

2023 IMPACT REPORT

# Impact Beyond Expectations

Certified



Corporation



AMERICAN  
COLLEGE *of*  
EDUCATION®

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Each year, it's always a delight to see the great impact ACE is making both internally and in communities nationwide, and 2023 was no different. As a Certified B Corporation (B Corp), we're committed to embodying business practices that make a positive difference for both people and planet every day. We accomplish such a mission from the inside out –it starts from our employees and radiates outward to encompass the entire ACE family, students and alumni included!

In 2023, we continued our unwavering commitment to community service through a variety of channels. **More than 200 ACE employees volunteered over 2,800 civic hours** to serve their communities. We also connected with **Gifts for Good**, a fellow B Corp that partners with 64 nonprofit and social impact enterprises who serve all 50 states and 72 countries. In lieu of anniversary gifts from ACE, **employees can choose a gift that benefits a Gifts for Good partner or convert their gift into a donation.**

I'm especially excited that ACE has once again been recognized as a **Top Workplace USA**, this time receiving all twelve available culture badges. It's an honor that more than **90% of our survey respondents say they feel included at ACE, that we operate by strong values, and that we embrace diversity and inclusion as part of our culture and everyday operations.** Great job, ACE!

Employees, students and alumni gathered to participate in our annual **Month of Impact** in September where we supported the Indy American Heart Association among many other organizations nationwide. And, we were honored with the **2023 Corporate Volunteerism Award by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development Serve Indiana** in November. The award recognized our commitment to volunteering and serving in Indiana, where ACE is headquartered.

We celebrated the **conferral of nearly 5,500 degrees**, and we made institution history in the fall when we reached **10,000 active students**. What an exciting and momentous milestone! It's such a gift to see our affordable, flexible and high-quality programs continue to reach more students and catapult their careers to the next level. As a college, helping our students make an impact in their fields is paramount and our highest priority.

It's been another year of outstanding impact, and we aim to continue raising the bar in years to come!



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "KK Byland, SPHR".

**KK Byland, SPHR, SHRM-SCP**  
Chief Human Resources Officer  
*American College of Education*

# B Corporation: Definition and Score

As a B Corp, ACE strives to solve social and environmental problems through the power of business. We are certified by the nonprofit B Lab to meet rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency.

According to the B Corp Declaration of Interdependence, we believe:

- That we must be the change we seek in the world.
- That all business ought to be conducted as if people and place matter.
- That, through their products, practices and profits, businesses should aspire to do no harm and benefit all.
- To do so requires that we act with the understanding that we are each dependent upon another and thus, responsible for each other and future generations.

To maintain B Corp standing, ACE must recertify every three years and achieve a minimum score of 80 points on the B Impact Assessment, verified by the B Lab. ACE last submitted for recertification in 2022, where we received a score of 97. This was an increase of 8.4 over our last recertification score in 2019 and included notable growth specifically within the environment and customers categories.

The assessment measures workers, environment, community, customers and governance and asks how the day-to-day operations of a company create positive impact for its workers, community and environment. Additionally, companies can also earn points if their overall business model exemplifies creating positive social and environmental impact, qualifying the company for specific Impact Business Model points. ACE employees are among over 700,000 B Corp workers from across the globe working toward one unifying goal — to benefit people, community and planet.

## OUR B IMPACT SCORE

97



Governance



Workers



Community



Environment

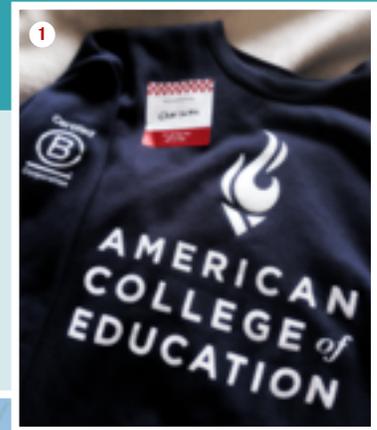


Customers

The B Impact Scores are being compared against all businesses that have completed the B Impact Assessment. Most companies score 40 to 100; the highest-performing B Corps score 160-170.

## ACE IS COMMITTED TO SERVING OTHERS

To show commitment to our B Corp mission, ACE employees are invited to submit photos throughout the year of when they've made an impact in their communities.



- 1 Charlotte Motley donated blood to her local American Red Cross.
- 2 Gretchen Treadwell volunteered as a DJ for a community radio station whose governing board is the San Miguel Educational Fund.
- 3 Traci Coomer and her daughter Chelsea collected peanut butter and canned goods for the North Texas Food Bank at the State Fair of Texas.
- 4 Sarah and Joshua Reichard volunteered at Ronald McDonald House for ACE Month of Impact.
- 5 Rebecca Curtis wrote and sent several cards to individuals in nursing homes and aging facilities on behalf of Letters Against Isolation.

# Impact From the Inside Out

At ACE, we believe that our impact on our students, alumni and communities starts from within. Accomplishing this takes intentionality and commitment to creating a positive and healthy work environment for all employees. Our dedication to an employee-centric workplace, combined with our B Corp mission, allows ACE to catapult its internal impact to external service.

## Employee Engagement

In 2023, ACE was named a **Top Workplaces USA** winner for the second consecutive year. We received **all twelve cultural badges**, and data showed that ACE **outperformed other college participants by 10%** or more in culture drivers and positivity themes including:

- Performance
- Connection
- Alignment
- Coaching

Particularly, the survey's measurement of culture driver responses showed **ACE earned scores above the 90th percentile in all categories**. We also received seven Culture Excellence Awards:

- Innovation
- Professional Development
- Employee Appreciation
- Compensation and Benefits
- Work-life Flexibility
- Purpose and Values
- Employee Well-being



93% of employees believe we operate by **strong values**



91% of employees feel that their **jobs are meaningful**

## Making the Most of Employee Benefits

ACE is proud of its ability to offer employees benefits that add to their quality of life, going beyond the traditionally expected. PTO never goes to waste as employees can convert leftover time to student loan payments, a 529 savings account, 401K contributions or a donation to charity. Another option is to donate unused PTO to an internal PTO bank for employees in need who've exceeded their own allotted PTO. In 2023, **more than 4,000 PTO hours were converted and 122 of those hours were either donated to a charitable cause or the internal PTO bank.**

The ACE culture is unwaveringly giving, and our employees cheer one another on. **More than 3,500 impressions were awarded**, a unique way to give kudos and recognition to colleagues. The top impression was “**great job**” and was awarded **775 times to 277 employees**. We know how valuable and high-performing our employees are, which is why we invest so much into developing talent from within. This resulted in **79 internal employee promotions in 2023.**

Just as ACE is dedicated to providing accessible continuing education to our students, we do the same for our employees. When our employees enroll in an ACE program, we completely cover the tuition; employees are only responsible for program fees. In 2023, **27 employees enrolled in an ACE program**, which saved them a total of **\$69,651 in tuition**. Additionally, our Training and Development team saved ACE **more than \$2.5 million** by creating **41 new custom training programs** for internal use in 2023 alone. Employees embraced the professional development and earned **2,397 digital badges for successful training completion**, an increase of **522 badges** from 2022.



ACE is an organization that values learning and growth and because of this we now have over 100 different courses in our training and professional development catalog. Not only do we have self-paced trainings, but we have partnered with department leaders to develop department-specific trainings that have helped support our employees throughout the college. Many employees have taken advantage of our professional development opportunities to help with their development plans and annual goals.



**Jennifer Linch**

Director of Training and Development  
*American College of Education*

**\$2.5M**

saved in 2023 by internal training programs

## Work-Life Balance is Paramount

ACE partners with American Health and Wellness to create meaningful and impactful wellness opportunities for employees. In 2023, we completed **quarterly challenges** that inspired employees to **try new foods, get more active, practice self-love, embrace mindfulness** and more. We even have a team that leads ten-minute **meditation sessions** three times a week for any ACE employee to participate in.

Our employees are also empowered to make time to serve others. ACE instituted an organization-wide contest for employees to use civic hours and make a difference in their communities in 2023. The top three teams who used the most civic hours won the team contest, and then all employees who used all 16 of their civic hours were in a random drawing for the individual prize.

Each of the winners won a \$250 donation to the charity of their choice:

- **Team 2** (Academic Affairs, Doctoral Research, Education Solutions, Integrated Operations, College Support Services, Credit for Prior Learning Services) donated to Indy Reads Indianapolis
- **Team 5** (Continuous Improvement, Registration, Finance, IT, Nursing) donated to Wounded Warriors
- **Team 7** (Teaching and Learning, Institutional Analytics, Human Resources) donated to St. Jude Children's Hospital
- **Anissa Anderson** (Senior Director of Student Services) donated to CitySquare



- 1 Kim Taylor helped remove yellow star thistle plants, an invasive species, from the Santa Cruz mountains.
- 2 TJ Sparks volunteered with Servants at Work (SAWs) to build handicap ramps in Indiana.
- 3 Andy Khaliqi and his mom packed snack bags for refugee families coming to the Denver area through Justserve Denver.



- 4 Debra Cannon helped load over 10,000 toys and educational resources for children in need in Fort Worth, Texas as part of Summer Santa.



I am proud of last year's accomplishments related to DEI, but I also remind myself that my work to create greater inclusion is not yet complete. I celebrate our small victories because these will motivate and encourage us to continue creating spaces for all of our stakeholders to feel that they are an integral part of ACE's community.



**Fawzia Reza**

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Manager  
*American College of Education*

**We Live Out Inclusivity**

At ACE we live out inclusivity and strive to promote belonging in a way that creates action and inspires others to integrate its principles into daily living.

ACE participated in several inclusivity initiatives throughout 2023. To start, our team developed a presentation showcasing the history of DEI at ACE and a voluntary comprehensive DEI workshop for faculty and staff members. We also hosted four student-led panel discussions and two faculty- and staff-led ones that inspired the institution to continue growing in all areas of inclusivity. Additionally, ACE now offers two doctoral-level courses related to DEI.

ACE students and alumni shared many poignant insights and conversations during our 2023 panels. To highlight some of these discussions, we showcased them in a DEI Conversations video, which can be viewed at [www.youtube.com/@AceEdu/videos](http://www.youtube.com/@AceEdu/videos).



# Impact Beyond ACE

## Embodying Community Engagement and Service Nationwide

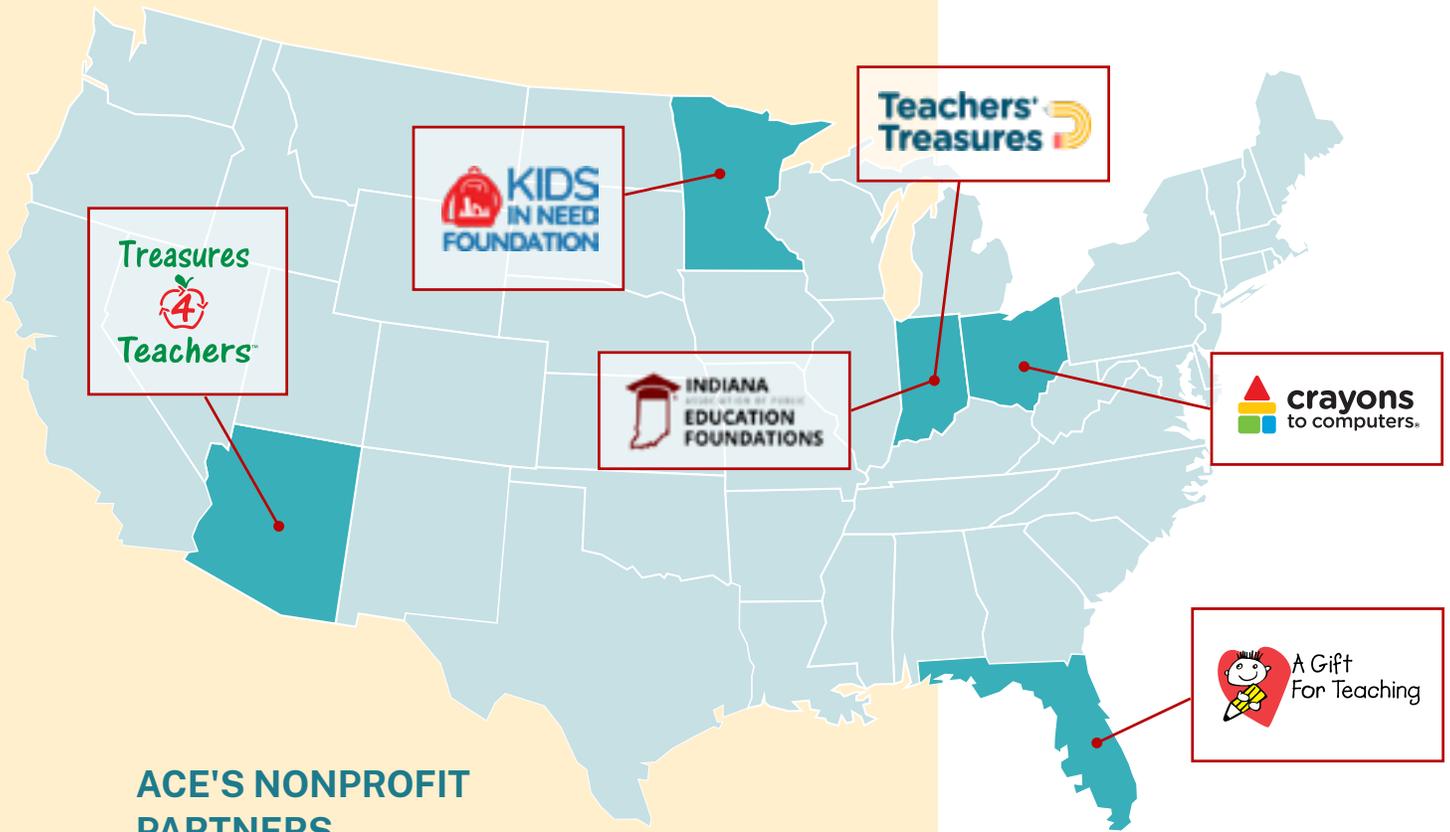
ACE's internal impact allows our employees to make a deeper impact in their communities. Beyond the record-breaking number of civic hours used in 2023, we continued strong and meaningful relationships with our nonprofit partners. We also celebrated individual achievements as **Dr. Crystal Neumann** (Assistant Provost, Business Professions) received the **Global Impression Award** from The International Center in Indiana, and **Dr. Andrea Curry** (Dissertation Editor) was selected as a 2023 **Woman of Impact** for the American Heart Association.

We are so proud of the unwavering generosity of our employees, who gave time and effort to those in need. As a fully online organization, it's especially impactful when we have a chance to serve communities in person, such as when ACE employees gathered in the fall at the **Tarrant County Food Bank** in Fort Worth, TX. The team helped fill **2,691 bags of produce**, which amounted to **13,452 pounds of food** that could be distributed to those who need it.



**2,691**

bags of produce filled



## ACE'S NONPROFIT PARTNERS

Partnering with nonprofits across the nation is one of ACE's many efforts to support individuals in need. These collaborative relationships mean more impact on more lives.

**2,841**

civic hours used by ACE employees

**205**

employees used civic hours

**136**

employees used all their civic hours

“

### A Gift for Teaching

Located in central Florida, A Gift for Teaching is a nonprofit organization that provides school supplies to students and teachers in need. ACE employees volunteered at the **2023 Great Big Backpack Build** where **20,000 students** were given new backpacks filled with essential school supplies.

ACE has been a wonderful partner for nearly a decade. They've been involved in many aspects of our organization, from volunteering to offering grants for teachers and supporting our programs financially. ACE has helped us grow each year and enabled us to serve more students and teachers. We enjoy working with them and appreciate their dedication to our mission and the field of education.

# 20,000

backpacks filled with supplies



### Angela Garcia

Vice President of Development & Marketing  
*A Gift for Teaching*



1 Natalie Pelham, vice president of human resources, smiles and poses while volunteering at A Gift for Teaching.



2 Geordie Hyland, president and CEO, stuffs a backpack with school supplies for the 2023 Great Big Backpack Build.



Tony Miller, vice president of field operations and partnerships, presents Tarrah Huber with her ACE scholarship.



I have been shopping at Crayons to Computers for two years now. I love walking in and seeing the workers and volunteers so happy to help. I also enjoy talking with the other teachers I meet while I shop. I learn a lot!

**Tarrah Huber**

Scholarship Recipient *Crayons to Computers*



### Crayons to Computers

Crayons to Computers is a nonprofit organization located in Cincinnati, Ohio that provides school supplies to teachers of students living in poverty. In the fall of 2023, ACE hosted an **alumni event** there where several attendees, including alumni, current students and prospective students, attended. Cincinnati fifth-grade teacher and Crayons to Computers shopper **Tarrah Huber** was presented a full scholarship toward an ACE master’s program.



ACE hosted an alumni event in Ohio where alumni, current and prospective students volunteered at Crayons to Computers.



By partnering with Crayons to Computers, ACE enables us to level the playing field in the classroom by ensuring that teachers can provide their students in need with the tools to succeed in school. Because of their commitment to our organization, we have been able to reach 504 teachers and more than 33,000 students. Thank you, ACE. We are very grateful!



**Betsy Wilson**

Director of Development  
*Crayons to Computers*

“

Partnering with ACE means empowering adult learners and the communities they serve. We especially appreciate their solid support of Kids in Need Foundation during Teacher Appreciation Week and at our signature event, Thanks A Million. As a partner, ACE's support makes a real impact, supporting education and the teachers who provide influence on tomorrow's leaders. Kids in Need Foundation appreciates ACE for giving educators access to affordable education and the tools to be recognized.



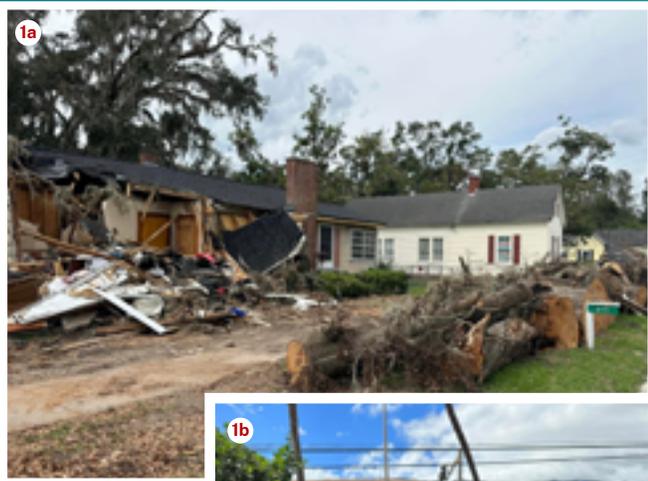
**Paul Wilson**

VP of Development  
Kids in Need Foundation

### Kids in Need Foundation

Kids in Need Foundation, a national nonprofit headquartered in Minnesota, serves teachers and students in under-resourced schools. ACE attended one of their 2023 events that reached nearly **1,000 teachers**. Teachers and their families enjoyed classroom supplies from over 40 vendors, food from local area restaurants, music and opportunities to learn about ACE programs.

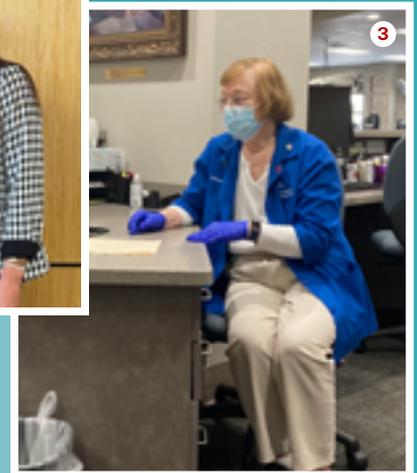
**1,000**  
teachers reached



**1** Julius Wynn volunteered with local churches to help those in Florida affected by Hurricane Idalia.



**2** Shon Smith served as the chairperson for the CAMERA organization that represents 32 school districts in Ohio to collaborate on teacher recruitment and retention. She posed with the Teacher of the Year.



**3** Ann Mowery volunteered in the cardio rehab unit at Ascension Providence Hospital where she helped provide administrative support to recovering patients.

## Indiana Association of Public Education Foundation

The Indiana Association of Public Education Foundation held its annual conference in 2023 to support education throughout Indiana. ACE and the foundation collaborated to create a **scholarship program** that will award up to **\$20,000 in scholarship dollars** throughout the state in 2024 for both paraprofessionals and individuals looking to enter education.

“

We are beyond excited to partner with the Indiana Association of Public Education Foundation as we continue to support teacher education throughout the state of Indiana. It's essential to have partnerships with organizations like INAPEF to create awareness and collaboration to support foundations across the state.



### **Monica Carson**

Chief Growth Officer  
*American College of Education*

**\$20,000** scholarship dollars for education



- 1 Jacqueline O'Mara helped distribute items to the homeless in Cleveland, Ohio with the 4 Corners City Outreach organization.
- 2 Lyndon Godsall volunteered for the twelfth year with the New World Symphony (NWS)
- 3 Nick Lee handed out runner bibs for the Circle City Donut Dash in support of Teachers' Treasures.



### Treasures 4 Teachers

Located in Tempe, Arizona, Treasures 4 Teachers is a supply store serving local educators. Several ACE employees visited and served the organization by filling **240 bags of markers** and **over 3,600 pencils** into **200 teacher bags**. Additionally, the team sorted over **1,000 books** and assembled an office chair in preparation for a raffle.



“

Treasures 4 Teachers' partnership with ACE has meant greater mission fulfillment for our member teachers. ACE has helped infuse resources and encouragement into Arizona classrooms through volunteerism, monetary and in-kind support. A continued collaborative partnership with ACE will bridge the resource and opportunity gap for teachers and students well into a very bright future.



**Christopher Cordes**

Director of Development  
Treasures 4 Teachers

“

## Teachers' Treasures

Teachers' Treasures, located in Indianapolis, Indiana, serves local educators of students in need by providing them access to free school supplies. ACE volunteered at back-to-school events and in their stores throughout the year. Fifteen ACE employees volunteered at Teachers' Treasures' banner fundraising event, **2023 Donut Dash**, helping them raise **\$10,000**. An additional **\$10,000** was raised by ACE for the **Dream Big! Gala**, an event that **12 employees also attended**. ACE also participated in the **Gr8 Paper Push** and raised nearly **\$3,500**. Indiana fifth-grade teacher and Teachers' Treasures shopper, **Payton Hill**, was awarded a scholarship for an ACE master's program.

“

The scholarship feels like an unexpected and extremely valuable gift! I have been thinking about getting into special education for a really long time, and I'm so thankful that I was chosen to be able to pursue it at the master's level. My students mean so much to me, and I'm very grateful for the opportunity to learn and be a better teacher for them.



### Payton Hill

Scholarship Recipient *Teachers' Treasures*

The longer we work with ACE, the more this partnership is valued and appreciated. Their creative and visionary arm with which we work is always trying to help more educational professionals be their better selves. Their service mission is special as it removes the 'business' from the relationship. The entire ACE family is made up of earnest humans who just want to make life better for their students and education. Teachers' Treasures and all we serve are beyond fortunate to work with this hard-working organization.



### Margaret Sheehan

Executive Director  
*Teachers' Treasures*



1



2

1 ACE employees pose at the photobooth at 2023 Donut Dash.

2 Geordie Hyland, president and CEO, takes a selfie with all the teachers in attendance at the Dream Big! Gala.

## Academic Excellence Is Our Standard

What is the responsibility of higher education institutions to their students? The obvious answer is to provide them with an education, but how that happens varies from institution to institution. And that “how” has become increasingly important as prospective students become warier about the heavy price tag that higher education often comes with.

ACE has always been at the forefront of providing students with affordable, flexible and high-quality education and that reached new heights in 2023. We not only surpassed 10,000 active students, but we conferred a **record-breaking 5,323 degrees and certificates**. Our alumni network **grew to over 40,000**.

While ACE has been able to grow and serve more students, we are keenly aware that there are still thousands of working professionals who do not feel like continuing education is within their reach. Overwhelmingly, higher education is still prohibitively expensive and rising costs of living and inflation has only further exacerbated the problem.

ACE is challenging higher education to adapt its model by placing more emphasis on researching and tracking student return on investment (ROI). In 2023, we did this by [commissioning a study](#) to determine our economic impact. The study found that **for every \$1 our graduates invested in their education at ACE, they saw a return of \$19.20 in higher future earnings**. Their investment has an **annual internal rate of return of 120.7%**. (Compare this to the U.S. stock market’s 30-year average rate of return of 9.6%.) Higher education is only valuable when higher education institutions can prove their value. Transparently sharing with students their anticipated ROI is a way to do just that.

“

Our student ROI study validates ACE’s relentless focus on creating value for students. We are proud of our ability to combine exceptional academic quality and graduation rates along with affordable tuition. We have not raised our tuition since 2016, and 87% of our students pay cash as they progress and graduate without incurring debt.

It’s our pleasure to serve over 10,000 students with the education they deserve.



**Geordie Hyland**

President and CEO  
American College of Education

**\$1 → \$19.20**

For every dollar invested, ACE students gain \$19.20 in future earnings.

# 16

new programs  
launched

# #3

conferrer of Master's  
of Education nationally



student satisfaction



employer satisfaction

Of course, the biggest perceived value of continuing education is its ability to advance careers. When continuing education comes with a large amount of student debt, however, that correlation starts to become muddy. So, ACE is taking steps to reinvigorate that link, not just with our already low tuition, but through organizational partnerships and granting credit for prior learning.

ACE established **395 new partnerships** in 2023 with the goal of making our programs even more accessible and affordable to those organizations' employees and customers. Not only do our partnerships feature discounted tuition rates, but we work with professional development providers to map their training and courses to our educational programs.

By aligning our academic outcomes to their training or course objectives, **we create opportunities for people to receive academic credit for work they have already completed** – what we call credit for prior learning. This allows professionals to come into an ACE program with credits already under their belt, shortening their time to completion and reducing the amount they pay. In total, **we awarded credit for prior learning for 11,323 courses in 2023.**

Our responsibility to our students is to provide them with a great education, but how we do it is what is important. True academic excellence is only achieved when you intentionally prioritize meeting students where they are and providing a valuable educational experience as an institution.



American College of Education

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