



The State of Ohio Higher Education

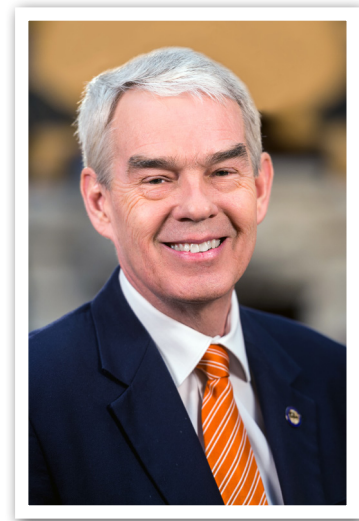
2020 Year in Review

January 14, 2021

A Message from the Chancellor

It has been a once-in-a-lifetime year for higher education, for our state, our country, and the world. As we turned the calendar to 2020, we had no idea what the months ahead would bring. But through all of the challenges, we remained resilient in our effort to offer students the best possible education opportunities for a bright future. And we did so together.

To Ohio's Higher Education Leadership, you are to be commended for your tireless dedication to facing the pandemic head-on. We will continue to work collaboratively with you and support your efforts to provide Ohioans with the best higher education value possible, in all circumstances.



To Ohio's College Students, I applaud your ability to adjust to all of the changes and challenges that became part of your higher education experience in 2020. We will work to ensure you learn in a safe and healthy environment, and will strive to continue to make a college degree as affordable and accessible as possible with restraints on tuition, support for more need-based financial aid, strategic academic scholarships, and enhanced student support services so that every student can reach their God-given potential.

To Families Planning for the Future, we will work to successfully adapt to whatever lies ahead to keep Ohio as a springboard to your student's future success. We will develop even more ways to help, through savings plans, strengthened College Credit Plus opportunities, and continued support of an "all of the above" approach that includes a diversity of options for college and workforce preparation.

To Ohio's Employers, you have weathered a difficult time in our history, and we know your success directly corresponds to a healthy economic future for Ohio. We will continue to listen and support investments in workforce preparation strategies that prepare Ohio's future workers while concurrently supporting education reforms to meet the ever-changing demands of today and tomorrow.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Randy Gardner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

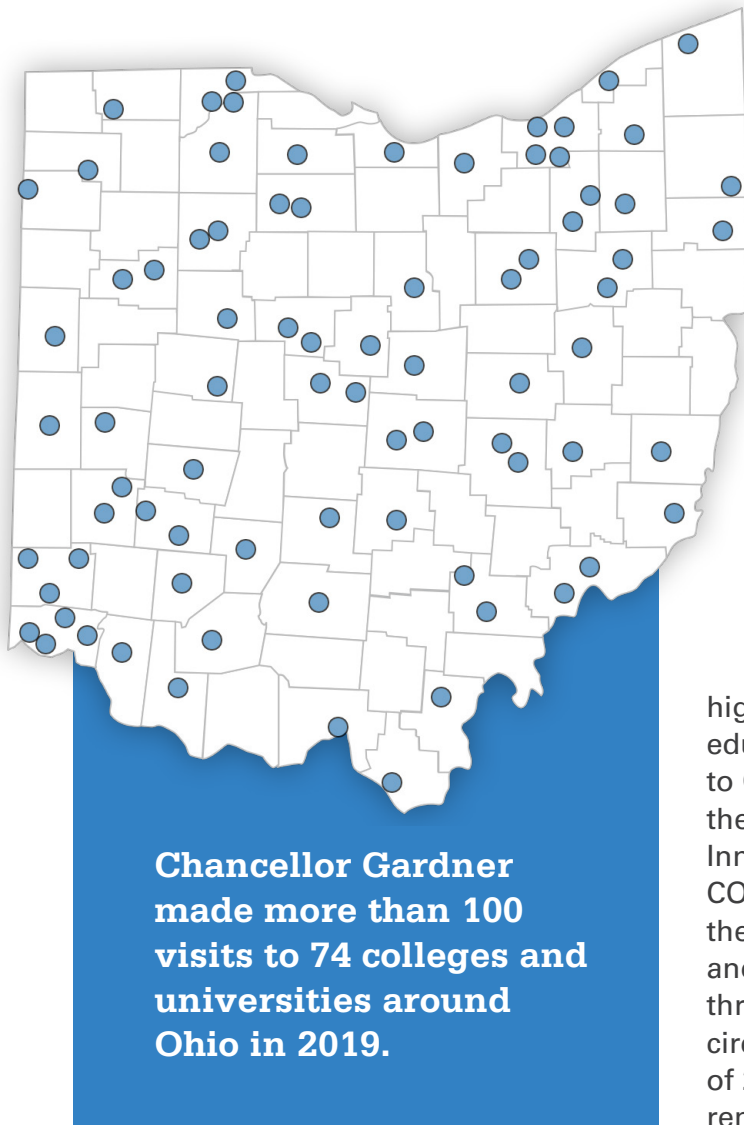
Randy Gardner
Chancellor

2020 – An Unprecedented Year

It has been two years since Mike DeWine was sworn in to serve as Ohio’s 70th governor, joined by Jon Husted as lieutenant governor. From the very beginning, Governor DeWine requested that his Cabinet listen carefully to the people of the state and then proceed to act with a sense of urgency to change Ohio. This document provides a brief summary of what the DeWine-Husted Administration – and the Department of Higher Education – has accomplished in its first two years leading Ohio.

The year 2020 marked an unprecedented time of anxiety, uncertainty, and crisis. Clearly 2020 was a sharp contrast to 2019, when Chancellor Randy Gardner began an extensive

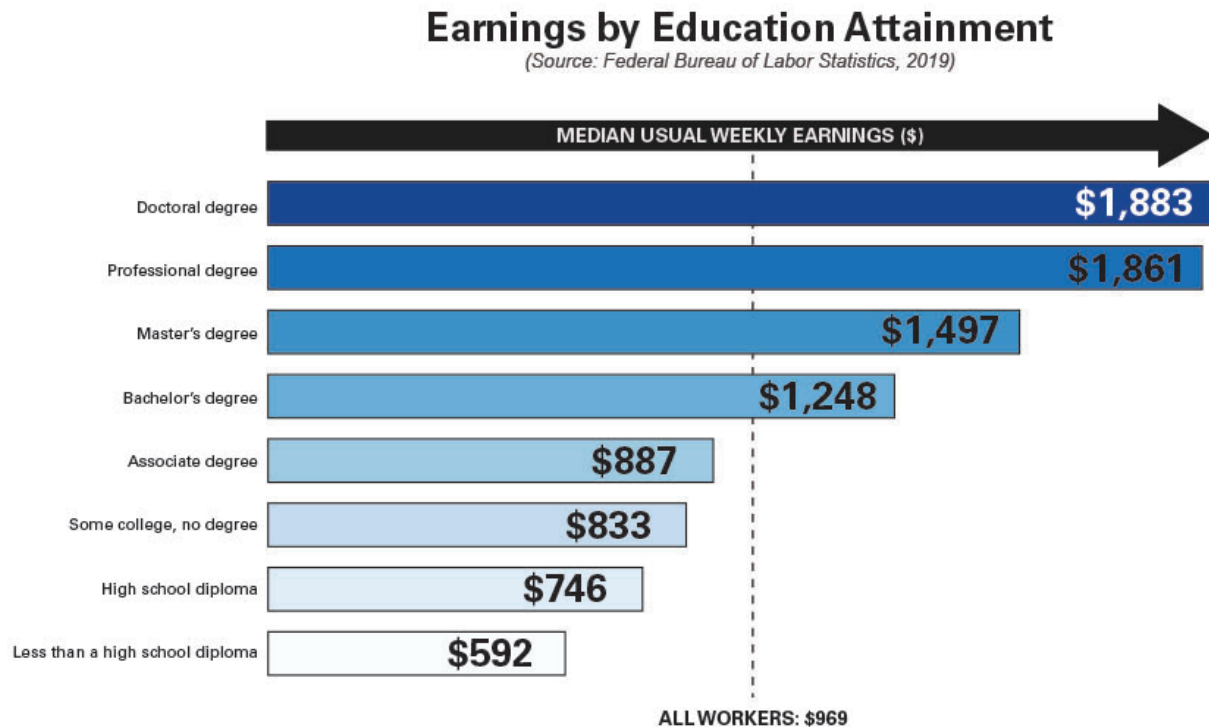
outreach effort to listen to students, higher education leaders, faculty, members of college and university boards of trustees, and Ohio’s business community. Chancellor Gardner visited a total of 74 college and university campuses in addition to a number of Ohio Technical Centers and career centers throughout 2019.



For two months at the start of 2020, Chancellor Gardner, Governor DeWine, and Lt. Governor Husted traveled the state – sometimes together – to highlight the importance of higher education and workforce preparation to Ohio’s future. Then, after a visit to the University of Cincinnati’s 1819 Innovation Hub on March 6, the COVID-19 pandemic struck Ohio and the nation, halting in-person visits and requiring virtual, online learning throughout Ohio. Despite the strange circumstances and difficult challenges of 2020, elevating higher education remained a priority.

The Unmistakable Value of Higher Education

Achieving postsecondary degrees and credentials is dramatically important today – more important than ever before for our nation, our state, and individuals who strive for a better future. This is evident based on quantifiable quality-of-life statistics as well as fundamental unemployment and wage rates. The chart below from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (September, 2019) is conclusive:



Bottom line: Increased education attainment most often leads to stronger employment opportunities and greater wage and income prospects.

The updated “education attainment unemployment gap” as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics has grown even wider during this challenged economy. Unemployment rates, as of October 2020, are as follows:

- Bachelor’s Degree and Higher: 4.2%
- Associate Degree and Some College: 6.5%
- High School: 8.1%
- Less Than a High School Diploma: 9.8%

The COVID Crisis: Ohio Responds

The DeWine-Husted Administration’s focus on student success was reinforced with the signing of the biennial operating budget in July of 2019, a budget Chancellor Gardner identified as “the most student-focused budget” he’d seen in his 33 years in the General Assembly.

The budget proved to be the first time in four years where increased support for state basic aid (State Share of Instruction) combined with modest tuition flexibility to enhance quality. The funding increase specifically focused new dollars in areas clearly identified as DeWine Administration priorities – need-based student financial aid, student counseling and support services, and workforce preparation.

Unfortunately, COVID-related impacts reduced state tax revenues and resulted in a reduction in state budget line items to meet the state’s constitutional requirement of a balanced budget. Nevertheless, the budget adjustments were smaller than anticipated, with the Chancellor and Governor successfully ensuring that no student receiving a state scholarship was negatively affected by budget revisions.

In a clear demonstration of the state’s trending support for higher education, Ohio ranked second in the nation in the amount of targeted discretionary federal CARES Act funding for colleges and universities, according to a National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL) analysis in December 2020. The total as of January 1, 2021 was \$300 million in direct payments to institutions and an additional \$38.6 million in grants and higher education assistance.

COVID Support

Ohio’s colleges and universities responded to the pandemic in a heroic way, maintaining the safest possible conditions with strategies to de-densify campus, provide online and hybrid instruction, and monitor and support the health of students, faculty, and staff. Within days of the need to move to online learning in the spring of 2020, a community college maintained a food bank to address food



The Point at Otterbein University set up a light manufacturing operation in the university’s Maker Space. PPE – made at The Point – was then donated to EMS, fire, police, and healthcare workers.

insecurity issues among its students. Another community college immediately supplied Chromebooks to students who needed them to stay on track. And universities maintained safe housing accommodations for students, including former foster care youth, who had no other safe place to go.

From the State of Ohio, in addition to \$300 million in direct aid to institutions, close to 50,000 free COVID tests were provided and 1 million masks supplied and distributed to help meet the needs of 2020. Additionally, our Responsible RestartOhio guidelines and protocols for higher education were among the strongest and most thorough in the nation, including comprehensive testing guidelines for colleges and universities.



Testing Support from the Ohio National Guard

Under the leadership of Major General John Harris, the Ohio National Guard was of great assistance to our colleges and universities as they confronted the challenge of keeping students safe on campus during fall semester 2020. National Guard pop-up testing events, conducted at 24 college and university sites across Ohio, were a critical component of a safe and successful fall semester at many institutions. In some cases, National Guard testing resources were essential to quickly assessing the scope of COVID outbreaks on campus, eventually enabling institutions to resume in-person instruction and successfully finish the fall semester.



Major General John Harris

The Chancellor's Student Roundtables

Chancellor Gardner invited students from 56 colleges and universities to a series of three video conference meetings to discuss college life during the pandemic, answering questions and listening to suggestions as to how state government could help. Tremendous input was received, especially when Governor DeWine joined one of the Roundtables to engage with students.



A Stronger Focus on Mental Health

Under Governor DeWine's leadership, Ohio became the first state in the nation to provide federal CARES Act dollars for enhanced mental health and counseling services on college campuses throughout Ohio. Working with Director Lori Criss of the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, a \$16 million program was developed, with \$13.5 million in direct payments to both public and independent institutions of higher education.



OhioMHAS Director Lori Criss

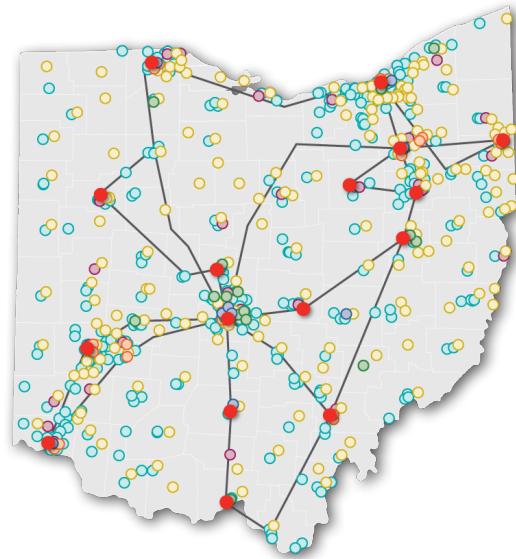
OARnet and OhioLINK – Meeting the Need

Ohio is extremely fortunate to have a nationally recognized technology asset in the form of the Ohio Academic Resources Network (OARnet), a fiber optic backbone stretching more than 5,500 miles across Ohio. COVID-related challenges exacerbated the impact of wide disparities that already existed in access to technology and internet connectivity. As we looked for ways to expand broadband access to all corners of our great state, the DeWine-Husted administration supported ODHE's December 2020 Controlling Board request to use Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funds to expand OARnet's capacity.



OARnet

An **OH·TECH** Consortium Member



OhioLINK

An **OH·TECH** Consortium Member

\$40,882,804

— IN AVOIDED COSTS —
OVER THE PAST 5 YEARS



Our colleges will receive \$12.1 million in support through OARnet, known to be among the top five broadband technology support systems in the nation. We will increase the broadband capacity for 40 institutions in Ohio, ensuring that all colleges and universities are at the 10 Gigabyte level. In addition, we will pay for the doubling of internet capacity at every campus for the next two years.

We also won support for \$2.5 million for enhancements to OhioLINK, a shared library system that will allow enhanced curriculum development and resources as online learning becomes more prominent.

Affordability and Transparency for Students and Families

A DeWine administration goal on day one, tuition guarantees are offered today at all 13 Ohio public undergraduate universities, giving Ohioans perhaps the strongest, most transparent and universal price guarantee in the nation. Thanks to the guarantee and Ohio's commitment to affordability, more than 80 percent of Ohio sophomores, juniors, and seniors had no tuition increase this school year.

Undergraduate Tuition Guarantee Programs



At Ohio's public higher education state trustees conference in 2019, Governor DeWine asked all qualifying public universities to provide in-state graduate degree tuition rates for all students who earned their undergraduate degrees in Ohio. Without a mandate or a change in law, all universities in Ohio agreed to the Governor's request. Keeping students here to complete their graduate degrees gives Ohio a better opportunity to keep these students in Ohio to become part of our emerging economy.

The State Capital Budget

The State Capital Budget—Senate Bill 310—was passed by the General Assembly and signed by the Governor in December 2020. The bill contains \$452 million overall for higher education, and the first-ever statewide campus safety and security grant fund—\$5 million—to be administered in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Public Safety. Most of the higher education capital budget provides direct payments to institutions for infrastructure maintenance, renovations, and repairs to protect our state higher education facilities, which are some of Ohio's most important assets.

Ohio College Opportunity Grant

For the 2019-20 collegiate year, eligible students in Ohio's primary need-based scholarship program received, on average, a **25% increase in state aid**. While a planned additional increase was not achievable in the 20-21 academic year, the per-student scholarship amount was maintained at the enhanced level.

Choose Ohio First Scholarship

Ohio's efforts to increase students graduating in STEMM fields (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine) was bolstered with a significant boost in funding for Choose Ohio First scholarships from actual spending in the budget bill. A new round of Choose Ohio First Scholarship grants was announced in fall of 2020, with \$20.5 million in new scholarships available for students at community colleges as well as four-year public and independent institutions, creating additional opportunities for more STEMM students. It was Lt. Governor Husted's leadership as Speaker of the House of Representatives in 2007 that established the Choose Ohio First program.

Choose Ohio First



Chancellor Gardner talks with students about their research project at the Choose Ohio First Scholar Showcase in February 2020.

Helping Families With the Cost of Education

Helping families save on the cost of college is the primary focus of the Ohio Tuition Trust Authority, the agency under the Department of Higher Education's purview that celebrated the 30th anniversary of its CollegeAdvantage 529 savings plan in 2019. Ohio's CollegeAdvantage Direct 529 Savings Plan is one of the top-rated 529 plans in the country, having earned the number-one rating in investment performance in the one-, five-, and 10-year categories by SavingforCollege.com.



Students were also encouraged to save on the cost of college in 2019 by completing their Free Application for Federal Student Aid – or FAFSA – form. Ohio generally ranks around 15th in the nation annually in FAFSA completion rates. While that ranking is better than

most other states, it is not good enough, with an estimated 39 percent of eligible students not completing the FAFSA, leaving an estimated \$87 million in financial aid unutilized to benefit students.

Governor DeWine has officially declared October to be FAFSA Completion Month in Ohio. October also kicked off the third year of the Department of Higher Education’s 3 to Get Ready program, designed to help Ohio high school students prepare for postsecondary education by focusing on three important steps – FAFSA completion, College Application Month, and College Signing Day.



In December, Governor DeWine supported Chancellor Gardner’s request for \$3.5 million in federal COVID relief dollars to support students especially impacted by the pandemic. The Controlling Board acted, with new strategies to increase FAFSA completion, support Ohio’s Transfer Promise, and encourage education attainment throughout Ohio.

Another way ODHE works to make higher education more accessible and affordable for students is through collaboration with other state agencies. ODHE continues to collaborate with the Ohio Department of Education on the College Credit Plus dual enrollment program, which celebrated its sixth anniversary in 2020. The program,



which provides students the opportunity to earn high school and college credits at the same time by taking courses from the state’s colleges and universities, has saved students and their families approximately \$720 million on the cost of tuition in the past

four years. Under the leadership of Chancellor Gardner and State Superintendent Paolo DeMaria, a comprehensive College Credit Plus flexibility/guidance document was first issued in March 2020 and extended in November 2020 to provide students, families, and institutions with maximum CCP options for student access and success despite COVID-19 challenges.

Ohio’s Aspire program works to reduce the estimated number of 800,000 Ohio adults without a high school diploma. The Aspire program provides grants for the development and administration of courses with instruction in basic literacy, workplace literacy, family literacy, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), and preparation for high school equivalency tests.



Strengthening Ohio's Economy

Ohio Now a Destination State for Education

Not long ago Ohio lost many of its high school graduates to other states and found fewer students coming to Ohio for college. Now, Ohio retains more students annually while attracting approximately 6,400 more recent high school graduates to Ohio than it loses to other states. This statistic speaks to both Ohio's affordability and quality. As Ohio continues to emphasize these traits, this trend can be continued and expanded, and the Buckeye State will have the opportunity to retain more talent to bolster Ohio's economy.

RAPIDS Grants Support Workforce Preparation

The biennial operating budget included an additional \$8 million for the state's RAPIDS program. RAPIDS, which stands for Regionally Aligned Priorities in Delivering Skills, is a collaboration between higher education institutions and Ohio businesses where funding is awarded to purchase equipment to train students and upskill incumbent workers. A capital budget allocation for the RAPIDS program was included within the state operating budget for the first time in 2019. In December of 2020, the state's Capital Appropriations bill included another \$7.6 million for RAPIDS, affirming Ohio's interest in workforce preparation partnerships.



In February, Gov. Mike DeWine announced that Central Ohio Technical College had been awarded a \$161,266 RAPIDS grant.

In an effort to reinforce the important role that Ohio Technical Centers (OTC) play in educating the state's workforce, the budget provided a significant increase in funding for the state's OTC partners.

In an effort to reinforce the important role that Ohio Technical Centers (OTC) play in educating the state's workforce, the budget (even after COVID-impacted budget reductions) provided a significant increase in funding for the state's OTC partners. And in a show of support for those serving our country, the budget maintained funding to the National Guard and War Orphan scholarships to cover 100 percent of student tuition and fees.

Supporting Ohio Employers in a New Economy

ODHE and the Development Services Agency, led by Director Lydia Mihalik, partnered with Lieutenant Governor Husted to establish TechCred, a program designed to upskill the incumbent workforce and qualify them for new jobs in the technology-infused economy. The biennial operating budget provided \$15 million per year to support grants to employers to help fund new credentials and certificates. Originally, the administration set a goal for the program to support an additional 10,000 credentials annually. As of December 2020, the program has supported more than 15,000 new credentials, with 31 out of 36 eligible public colleges and universities participating. Applications for employers to apply for grants that reimburse them for worker training began in 2019 and the program became even stronger in 2020. Those interested may get more information or apply at TechCred.Ohio.gov.



Lt. Gov. Jon Husted

A stronger Ohio economy is tied to Ohio's ability to produce a talented workforce and make progress on increasing education attainment. With more than 11,000 fewer students projected to graduate from Ohio high schools in the next 10 years, increasing the number of Ohioans with a college degree or credential will be challenging. There is some positive news. Ohio's overall rate of educational attainment has increased by 14.3 percentage points from 2008 to 2018. While a portion of this increase can be attributed to the inclusion of workforce-relevant certificates in the total of postsecondary credentials in 2014 and certifications in 2018, Ohio's degree attainment rate has also steadily improved, increasing by almost 6 percentage points, from 34.9 percent in 2008 to 40.5 percent in 2018. Ohio's education attainment rate has increased more than the national average (17th best), with the 4th-best attainment gains in the Midwest. Aiding Ohio in this effort are enrollment numbers in the past three years that are better than the national and Midwest averages coupled with one of the best articulation and transfer systems in the U.S., allowing students to transfer credits from one postsecondary institution or training center to another.



DSA Director Lydia Mihalik

Working Together

Ohio's Independent Non-Profit Colleges and Universities

Ohio is home to more than 70 four-year non-profit institutions, 51 of which are members of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio (AICUO). Independent institutions add to Ohio's diversity of opportunity available to Ohio students and out-of-state students looking to make Ohio their education home. Many of them participate in key statewide programs such as College Credit Plus, the Choose Ohio First Scholarship, and the Ohio College Opportunity Grant. Every year a growing number of public-private partnerships emerge to help provide more student options and enhance affordability, especially between community colleges and independent schools.

Community College Co-Requisite Education Reform

Chancellor Gardner prioritized federal CARES Act funds to support co-requisite education – a key policy preference of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges – in the SSI formula. Co-requisite remediation is a model in which students who have been assessed as not yet ready for college work receive extra help while they take a college-level course instead of receiving a traditional, prerequisite remedial (developmental) course. Funding of \$4.5 million was approved in December 2020 that will support community colleges as they implement this key reform, reducing reliance on developmental education courses that often put students, particularly those who are low-income, first generation or otherwise underrepresented in higher education, at a disadvantage to gain college credit and attain a degree.

Supporting Students with Disabilities

An exciting new collaborative program between higher education and the Office of Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) was included in the biennial operating budget and led by OOD Director Kevin Miller. The College2Careers program, which provides for a full-time rehabilitation vocation counselor at 15 of Ohio's public colleges

and universities, ensures that students with disabilities have the support they need to complete their degree or credential and succeed in the workforce.



Higher Education Leadership with the Third Frontier

ODHE traditionally oversees \$8 million every year in Third Frontier research incentive projects, with funding for university algal bloom research, opioid addiction, and infant mortality, among other things. A new initiative, spinal cord injury research, was included in the most recent biennial operating budget, with up to \$3 million available over the biennium to assist in striving to improve the lives of those with spinal cord injuries.



Another Successful State College Trustees Conference

Expressing a clear priority to work with colleges and universities, Governor DeWine attended three separate events at the State Trustees Conference at Columbus State Community College in October 2019, the largest such event in state history. The 2020 COVID pandemic would not allow an in-person conference, yet more than 250 participants joined our statewide video WebEx conference in December, featuring both Governor DeWine and Lt. Governor Husted.

Remarkably, the Ohio Department of Higher Education operated in 2020 with fewer employees than 10 years ago. Since 2010, full-time permanent ODHE staff have been reduced from 80 to 60 employees, a reduction of 25 percent.

Close Collaboration with Association Leadership

The challenges of 2020 and the rapid pace of change required close collaboration and daily communication with college and university leaders and the associations that represent them. Association leaders were often directly involved in working with ODHE to help craft solutions to the many complex issues confronted during the year, always keeping students and their families as the top priority. Our key association partners include:

- The Inter-University Council of Ohio (IUC), led by President and CEO Bruce Johnson, representing Ohio's 14 four-year public universities.
- The Ohio Association of Community Colleges (OACC), led by President and CEO Jack Hershey, representing Ohio's 23 two-year public community, state community and technical colleges.
- The Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio (AICUO), led by President and General Counsel C. Todd Jones, representing 51 of Ohio's independent not-for-profit colleges and universities.
- The Ohio Association of Career-Technical Superintendents (OACTS), led by Executive Director Maggie Hess, representing Ohio Technical Centers (OTCs) that provide post-secondary career and technical education at 54 career centers across Ohio.



Bruce Johnson



Jack Hershey



C. Todd Jones



Maggie Hess

New Presidents

Ohio's campuses are fortunate to have strong leadership, and 2020 brought new presidents to two community colleges, three public universities, and seven independent not-for-profit institutions.



Bill Balzer
Interim President
Owens Community College



Trevor Bates
President
Wilmington College



Thomas Botzman
President
University of Mount Union



Scott Cowen
Interim President
Case Western
Reserve University



Michael Geoghegan
President
Eastern Gateway
Community College



David P. Haney
President
Hiram College



Kristina Johnson
President
The Ohio State University



Dave Kaufman
Interim President
Capital University



Gregory Postel
Interim President
The University of Toledo



J. Michael Pressimone
President
Notre Dame College



Jack Thomas
President
Central State University



Kathleen Williamson
President
Mount Carmel College
of Nursing

Higher Education Senior Leadership Team



Chancellor
Randy Gardner



Chief of Staff
Jim Bennett



Sr. Vice Chancellor
Mike Duffey



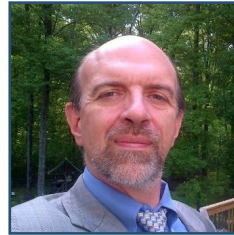
Sr. Vice Chancellor
Gary Cates



**Vice Chancellor,
Academic Affairs**
Dr. Stephanie Davidson
(retired 12/31/2020)



**Vice Chancellor,
Academic Affairs**
Dr. Tom Sudkamp
(hired 1/11/2021)



**Vice Chancellor,
Finance & Data
Management**
Fred Church



**Vice Chancellor,
External Relations
& Education
Technology**
Charles See



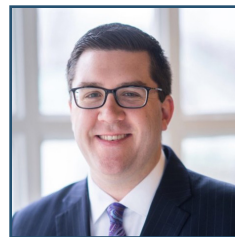
**Vice Chancellor,
Higher Education
Workforce
Alignment**
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Communications**
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Legislative Affairs**
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