



EACUBO AT 100 —

A COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL RELEVANCE

Among the values appreciated most by EACUBO's members are the various ways the association contributes to our career paths and success. As chief business officers (CBOs), our roles and responsibilities have continually expanded over the decades, stretching beyond traditional finance functions. Today's CBOs lead not just the financial activities of the institution but often include such areas as facilities, human resources, information technology, auxiliary services, athletics, enterprise risk management, and campus security, and may even include enrollment management functions.

EACUBO's programming has evolved along with the CBO's expanding and increasingly complex roles and demands. This parallel evolution has allowed the association to remain relevant as a primary "career partner" and provider of quality programs and services for our personal and professional development and growth throughout our careers.

Just as none of us can optimize our contributions to our institutions working alone or without a commitment to lifelong learning, EACUBO recognizes that in order to remain relevant and uniquely positioned to meet its members' needs, the association must focus on relationship management, development of new collaborations and partnerships, and maintaining continuous adaptation and improvement of all programs. EACUBO continues to expand, diversify, and enrich its universe of members, network of higher education association and business partners, and quality and focus of its programs and services. EACUBO has grown from its 16¹ founding member institutions to approximately 750 today, in great part because it strives to fulfill the association's mission: *"We prepare and support financial and administrative leaders as pivotal strategic partners, enabling their academic institutions to thrive."*

Since its inception, EACUBO has focused its programs on technical, organizational, and leadership skills and was credited in 1936 by Trevor Arnett, author of *College and University Finance*, for "...creating an *esprit de corps* among the business officers..."²

EACUBO is committed to fulfilling its vision and to remaining relevant as *"...a vibrant, energized community. We are an incubator and a network where our members collaboratively tackle some of the most significant challenges and opportunities facing higher education. We understand that developing solutions and learning happen simultaneously and this drives all we do."* One fundamental guiding principle for all EACUBO programs and services is to demonstrate why material being presented is relevant and how it contributes to CBOs' imperative roles as pivotal strategic partners.

Active engagement in EACUBO facilitates career-long and even post-retirement professional and personal development. It is in EACUBO's DNA to offer comprehensive support for individual members' career advancement and devotion to higher education as their vocation. EACUBO's impact includes providing early-career individuals with a range of learning opportunities and mentoring programs, plus onboarding professionals entering higher education from other industries, and supporting and connecting veteran CBOs.



When I was new to higher education, EACUBO provided me with programs covering an array of topics from important accounting updates, like the transformative changes to our financial statements and pension accounting (SFAS 106, 116, and 177), to crucial “soft skills” like interpersonal and communication skills within the higher education context. These sessions and related conversations with colleagues at other institutions enabled me to help Colgate University be an early adopter of these substantial new pronouncements and develop my leadership and collaboration abilities. EACUBO’s impact on my career has remained invaluable for three decades, contributing to my maturation as a leader and executive, broadening and deepening my industry expertise, and connecting me to business partners across many fields that assisted me and my institutions in adopting transformative changes. Now, as a more seasoned chief business officer, EACUBO helps me to explore contemporary, complex topics such as mergers and alliances, public-private partnership (P3) opportunities, program prioritization, and advocacy for our education system and preserving student choice. Even more importantly, I also owe a huge debt of gratitude to many colleagues and lifelong friends across the EACUBO community for their collaboration, assistance, coaching, and mentoring. These relationships have enriched my life and vocational experiences.

EACUBO intentionally designs programs to focus on all members, regardless of where they are on their career paths. Examples of these programs and services include a formal year-long mentoring program, peer networking opportunities, roundtables to develop and share innovative solutions for emergent issues, and assistance for member institutions and individuals with job searches. Facilitating career counseling sessions during annual workshops, supporting concurrent sessions that encourage interactive discussions around common search processes, and hosting a job board on the EACUBO website are small examples of this practical support. EACUBO is also a highly collaborative association and partners with other organizations for leading professional development programs such as the Cornell University-EACUBO co-sponsored Administrative Management Institute (AMI), the recent EACUBO-NACUBO Women’s Leadership Forum, and EACUBO’s Next-Generation Business Officer single-day workshops, among others.

EACUBO’s board of directors focuses on ensuring that its suite of programs and services continuously adapt to the needs of our sector and members, enabling higher education administrators to excel in their current and promotional roles, thereby advancing their institutions with the best strategies and solutions. Rita Temple Brooks, a past Distinguished Service Award winner, described her EACUBO experience this way: “When I started my higher ed career, I needed to understand insurance, and the Annual Meeting provided a session; later in my career, I was looking for a broader understanding, and AMI was there; and all during my career when I needed colleagues as sounding boards, EACUBO was there.” This level of devotion to members’ career-long needs can even continue into semiretirement, aligning veteran CBOs with institutions seeking interim executives or advisory services. As stated by Randy Gentzler, vice president for finance and administration at Loyola University Maryland, NACUBO past chair, and EACUBO past president, “We need to continue our focus on succession planning given the projected wave of CBO retirements in the near term, and, given all that our profession offers, continue to find ways to encourage professionals at all stages of their careers to see higher education as an attractive vocation and career.”

Today’s need for intellectual agility and adaptability is arguably unparalleled in our industry’s history. The pace of advancements in technology and globalization combined with numerous market factors is causing intense disruptions to higher education economic models. This reality means higher education administrators and CBOs must continuously retool and reinvent themselves to contribute effectively to the sustainability of their institutions. CBOs must help lead their organizations in developing and adopting creative, innovative, unconventional, and disruptive strategic solutions. In sum, today’s role of the higher education CBO often encompasses the role of the institution’s (chief) business strategist.

The stakes are high for our education system. Our nation’s mandate for solutions for enhanced access, coupled with improved affordability and strengthened student outcomes (e.g., lower cost of attendance, on-time graduation, and career readiness), are cornerstones of the objectives many strive to achieve. These mandates and the dizzying and increasing pace of change means professional skills and knowledge are “aging” faster, requiring improved professional development, quicker renewal, and shorter adaptation cycles. Based on this new, and dynamic, environment, higher education institutions must continue their work on knowledge creation and knowledge dissemination of a wide range of disciplines, thereby effectively contributing to an exceptionally well-educated global society.



In meeting this challenge, I believe EACUBO is even more relevant and necessary today than it has been in the last 100 years. I am certainly among the EACUBO members who share the view that EACUBO has been instrumental in my career evolution and contributions, providing immeasurable value to me personally and professionally. And, I am confident EACUBO will remain just as important to me for the remainder of my career.

Tell us how we can help you take advantage of these same benefits from your EACUBO membership that many of us have utilized throughout our careers. The return on this investment is vital to our profession and to our higher education community.

Roger W. Stackpoole
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EACUBO President 2011–2012

Endnotes

- 1 Founding members included: Amherst College, Brown University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Carnegie Institute of Technology, Delaware College, George Washington University, Johns Hopkins University, Lehigh University, New York University, University of Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, Princeton University, Temple University, Washington and Jefferson College, and Yale University, per *Eastern Association of College and University Business Officers: Seventy Five Years in Review 1919-1994*, by Mary M. Lai, former EACUBO historian.
- 2 Per *Eastern Association of College and University Business Officers: Seventy Five Years in Review 1919-1994*, (page 12) by Mary M. Lai, former EACUBO historian. *College and University Finance* was the earliest business officer accounting and administration guide; it was a 212-page volume of college principles for accounting, management of donated funds/trusts, and description of a “system of accounts” proven to be effective at colleges.