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A Leader on College Access

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Thomas J. Lasley II, dean of the School of Education and Allied Professions, said the organization is doing important work to support organizations that improve access to higher education and aid Ohio students' transitions to public and private post-secondary education.

"OCAN works to maximize opportunities for student access and success in their post-secondary pursuits," Lasley said. "Without such statewide efforts it becomes difficult for policymakers and practitioners to coordinate their efforts."

Lasley has been serving in education at the state level for more than a decade. He was part of Governor Bob Taft's Commission for Teaching Success and is currently a member of the Ohio Board of Regents' planning and accountability committee. He also is a co-chair of the Teacher Quality Partnership, a statewide initiative to study teacher quality, and was the program administrator for the Ohio Board of Regents' Teaching Fellows program for four years.

Lasley was one of the principal architects of the Dayton Early College Academy, which takes an innovative approach to preparing low-income, urban students to succeed in college. In 2007, he shepherded the school's transition into an independent charter school receiving support and academic oversight from the University of Dayton. DECA is the nation's only charter school operated by a Catholic university.

OCAN selected Lasley, in part, for his commitment to education and his willingness to work with first-generation college students and low-income families, OCAN President and CEO Reginald Wilkinson said.

OCAN is a nonprofit collaboration of the KnowledgeWorks Foundation, the Ohio Board of Regents, the Ohio Department of Education and businesses throughout the state.

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