NACUBO Welcomes the 2017–18 Cohort of Fellows

The second cohort of NACUBO Fellows made its debut at the NACUBO 2017 Annual Meeting, in Minneapolis. These 16 individuals will participate in a one-year leadership development program, now in its second year.

Business Officer editors caught up with the Fellows to ask for a bit of background and learn about their expectations of their year in the program.
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R. SCOTT FREW, assistant vice president for finance and treasury management, Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H.

For me, having a trusted set of peers from such a diverse group of institutions is the most exciting part of the Fellows program. My fear is about being sure that I make time to take advantage of the program. It is always too easy to tackle the most urgent tasks that are sitting on our desks, while professional development takes a backseat.

SCOTT BITNER, associate vice president, budget and finance, University of Maryland, Baltimore

My colleagues are such an amazing group of individuals at a variety of institutions; they will be able to offer their unique campus perspectives and ideas to challenging issues. Over the next year I intend to take advantage of that, and also to strengthen my soft skills, which are not as dominant in the way I interact with faculty, staff, and students.

MARY ELLEN BORCHERS, assistant vice president, business and finance, Capital University, Columbus, Ohio

I am currently leading a team effort to deploy a cloud-based budget system and a long-range planning tool. The Fellows program is affording me the opportunity to visit other schools and gain insights on creative ways to engage stakeholders and construct a robust and adaptive model that can be used to inform decision making.

JONICA BURKE, director, enterprise resource planning and financial services, Shawnee State University, Portsmouth, Ohio

Shawnee State is exploring how to adapt the RCM budget model to a small campus. We want to establish appropriate incentives for creativity and growth, without introducing undue complexity. I believe the Fellows program will expose me to new strategies that will help guide this transition.

C. AARON LEMAY, senior associate controller, University of North Texas System, Denton

I am most excited about learning from the educators, my colleagues in the program, and the self-study required by the program. My biggest apprehension is balancing the program requirements with my existing job duties.

TERENCE FINLEY, assistant vice president of business services, Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas

Through my participation in this program, I hope to enhance my management, leadership, and communications skills by gaining an awareness into the best practices of a successful chief business officer.

DENNIS BUTLER, comptroller, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wis.

My institution recently acquired 50 acres of land, and a small team, which includes myself and the CBO, has been tasked with conducting economic development within the city of Prairie View, where our campus is located. Through this program, I look forward to extracting ideas, resources, contacts, and insightful do’s and don’ts from other fellows, and establishing relationships with a cadre of colleagues from around the higher education spectrum.

EILEEN GERENZ, associate vice president for finance and administration, Massachusetts Bay Community College, Wellesley, Mass.

Over the past three years, I have focused on improving internal processes and procedures for the business operations at my institution. I need to spend more time building a network, and learning from my colleagues to find innovative pathways to improve educational outcomes for the entire institution.

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Stephen Hietsch, associate vice president, auxiliary services and budget management, Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa.

I hope to broaden my knowledge of the higher education industry, as a whole, and improve my ability to work as a member of a team. And, I am very interested in developing my ability to engage effectively in “whole-brain” communications and interactions, which we learned about in Minneapolis.

Lisa Imbragulio, associate vice president, business and financial affairs, Samford University, Birmingham, Ala.

I have worked at Samford University for the past 15 years; before that, I practiced corporate and tax law. I am excited to interact with leaders from across higher education and to make lasting friendships with other members of the Fellows program. I also hope to strengthen my communication skills.

Jean Cibuzar, executive director, finance, Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C.

After starting my career in auditing and then moving to an accounting role at a venture capital firm, I moved toward business process redesign and financial system implementations. My client base ranged from technology companies to manufacturing to retail, to finally, higher education. Gallaudet University was my first exposure to the business side of higher education. I’m looking forward to further developing my understanding of the academy and am excited about this structured program with NACUBO.

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Sara Throndike, associate vice chancellor for finance and controller, University of North Carolina, Wilmington

I originally thought I would be an astronaut with an engineering degree. My career path took several unexpected turns, and I am glad it did. As a CPA, I feel comfortable supporting the financial aspects of the CBO role, but a CBO can have a great breadth and variety of areas that report to the position. I want to learn how I can best support those nonfinancial areas.

Jean Cibuzar, executive director, finance, Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C.

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David Moore, assistant vice president and chief budget officer, George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.

We have had a number of changes at our institution, from a redesign of our budget model to implementation of new systems. I feel that I will benefit from the networking that NACUBO and the Fellows program offers—to hear from other leaders as they have led change at their institutions.

Jean Cibuzar, executive director, finance, Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C.

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Matthew Skinner, associate vice president for finance, Washington State University, Pullman

As a consultant at a Big Four firm, I was attracted to the unique education and research mission of my higher education clients. Now I enjoy the opportunity and challenge of supporting my institution’s mission with effective planning, strategy, and business practices and services. On my reading list: The Five Dysfunctions of a Team; What Is Six Sigma?: and Make Your Bed: Little Things That Can Change Your Life ... And Maybe the World.

Linda Thornton, Comptroller, Carleton College, Northfield, Minn.

I have been a parent since I was 17 years old. Education was my personal path out of what could have been a lifetime of poverty. Work ethic and grit will take you places; education will take you to the right places. As a participant in the NACUBO Fellows Program, I am most excited about exploring more deeply the critical issues impacting higher education and imagining the solutions we can create together.