



For The Record

OACRAO MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

President's Opening:



It's hard to believe we are just a few weeks away from OACRAO's 100th Annual Conference!

After months of planning, meetings, emails, and plenty of behind-the-scenes work, A Century of Connections is almost here. I am incredibly excited to welcome everyone to Deer Creek and celebrate this milestone together.

As we've planned this conference, I've been reminded again and again that OACRAO

has never just been about the work we do—it's about the people we meet along the way. For 100 years, this organization has brought together colleagues who understand the challenges of our profession, share ideas and resources, support one another, and, very often, become lifelong friends.

Before we get to conference, I have to give a very special thank you to my Local Arrangements Committee Co-Chairs, **Chris and Sondra**. The amount of time, energy, creativity, and heart they have put into making our 100th conference special cannot be overstated. I truly could not have done this without them.

And to our **amazing Board of Directors**—thank you. This group has supported me, jumped in whenever something needed done, shared ideas, solved problems, and helped keep everything moving throughout this year. Being President may come with one name attached to it, but everything we have accomplished has absolutely been a team effort. I am so grateful to have had this group beside me.

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This year's conference will give us an opportunity to celebrate our history while also looking ahead to what comes next. We'll welcome retirees and longtime members, recognize those who have helped shape our organization, learn from one another, and hopefully make a few new connections along the way.

Now there's only one thing left to do: **come celebrate with us!**

I can't wait to see everyone October 14–16 at Deer Creek for OACRAO's 100th Annual Conference. Here's to 100 years of connections—and to the next century of OACRAO!

See you at Deer Creek!

Sincerely,
Heather Pritchard

President

Member Spotlight!



MARK MCKELLIP

Registrar
Mercy College of Ohio



What do you hope to get out of OACRAO?

Connection! The best thing I get out of OACRAO is seeing that we are all in similar boats and all rowing towards the same goals. It's always nice to see when colleagues are dealing with the same issues and especially how they handle them. Each place is a little different, but I enjoy hearing how folks are handling these challenges and I love it even more when I can gain a bit of wisdom from others.

Favorite way to spend a weekend?

Watching football and/or playing boardgames. I am a longtime fan of the Super Bowl Champions Seattle Seahawks and am overly excited about their last year's championship season and hope that it will continue going forward. I also play board and card games with friends and colleagues. (No, not Monopoly and definitely not Life.) We enjoy Lords of Waterdeep, Wingspan, Solo and any number of other games. To date this year, I've played over 50 different games and have over 100 plays. (Yes, I am a huge geek and keep track of what games I play and how often. If you're really curious, I can tell you gaming data since 2023.)

Who or what inspires your work?

Watching folks get an education so that they can go out into the world and be amazing! Similarly, I want Mercy College to be a place that excels at making that happen. I love working with folks who keep the focus on the students and learning. I aspire to make the Records Office the 'go-to' office for help at the college for students, staff, and students alike. While, I'm certain I'm biased, Records is the heart of a college and we have a unique opportunity to share and work with everyone in the organization.

★ Don't Miss Your Chance to Celebrate 100 Years of OACRAO! ★

The countdown is on! We're looking forward to welcoming everyone to the OACRAO 100th Annual Conference, taking place October 14–16, 2026, at Deer Creek Lodge and Conference Center.

This year's theme, "Celebrating a Century of Connections," will honor the relationships, accomplishments, and shared experiences that have shaped OACRAO over the past 100 years—and the connections we'll continue building together.

Registration Closes October 1 — Don't Wait!

If you haven't registered yet, there's still time to join us for this historic celebration! Registration will close October 1.

Please note that there are no rooms remaining at Deer Creek Lodge. If you still need accommodations, there are several hotels located approximately 20 minutes from the conference center.

Get Ready for the Centennial Gala!

We'll celebrate 100 years of OACRAO in style during our Centennial Gala on Thursday, October 15, from 7:00–11:00 p.m.

Get ready for an evening featuring:

- 🎹 Dueling Pianos
- 🎵 DJ & Dancing
- 📷 Photobooth
- 🏆 Centennial Gala Awards

And, of course, we want everyone to dress for the occasion! Whether you bring back a favorite vintage look, wear a formal favorite, or simply step out in something new and fancy, come ready to celebrate 100 years of OACRAO!

Bring Your School Swag!

Each institution is encouraged to bring school swag for our door prize giveaways! Think tumblers, blankets, pens, shirts, bags, and anything else that shows off your institution. Drop off your swag at registration when you arrive. It's a fun way to show your school pride and give attendees a chance to take home something from your institution!

Bring Cash for the 50/50!

Don't forget to bring cash for the 50/50 raffle! Proceeds will benefit the OACRAO Scholarship Fund, helping support future students and the next generation of higher education professionals.

Conference Charity & Nature Walks

Star House: This year's conference charity supports Columbus-area youth ages 14–24 experiencing homelessness by providing basic needs and education and employment resources. Attendees are encouraged to donate **new** clothing, hygiene products, shoes, backpacks, blankets, water bottles, umbrellas, and other essential items. Star House does not accept used clothing. For a full list of needs or to donate financially, visit the [Star House donation webpage](#).

Deer Creek Nature Walks: Attendees can join two optional, easy bird-watching walks led by park naturalists: a **Sunset Bird Migration Walk** on Wednesday, October 14, from 5:00–6:00 p.m., and a **Sunrise Bird Walk** on Thursday, October 15, from 7:00–7:45 a.m. Comfortable shoes are recommended, as trails may be muddy. Binoculars are optional.

Register by October 1, pack your gala attire, grab some school swag, and bring your cash—we'll see you at Deer Creek!

Don't Miss Our OACRAO Closing Session!

Still Having Trouble Figuring Out How to Get Real Value Out of AI?

Featured Closing Speaker

Joseph Pheil
Executive Director, Ohio Rural Water Association

Artificial intelligence is everywhere, but many people are still trying to figure out how to use it in a way that is practical, safe, and genuinely helpful. "Finding Your Footing with AI" is designed with university registrar personnel in mind, while remaining relevant for business professionals at every stage of AI experience — whether you are an AI power user, have never used it before, or are somewhere in between.

This session will introduce the AI Capability Staircase, a simple framework for understanding where you are, what AI capabilities may be available to you, and what a responsible AI learning journey can look like. The focus is not on becoming an AI expert, but on learning how AI can support the work already in front of you, while giving you a better understanding of where you want to go with your own AI journey.

Scholarship Committee Update

OACRAO is proud to award three \$1,000 scholarships each year to students working at current OACRAO member institutions in the Registrar, Admissions, Student Services, or Enrollment Management offices. These scholarships provide meaningful financial support and can truly make a difference in a student's life.

Last year's recipient, Abbie Harris from Miami University, shared:

"I am deeply grateful to receive the OACRAO Scholarship. This award serves as a meaningful testament to my hard work and academic perseverance. By easing the financial pressures of my final semester, I can focus my full energy on my remaining coursework and professional development in the medical field."

Application opens October 1st and we encourage you to share this opportunity with your student workers and remind them to apply by November 1 through the OACRAO Scholarship Committee webpage.

We're Almost There!

It's never too late to support the OACRAO Scholarship Fund! We are just \$170 away from reaching our \$4,000 fundraising goal. Thanks to our Day of Giving and the generous support of our exhibitor sponsors, **we have raised \$3,830 so far!**

Every contribution helps us continue to support and empower students across our member institutions.

Ways to support the Scholarship Fund:

- Make a direct donation: Contributions can be made at any time through our donation link.
- Join the fun at the OACRAO Conference: Purchase a ticket for our 50/50 raffle, with proceeds going directly to the scholarship fund. Forgot to bring cash? No problem! An ATM is located near the front desk, and QR codes for digital donations will be available throughout the conference.

Together, we can reach our goal and continue investing in the future of our students!

Program Committee Update

OACRAO Session Preview! Identity theft is at the front of our minds right now – from admissions applications to sending official transcripts. How are other universities working through these issues? Check out these great sessions lined up for the 100th Annual OACRAO Conference!

Ghost Application Fraud: Identification, Prevention, and Response

Thursday, October 15 – 9:30 – 10:20am

Presenters: Jason Chambers, Caitlyn Carey, Alexandria Fraley, Amy Murray

Application fraud is no longer a fringe issue - it's an evolving threat hitting institutions of all sizes. This panel brings together admissions professionals from large and mid-sized Ohio institutions to share what they're seeing on the ground, how they're identifying suspicious applications, and the institutional, legal, and policy considerations that come with responding. Rather than a one-size-fits-all solution, attendees will walk away with a clearer picture of the fraud landscape and practical strategies they can adapt for their own campus context. Whether you're just starting to notice the warning signs or already deep in response mode, this is the conversation you need to be having.

Guarding the Gates: Tackling the Rise of Fraudulent Transcripts

Thursday, October 15 – 10:20 – 11:20am

Presenters: Heather Rognon, Kirsten Berlan

Fraudulent transcript requests and applications are becoming more common, and many institutions are feeling the impact. In this session, we'll talk through how to spot red flags, what steps schools are taking to prevent fraud before it happens, and how to thoughtfully notify alumni when their identity has been misused. Join us for a practical, discussion-based session focused on real scenarios and shared solutions.

What's Happening On Your Campus?

The Bitonte College of Dentistry (BCOD) is Northeast Ohio Medical University's (NEOMED's) newest college.

The inaugural class of 2029 began with 52 students in the Fall of 2025. The NEOMED Bitonte College of Dentistry Clinic will open its doors for a "soft opening" to patients on Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2026. Second-year dental students, under direct supervision of the BCOD faculty, will be offering Oral Cancer Head and Neck Screenings on Tuesday afternoons (1-5pm) and Thursday Mornings (8am-noon)

every week until December 1, 2026. This service is free and open to the public but will be by appointment only.

Starting in January 2027 the clinic will be open to screen patients for dental care in preparation for the third-year dental students entering the clinical year. This screening, which will be completed by BCOD faculty, will allow our patients to begin their dental care in May of 2027.

To schedule and appointment for either of these screening types, you may call 330-325-6666.



AACRAO Key Updates

As higher education operations adapt to shifting student needs, evolving technology, and regulatory landscapes, staying connected with national standards is vital for our daily work in admissions, registration, and records management. Here is a brief roundup of key initiatives, research, and policy developments from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO).

1. "Start From Yes": A National Shift in Transfer Credit Evaluation

AACRAO and its LEARN Commission (Learning Evaluation and Recognition for the Next Generation), alongside nearly 20 partner organizations, have launched the **"Start From Yes"** national initiative. This campaign challenges deep-rooted skepticism around transfer credit evaluation and prior learning assessment. The initiative encourages institutions to adopt a learner-centric approach—defaulting to credit acceptance whenever academic quality aligns—to improve degree completion rates and eliminate systemic hurdles for mobile students.

2. Practical AI in Registrar & Admissions Operations

Artificial intelligence is moving beyond theory into daily campus workflows. AACRAO's Technology Advisory Council has launched a dedicated **AI Work Group**. This practitioner-led group is actively developing guidance and ethical frameworks for integrating AI tools into transcript processing, automated degree audits, student communication workflows, and administrative operations without sacrificing compliance or personalization.

3. Focus on Professional Development & Learning Mobility

- **International Credentialing:** The International Education Standards Council (IESC) Fellowship continues to expand training for credential evaluators, addressing the growing complexity of international admissions and global student mobility.
- **FERPA & Disciplinary Notations:** AACRAO recently refreshed member resources on FERPA compliance, specifically highlighting updated guidance regarding transcript disciplinary notations and comprehensive academic record-keeping standards.

4. Annual Meeting & Engagement Opportunities

- **112th AACRAO Annual Meeting:** Content proposals and session planning are underway for AACRAO's upcoming national gatherings. Registrars and admissions officers are encouraged to submit presentation proposals highlighting innovative campus solutions, particularly in learner-centric services, transfer alignment, and technology integration.
- **Research & Publications:** AACRAO's *College & University (C&U)* journal is spotlighting member research on admissions staff retention, strategic enrollment planning, and the long-term ROI of graduate credentials.

Why It Matters for Our Campuses Whether it's adopting fairer credit transfer policies, evaluating AI tools for records management, or staying compliant with privacy rules, these national trends directly inform how we serve our students.

To explore full guidance documents or join an AACRAO work group, visit aacrao.org.



Membership Committee Update

Need to Add Someone to Your OACRAO Membership Roster?

New members can complete the Request to Create a Member Account form located on the OACRAO Membership & Dues page.

Request a Member Account:

<https://oacrao.memberclicks.net/membership-and-dues>

Completing the form ensures we receive the information needed to add the individual to your institution's roster. Once their account is created, the new member will be able to set up their password and access MemberClicks.

We encourage institutions to continue keeping their membership rosters current as staff join or transition into new roles. If you have members that leave your institution, please reach out to Sarah (smarcin1@kent.edu) or Kathleen (brownk16@ohio.edu) to update your roster and remove them from the listserv.

Membership Directory Update: Put a Face to the Name!

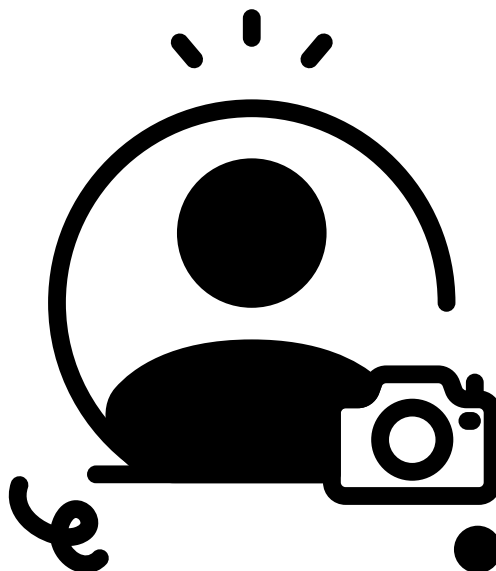
The Membership & Mentoring Committee have been busy updating the OACRAO Member Directory, and we're excited to share that every active member institution now has an updated logo in the Directory Search on the website!

Now that our institutions are looking good, it's time for our members to get in on the fun!

We encourage all OACRAO members to log in to their MemberClicks account and upload a profile picture.

Adding your photo is a simple way to help fellow members put a face to a name—especially as we continue to build connections through OACRAO events, committees, the Mentorship Program, and our Annual Conference.

Our directory is more than just a list of names and institutions—it's a way for OACRAO members to find and connect with one another. Let's put some faces to those names!



OACRAO Word Search

S T U D E N T S O A C R A O P
U A D M I S S I O N S Y Q V R
E R E G I S T R A R W E E A E
F T E R E C O R D S O E N L R
E C E R T I F I C A T I O N E
R I O R G A N I Z A T I O N Q
E P E N R O L L M E N T X O U
F O A C A D E M I C S M I I I
E E T R A N S C R I P T M T S
R E G I S T R A T I O N P A I
R U N I V E R S I T Y S A L T
A T R A N S F E R E G I S T E
L S C H E D U L E D E G R E E
C O N F E R E N C E T E R M S
A D V I S I N G A U D I T S P

WORD LIST

- OACRAO
- ADMISSIONS
- REGISTRAR
- TRANSCRIPT
- ENROLLMENT
- RECORDS
- DEGREE
- STUDENTS
- TRANSFER
- REGISTRATION
- CONFERENCE
- SCHEDULE

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Thank you for reading!