

Certified



Corporation

2024 IMPACT REPORT

Providing Solutions, *Making a Difference*



AMERICAN
COLLEGE *of*
EDUCATION®

Table of Contents

- We Are Problem-Solvers 4**
- Stronger Teams, Greater Impact 5**
 - Growing and Enhancing Employee Experiences 5
 - Transforming Benefit Opportunities 6
 - Focusing on Health and Wellness 6
 - Living Out Values and Creating a Welcoming Culture 7
 - Sharpening Old and Developing New Skills 7
- Solutions for Communities Across the Nation 8**
 - Volunteering and Keeping Our Environment Strong..... 8
 - Serving Nonprofit Partners 9
- Solutions for Our Valued Partners 13**
 - Transforming Challenges Into Opportunities 13
- ACE Addresses National Challenges in Higher Education..... 14**
- Academic Solutions for Our Students 15**
 - Refining Our Approach to Support Student Needs 15

Each year, I'm excited to see how ACE's strong commitment to social impact increases as we continue to grow. Our status as a Certified B Corporation (B Corp) starts at the deepest level of our core as an organization, and it manifests in efforts ranging from fundraising for teachers to ensuring our printed products honor the environment.

No matter the scale, our team never stops finding ways to make our B Corp mission an embedded component of our operation, and 2024 only continued to showcase that.

ACE's primary business functions provide solutions and make a difference through enrolling, equipping and graduating students — largely debt-free. We were honored to **confer 5,729 degrees** in 2024 and celebrate **859 graduates in person, with 1,253 attending virtually**. To say we're proud is an understatement!

As we celebrate our alumni and the great things they bring to their communities and careers, I also reflect on the inspirational impact ACE employees make. We aren't afraid to roll up our sleeves and find solutions to widespread challenges. In 2024, we continued growing our partnerships to offer **accessible and affordable educational pathways and opportunities for school districts and hospitals to overcome teacher and nurse shortages**.

We had a fantastic year collaborating with other organizations and helping make a world-class education more accessible. In fact, we gave nearly **\$1.2 million in scholarships and grants**. We also gave **\$10,000** to ACE students in need through our TechForce scholarship fund.

ACE employees were generous with their time and finances as our workforce of nearly 650 dedicated and passionate individuals donated **nearly \$100,000 to nonprofits in 2024**. Additionally, we **surpassed our collective annual goal of civic hours by 140%** by volunteering approximately **4,755 hours**. Seeing our teams so committed to making a difference brings me great joy!

It's always great to reflect on an amazing year of impact and forecast how we'll continue working toward solutions that benefit all. May we be problem-solvers in more ways than we can imagine next year!



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

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

We Are *Problem-Solvers*

ACE leverages the power of business to serve a **triple bottom line** — people, planet and profit. We meet high social and environmental performance standards in our daily operations and transform profits into solutions. Specifically, in 2024, we set organization-wide goals **to increase revenue to then increase our social impact**.

ACE must recertify its B Corp standing every three years and achieve a minimum score of 80 points on the B Impact Assessment, verified by the B Lab. Our most recent certification, in 2022, concluded with a **score of 97**. The assessment evaluates operations, policies and practices to measure ACE's impact on our employees, community, environment and stakeholders.

Our commitment to using profit for good positions us as **problem-solvers**. We use innovation and ethical business practices to **demolish barriers**, most notably student debt, preventing students from accomplishing their career goals. We also support school districts, national organizations, hospital systems and more with **customized educational pathways** that develop and build human capital pipelines to increase economic impact.

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.

Stronger Teams, Greater Impact

Investing in our staff and faculty positions our workforce to make a greater impact internally and with our students and stakeholders. Our commitment to a positive and healthy work environment requires us to act — actively listen and then take action to refine and grow our employee experience continuously. Further, we adopt and embody solution-first mindsets that orient us to make a difference within our teams and beyond.

Growing and Enhancing Employee Experiences

Employee feedback is critical to developing a thriving work culture. In 2024, our team completed anonymous surveys conducted by Energage, and among the findings was evidence of the positive environment we strive for daily.

90%

of employees feel respected and supported

92%

of employees feel that their job is part of something meaningful

90%

of employees feel genuinely appreciated at ACE

92%

of employees feel ACE operates by strong values

92%

of employees feel included at ACE

90%

of employees feel that new ideas are encouraged at ACE

At the top of the year, Energage named ACE a **Top Workplaces USA winner** for the third consecutive year. We ended the year as a **2024 Top Workplaces Culture Excellence winner**, receiving all 12 **Top Workplaces Culture** badges for the second consecutive year and Culture Excellence awards in **Appreciation, Employee Well Being and Professional Development**.

(left to right) Geordie Hyland, Natalie Pelham and KK Byland attended the 2024 Top Workplaces USA celebration in New York City.



3,983

unused PTO hours converted,
amounting to over

\$125,000

towards student loan
payments, 529 savings
accounts, 401K accounts or a
donation to a cause.

33

employees enrolled in ACE
programs, saving nearly

\$100,000

on tuition.

16,847

miles logged in
Charity Miles raising

\$4,000

for The Nature Conservancy.

Transforming Benefit Opportunities

ACE honors and values employee contributions through meaningful benefits and opportunities that have a lasting positive impact. We were delighted to celebrate **72 internal promotions** in 2024.

Launched in late 2023, many employees selected items supporting various causes from Gifts for Good for their 2024 anniversary gifts. With incredible generosity, they met several needs including **462 children with a one-year supply of life-saving vitamins**, **415 children in the U.S. with meals**, **201 hours of care for rescue animals** and much more.

Our team also loves to pat one another on the back. ACE employees awarded **4,259 impressions** — virtual kudos — to colleagues in 2024. The most popular, “Great Job,” was awarded 765 times.

As part of one of ACE’s most unique employee benefits, employees converted **3,983 unused PTO hours** — amounting to a grand total of **over \$125,000** — toward student loan payments, 529 savings accounts, 401K accounts or a donation to a cause.

We also believe investing in our employees involves opening opportunities for them to invest in themselves. Using our tuition reduction benefit, **33 employees** enrolled in ACE programs, saving nearly **\$100,000** on tuition. We reimbursed nearly **\$28,000** to those enrolled at other institutions.

Focusing on Health and Wellness

In partnership with American Health and Wellness, ACE saw our highest employee participation in health and wellness activities in 2024 — **91 employees**, a **1,037.5% increase**. Further, **26 employees** completed monthly activities like ongoing health seminars and learning opportunities. **Twelve employees** participated in our first round of Prevent T2, a 16-week diabetes and cardiovascular disease prevention program developed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

ACE introduced a new benefit in 2024 in collaboration with **BetterHelp**. Employees, students and alumni can access the global online therapy platform free for one month and at a reduced cost for additional sessions. This opportunity, alongside our **ACE Mindfulness and Meditation** weekly meetings, encourages positive mental health for our teams.

Each year, ACE employees and their families are invited to participate in **Charity Miles**, an initiative that raises funds for a selected cause. In 2024, **140 ACE community members** logged **16,847 miles** and raised over **\$4,000 for The Nature Conservancy**.



A record number of ACE employees participated in various health and wellness activities.

Living Out Values and Creating a Welcoming Culture

Creating a welcoming culture is not something we just say at ACE, but a way of life. Throughout the year, we take intentional steps toward creating an inclusive environment for all. In 2024, our efforts primarily contributed to our **accreditation recertification**. Additionally, employees and students created a **collaborative booklet** of motivational and inspirational quotes related to cultivating a welcoming mindset. We also distributed a **celebratory newsletter** honoring various holiday and festival activities and highlighting unique traditions, gatherings and meals.

Sharpening Old and Developing New Skills

Our workforce has internal access to professional development and training with our dedicated Organizational Development and Training (ODT) team. Employees can select training based on individual or team areas to grow in.

In 2024, our ODT team saved the college **more than \$1.7 million** through course development, maintenance of existing courses and Quality Matters participation. They developed **45 stand-alone, custom training programs** throughout the year and collaborated with the Enrollment team to develop and launch **comprehensive training** for both the Enrollment and Field teams.

More than **375 employees** participated in seven engaging sessions about artificial intelligence during ACE's "Jump into July With AI" campaign, and over **2,066 digital training badges** were awarded to employees who participated in other trainings throughout the year.



Solutions for Communities *Across the Nation*

As a fully virtual organization, ACE has the unique opportunity to make a national, widespread impact as employees are located across the U.S. From making our environment a healthier place to fundraising for those in need, our employees solve problems through giving time, energy and donations.

Volunteering and Keeping Our Environment Strong

Serving our communities is part of ACE's core as a B Corp. Employees can join and lead three subcommittees of a larger B Corp committee each year: Community Subcommittee, Workers Subcommittee and Environment Subcommittee. The subcommittees spearheaded several impactful initiatives throughout the year including new professional development opportunities, resources that encourage environmental sustainability and communication that inspired the team to continue making a difference.

In August, several ACE employees gathered at Feeding Tampa Bay, **sorting 7,640 pounds of food and creating 6,366 meals** for the Tampa, Fla., community.

In September, we celebrated ACE's B Corp birthday (Sept. 7) with our Month of Impact campaign. Each week focused on a unique theme including contributing to the American Cancer Society, volunteering with a nonprofit, participating in an environmentally conscious activity and doing random acts of kindness.

ACE employees volunteered at Feeding Tampa Bay to support local efforts that alleviate food insecurity.



21,000

backpacks filled



Serving Nonprofit Partners

A significant component of ACE's B Corp identity is collaborating with nonprofit organizations to meet needs and provide solutions. Throughout the year, our employees volunteer for countless organizations within their communities, and sometimes, we get to serve in person together!

ACE partners with various nonprofit organizations, many of which support teachers of students in need. In 2024, we participated in several events and initiatives that gave back to the education sector. Here are some highlights of the meaningful and impactful opportunities we had to serve this year.

A GIFT FOR TEACHING (ORLANDO)

A large group of ACE employees gathered at the annual Great Big Backpack Build event where we **helped pack more than 21,000 backpacks** with core school supplies. Additionally, ACE awarded a local music educator, Madison Ickes, with a **master's degree scholarship**.

Juliet Krummick joined several ACE employees to fill backpacks with school supplies at the Great Big Backpack event.

“

This scholarship means the world to me. I have been interested in continuing my education for a couple of years, but the financing was a roadblock. Thanks to A Gift for Teaching, I am able to do what I love and further my education. I am so grateful for the partnership between ACE and AGFT.

➤ Madison Ickes

A Gift For Teaching Scholarship Recipient



A Gift
For Teaching



CRAYONS TO COMPUTERS (CINCINNATI)

ACE had the honor of sponsoring the Teacher Resource Center in April.

“

Teachers are unsung heroes, often working long hours for little pay, and in today's society, they face challenges beyond the classroom. Crayons to Computers exists to ensure that teachers can provide students in need with tools to excel in school. ACE is driven to serve those who serve and make a positive impact. Together, Crayons and ACE focus on the importance of teachers and celebrate them for the difference they make. Thank you, ACE, for supporting Crayons and teachers. We are grateful!



➤ Betsy Wilson

Crayons to Computers
Director of Development

.....



\$25k

in scholarships to
four educational
professionals



INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION (INDIANA)

ACE was pleased to partner with INAPEF to present full scholarships amounting to \$25,000 to four education professionals in Indiana.

“

Partnering with ACE has alleviated financial stress for aspiring and current educators seeking higher education. The impact that our collaborative scholarships have had is invaluable, and we look forward to continuing to support Indiana education in this way.

➤ Krista Baber

INAPEF Association Administrator

TEACHERS' TREASURES (INDIANAPOLIS)

Our employees were excited to participate in several annual initiatives held by our longest nonprofit partnership in 2024: Circle City Donut Dash, Dream Big! Gala and the Gr8 Paper Push. Between the three events, ACE collectively contributed more than \$50,000. Additionally, we presented a scholarship to Joshua Blevins as part of the Indianapolis Public Schools Newcomer Program.



ACE Chief Human Resources Officer KK Byland served as one of the honorary starters at the Circle City Donut Dash.



“

ACE continually shows up to demonstrate their support of teachers and our mission. We believe it takes a village to move things forward, and ACE is at the lead for us when it comes to making things happen. We are so proud of our friendship and partnership with the entire ACE team. They bring strategy, joy and enthusiasm to the work. It doesn't get better than that!



➤ Margaret Sheehan

Teachers' Treasures Executive Director



Treasures  Teachers

TREASURES 4 TEACHERS (PHOENIX)

We proudly sponsored their Teacher Appreciation Week campaign in 2024, and our employees visited the organization for a volunteer day over the summer.

ACE employees gathered in Phoenix to support local teachers with the core school supplies they need.

(right) Flora Reichanadter taught beginner embroidery classes at One Life to Love in Baja California as part of an art therapy program for women recovering from abusive relationships.

Below: Jocelyn Pride volunteered with Box of Balloons to donate party supplies and gifts to celebrate a child in need's birthday.



(right) Debra Cannon served as a safety judge for the 2024 Solar Car Challenge, an event where high school students build and race solar cars.



(right) DJ Streat collected and distributed food for the Cedar Hill Food Pantry and Graceland Community Church.



(above) Julia Moses dressed in a fun gingerbread person costume as books were read in classrooms for the holidays.

Solutions for Our Valued Partners

Each year, ACE continues to collaborate with partners in various sectors including higher education, K-12 education, healthcare, nursing and business. We were excited to expand our partnerships in 2024 by offering customized educational pathways that support employee development and address staff shortages. Our partnerships are a great opportunity to live out our B Corp mission and leverage business for good as we aim to make an economic and social impact through unique solutions.

Transforming Challenges Into Opportunities

ACE is continuously finding new and innovative ways to collaborate with different organizations. Oftentimes, we take training and/or academic programs offered by partners and transform them into seamlessly transferrable credits toward an ACE program — cutting program duration and cost. Some partnerships involve tuition reduction or other benefits. In 2024, we worked with our partners to provide a variety of solutions tailored to overcome their unique challenges.

→ First-Ever Healthcare Direct Bill Agreement:

We enhanced our existing partnership with Norman Regional Health System with our **first-ever direct bill agreement in healthcare**, uncomplicating the employee tuition reimbursement benefits they offer. Additionally, their employees — known as “healers” — have more opportunities to maximize on-the-job training and apply it seamlessly into an ACE program.



→ Concurrent Enrollment Opportunities:

Collaborating with community colleges provides the unique opportunity to create **concurrent enrollment opportunities**. We partnered with Dallas College and GateWay Community College to enable students to enroll and start an ACE program while still taking their community college courses. Students can also complete their associate degree program first and transfer it to ACE. Both partnerships support the healthcare employment landscape.

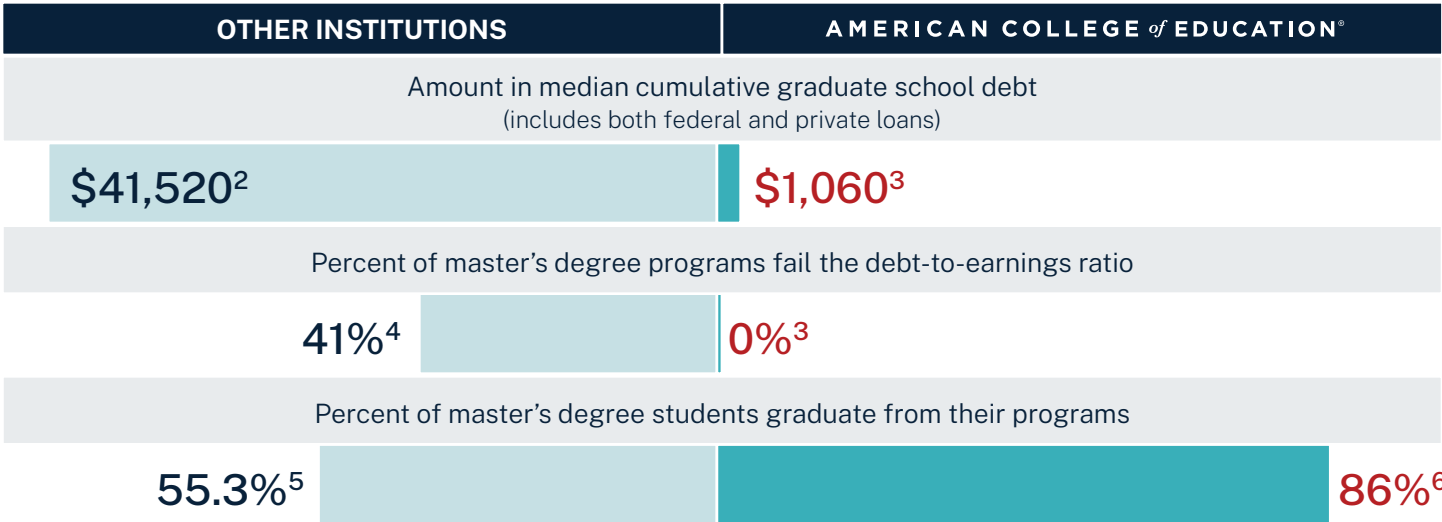
→ Career Advancement: Sometimes organizations and/or school districts need staff to gain specific skills. Our partnership with Distinctive Schools created a pathway for charter school teachers in Chicago to grow into licensed special education teachers by earning their Learning Behavior Specialist 1 (LBS1) endorsement.

ACE President and CEO Geordie Hyland signed an agreement with Dallas College at a commemorative ceremony in Dallas.

ACE Addresses National Challenges in Higher Education

Headlines across the United States proclaim the issues facing higher education — student debt and its dire implications, failed debt-to-earning ratios, graduation rates and unproven returns on investment.

ACE offers a data-proven educational approach that breaks the traditional higher education molds contributing to these out-of-control challenges. We look around and see students tabling their career goals due to unaffordable tuition costs, and that’s why our teams are committed to advocating for the affordable, quality education every student deserves. In fact, 86% of ACE students graduate without debt.¹



ACE graduates gathered in Indianapolis to celebrate commencement.

¹Source: Internal research completed in June 2024 ²Source: [Education Data Initiative](#) ³Source: Internal calculations completed in 2024 ⁴Source: [Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce](#) ⁵Source: [Mission: Graduate](#) ⁶Source: [Student Right to Know](#)

Academic Solutions *for Our Students*

ACE highly and deeply values our students and their “why” for seeking higher education. Whether it’s for a promotion, pay increase, career change or other goal, supporting them requires intentionality and care. In 2024, our academic experience continued to put students first as we took intentional steps toward ensuring a quality education that eliminates barriers that keep students from focusing solely on their studies.

After an 18-month effort, ACE **completed our affirmation of accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC)**. Reaccreditation is a rigorous process that includes creating a comprehensive assurance argument and hosting an onsite HLC peer review team. The purpose is to ensure educational institutions are meeting established standards of quality and effectiveness in education. Not only did we receive reaccreditation for a full 10 years, but HLC also commended us on our processes and student support.



Refining Our Approach to Support Student Needs

As an institution of higher learning, we take dedicated steps every year to maintain the world-class education we offer by interpreting student surveys and evaluating the educational landscape. In 2024, we made several refinements that supported student needs and solved challenges.

- ➔ **Student Commons Update:** ACE revamped and relaunched its internal student portal with significant improvements to user-friendliness, content and overall organization. This update ensured students have easy-to-access information and support resources.
- ➔ **Academic Learning Outcomes Update:** We updated our academic learning outcomes, establishing clear expectations and ensuring graduates are well-prepared to excel in their fields.
 - ▶ **Evidence-Based:** Assess and apply research from evidence-based sources to inform decision-making and problem-solving within a relevant field.
 - ▶ **Preparedness/Relevance:** Demonstrate readiness to serve and lead in a chosen profession by applying acquired knowledge and relevant communication and collaboration skills.
 - ▶ **Cultural Competence:** Exhibit cultural competence in diverse, inclusive environments through emotional intelligence, civic engagement, ethical reasoning and social responsibility.
 - ▶ **Innovation:** Apply current digital tools and skills for innovation and data-informed decision-making.
 - ▶ **Growth:** Create a growth mindset for continuous improvement of personal, professional and organizational development.



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