



The Institute for Higher Education Policy

# ***Champions of Access and Success***

## Awards Program

Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2013

National Press Club

Washington, D.C.



# IHEP Champions of Access and Success Institutional Award Winners



**NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE —ANNANDALE, VA. (@NovaAccess)**  
**PRESIDENT ROBERT G. TEMPLIN, JR.**

Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) is recognized for its leadership in expanding educational opportunity and enhancing regional workforce development. NOVA has undertaken several major institutional initiatives to improve access and success for underserved students, emphasizing strategies that focus on students of all ages and academic levels. Programs such as Pathways to the Baccalaureate—a partnership with local public school systems and George Mason University—help many first-generation, low-income, minority, and immigrant youth and adult learners receive one-stop, case management-style student support services. Also, since 2007, NOVA has worked with community-based organizations (CBOs), like the Northern Virginia Family Services and Goodwill of Greater Washington, to offer credit courses at CBO sites, thereby modeling flexible, collaborative, and community-based strategies for students. These and other initiatives reflect the broader institutional commitment to adopting and scaling policies and practices that have proven effective in significantly improving student access and persistence.

NOVA has experienced significant increases to enrollment and degree completion rates in recent years, especially among underserved populations. From fall 2008 to fall 2012, overall enrollment increased 22 percent, with a 33 percent increase for African American students; 18 percent increase for Asian students; and 63 percent increase for Hispanic students. NOVA also experienced an increase in four-year graduation rates in the aggregate and for low-income students.

NOVA is a public two-year institution and is the largest educational institution in Virginia and the second-largest community college in the United States. NOVA is also one of the most internationally diverse colleges nationally, with a student body consisting of individuals from more than 180 countries.



**SALISH KOOTENAI COLLEGE—PABLO, MONT. (@skcollege)**  
**PRESIDENT ROBERT R. DEPOE**

Salish Kootenai College (SKC) is recognized for its leadership in modeling innovative, data-driven solutions to increase postsecondary participation and completion, particularly for American Indian students. With 70 percent of entering SKC students requiring developmental instruction, the college has placed significant attention on improving the academic success of these students. In particular, SKC offers accelerated options for developmental education and provides wrap-around support services designed to help students succeed. By using data to better understand the demographic characteristics and trajectories of their student body, SKC recognizes that to achieve sustainable success, effective strategies need to be institutionalized and valued by the entire campus community. Therefore, at the heart of

SKC's access and success efforts are the faculty members, as they are key to student retention. Faculty members regularly engage in specialized trainings that emphasize teaching and learning. They have revised their curricular and pedagogical practices to better educate students; and beyond the classroom, they serve as mentors, career coaches, tutors, and trusted advisers.

SKC is a public four-year Tribal College chartered to provide quality postsecondary educational opportunities to American Indians. More than 70 percent of the current student population is American Indian, representing up to 70 tribes.

Over the past four years, SKC's intensive efforts to improve the success rates of all students, but particularly those enrolled in the developmental curriculum, has led to an increased graduation rate that is currently well above the national average for an institution serving such a high-risk student population.



**ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY—AUSTIN, TEXAS (@stedwardsu)**  
**PRESIDENT GEORGE MARTIN**

St. Edward's University (SEU) is recognized for its strategic efforts to maintain its institutional commitment to underserved students while “growing” the institution—in size, academic quality, faculty caliber, and infrastructure. SEU stands out because as it worked to enhance its academic profile, it did not sacrifice its core commitments to access, diversity, and financial support for low-income students. All SEU students are exposed to a range of high-impact success strategies, such as living-learning communities, peer mentoring and supplemental instruction, career preparation, and undergraduate research opportunities, to name a few. Underserved students benefit tremendously from these active teaching and learning practices, as the college takes a targeted approach to tailor efforts to their needs. In addition, one of SEU's signature initiatives is the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), which was established in 1972 and is the only original program to have maintained continuous operation. CAMP provides comprehensive support for students from migrant and seasonal farm worker families. Although federal support is limited to the freshman year, SEU has established an institutional endowment to provide full tuition and academic support for all CAMP students who maintain satisfactory academic progress.

SEU is a private four-year Hispanic-Serving Institution. As an independent Catholic university, it welcomes qualified students of all ages, backgrounds, and beliefs; serves a culturally diverse student body; and features programs designed to inspire students with a global perspective.

During a period of significant growth in both quality and infrastructure, SEU has successfully maintained its commitment to cultivating a diverse student body: Approximately 25 percent first-generation; 44 percent minority; and 36 percent Pell Grant recipients, on average, since 2000. SEU can also boast the highest six-year graduation rate—72 percent—among all Hispanic-Serving Institutions.



**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO—EL PASO, TEXAS (@UTEP100Years)**  
**PRESIDENT DIANA S. NATALICIO**

The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is recognized for its goal of ensuring access, with a coupled focus on academic excellence and student success. UTEP fosters an academic climate that emphasizes the use of applied knowledge and skills to explore and address the major issues that confront the multicultural, U.S.—Mexico border region. UTEP's involvement with Early College High Schools (ECHS), a partnership with El Paso Community College and El Paso Public High Schools, is helping many students reduce time-to-degree and college costs. Because of the ECHS program, many students now graduate from high school with an associate's degree. To help these students continue on the pathway to the baccalaureate, UTEP has changed transfer pathways, academic support services, scholarship programs, and other critical campus programs and policies to ensure successful completion of a four-year degree program, in some cases, in as little as two years. Critical to UTEP's success is a campus-wide commitment to using data to better track students' progress and inform institutional decision making. The university leverages web-based tools and training to ensure that staff and faculty understand and use available data to make sound decisions that contribute to student success, while maximizing the efficient use of resources.

In the past 10 years, UTEP has experienced growth in total undergraduate enrollment and degrees awarded. Also, UTEP is a leader in graduating Hispanic students and ranks seventh nationally as a top feeder school for Hispanic doctorates.

UTEP is a public four-year Hispanic-Serving Institution. The vast majority of UTEP's undergraduate students come from El Paso County. UTEP is currently the only doctoral research-intensive university with a student body that is predominately Mexican-American.

# Exemplar Institutions

## **CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE—NORTHRIDGE, CALIF. (@csunorthridge)**

**PRESIDENT DIANNE F. HARRISON**

California State University, Northridge (CSUN) is recognized for its commitment to access and success, a commitment that permeates the campus culture. Even in the midst of a challenging fiscal climate, CSUN maintained a firm commitment to maximizing access for new students. During years of statewide enrollment retrenchment, CSUN made a commitment to access, increasing the relative percentage of Pell Grant recipients by 48 percent and first-generation students by 45 percent in four years. Additionally, CSUN's integrated high impact success practices provide sustained interventions and support for all students, especially underserved populations. Much of the university's current success stems from early and sustained efforts to identify and address barriers to degree completion both for first-time and transfer students. CSUN has built a data-driven system of continuous improvement—led by faculty and staff—that is driving significant gains in opportunity and attainment for its students.

## **FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY—FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. (@uncfsu)**

**CHANCELLOR JAMES ANDERSON**

Fayetteville State University (FSU) is recognized for its commitment to high-impact access and success practices that engage all students, but are targeted to improve outcomes for male students in particular. Through focused implementation of an early alert system and other department- and institution-level assessment tools, FSU is working to identify at-risk students earlier and is seeking to better target interventions to help them succeed, including residential summer bridge programs and linked learning communities/first-year experience programs, to name a few. Similarly, male-centered initiatives—Male Initiative on Leadership and Excellence, the Boosting Bronco Brothers Transition to FSU, and Captain of My Destiny—serve as models for advancing Black male achievement. As an early adopter of the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), FSU has strengthened its commitment to improving student learning. The CLA has been administered since 2005, and, in addition to the university seeing an increase in CLA scores over time, FSU uses the assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of programs to improve teaching and learning of core learning outcomes in a major. Recent four-year graduation rate gains signal that the institution's data driven interventions are beginning to improve the success trajectories of their underserved students.

## **FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY—TALLAHASSEE, FLA. (@floridastate)**

**PRESIDENT ERIC J. BARRON**

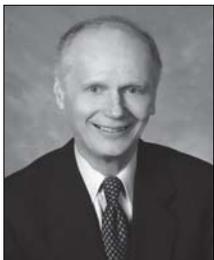
Florida State University (FSU) is recognized for its commitment to ensuring equal opportunity for underrepresented students. Through targeted efforts, primarily through the Center for Academic Retention and Enhancement (CARE), FSU has seen significant enrollment, retention, and graduation increases for underrepresented student groups. Notably, the graduation rate for underserved minorities is significantly higher than it is at comparable institutions, and the graduation rate gap between these students and the overall student body is consistently small or non-existent. Veterans, who receive support through the Student Veterans Center (SVC), are another critical student group at FSU. Because of SVC's successful outcomes, FSU has become a leader in educating veteran students. Between 2011–13, FSU achieved a student veteran graduation rate of 88 percent, well above the overall student body graduation rate.

## **MIAMI DADE COLLEGE—MIAMI, FLA. (@MDCollege)**

**PRESIDENT EDUARDO PADRÓN**

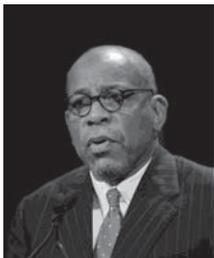
Miami Dade College (MDC) is recognized for its commitment to providing access to a quality, affordable education throughout its region. As the nation's largest postsecondary institution, MDC has effectively scaled high-impact student access and success practices, driving institution-wide changes across its many campuses and education centers. As a result, students are exposed to high-quality teaching and learning experiences that prepare them to be responsible global citizens and successful lifelong learners. More recently, MDC launched the Student Achievement Initiatives (SAI), through which the college seeks to identify obstacles to student success and completion, and then to implement practices, policies, and procedures to remove those barriers. To date, more than 15,000 students have received redesigned services (e.g., academic pathway redesign, first-year experience courses, three-tiered advising and coaching) resulting from this process. MDC plans to expand this effort—over the next five years—to ensure that all MDC students can benefit from these interventions. MDC's commitment to academic excellence and workforce development is pervasive across the campus and serves as the foundation for its community partnerships throughout the greater Miami-Dade County community.

## Champion of Champions Award Winners



**RICHARD W. RILEY**—*Former U.S. Secretary of Education, Former Governor of South Carolina, and Current Senior Partner of Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP and its affiliate EducationCounsel LLC*

Secretary Richard W. Riley is recognized for his leadership in the field, particularly with respect to national and state policy. As governor of South Carolina (1979–87) and U.S. Secretary of Higher Education (1993–2001), he advanced a policy agenda that refocused state and federal attention on the importance of high-quality education for all. His work to institute high academic expectations for every child, as well as increase postsecondary pathways and financial aid programs, has helped countless underserved students gain the knowledge, skills, and funding needed to participate and succeed in postsecondary education. Riley also co-chairs the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future and serves on the boards of ACT, the KnowledgeWorks Foundation and that of his alma mater, Furman University, where he also chairs the Advisory Council of the Riley Institute of Government, Politics and Public Leadership. Most recently, Riley chaired the Commission on Regulation of Postsecondary Distance Education and he is co-chair of the Selection Jury for the Aspen Institute’s Prize for Community College Excellence.



**ARNOLD L. MITCHEM**—*Founder and President Emeritus, Council for Opportunity in Education (COE)*

Dr. Arnold L. Mitchem is recognized for his leadership in the field, particularly with respect to his organizational efforts to significantly increase postsecondary support services for underserved students. His entire career has focused on increasing postsecondary opportunity and success for first generation, low income, disabled, adult, veteran, and other underserved student populations. As founding president of COE, Mitchem has worked to expand the federal TRIO program, thus providing critical support services for hundreds of thousands of students who otherwise would not have the opportunity to participate in higher education. He introduced the term “first-generation students” and has successfully advocated for policy and practice solutions that address their needs. Mitchem is currently a member of the Executive Committee of the European Access Network and serves on the Board of Trustees for Marquette University. He is a former trustee of the College Board; past president of the Committee for Education Funding; and served on INROADS, Inc.’s first national board.



**MARY BETH MARKLEIN**—*Education Reporter, USA Today*

Mary Beth Marklein is recognized for leadership in the field, particularly with respect to increasing public awareness of postsecondary access and success concerns. For nearly two decades at *USA Today*, she has served as the public documentarian of America’s colleges and universities—particularly community colleges—and their students. *USA Today*’s special “community college all-stars” issues, in particular, exposed a wide-reading public to the struggles and potential of community college students of all ages, races, and economic backgrounds. Marklein has immersed herself in policy and practice challenges of both postsecondary providers and the students they serve, in order to more accurately elevate their experiences for public understanding. She received a 2007 Hechinger Institute on Education and the Media fellowship, was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Bucharest and Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj from 2004–05, and taught journalism at American University.



**CLIFFORD ADELMAN**—*Senior Associate, IHEP*

Dr. Clifford Adelman is recognized for his leadership in the field, particularly with respect to research and analysis for underserved students. His research on student academic momentum and completion—what students study and when they study it—is foundational to understanding today’s access and success challenges. Adelman is now working to help structure and align degree programs for student success, drawing on his deep understanding of what works in other countries, through such projects as the Degree Qualifications Profile and Tuning USA. He has also helped to identify “mobile” students and the degree to which data do not adequately account for their needs and successes. His current work involves doing the same to help reduce the number of students who leave two-year institutions, and the postsecondary system, within striking distance of an associate’s degree. Adelman served nearly 30 years as a senior research analyst at the U.S. Department of Education and has held positions at City College of New York, Roosevelt University, William Paterson College of New Jersey, and Yale University.

**ABOUT THE AWARDS:** In 1993, the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) was established to increase college access and success for underserved students. Since our founding, we continue to embrace a vision where all people have the opportunity to reach their full potential by participating and succeeding in higher education. As we celebrate IHEP's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we affirm our role as a longstanding **Champion of Access and Success**. Through the IHEP Champions of Access and Success Awards, we are recognizing the postsecondary institutions and individuals that embody our mission by leading efforts to improve access and success for underserved students across the nation.

The institutional recipients of the IHEP Champions of Access and Success Awards serve as models for all institutions seeking to increase access, success, and degree attainment for today's students. These awardees all have strong senior leadership as well as faculty and staff committed to students' educational success. Additionally, all award winners have experienced significant gains in institutional access and success outcome data, especially for underserved students.

The Exemplar Institutions have strong programmatic efforts driving access and success gains for targeted underserved student groups. Each institution endeavors to expand and scale these initiatives, which reflect strong institutional commitment that will lead to even better outcomes for all students.

The IHEP Champion of Champions Awards recognize individuals who have provided exceptional leadership for improving access and success for underserved student groups and whose persistent work on behalf of these students has significantly improved the policies, practices, resources, and/or public will necessary for their successful entrance to and completion of postsecondary education.

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.



**IHEP**

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