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## **Mission Statement**

The ACE Women's Network-Ohio is a network of women administrators, faculty, and staff from colleges and universities across the state that is dedicated to the professional advancement of women. Through representatives, conferences, workshops, and other resources, we are committed to improving the status of women on our campuses and throughout higher education. In doing so, we support the mission of the Inclusive Excellence Group and the American Council on Education.

## **A Brief History and Description of the ACE Women's Network Ohio (ACE WNO)**

The history of the ACE Women's Network Ohio (ACE WNO) begins with the creation of the ACE National Identification Program (ACE NIP) in 1977. With a grant from the Carnegie Foundation that year, the American Council on Education's Office of Women in Higher Education started the ACE National Identification Program, which is now known as the ACE Women's Network. Its purpose was, and still is, to address the needs of women and issues related to women's leadership in higher education.

Several states created the first state ACE National Identification Programs that same year and Ohio followed a year later in 1978. Within the next five years, the ACE National Identification Program became a state-based national program. The initial Carnegie grant proposed creating state planning committees headed by state coordinators and supported by institutional representatives and presidential sponsors. The state networks are linked to one another through their affiliation with the ACE Women's Network and the Women's Network Executive Council, which is composed of several women who serve as liaisons between the national network and the states.

Ohio was one of the earliest states with an active network. Dr. Kathy Stafford, who served as vice president at Kent State University, was instrumental in organizing the ACE National Identification Program in Ohio. Sometime in the late '80s or early '90s, the Ohio network became dormant, but not for long. In 1995 Nancy Scott at Kent State expressed interest in reorganizing a network in Ohio. Dr. Carol Cartwright, president of Kent State at the time, wrote to all of the college and university presidents in the state, asking them to appoint an institutional representative for a meeting. From that initial meeting on the Kent campus in 1998, the Ohio network was reorganized and began planning state conferences that have since been held at several campuses across the state. The first state conference was held in 1999; after a two-year gap, annual conferences resumed in 2002, and the Ohio network has hosted conferences most years since then (only missing 2006 and 2011).

Membership in the ACE Women's Network Ohio (ACE WNO) is institutional. That is, all Ohio colleges and universities that are accredited by the Higher Learning Commission are members of the ACE Women's Network Ohio. The ACE WNO does not provide individual memberships. By virtue of being employed at an ACE WNO member institution, individuals are automatically part of the ACE WNO. Each member institution is represented by an institutional representative (IR), who is appointed by that institution's president. In addition to the state conferences, the ACE WNO has sponsored periodic workshops for IRs.

The ACE WNO's primary mission is two-fold: (1) to promote the advancement of women into senior administrative positions in higher education and (2) to encourage and support the professional development of all women. This mission is accomplished through advocacy, networking, and educational programming.

The ACE WNO is led by an Executive Board consisting of officers and members-at-large. Standing committees are formed for the purpose of organizing the Executive Board's work. The Executive Board is guided by the values of diversity, inclusion, and leadership, believing them to be integral to the full accomplishment of the ACE WNO's purpose. The mission and values guide the Board's work and inform the Board's two-year action plans.