

Promoting College Success: What We Know and What We Should Do

May 19-20, 2010 ■ Washington, DC

PROGRAM AGENDA

Location: Bank of America, 730 15 Street NW, Washington DC, 20005 – 10th Floor

Wednesday, May 19, 2010

8:00 – 8:30 am Registration & Breakfast

8:30 – 8:45 am Welcome: Framing the Days Ahead

College attainment rates are increasing in every industrialized and post-industrialized nation in the world—except ours. Stagnating college graduation rates in the U.S. are leaving millions of Americans cut off from educational achievement and economic prosperity. Together we'll explore the challenges, opportunities and strategies to increase postsecondary access, persistence and success, including the particular supports necessary to ensure under-represented students thrive.

- Welcome: **CHRIS TEBBEN**, executive director, *Grantmakers for Education*, and **KRISTY TESKEY**, national philanthropy manager, senior vice president, *Bank of America Charitable Foundation*

8:45 – 10:15 am Breakfast Keynote: Crossing the Finish Line

Less than 60 percent of the students entering four-year colleges in America today are actually graduating. Michael McPherson, co-author of *Crossing the Finish: Completing College at America's Public Universities*, will highlight findings from this recently published study of 21 flagship public universities and four statewide systems of public higher education. Focusing on the progress of students in the entering class of 1999, the book explores dropout rates linked to race, gender and socioeconomic status. Of particular note is the authors' concept of "under-matching," an examination of why some students choose not to attend the most selective college they can get into and, as a result, are less likely to graduate.

- Keynote remarks: **MICHAEL MCPHERSON**, president, *The Spencer Foundation*
- Q&A moderator: **KYLE MALONE**, senior program officer, *USA Funds*

10:15 – 10:30 am Break

10:30 am – noon The Latest Data: New Information and the Gaps that Remain

Given the complexity of our challenge, our ability to increase postsecondary success is dependent upon our detailed understanding of key data points—the who, what, where, when why and how—of students' persistence and attainment in community colleges and four-year institutions. In this session we will examine the factors that contribute most to college success; consider which strategies should be prioritized over others; explore data that helps us address systemic issues; and discern what gaps remain and what education grantmakers can do to fill those gaps.

- **THOMAS BAILEY**, director, *Community College Research Center*
- **KATI HAYCOCK**, president, *Education Trust*
- Moderator: **KRISTIN BOYER**, director, public benefit grants, *TG*

GFE appreciates the support from the following organizations for this member briefing:



Noon – 12:45 pm **Networking Lunch**

12:45 – 2:15 pm **The Policy Landscape: Restoring America's Leadership in Higher Education**

President Obama's ambitious goal for America to regain, by 2020, the world's top spot as the country with the highest proportion of college graduates is supported by a historic plan to both strengthen the higher education pipeline and address college completion. During this session, we will examine both this federal effort and the critical roles state policies must play in advancing postsecondary success rates. We will also examine the catalytic, policy-engaging roles education grantmakers can play at both the state and federal levels to advance success at scale.

- **MARTHA J. KANTER**, under secretary of education, *U.S. Department of Education*
- **STAN JONES**, president, *Complete College America*
- Moderator: **MICHELLE GILLIARD**, senior director, *The Walmart Foundation*

2:15 – 2:30 pm **Break**

2:30 – 4:00 pm **Helping Under-Represented Students Overcome the Hurdles to College Completion**

Under-represented students face significant and varied barriers to college access and persistence. During this roundtable conversation, we will examine the needs of students from varying racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, geographic, gender and age groups. Among others, questions we will explore include: What strategies are most effective in promoting access and persistence among under-represented students? What successful strategies are leading minority-serving institutions employing? What special role do community colleges play in meeting these needs?

- **SARITA BROWN**, president, *Excelencia in Education*
- **MICHELLE COOPER**, president, *Institute for Higher Education Policy*
- **RICHARD RHODES**, president, *El Paso Community College*
- Moderator: **CHANDRA TAYLOR SMITH**, vice president and director, *The Pell Institute*

4:00 – 5:00 pm **Collective Reflections and Insights: Today's Key Learnings**

Today we will have explored new data in college success, the federal landscape for higher education and the unique issues facing under-represented students. In small group conversations with colleagues, take this time to reflect on the day's salient learnings: Which data surprised you and why? What strategies were affirmed? What questions remain? What opportunities might there be to collaborate with your colleagues? What ideas would you most like to explore tomorrow?

5:15 – 6:30 pm **Reception**

Thursday, May 20, 2010

7:30 – 8:30 am Interest-Based Breakfast Conversations

8:30 – 10:00 am Roundtable Discussion: The Community College Equilibrium—Strategies for Persistence, Attainment and Transfer

As public funding for higher education contracts and the economy remains tight, community colleges play an increasingly critical role—especially for under-represented students—in the postsecondary success effort. Together we will explore the key drivers for community college completion; smart strategies that support successful student transitions to four-year institutions; and what funders can do to support these critical pieces to the postsecondary success puzzle.

- **KAY MCCLENNEY**, director, *Center for Community College Student Engagement*
- **WILLIAM TRUEHEART**, CEO, *Achieving the Dream*
- **ROBERT TEMPLIN JR.**, president, *Northern Virginia Community College*
- Moderator: **DIANE TROYER**, senior program officer, *The Gates Foundation*

10:00 – 10:30 am Break

10:30 am – noon Collaborating for Success

Integrating the conversation over the past two days, Wynn Rosser and Chris Tebben will guide participants through a summative conversation to highlight some of the key themes and emergent opportunities for funders. Building on the small group conversations from breakfast and from the preceding day, the group will identify specific initiatives and action steps that funders would like to take in coordination with other grantmakers. Participants will further develop opportunities in small groups and report out on several key takeaways to help move this work forward.

- Co-Facilitators: **WYNN ROSSER**, executive director, *Greater Texas Foundation* and **CHRIS TEBBEN**, executive director, *Grantmakers for Education*

Noon – 12:30 pm Wrap-up/ Next Steps/ Grab-and-Go Lunch

GFE appreciates the advice of the following grantmakers in designing this program:**KRISTIN BOYER**, TG**JACOB FRAIRE**, TG**EMILY FROIMSON**, Jack Kent Cooke Foundation**JERRY FULLER**, Associated Colleges of Illinois**MICHELLE GILLIARD**, Walmart Foundation**KYLE MALONE**, USA Funds**ANN PERSON**, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**WYNN ROSSER**, Greater Texas Foundation**KATIE TREMPER**, College Access Foundation of California**HOLLY ZANVILLE**, Lumina Foundation for Education