

## Rural Community College Alliance – Speaker Biographies

**Dr. Bruce Ayers** served as president of Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College in rural Appalachia for almost 27 years. During his tenure as president, Dr. Ayers provided the leadership and vision for two successful major investment campaigns. In addition, his institution was ranked by the prestigious Aspen Institute as among the top 10 percent of the nation's community colleges for three of the last four years of his tenure. Southeast moved even higher in his last year of service when it was chosen as one of the Top Ten 2-year colleges in the country. Dr. Ayers is a founding board chair of the Rural Community College Alliance and a recipient of the Association's George Autry Award.

**Brent Cejda** is a Professor in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln. Cejda developed and implemented the Community College Leadership program at UNL and served for nine years as the Executive Director of the National Council of Instructional Administrators, an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges that is housed at UNL. His community college experience began as an instructor at Butler Community College in Kansas. He later served as an administrator at Butler and also held administrative appointments at Edison State Community College in Ohio and Highland Community College in Kansas. Cejda has previously presented at RCCA Conferences and served as a keynote speaker at the 2011 Conference in Oklahoma City.

**Michael R. Chipps, Ph.D.**, is a nationally recognized community college chief executive officer with over 38-years of higher education experience. He assumed the presidency at Northeast in February 2012 after serving 10-years as president and chief executive officer of Mid-Plains Community College in North Platte and McCook. He also served 21 years in the United States Army/Army Reserve and retired as a Major in 1995. A Nebraska native, Dr. Chipps received his Doctor of Philosophy: Educational Administration, Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. He earned a Master of Science in Education from the University of Nebraska at Kearney. He also holds a Bachelor of Science in Education Degree with a major in Sociology and a minor in Psychology from the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Dr. Chipps has served for a number of years on regional, national and international boards. Since 1994, he has been an international higher education consultant for over 90 colleges, universities and other organizations and served as a team chair for accreditation visits for distinguished organizations such as the American Council of Education and the Higher Learning Commission, among others. Dr. Chipps also writes and presents articles and essays for the higher education community; the latest of which represent the reflections of college presidents relating to the value and state of American higher education. He is also a former member of the board of directors of the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics, which serves the global higher education community of 38 nations. He has also made presentations in several countries, most recently in Australia, Bahrain and Brazil. Dr. Chipps serves on the Presidential Advisory Board for the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society. He is also a member of the Nebraska Advanced Manufacturing Coalition Board of Directors. Dr. Chipps has been recognized by several distinguished organizations, including the American Association of Community Colleges, Phi Theta Kappa, Nebraska Department

## Rural Community College Alliance – Speaker Biographies

of Education/Nebraska Career Education, the Nebraska Community College Association, and the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations. His recognitions include the Outstanding Administrator Award from the Nebraska Community College Association and the Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction for his leadership and support of the Phi Theta Kappa academic honor society. Dr. Chipps and the Northeast Board of Governors were named by the American Association of Community Colleges as one of four finalists in the nation for its Exemplary CEO/Board of Trustees Award of Excellence. The Norfolk Daily News selected Dr. Chipps as one of three finalists for its inaugural 2015 Person of the Year Award. The Nebraska Department of Education/Nebraska Career Education presented him with the 2016 Elaine Stuhr Leadership and Advocacy Award. This is the highest honor that Nebraska Career Education recognizes each year. Dr. Chipps was the recipient of the 2017 Association of Community College Trustees Western Region Chief Executive Officer Award, representing 10 states and five Canadian provinces and territories.

**Yasminda Choate** is an English faculty member at a rural two-year college in Oklahoma. Her institution's service area includes Mabel Bassett Correctional Center at which Choate has taught courses. As a doctoral student at the University of Oklahoma, Choate's research interests include community college administration and the experiences of Oklahoma's incarcerated women with college in prison.

**Dr. Flegal-Smallwood** is the Director of a 5-year Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution, Part A grant focusing on STEM success in high-risk students, including Native American, low-income, and first-generation students. She oversees greenhouse and aquaponics operations, peer tutoring in STEM, and expanding institutional development with partnerships.

**Alton (Tony) Hardman** is currently serving as the Library Director at Oklahoma Panhandle State University in Goodwell, Oklahoma. He has over twenty years of supervisory/management/administrative experience and has presented at professional conferences in Oklahoma, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Kansas and South Dakota as well as two previous RCCA conferences. Hardman is also a professional storyteller and recently, he was named as one of the top five storytellers in Oklahoma and has served as President of three professional organizations.

**Dan Hovestol** is President of the Northern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (NIAC); a 10 college conference consisting of public/private and 2/4 year institutions. Born and raised in Williams Bay, WI, Dan has spent his working career with various aspects of Higher Education. A graduate of Bemidji State University, Dan spent 24 years (1990-2014) at Oak Hills Christian College (Bemidji, MN) in Director roles in the Admissions, Financial Aid and Athletic Departments. Under his leadership, the athletic program at OHCC was first introduced and he served as the school's Athletic Director for 17 years (1997-2014). Dan also served as Men's Basketball Coach for 10 years (1997-2007) where his teams accomplished 4 conference championships and the school's only national title (ACCA) in 2005-06. In addition to his NIAC duties, Dan speaks regularly to groups around North America with hope inspired messages while finding time to additionally serve as

## Rural Community College Alliance – Speaker Biographies

Vice Chairman of the Association of Christian College Athletics (ACCA), Director of Enrollment Management for Montana Bible College (Bozeman, MT) and with the Mokahum Ministry Center (Cass Lake, MN). Dan resides in Bemidji, MN with his wife, 4 children and 2 grandchildren.

**Dr. Ed Hughes** served as president of Hazard Community College from 1985 to 2001 and as president of Gateway Community and Technical College from 2001 until his retirement in 2015. The Northern Kentucky College gained national recognition for its workforce programs and received the Bellwether Award in 2014 for its ten year partnership with CITI in Florence, KY. Each college implemented and completed a successful major investment campaigns through his leadership as president.

### **Edward P. Jordan, PhD**

#### Current Position

-Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs – St. Johns River State College (2015-Present)

- Assist the Vice President for Academic Affairs with oversight and coordination of all the general education instruction activities of the College, including academic support, distance/on-line learning, Florida School of the Arts, dual enrollment, library services, adult education, community education, teacher education, college prep instruction, academic scheduling and academic policy.

#### Previous Positions

-Dean of Adult & Secondary Education - St. Johns River State College (2012-2015)

-Responsible for the strategic leadership, coordination of academics, and operational management of the college's adult and secondary education programs.

-Director of P-20 Initiatives -Board of Trustees Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (2010-2012)

**Lyle Kathol**, Vice President of Educational Services, oversees five academic divisions at Northeast Community College – Agriculture, Math and Science, Applied Technology, Business and Technology, Health and Wellness, and Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Industrial Technical Education and a Master of Science in Education from Wayne State College, as well as additional administrative coursework through the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. Kathol began his career in higher education at Northeast in 1985 where he served as an automotive technology instructor and the cooperative internship coordinator. He was promoted to the position of Dean of the Transportation and Construction Division (later renamed Dean of the Applied Technology Division), where he supervised thirty-seven full-time instructors and numerous adjunct instructors in fifteen academic and non-credit programs. Kathol held that position for 16-years until he was appointed vice president in 2017. As Dean of Applied Technology, Kathol was instrumental in the development of several technical programs and in working to establish strong ties between Northeast and business and industry. This includes partnerships with the Trane® Corporation and Snap-on® tools as part of the National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3), a non- profit network of education providers and

## Rural Community College Alliance – Speaker Biographies

corporations that supports and advances new and emerging technology skills in the transportation, aviation and energy industry sectors. Most recently, Kathol was instrumental in another NC3 enterprise, the Mopar® CAP (Career Automotive Program) LOCAL program, an initiative to train individuals to earn industry certification to service vehicles in Chrysler auto dealerships.

**Pradeep Kotamraju:** Currently the Bureau Chief, Career and Technical Education, Division of Community Colleges, Iowa Department of Education., Kotamraju is Iowa's State Director for Career and Technical Education (CTE). He has leadership responsibility in managing those secondary and community college CTE programs that are funded through the Carl D. Perkins federal program and those mandated through state legislation and policy.

**Dr. Pat Lake** served as President of Henderson Community College from 1986 until his retirement in 2010. Afterwards, he provided the equivalent of two years of presidential leadership serving as the interim president at Ashland Community and Technical College and as the interim president at Hopkinsville Community College. During his tenure at Henderson Community College, the institution's enrollment increased over 200 percent. In addition, three additional buildings and two off-campus centers were added to the college. He helped lead three fundraising campaigns, resulting in additional student scholarships, two buildings and the enhancement of information technology for the institution.

**Jan Friedel Nahra** is Associate Professor in the doctoral Community College Leadership Program at Iowa State University, Ames, IA. (2011-present). Previous professional experience includes almost 30 years of service in academic and administrative positions in community colleges at both the state and local levels. Her work has specialized in community colleges; and her research in principally in community colleges, funding and higher education public policy.

**Dr. Christopher J. Parker** serves as the chief executive officer of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA), the national governing body of two-year college athletics, comprised of over 500 member colleges and nearly 60,000 student-athletes. Prior to joining the NJCAA, Parker served as Vice President of Enrollment Management and Marketing at Pfeiffer University. Under his leadership, Pfeiffer enrolled its largest incoming graduate class in 30 years and developed the university's first comprehensive strategic marketing strategy. In 2006, Parker was hired as the first-ever athletic director at Patrick Henry Community College in Martinsville, Virginia, and led the institution to being the first community college in the Commonwealth of Virginia to join the NJCAA. He raised over \$2 million for intercollegiate athletics at Patrick Henry, leading to new facility construction projects as well as renovations. Under his leadership, Patrick Henry's athletic program grew from its original three sports to 12 before his departure in December 2015. Parker was named the Under Armour Southeast Athletic Director of the Year in 2010-11. In addition to his responsibilities at Patrick Henry, Parker served as the

## Rural Community College Alliance – Speaker Biographies

assistant director and director of NJCAA Region 10 for seven years. He also helped guide an additional eight Virginia community colleges into membership with the NJCAA – serving as a direct consultant for five institutions in establishing their athletic programs. During his 10-year stint with Patrick Henry, Parker rose through the ranks and served the positions of Assistant Dean for Academics and Dean of Academics before taking on the duties of Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Campus Life, and Athletics. In addition to that role, he was also the Executive Director of the PHCC Foundation and Real Estate Foundation. Parker holds both a doctorate and education specialist degree in educational leadership from Liberty University, master of science degree from Virginia Commonwealth University, bachelor of science degree from Virginia Tech and associate degree from Southside Virginia Community College. Professional certifications include non-profit leadership, Duke University; online teaching and instruction, Longwood University; and entrepreneurship, National Association of Community College Entrepreneurship.

**Jared Reed** is a graduate of the doctoral program in higher education at Iowa State University. He holds a Master of Arts degree in geography. His research and teaching interests are: community colleges, rural communities, sense of place, and community development. Jared currently is a community college practitioner at a small, rural community college in the Midwest.

**David Sherwood** was born in Manchester, England. He earned his Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration whilst serving in the British Army, Royal Corps of Signals. During his time in Her Majesties Armed Forces, he served in various locations throughout the world, including UK, Germany, Belize, Denmark, Northern Island, Falkland Islands. Whilst serving in The Royal Corp of Signals, David was involved in many aspects of training, from driving instructor (Heavy Goods Vehicles) to Nuclear, Biological and Chemical warfare instructor. David has been working with community colleges and universities throughout North America for the past 10 years introducing innovative training tools, specifically in simulation, virtual reality and computer based training.

**Jason L. Taylor** is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of Utah. His research examines how policy influences students' access to, transition through, and success in college. He has published on issues such as developmental education, dual enrollment, transfer and mobility, degree reclamation, LGBTQ students, and Promise programs. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is the 2016 recipient of the Barbara K. Townsend Emerging Scholar Award from the Council for the Study of Community Colleges. His scholarship is published in peer-reviewed journals such as *American Behavioral Scientist*, *Community College Review*, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, *The Review of Higher Education*, and *Education Policy Analysis Archives*.

## Rural Community College Alliance – Speaker Biographies

**Dr. Linda Thomas** is the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Workforce Development at West Hills Community College District. In her 18th year of service to higher education, her present duties include planning and implementing strategies that provide leadership and direction of efforts for district Educational Services, Workforce Development, Categorical Funding and Grants, State and Federal Programs, Distance Education, Workplace Learning, Contract Training, Westside Institute of Technology, and Child Development Centers. Linda received her Bachelor's Degree from UC Riverside in Political Science in 1986. She received her Master's Degree in Theology from the Graduate Theological Union at UC Berkeley in 1990 and her Doctorate in Educational Administration and Leadership from the University of the Pacific in 2008. Linda's Doctoral thesis explored the ethics of teaching in higher education. Before assuming the duties of Vice Chancellor at West Hills, Linda served as both a faculty member and a Dean of Career Technical Technology.

**Zoe Thornton:** As a Consultant in the Division of Community Colleges & Workforce Preparation at the Iowa Department of Education, Zoë M. Thornton works with the 15 public community colleges and the 333 local school districts on a variety of initiatives, including: state accreditation, program approval, Voluntary Framework for Accountability reporting, federal Perkins funding, career and technical education, Senior Year Plus, workforce training, and economic development.

**Ken Tourand** is the President of the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology. Ken started at NVIT in 1995 as a faculty member and after holding a number of administrative positions, became President/CEO of NVIT in October 2010. Ken holds a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree and a Master of Arts Degree in Leadership and Training. Ken is passionate about Aboriginal Education. Ken has presented at many conferences and roundtables regarding Aboriginal Education and the unique role that NVIT plays in meeting the needs of Aboriginal students and Aboriginal communities. Ken has served on many Boards (including CANDO) and is the past Chair of the Indigenous Advisory Committee for College and Institutes Canada. Ken was instrumental in creating the National Indigenous protocol for post-secondary institutions. Ken is married to Darlene and has two wonderful children, Jacob and Stephanie.

**Warren Weir** is the Academic Administrator of Vancouver Island University's Cowichan Campus, located in Duncan, BC. Warren is a proud member of the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (Cando: 1990-2018), and is lead editor of Cando's Journal of Aboriginal Economic Development (JAED). He is a past Director of the Canadian Council of Small Business and Entrepreneurship, and received his professional Cando Professional Aboriginal Economic Developer (PAED) designation in 2007. Past positions include Department Head of the Administrative Studies programs (1990-1997) and Academic Dean (2011-2013) at the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, and Assistant Professor and Director of the Indigenous Management Specialization, MBA Program, Edwards School of Business, University of Saskatchewan (1999-2010). In 2010, Warren served as the Acting Director of the Northern Ontario Research, Development, Ideas, and

## Rural Community College Alliance – Speaker Biographies

Knowledge Institute, Algoma University. He is a member of the International Centre for Northern Governance and Development (ICNGD). Warren has authored and co-authored 23 book chapters, refereed and non-refereed journal articles, as well as technical reports relevant to his academic field of inquiry, which includes Indigenous education, strategic management, community economic development and leadership, governance, and Canadian government, public policy, and politics. He has edited one book on Aboriginal Measures for Economic Development. He has supervised 28 MBA graduate students with their major management reports and theses, and taught over 120 undergraduate and MBA courses in his field of inquiry over the past 28 years. He has presented at numerous national and international conferences and workshops. While not at work, Warren may be found enjoying the company of his three grown children (Shelly, Hugh, and Nathan), grandson Isaiah, and life partner, Helen.

**Dr. Larry Whitworth** served as the president of Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor, Michigan for 13 years prior to his retirement. Preceding the presidency at Washtenaw he was the president of Tidewater Community College serving the Norfolk, Virginia Beach area of Virginia. Dr. Whitworth began his career at the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) in Pittsburgh where he served in various capacities for 24 years. He served as Dean for Vocational/Technical and Occupational programs, Campus President and ultimately as the Executive Vice President for the college. Dr. Whitworth has a bachelor's degree from Adrian College, a Master's in Business Administration (MBA) from Duquesne University and a doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh in Curriculum and Supervision. Throughout his career he has pursued enrollment and resource enhancement utilizing a variety of analytic and data based tools.