

# BACKGROUND

## ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY Washington, D.C.

The Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization considered one of the most effective voices in championing access to and success in higher education for all students. Founded in 1993, the Washington, D.C.-based organization develops innovative policy- and practice-oriented research to guide policymakers and education leaders who develop high-impact policies that will address our nation's most pressing education challenges.

IHEP offers an unbiased perspective through a staff that includes some of the most respected professionals in the fields of public policy and research. The organization is committed to equality of opportunity for today's students, particularly underserved students of which many are low income, students of color, and adults. IHEP provides timely research—with the goal of informing public policy decisions—in areas such as access and success, accountability, diversity, finance, underserved student populations, and much more.

In February 2014, IHEP announced a new policy agenda refocusing the organization's research and analytic expertise to inform and shape national, state, local, and institutional policy reform in ways that are relevant to the demands of the 21st century. IHEP is aligning its future work on the following four priorities:

- Elevating effective pathways for increased degree attainment.
- Enhancing affordability and reshaping college finance systems.
- Promoting and improving meaningful accountability and consumer awareness.
- Supporting communities and critical institutions serving 21st-century students.

Recognizing that too many of today's college students still encounter obstacles as they attempt to access and matriculate through postsecondary education, IHEP manages several initiatives that directly impact students around the world. The following are a few of IHEP's efforts—all of which help to investigate innovative research questions, educate key constituents, and demonstrate consistent leadership:

- **Postsecondary Data Collaborative (initiated in 2013)** is responsive to the need for quality postsecondary data—from consumers wanting to make more informed decisions about college, to institutions seeking to improve outcomes, to policymakers aiming to ensure efficient and effective use of public funds and scarce resources.
- **Reimagining Aid Design and Delivery (RADD; initiated in 2012)** focuses on postsecondary financial aid solutions that ensure continued access while also increasing success for low-income students. An initiative supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the RADD project is intended to accomplish two goals: (1) To shift the national conversation on federal financial aid toward ideas that will make college more affordable, while giving students the support and encouragement they need to earn their degree or credential; and (2) to seed the field with innovative policies that can make that happen.
- **Project Win-Win (2009–13)** changed how state systems and two- and four-year institutions identify, graduate, and reengage students who have left college just short of an associate's degree and has spurred reforms that are removing barriers that can lead to the early departure of students who are "near completers."

(over)



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- **The International Rankings Expert Group (launched in 2004)** is a multinational initiative established to promote a system of continuous improvement of country-specific and international college ranking efforts, particularly around issues of student equity and institutional diversity, data transparency, and student outcome measures.
- **Community Partnership for Attainment (launched in 2013)** is a community mobilization initiative designed to dramatically increase the number of local residents with postsecondary credentials. This collaborative effort, funded by Lumina Foundation, connects participating cities with significant technical and planning assistance, data tools, flexible funding, and special access to a powerful network of national thought leaders.

**Michelle Asha Cooper, Ph.D.**, is the president of IHEP. The organization's current **board of directors members** include: **Augustine Gallego**, chancellor emeritus, San Diego Community College District; **Rob Anderson**, vice chancellor for educational access and success, University System of Georgia; **Cheryl D. Blanco**, vice president for special projects, Southern Regional Education Board; **Art L. Coleman**, managing partner and co-founder, EducationCounsel, LLC; **Charlene M. Dukes, Ph.D.**, president, Prince George's Community College; **Neil Horikoshi**, president & executive director, Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund; **David A. Longanecker**, president, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education; **Laura W. Perna**, professor, higher education management program, University of Pennsylvania; and **Michele Siqueiros**, executive director, The Campaign for College Opportunity.

Financial support for IHEP is provided by philanthropic organizations, along with considerable funding from state governments and others who are working to advance access in higher education. Recent funding partners include the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**, **Ford Foundation**, **Kresge Foundation**, **Lumina Foundation**, **TG**, **USA Funds**, and **Walmart Foundation**, among others.

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**THE INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY (IHEP) IS A NONPARTISAN, NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION COMMITTED TO PROMOTING ACCESS TO AND SUCCESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS. BASED IN WASHINGTON, D.C., IHEP DEVELOPS INNOVATIVE POLICY- AND PRACTICE-ORIENTED RESEARCH TO GUIDE POLICYMAKERS AND EDUCATION LEADERS, WHO DEVELOP HIGH-IMPACT POLICIES THAT WILL ADDRESS OUR NATION'S MOST PRESSING EDUCATION CHALLENGES.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT IHEP'S COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT, LIBBY MAY, THE HATCHER GROUP, AT (301) 656-0348, OR LIBBY@THEHATCHERGROUP.COM. ALSO, VISIT WWW.IHEP.ORG.**

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