

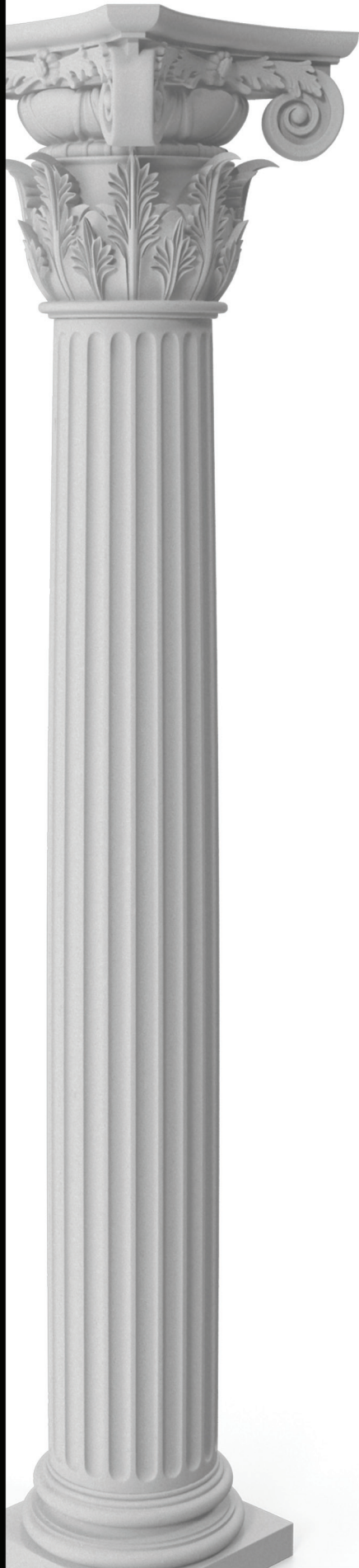
**COWLEY COLLEGE**

# PILLARS

# OF SUCCESS

Strategic Plan 2026 - 2029





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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As Cowley College enters a new strategic planning cycle, I am pleased to share the 2026–2029 Strategic Plan, which focuses on fostering prosperity for the College, our students, and the communities we serve. This plan was developed during a year of thoughtful reflection and collaboration, with input from a wide range of stakeholders, including community members, employees, students, and the Board of Trustees through surveys and goal-setting sessions.

Designed to be forward-looking, the plan incorporates key insights from the Higher Learning Commission's Trends in Higher Education and is organized around three core pillars: **Accessible, Successful, and Invested.**

- **Pillar One: Accessible** emphasizes providing equitable, affordable, and flexible learning opportunities for all.
- **Pillar Two: Successful** focuses on student achievement, academic excellence, and career readiness.
- **Pillar Three: Invested** outlines initiatives that strengthen relationships and support investment in faculty, staff, and the broader community.

Grounded in the College's mission, this strategic framework offers both guidance and flexibility. It is a living document designed to support our mission, vision, and values while advancing student success.

As a community college, our success is deeply tied to the engagement and support of our community. This plan further reinforces Cowley College's role as a key driver of workforce and economic development in South Central Kansas.

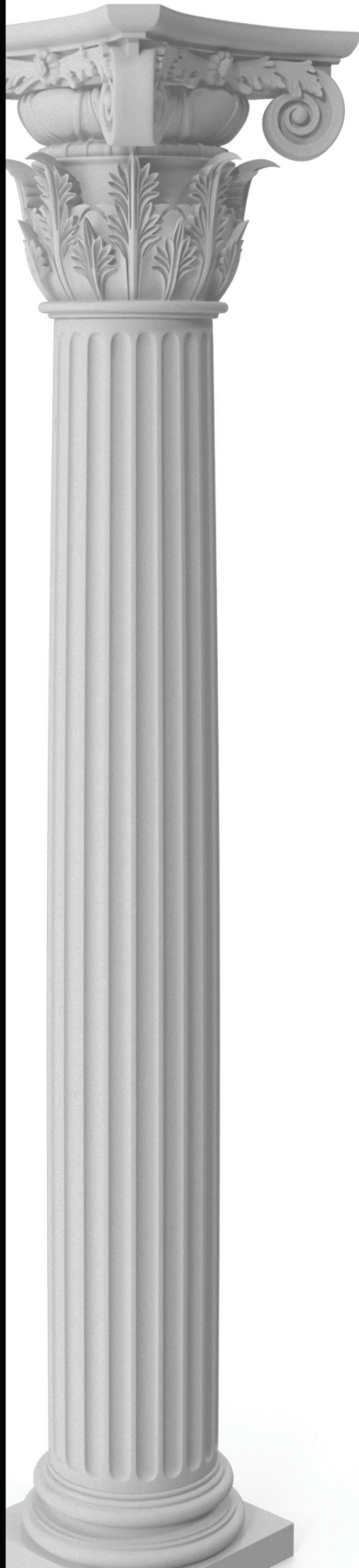
I invite you to join us in achieving the goals of this Strategic Plan through your continued support and partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Schoon". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Michelle Schoon  
President





# MISSION

## VISION | VALUES

### STRATEGIC THEME

#### Mission Statement

Cowley College is committed to providing opportunities for learning excellence, personal achievement, and community engagement.

#### Vision Statement

Champion the relevance of two-year colleges in higher education through holistic learning and workforce development opportunities.

#### Core Values

Cowley College is dedicated to a continuing pursuit of excellence by embracing our Core Values, the fundamental principles that guide our actions:

##### People

- We recognize people as a vital asset to the success of the College and its students.
- We provide a positive learning environment in which we embrace teamwork and growth.
- We create a supportive environment that prioritizes the individual strengths of students.

##### Integrity

- We commit to a fair learning environment where academic, personal, and professional standards reflect honesty and integrity.
- We hold ourselves to compliance with high standards in conduct.
- We affirm a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, and respect.

##### Accountability

- We provide a high-quality education while empowering students to take an active role in their success and advocate for their future.
- Our employees are reliable, dedicated to the mission, and focused on delivering excellence.
- We are accountable to the community to educate students who make positive contributions to society.

##### Leadership

- We provide impactful opportunities and resources to better serve the current and future needs of our communities.
- We provide a positive atmosphere that fosters personal, educational, and professional growth.
- We empower students and employees to be innovative, creative, and visionary.

#### Strategic Theme

With integrity and passion, Cowley College advances its mission and vision by supporting the attainment and demonstration of life skills in the areas of critical thinking and problem solving, communications, citizenship, computation, and technology.

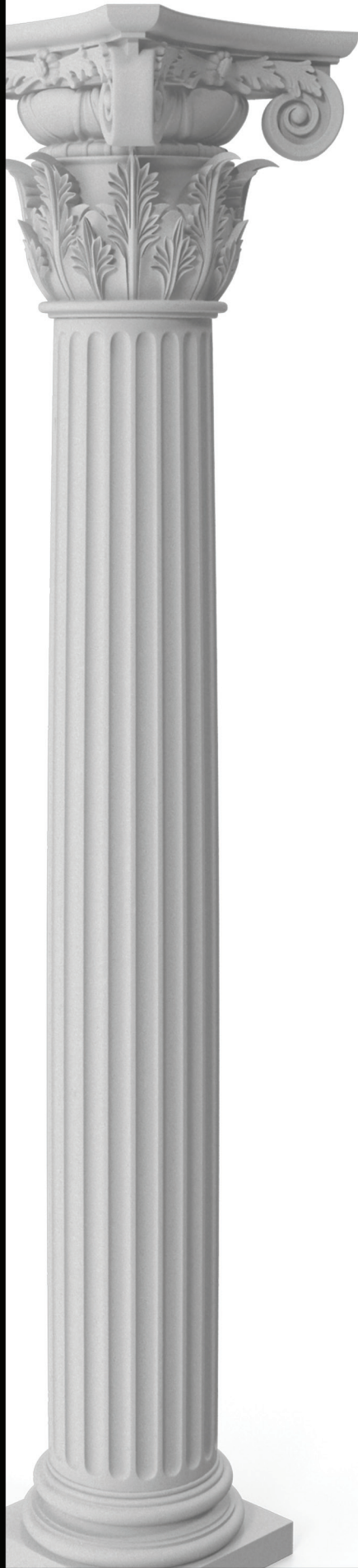


# PILLARS OF SUCCESS

Cowley College pursues strategic planning with a focus on continuous improvement. Our annually reviewed Mission, Vision, Core Values, & Strategic Theme guide the planning process which includes: an environmental scan, campus wide Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, prioritizing trends in higher education, and identification of strategic issues, institutional priorities, and measurable goals. The strategic plan is approved by the Cowley College Board of Trustees each spring.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the President, and the Administrative Council identified themes from the environmental scan and SWOT analysis allowing for the development of three strategic planning “pillars” to form the foundation for setting, tracking, and obtaining goals.





# PILLAR ONE

## ACCESSIBLE

**Provide equitable, affordable, and flexible learning opportunities for all**

- **Expand affordability & access to aid**
  - Increase need-based & last dollar scholarships
  - Streamline FAFSA & award communications
  - Provide proactive outreach campaigns for underserved & adult learners
  - **Primary Owners:** Financial Aid, Foundation, Enrollment Management
- **Offer flexible learning formats for adults & working learners**
  - Expand online, hybrid, evening, and weekend sections and pilot 8-week and accelerated "HyFlex" options at two campuses
  - Review and adjust scheduling patterns to better accommodate student needs
  - Identify barriers for adult learners and provide alternative solutions or extended hours for key services
  - **Primary Owners:** Academic Affairs, Business Services, Student Services
- **Improve technology & campus accessibility**
  - Improve access through redesigning website wayfinding, student portal & learning management system navigation
  - Redesign campus wayfinding signage and address parking congestion
  - Reduce technology barriers through multi-campus programs associated with laptop / hotspot needs
  - Develop procedures to address the accessibility needs and requirements related to facilities, written sources, learning management system, and website
  - **Primary Owners:** Information Technology (IT), Student Affairs, Facilities, Marketing
- **Key Metrics:** Enrollment growth in underrepresented groups, Financial aid use, Student satisfaction

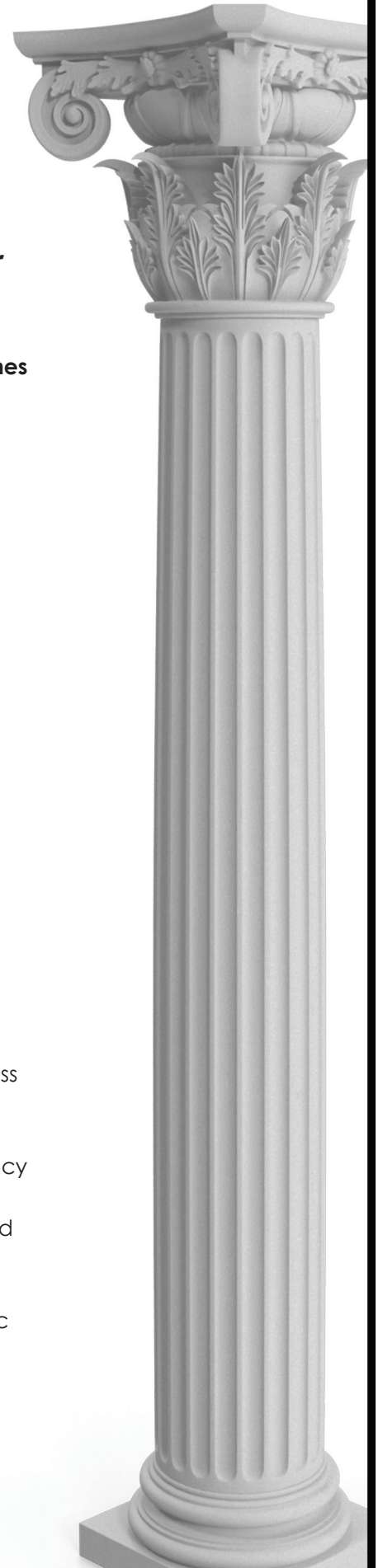


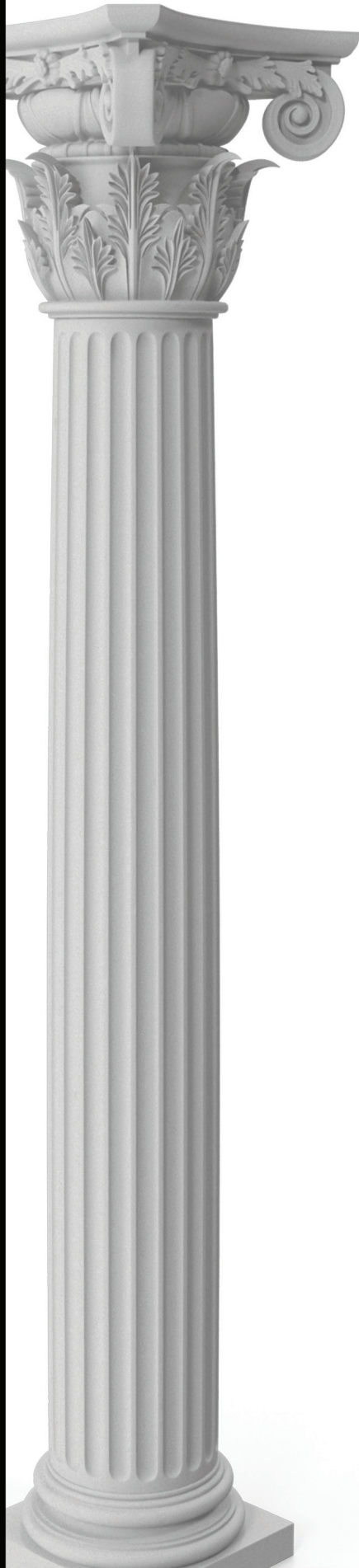
# PILLAR TWO

# SUCCESSFULL

## Champion academic achievement and career readiness

- **Implement guided pathways for clear progression and transfer outcomes**
  - Publish guided pathways with term by term maps; embed milestone checks in advising
  - Create a "Transfer Clarity" toolkit so advisors can address other schools' requirements—directly tackling a noted student challenge
  - **Primary Owners:** Advising, Academic Affairs
- **Enhance advising, tutoring, and mental health services**
  - Scale tutoring, embedded supplemental instruction, and mental health services
  - Maintain strengths in registration/billing convenience and online access to services
  - **Primary Owners:** Student Success, Counseling, IT, Academic Affairs
- **Build employer partnerships for internships and job placement**
  - Develop an active employer partnership process for internships, clinicals, and apprenticeships
  - Expand short term, stackable credentials aligned to local workforce demand, addressing the broader shift toward skills based learning
  - **Primary Owners:** Workforce/Career and Technical Education (CTE), Program Advisory Councils
- **Use data-driven strategies to improve retention and graduation**
  - Analyze early alert analytics and course success dashboards to assess the effectiveness of the current process and explore new tools as needed
  - Review the data from the Gainful Employment, Financial Transparency and address equity gaps with program review
  - Incorporate responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in advising and instruction where appropriate to improve communication and streamline processes
  - **Primary Owners:** Institutional Effectiveness (IE), IT, Advising, Academic Support Services
- **Key Metrics:** Retention & graduation rates, Job placement, Support program engagement, Student survey gains





# PILLAR THREE

# INVESTED

## Strengthen relationships and invest in faculty, staff, and community

- **Develop and retain exceptional employees by fostering a culture of inclusion and shared governance**
  - Provide structured professional development in teaching, AI literacy, and inclusive practices; leadership pathways for supervisors
  - Review and clarify human resource practices related to employee concerns: communication, workload, pay, staffing, role clarity, and supervisor feedback
  - Close employee survey performance gaps on culture and morale
  - **Primary Owners:** Human Resources, Professional Development Team, Administrative Council
- **Increase alumni, donor, & business engagement**
  - Relaunch alumni network and donor stewardship tied to workforce initiatives and scholarships
  - Expand active community partnerships through employer advisory councils for workforce development
  - **Primary Owners:** Foundation, Academic Affairs, Workforce/CTE
- **Maintain compliance while implementing practices to minimize risk, enhance operational efficiency, and support financial stability**
  - Develop a 5-year facility maintenance plan and a 5-year technology update plan
  - Increase revenue from alternate sources to maintain fiscal growth and stability
  - Review and implement policies and practices related to data privacy, safety, business continuity, and incident response exercises
  - **Primary Owners:** Foundation, Academic Affairs, Workforce/Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- **Key Metrics:** External funding, Active community partnerships, Employee satisfaction & retention, Shared governance participation, Employee Survey, Community survey, & Advisory council survey



# GLOBAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Global learning outcomes (GLO) focus on the skills and knowledge all students should be able to demonstrate as a result of faculty established curriculum and quality teaching and learning.

## 1. Communication Skills

**Students will demonstrate the ability to:**

- A. Write in an accurate, correct, and understandable manner.
- B. Comprehend written information and analyze, summarize, and apply what has been read to a specific task.
- C. Speak in an accurate, correct, and understandable manner.
- D. Maintain positive relations with others and resolve conflicts.

## 2. Computational Skills

**Students will demonstrate the ability to:**

- A. Apply mathematical concepts and reasoning by analyzing and using numerical data.

## 3. Critical Thinking/Problem Solving Skills

**Students will demonstrate the ability to:**

- A. Recognize and define problems.
- B. Devise and implement solutions.

## 4. Computer/Technology Skills

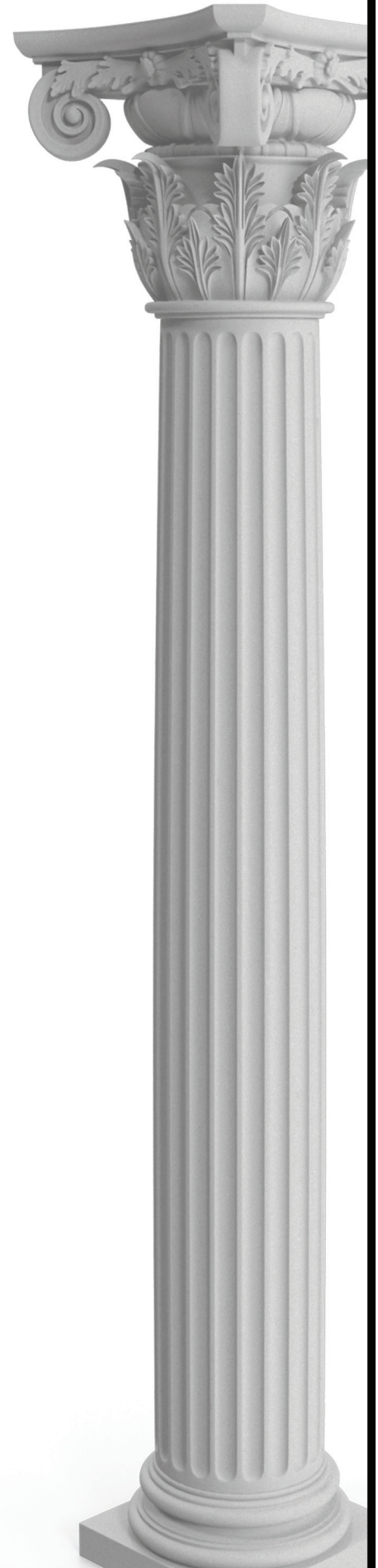
**Students will demonstrate the ability to:**

- A. Use computer literacy skills to achieve academic and career goals.
- B. Retrieve and manage information through the use of the Internet.

## 5. Citizenship Skills

**Students will demonstrate awareness of:**

- A. Cultural, social, and artistic diversity.
- B. Ethical principles such as honesty, integrity, and tolerance.
- C. Knowledge necessary to achieve financial stability.
- D. Civic responsibility through community involvement.
- E. Working together in a group to reach a common goal.



# STRATEGIC TEAM MEMBERS

## Board of Trustees

Dr. Alan Marcotte - Chair  
Brett Bazil  
Stanley Cochran  
Bob McGregor  
Jacinda Shaw-Kinzie  
Joe Shriver  
Phil White  
Gary Wilson

## Administrative Council

Dr. Michelle Schoon  
President  
Holly Harper  
Executive Vice President of Finance and  
Administration  
Paul Erdmann  
Vice President of Information Technology  
Dr. Jason Kegler  
Vice President of Student Affairs  
Dr. Scott Layton  
Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Dr. Ryan Burkett  
Executive Director of Institutional  
Effectiveness  
Jeff Fluty  
Athletic Director  
Dr. Brooke Istas  
Cowley Education Association (CEA)  
President & Faculty Liaison

## Pillar Teams

### Accessible:

Chris Absher  
April Beeson  
Stephanye Edwards  
Carissa Honkamp  
Shelby Huddleston  
Lauren Hughes  
Dr. Brooke Istas  
Stefani Jones  
Dr. Scott Layton  
Stephanie Miller  
Wendy Neal  
Darci Sampson  
Jennifer Searle  
Dawn Simpson  
Julianna Smarsh  
Matt Stone  
Tiffany Vollmer

### Successful:

Lynlea Bartlett  
Holly Benton  
Lynell Durham  
Stephanye Edwards  
Jeff Fluty  
Rebecca Holman  
Dr. Brooke Istas  
Rhoda MacLaughlin-Ramirez  
Amy McWhirt  
Paola Medina  
Greg Mink  
Brenda Romesburg  
Kristi Shaw  
Julianna Smarsh  
Meg Smith  
Peyton Snively  
Kari Stephenson

### Invested:

Andy Bohn  
Chris Cannon  
Zach Cooper  
Paul Erdmann  
Jeremy Fortner  
Micah Fry  
Holly Harper  
Rebecca Holman  
Tim Kennedy  
Frank Owens  
Stephanie Miller  
Suvanah Perdue  
Dr. Michelle Schoon  
Matt Stone  
Megan Sweeney  
Tiffany Vollmer

