



*“Building a community of educators helping people achieve education and workplace success.”*

This is the mission statement of the ACT State Organizations, which have been crucial to ACT’s growth as a provider of solutions that promote education and workforce readiness for individuals around the world. ACT’s management and staff have relied heavily on the network for advice both for ensuring that ACT’s programs and services remain relevant to the needs of students, schools, and colleges, and for designing new services responsive to the ever-changing challenges faced by those charged with preparing the nation’s people for education and workplace success.

The ACT State Organizations, consisting primarily of individuals in secondary and postsecondary institutions, have been in existence since ACT was founded in 1959. The network is widely credited with providing an effective communication channel for ensuring the relevance of ACT’s services.

### **Building a Network**

The State Organizations were at the heart of ACT’s initial organizational structure. In 1959, ACT founders E.F. Lindquist and Ted McCarrel began organizing their professional colleagues—full-time employees of colleges and universities—into a network that would lay the foundation for the State Organizations.

The 16 states that joined in 1959 were Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. By the end of the school year, they were joined by Alaska, Idaho, and North Dakota.

The first ACT state coordinators were paid advisors who had direct involvement with ACT’s organization and development. Among their duties were communicating with high schools and colleges in their states; distributing materials such as announcements, publicity pieces, and registration forms to secondary and postsecondary institutions in their states; securing test facilities; handling registration forms; collecting fees; and forwarding reports to high schools and colleges. They also organized state advisory committees that eventually evolved into the State Organizations.

Upon ACT’s founding, McCarrel appointed regional directors to help State Organizations promote the ACT® test. By the time the first ACT test administration occurred in November 1959, the company had successfully recruited colleges and universities across the country to use ACT scores for college admissions.

In 1961, state coordinators became unpaid volunteers, serving as the governing body of and providing guidance to the organization. In subsequent years, steering committees were created. The role of the state coordinator evolved into that of state representative, a position that was either elected or appointed. When ACT established a 15-member Board of Trustees in 1965, state representatives filled eight of the seats,

giving State Organizations representation on the board. Also, new guidelines were created to determine how states could participate in the State Organization network.

### **Broadening the Scope**

In July 2003, a task force was established to redefine the role of the State Organizations following changes to ACT’s governing structure. Prior to that time, many of the State Organizations worked primarily with postsecondary institutions. While ACT’s college admissions and placement exam continued to gain in popularity, ACT had expanded its scope to incorporate new audiences, including secondary educators, workforce professionals, and government administrators at the state and federal levels. As a result, ACT needed to broaden the composition and the role of its State Organizations. In 2004, the ACT Board of Directors adopted the recommendations of the task force. They included:

- Adopting a common statement of purpose for the State Organizations
- Developing and implementing an annual plan of work based on strategic objectives
- Adopting a set of principles addressing the organizational structure and membership of the State Organizations
- Updating the role of the state representative to emphasize the position’s leadership responsibilities
- Designing and implementing a State Organization leadership development program

### **State Organizations Today**

As of ACT’s 50th anniversary in 2009, all 50 states are represented through the 44 ACT state and regional organizations across the country. These organizations have more than 8,000 members, and nearly 6,000 individuals attend the annual conferences. Generally, ACT State Organizations are led by a Council and an Executive Committee consisting of a State Representative, Chairperson, Chair-Elect, Past Chair, and Secretary.

Today, members of State Organizations provide advice and support to ACT. Their duties include:

- Serving as a communication link between educational institutions and agencies and ACT
- Coordinating and facilitating statewide professional development activities related to ACT’s mission
- Providing feedback on the utility and effectiveness of ACT programs and services
- Assisting ACT regional staff in identifying state service needs
- Providing input and advice on future ACT programs and services
- Identifying exemplary applications of ACT programs and services

# ACT STATE ORGANIZATIONS

## MISSION

Building a community of educators helping people achieve education and workforce success

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

ACT state organizations support and promote informed decision making by:

- Individuals engaged in education and career planning, preparation for further education and work, and lifelong learning
- Parties who are making or influencing decisions by those individuals

## The Alabama ACT State Organization

Alabama's ACT Advisory Committee was established in 1959, the year of ACT's founding. Its membership represented public and private institutions, the state Department of Education, and secondary schools. William Adams of the University of Alabama was the first ACT state coordinator, and he later became an ACT regional director.

Today, the Alabama ACT State Organization sponsors an annual forum with more than 200 participants from across the state and has a membership of nearly 300 secondary and postsecondary educators and administrators. Alabama is an ACT state with 77% of high school graduates taking the ACT. Additionally, Alabama has statewide use of COMPASS® as its placement exam for two-year colleges and WorkKeys® as its work readiness assessment.

## Past Alabama ACT State Representatives

1959–1966	William Adams, Dean of Admissions, University of Alabama
1967–1991	J. Ernest Mickler, Professor of Behavioral Studies, College of Education, University of Alabama
1991–1997	Roy Smith, Registrar and Director of Admissions, Records, and Testing, University of Alabama
1997–2001	Don Belcher, Assistant Vice President and Director of Admissions, University of Alabama–Huntsville
2001–2004	Lisa Harris, Assistant Vice President, Academic Affairs, University of Alabama
2004–2009	Rebecca Mims, Director of Secondary Guidance and Testing, Tuscaloosa County School System

State Representatives are elected by the members of the State Organization to serve a term of three years, serving no more than three full consecutive terms.

State Representatives' duties and responsibilities include:

- Serving as a voting member of the Executive Committee and the Council
- Representing the views and interests of members of the State Organization
- Facilitating communications between ACT staff in its regional and national office and the members of the State Organization
- Reporting to the members of the State Organization on significant developments regarding ACT programs and services



## Alabama Colleges and Universities That Have Accepted the ACT Since 1959

Athens State University  
Auburn University  
Bevill State Community College  
Birmingham–Southern College  
Faulkner University  
Judson College  
Marion Military Institute  
Samford University

Snead State Community College  
Southeastern Bible College  
Southern Union State Community College  
Spring Hill College  
The University of Alabama  
Troy University  
University of Montevallo

### Current Alabama ACT State Organization Council\*

*ACT State Representative*

Rebecca Mims  
Director of Secondary Guidance and  
Testing  
Tuscaloosa County School System

*Chairperson*

Margaret Smith  
Education Specialist, Guidance and  
Technology  
Alabama Department of  
Education–Career/Technical  
Education

*Chair-Elect*

Sheryl Smith  
Counselor  
Wrights Mill Road Elementary School

*Past Chair*

DeeDee Barnes Bruns  
Associate Vice President for Enrollment  
Management  
University of Alabama at Birmingham

*Secretary*

Tom Carter  
Director of Admissions and Recruitment  
Northwest–Shoals Community College

*ACT Liaison*

Jacque Twiggs  
Director, Elementary/Secondary Services  
ACT Southeast Region

Juan Alexander  
Director of Admissions  
Alabama A&M University

Richard Barth  
Associate Vice President for Enrollment  
Services  
University of Alabama in Huntsville

Steve Benson  
Principal  
Tuscaloosa County High School

Elva Bradley  
Director, Center for Teaching and  
Learning  
The University of Alabama

Connie W. Coleman  
Counselor  
Hillcrest High School

John Fletcher  
Executive Director of Enrollment  
Services  
Auburn University

Randy Fuller  
Superintendent  
Shelby County School System

Lynn Gurganus  
Director of Admissions  
University of Montevallo

Martha Key  
Assessment Director  
Shelton State Community College

Edrice D. Leftwich  
Registrar  
Tuskegee University

Christopher A. Lynch  
Director, New Student Recruitment  
University of South Alabama

Joseph Miller  
Director of Admissions  
Huntingdon College

Martha Mitchell  
Director of Admissions  
Jacksonville State University

Sheri S. Salmon  
Dean of Enrollment Management  
Birmingham–Southern College

Diane Sherman  
Director of Research Services  
Alabama Commission on Higher  
Education

Brenda Truelove  
Director  
Tuscaloosa Career Link

Gloria Turner  
Director of Student Assessment and  
Accountability  
Alabama State Department of Education

Sue J. Wilson  
Dean of Enrollment Management and  
Registrar  
University of North Alabama

\* As of May 2009

