



**Minutes of the September 15, 2026 Joint Meeting
Oakton College Board of Trustees and the
Educational Foundation Board of Directors**

A joint meeting of the Board of Trustees of Oakton College and the Educational Foundation Board of Directors was held on September 15, 2026 in Room 1506 at 1600 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, Illinois, 60016.

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Bashiri-Remetio called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. Trustee Yanow called the roll:

Trustee Theresa Bashiri-Remetio	Chair	Present
Trustee William Stafford	Vice Chair	Present
Trustee Wendy Yanow	Secretary	Present
Trustee Martha Burns		Present
Trustee Micah Eimer		<i>Absent for roll call</i>
Trustee Benjamin Salzberg		Present
Trustee Marie Lynn Toussaint		Present

Mr. Scott Hurwitz conducted a roll call of the Foundation Board: Shane Carlin, Carl Costanza, Katie Hunt, Scott Hurwitz, Linda Korbel, Barry Nelson, Dayani Pieri, James Radermacher, August Schaefer, Brian Tanenbaum, Karen Tollenaar Demorest, and Cindy Veremis.

Also present in Room 1506:

Leadership: Dr. Joianne Smith, President; Dr. Kelly Iwanaga Becker, Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness; Johanna Fine, Chief Human Resources Officer; Dr. Bernard Little, Vice President for Student Affairs; Dr. Ileo Lott, Vice President for Academic Affairs; Michele Roberts, Vice President for Administrative Affairs; and Katherine Sawyer, Chief Advancement Officer,

Administrators: Dr. Andrea Lehmacher, Chief Marketing Officer; and Jessi Moon, Foundation Associate Executive Director.

Staff: Megan Brokop, Peter Carlson, Jane Griffin, M. Hummel, Kelsey Kapolnek, Jim Vilson, Beatriz Sparks, and Lindsay Ygiarto.

Educational Foundation Strategic Plan (2026–2029)

Core Goals: Advocate for Impact (elevate Oakton's story), Cultivate Relationships (increase investment), and Lead with Excellence (build trust).

Investment Areas: Student scholarships, holistic support services, experiential opportunities, and programmatic investments.

Campaign Objectives & Priorities

Campaign Focus: Focuses priorities around healthcare workforce shortages, mobilizes donors/partners, and accelerates major gifts.

Program Excellence: Capital and equipment, faculty investment, and supporting new/emerging programs.

Student Success: Direct scholarships, wrap-around support (e.g., transportation, emergency assistance), and help with specific program expenses (books, uniforms, clinical supplies).

Student Demographics & Health Careers Data

Demographics (651 Enrolled): Average age of 31, 75% female, 64% students of color, 60% full-time, and 54% utilizing financial assistance.

Program Distribution: Nursing & BNAT/CNA make up 45% of enrollment, followed by Sterile Processing (6%), Physical Therapy Assistant (5%), Cardiac Sonography (5%), Radiography (5%), and Medical Coding & Billing (5%).

Regional Workforce Demand: Highest projected job growth includes Physical Therapy Assistants (+20%; median \$67k/yr) and Health Information Techs (+13%; median \$66k/yr), while Registered Nurses represent the highest total openings (9,094 openings; median \$97k/yr).

Barriers to Completion & Support Needs

Academic & Life Pressures: Students face intensive full-time course loads, mandatory clinical rotation commutes, costly equipment/licensure fees, caregiving roles, and working full-time due to financial aid limits or past degree completion.

Campaign Status & Key Roles

Seed Commitments: \$750,000 in seed commitments already secured.

Partnership Roles: The Foundation secures resources and manages fundraising; the College provides impact data, student stories, and program excellence; together they align messaging and build community visibility.

College Trustees Updates

- FY27 Budget: Approved a balanced budget in June with no tuition increase. It funds strategic operational infrastructure (data quality reporting, Payroll, and Enrollment process improvements) and institutionalizes health careers staff positions previously funded by the discontinued Illinois PATH grant.
- Facilities & Construction: Entering the final year of the 5-year Facilities Master Plan and approving a consultant for the next plan. Upcoming projects include the Welcome Center and Campus store (starting late this month) and the TenHoeve Center/wing renovation (completing December 2027).
- ACCT Annual Meeting (Oct. 22–26, Chicago): The Des Plaines Campus will host a pre-conference site visit featuring the Lee Center, Cannabis Cultivation Lab, and Learning Commons. President Smith, Trustee Eimer, and Gus Granchalek (Skokie Hospital) will present on healthcare workforce partnerships on Oct. 22.
- Accreditation: Preparing for the Higher Learning Commission's 10-year reaffirmation site visit, with teams currently compiling evidence for the assurance argument.
- Board Elections: Two board seats (Trustees Stafford and Salzberg) are up in the April Consolidated Election. Candidate packets are available in the President's Office, with filing open from Nov. 16–23.

Educational Foundation Updates

- Financial Performance: Reached over \$26M in total assets in FY26, driven by \$1.7M in contributions and a 15% net investment return.
- Board Growth: Expanded to 25 voting members, 4 ex-officio/liaisons, and 1 Director Emeritus.
- Recent Initiatives: Introduced events to deepen donor engagement, including the Workforce Funders Summit, President's Breakfast, and Investors Breakfast.

- Upcoming Fall Events:
 - *Donor Appreciation Brunch*: Saturday, Nov. 7 (10:00 AM–12:00 PM) at the Skokie Doubletree.
 - *Empty Bowls*: Saturday, Dec. 5 (10:30 a.m. –12 p.m.), selling student-made ceramic bowls to benefit the Caring Closet and local district food pantries.

Adjournment

Chair Bashiri-Remetio asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Salzberg made the motion, which was seconded by Trustee Yanow. A voice vote was called and the meeting was adjourned at 5:01 p.m.



Theresa Bashiri-Remetio, Board Chair



Wendy B. Yanow, Board Secretary

Minutes recorded by:
Beatriz Sparks
9/2026