky State University Danville Area Alumni Golf Scramble, the National Alliance of Community and Technical Colleges conference at Murray State University, and Leadership Kentucky's New Executives symposium. Dr. Smith also spoke to the Louisville Rotary Club about the state's changing workforce education needs.
- *Dr. Amanda Ellis*, who heads up our K-12 Policies and Programs work, spoke on a panel at the 2023 National Ellucian Conference in New Orleans and discussed innovative ways to promote college affordability. Additionally, she lead the GEAR UP Kentucky team as they presented at the NACEP/GU National Convening in San Francisco in July, in which they discussed their data-informed decision making process and how to build effective partnerships with schools.