



# THE CURRENT

KACRAO'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

August 2025



## WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A Message from the President  
Conference Schedule at a Glance  
Conference Guest Speakers  
Conference Service Project New to KACRAO  
Upcoming in 2025  
KACRAO Shout Out

## *A Message from the President*

Hello KACRAO!

We are less than 2 months away from the 2025 KACRAO Annual Conference, hosted in Lawrence, Ks! This is a great opportunity to engage in professional development, learn and share "Best Practices," and network with other professionals.

During Thursday's business meeting we will review and vote on the proposed 2026 membership dues, budget and amendments to the KACRAO Constitution (see Article IV, Section 5).

Please visit the KACRAO site to preview the 2025-2026 Slate of Officers and log in to the Member Center to review the following information before conference:

- 2026 KACRAO Institutional Membership Dues
- 2026 Proposed Amended Constitution
- 2026 Proposed Budget

Reminders:

- Register for the Annual Conference before September 8th for early bird pricing.
- Lodging and session information can be found on the KACRAO Conference page.
- Download the KACRAO Events app. Available in the Apple Store or Google Play

I look forward to seeing you in Lawrence!

Brandi Brenner  
2025 KACRAO President

# ANNUAL CONFERENCE PREVIEW

**September 24-26th, 2025**  
**Double Tree By Hilton,**  
**Lawrence KS**



## Schedule At-a-Glance

### Wednesday, September 24, 2025

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Registration & Info Booth Open  
9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Pre-Conference Session: "Enduring: The Power and Practice of Purposeful Leadership" with Zach Mercurio.  
1:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m. Opening Session - Welcome & Business Meeting  
1:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m. Keynote Address - Zach Mercurio  
2:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Interest Sessions, Corporate Partner Fair and Breaks  
6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Dinner and Entertainment hosted at Venue 1235 - shuttles provided

### Thursday, September 25, 2025

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Registration & Info Booth Open  
8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Interest Sessions, Corporate Partner Fair, Town Halls, Breaks  
11:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. Lunch / Business Meeting  
1:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Interest Sessions, Corporate Partner Fair, Breaks  
4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Past President Reception  
6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Dinner & Entertainment Out in Downtown Lawrence on Massachusetts St. - shuttles provided. \*Note - meal not provided by the conference. Guides will lead groups to various restaurants.

### Friday, September 26, 2025

8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Registration & Info Booth  
8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Round Tables, Interest Sessions and Breaks  
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Closing Speaker - Dr. Cameron Piercy  
11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Closing Business Meeting

# ANNUAL CONFERENCE PREVIEW

## Guest Speakers

---

### Keynote: Zach Mercurio

Zach Mercurio is an author, researcher, and leadership development facilitator specializing in purposeful leadership, mattering, and meaningful work. He advises leaders in organizations worldwide on practices for building cultures that promote well-being, motivation, and performance.

Zach holds a Ph.D. in organizational learning, performance, and change and serves as one of Simon Sinek's Optimist Instructors, teaching a top-rated course on creating mattering at work. His new book is *The Power of Mattering: How Leaders Can Create a Culture of Significance*. His previous book is *The Invisible Leader: Transform Your Life, Work, and Organization with The Power of Authentic Purpose*.

He's been featured in *The Harvard Business Review*, *Forbes*, *Psychology Today*, *The Denver Post*, and on *ABCNews*.



### Closing Speaker: Cameron W. Piercy

Cameron W. Piercy (PhD, University of Oklahoma) is an Associate Professor of Relationships and Digital Media. He is the founding director of the Human-Machine Communication Lab. He researches dynamic socio-technical networks facilitated by new media, especially in organizational contexts. His dissertation, "Strength of weak ties and the modern job search," won the NCA Human Communication Technology Division outstanding dissertation award. His research is published in communication, technology, organization science, and psychology journals including: *Communication Research*, *New Media & Society*, *Computers in Human Behavior*, *International Journal of Business Communication*, and *Mobile Media & Communication*.

Dr. Piercy teaches undergraduate and graduate classes focused on teams and groups, human-machine communication, computer-mediated communication, organizational communication, and social network analysis.



### AACRAO Rep: Chris Huang

Chris Huang - AACRAO Vice President for Information Technology  
Chris serves as the Vice President for Academic Systems and Completion Strategy at Ivy Tech Community College - Systems Office. Chris' experience in higher education began as an admissions counselor at his alma mater, Calvin University (nee College). Most of his career has been as a registrar at small and mid-size, private and public colleges and universities. Prior to joining Ivy Tech, Chris was the Associate Chancellor and Registrar at Purdue University Fort Wayne.

Chris' AACRAO involvement includes being a past chair of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Caucus, past chair of the State and Regional Relations Committee, and as past vice-chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee. Chris lives in Northwest Indiana (considered part of Chicagoland) with his wife, Carla, and has two children, Alex who is studying accounting at Purdue University, and Morgan, who is in high school.



# ANNUAL CONFERENCE PREVIEW

## Service Project: Ballard Center Donation Drive



KACRAO's annual conference service project for 2025 will support the Ballard Center, a 501(c) non-profit organization that partners with individuals and families to achieve stability through early childhood education and needs-based services in Lawrence and Douglas County.

All conference participants are encouraged to bring donation items, which will be collected at the conference registration area and delivered to the Ballard Center at the conclusion of the conference on Friday.

Nonperishables, diapers, and miscellaneous hygiene products are in high demand.

All conference attendees who contribute a donation will receive a raffle ticket for a prize to be raffled at the conference closing session on Friday.

### DONATION WISH LIST

#### Baby Needs

- Formula
- Baby food, jars or tubs
- Baby cereal
- Go-Go Squeeze pouches

#### Hygiene Products

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Body Wash
- Triple-blade razors
- Shaving cream
- Toothpaste

#### Snacks

- Granola bars
- Salsa
- Corn chips
- Peanut butter crackers
- Cheese crackers
- Nut mixes
- Trail mixes
- Crackers, all varieties

#### Proteins

- Canned chicken
- Canned beef
- Canned tuna, salmon
- Beef stew
- Chicken and dumplings
- Chili beans with meat
- Chili beans, vegetarian
- Peanut butter, smooth
- Peanut butter, chunky
- Shelf-stable milk, qts.
- Shelf-stable milk, pts.

#### Fruits and Vegetables

- Applesauce
- Canned peaches, pears
- Pineapple, chunks and slices
- Mandarin orange sections
- Fruit cocktail
- Raisins, dried apricots
- Pumpkin
- Vegetable combos
- Canned potatoes
- Canned tomatoes
- Tomato sauce, paste

#### Grains

- Spaghetti, whole grain spaghetti
- Boxed pasta, all types
- Packaged noodles
- Potato flakes
- Brown and white rice
- Rice & noodle seasoned
- Dinner mixes (Rice-a-Roni, Hamburger Helper, e.g.)
- Canned ravioli, Spaghettios

#### Condiments

- Ketchup, relish
- Mustard, mayo
- Salt and pepper
- Salad dressings
- Gravy, gravy mix
- Jelly and jam
- Seasoning mixes (chili, sloppy joe mix, e.g.)

New to KACRAO or the  
Admissions/Registration office?

# What can **WE** do to support → **YOU** ← better?

The Executive Council is committed to helping new professionals feel welcomed and supported as they begin their journey in college admissions and registrar offices.

While we currently host a First-Time Attendee session at our annual conference, we're exploring additional ways to enhance the experience for newcomers.

Ideas in the works include reintroducing a mentor/mentee program and using colored tags on nametags at conference for easy recognition.

The Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) has been working to develop fun and engaging ways to connect first-time attendees with seasoned members at conference this year.

However, we recognize that support for new professionals shouldn't end when the conference does. Currently, there's a noticeable gap in how we engage and support new members post-conference—and we want to change that.

What ongoing resources, connections, or programs would be most helpful to you or your office? We'd love to hear your ideas. What kind of support would you prefer from KACRAO throughout the year?



# Upcoming in 2025

## 2025 CPC REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

Log in to [www.KACRAO.org](http://www.KACRAO.org) to access the CPC Members Only section and click the 2025 Registration link.

**Deadline to register is  
Friday, August 29th!**

For questions, contact  
**Amy Morris**  
[collegeplanningconference@kacrao.org](mailto:collegeplanningconference@kacrao.org)

## THE CURRENT

KACRAO'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Sept 12th

## Executive Council

September 23rd

## 2025-2026 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

### Slate of Officers

President Elect  
Kyle Stacken  
Fort Hays State University

VP for Association Services  
Melissa Conley  
Wichita State University

Secretary  
Kendra Grizzle  
Sterling College

Admissions Advocate-at-Large  
Devan Flegler  
Emporia State University

Registrar Advocate-at-Large  
Brette Hankin  
Colby Community College

# #KACRAO ShoutOuts

Have something going on at your institution you would like to share? Maybe a wellness tip or advice you think your fellow KACRAO members might benefit from? Please share it with us by emailing [KACRAO@kacrao.org](mailto:KACRAO@kacrao.org) and we will share it in the next issue!



Follow us on Facebook  
[@KACRAO.KS](https://www.facebook.com/KACRAO.KS)



Check out our website  
[www.KACRAO.org](http://www.KACRAO.org)



Subscribe to our YouTube Page  
[@KACRAO](https://www.youtube.com/KACRAO)



Follow us on LinkedIn  
[www.linkedin.com/company/KACRAO](https://www.linkedin.com/company/KACRAO)