



History

In 1995, Jerry Martin and Anne Neal founded the National Alumni Forum (NAF) to give a voice to concerned alumni across the country. NAF became the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) in 1997 to emphasize its work with university trustees. Dr. Michael Poliakoff became president of ACTA in 2016, and under his leadership, ACTA has worked tirelessly to restore American higher education to what it once was—the envy of the world.

Mission

ACTA focuses on the “Three A’s”: academic excellence, academic freedom, and accountability. Accordingly, ACTA advocates for rigorous liberal arts curricula, the free and open exchange of ideas on campus, and a high-quality college education at an affordable price. ACTA is the only organization that works directly with trustees, alumni, donors, and policymakers to improve American higher education by ensuring that:

- Trustees understand the responsibility they have as fiduciaries of their institutions and have the resources they need to govern to the best of their ability;
- Higher education philanthropists are aware that their targeted giving can motivate colleges and universities to fulfill their highest ideals;
- Students and parents recognize the need for a well-rounded education that prepares students for meaningful careers and informed citizenship;
- Policymakers are equipped with expert research and testimony in order to promote high academic standards.

ACTA by the numbers:

- 1,100+ public and private colleges and universities evaluated in [What Will They Learn?®](#)
- 1,500+ institutions’ spending trends and data on [HowCollegesSpendMoney.com](#)
- 100+ million dollars in philanthropy guided through ACTA’s [Fund for Academic Renewal](#)
- 100+ reports and publications outlining best practices in higher education governance
- 80+ universities have adopted robust statements protecting free expression on campus
- 20+ states in which ACTA supported, advised, or testified on legislation

ACTA’s network of educators and supporters:

- 23,000+ individual trustees
- 1,200+ college, university, and university system presidents
- 17,000+ *Inside Academe* newsletter subscribers
- 54,000 + high school counselors and administrators
- 800+ individuals and foundations support ACTA’s work

ACTA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to academic freedom, academic excellence, and accountability in higher education. We receive no government funding and are supported through the generosity of individuals and foundations