

ACM Family,

As we enter the middle of the semester, I encourage you all to take care of yourselves and each other as the end of the semester approaches. As always, your hard work and dedication to our college amazes me every day.

Faculty and Staff Focus

This week's nominee is **Leah Pepple!**

"Leah is truly the heart of the Bedford County Campus Foundation office. She shows up every day for others, no matter what, and she always works hard (often more than she should). Her to-do list is usually overflowing, yet you will NEVER hear her complain. Leah has such a kind heart for ACM students and ALWAYS goes above and beyond to make sure they get the support they need to be successful. I am incredibly blessed to work with her, and I'm honored to call her not only my colleague, but also my friend." - Nominated by **Alyssa Foor.**

Budget

The ACM Budget Advisory Committee met yesterday to receive an overview of the FY27 budget, which is still in draft format. Several revenue and expense items are being reviewed as the State and County budgets remain under development. I remain cautiously optimistic that the 3% increase from the State will remain intact. Under maintenance-of-effort legislation, ACM is tentatively scheduled to receive this increase, provided the County provides level funding. Some initial revenue assumptions include a 3% tuition increase, an approximately 3% increase from the State, level funding from Allegany County, and operational support from Bedford. Expense assumptions include support for faculty advancement, in-class advancement, and a one-step salary increase. CBIZ is actively evaluating health/Rx/Dental options that help to address the \$1,400,000 projected increase over the current year. Leadership plans to share additional details with faculty and staff over the next month as meetings with CBIZ continue, and all options and their projected price tags become clearer.

Congratulations, Men's Basketball

Congratulations to Coach Reams and the ACM men's basketball team for winning the Region 20 Division I Championship. Although they fell short on the scoreboard Saturday evening, please join me in congratulating the team on their 22-9 overall record.

Be My Guest

To uphold transparency, I encourage anyone with any questions to visit me at my office during the following dates below from 2:30 – 4 pm. I will be available from 2-2:30 pm on March 20th.

March 20 (2-2:30)

April 3

April 17

May 1

I warmly invite you to visit for an informal opportunity to meet, enjoy a cup of water/tea/coffee, connect, and answer your questions ... or to say hello.

Javier Colon

A friendly reminder that we have a contest upon us! Season one winner of The Voice, Javier Colon, is coming to ACM on May 1. Proceeds benefit the Western Maryland Food Bank. Tickets are available [here!](#)

For a chance at free tickets, share the event on Facebook using [this link!](#) The shared posts with the most interactions will win. Multiple winners will be selected, so start sharing!

Great Colleges to Work For

Allegany College of Maryland is once again participating in the *Great Colleges to Work For* program. This survey provides valuable data to inform decision-making and support our strategic plan as we work to create the best workplace possible. On March 2, 2026, a random selection of employees received an invitation from ModernThink LLC to participate. For questions, contact Scott Harrah (sharrah@allegany.edu) or visit www.ChronicleGreatColleges.com.

Bringing the ACM Community Together

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with your program, class, club, or team. Whether you're looking for a quick five-minute conversation or would like to share a lunch or dinner together, I'm happy to join you, and I'll gladly bring pizza and snacks. I truly enjoy connecting with the ACM campus community and working alongside students, faculty, and staff to strengthen our college and serve the broader community. If you're interested, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you and hope we can spend some time together soon.

Bedford County Campus featured on Bedford County Speaks

A special note of thanks to Leah, Alyssa, and Tina, who were featured in the Bedford County Speaks radio interview. They represented the Bedford Campus exceptionally well as they discussed the educational opportunities provided by ACM and the Bedford County Regional Education Foundation. <https://www.bedfordcountyspeaks.com/>

Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule

The Board of Trustees meeting schedule is listed below. As always, everyone is invited to attend, and anyone with questions can expect full transparency.

March 16, 2026

April 13, 2026

May 11, 2026

June 15, 2026

August 17, 2026

September 14, 2026

October 19, 2026

November 16, 2026

December 7, 2026

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 16, 2026, in the Thomas Welcome Center. The agenda follows:

1. Adopt the February 23, 2026, Minutes
2. Chairman's Update – Ms. Belt
3. President's Update – Mr. Jones
4. Board Reflections
5. Board Education – ACM Athletics – Mr. Reams
6. Background Check Policy (Action Item) – Ms. Duckworth
7. MOU: ACM/BCREF and Southern Tier (Action Item) - Ms. Kilduff
8. ACM Transportation/Bus Purchase (Action Item) – Ms. Kilduff
9. College Center Chiller Replacement (Action Item) – Ms. Kilduff
10. Website Content Management System Recommendation (Action Item)– Mr. Taylor, Ms. Beall

Upcoming Events:

April 2-3, 2026– Spring Holiday, College Closed

Mon, April 13 - Board of Trustees Meeting, Welcome Center, 4 pm

Tues, April 14 - Foundation Reception, College Center, 5 pm

Sat, April 18 - Spring Open House, 9 am – 12 noon

Tues, April 21 - Phi Theta Kappa Induction Ceremony, 6:30 pm

Wed, April 29 - Retiree Reception, Welcome Center, 11 am – 2 pm

Sat, May 9 - BCREP Dinner/Fundraiser, Clear Ridge Event Ctr, 5-9 pm

Mon, May 11 - Board of Trustees Meeting, Welcome Center, 4 pm

Thurs, May 14 – All College Assembly Meeting, Theatre, 9 am

Fri, May 15 - Nursing Pinning, Gymnasium, 6 pm

Sat, May 16 - Commencement, Gymnasium, 11 am and 2 pm

On A Personal Note

Earlier this month, I registered for the JFK 50 Mile Ultramarathon, held in November. I'm excited about this new challenge and thrilled to take on this adventure with my two adult children. It's a chance to push ourselves and share something unforgettable. I may need to take a vacation day to recover from this one.

With ACM Pride,

David