



ACCESSeD

Connecting state legislators to policy resources that support higher education access for women and minorities

AccessEd

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LUMINA FOUNDATION, AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION, AND THE AD COUNCIL LAUNCH UNIQUE COLLEGE ACCESS CAMPAIGN

KnowHow2GO

On January 17, the Advertising Council joined with Lumina Foundation for Education and the American Council on Education (ACE) to launch a national public service advertising (PSA) campaign designed to encourage low-income and first-generation students to take the steps necessary to go to college. This unified, national PSA effort combines education, community-based, and government partnerships to raise awareness among low-income students about preparing for college and what it takes to get there.

KnowHow2GO is a multi-media campaign that features television and radio PSAs, outdoor and print advertising, and an interactive website (www.KnowHow2GO.org) that delivers guiding information to students, parents/adults, and organizations.

In addition to the media components of the campaign, KnowHow2GO will utilize a network of grassroots partners, including mentoring and youth-serving organizations. Several states have joined the effort and plan to localize the campaign in their regions in February. ACE will tap into the nearly 2,000 colleges and universities and higher education associations that comprise its membership to further expand the campaign's reach.

"There are far too many Americans who want to go to college but can't — because they're either not prepared, can't afford it, or lack even the most basic knowledge about the college admissions process. The KnowHow2GO campaign represents a unique partnership that will leverage existing resources and programs such as those at the Department of Education in ways that will help prepare students early enough in the process to help them succeed."

— Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings

Through a partnership with the U.S. Department of Education, students and parents can access a toll-free number (800-433-3243) to request a new brochure containing tips on preparing for college. The Department is providing fulfillment and printing costs for the student/parent brochure.

The campaign primarily targets low-income students in grades 8 to 10, and secondarily, their parents and adult influencers to encourage them to start the college preparation process early. Research conducted for the campaign showed that low-



income and first-generation students have high aspirations for college, but do not have clear information on what steps they need to take. Campaign research also showed that particularly in low-income households, parents expect the student to take the lead in pursuing college.

According to research published in June 2005 in *Postsecondary Education Opportunity*, 75 percent of students from high-income families complete college by age 24; yet only nine percent of students from low-income families complete college by this age. KnowHow2GO strives to help more low-income students navigate their way to college.

"Our research with low-income and first-generation prospective students revealed that they have widespread enthusiasm for going to college, yet few are taking the necessary steps to prepare to get there," according to Peggy Conlon, president and CEO of the Ad Council.

KnowHow2GO has two central campaign goals: to raise awareness about the steps needed to prepare for college and to motivate low-income, first-generation students to turn their dreams of going to college into a reality.

"This campaign is critical now because America has slipped in comparison to other countries in the proportion of young

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Women In Government's Access to Higher Education Policy Research Center is dedicated to identifying policy issues, gathering research data and information, and providing a centralized clearinghouse for state legislators on ways to increase access to higher education for women and minorities.

“STEM” EDUCATION GAINS MOMENTUM

In the last few years, states have increasingly invested in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education, in response to growing concern about the disparities between the percentage of US workers entering the sciences compared to countries like China, India, and Ireland.

New Jersey is the latest state to officially require a greater focus on science education. Beginning in 2008, the Garden State will require high school students to pass a biology exam as a graduation requirement; other science subjects will be tested in future years.

In Missouri, Governor Matt Blunt has proposed investing \$4 million in math and science programs, with the long term goal of producing more engineers and scientists. While continued investment will be necessary, STEM advocates indicated that the funding is a good start.

Students are not the sole focus of the flurry of STEM activity around the states. Kentucky legislators have introduced two bills that would provide math and science teachers with financial incentives for student performance. The bills include grants for high schools seeking to expand STEM offerings, as well as cash bonuses for teachers. A November 2006 report from the National Association of System Heads, “Turning the Tide: Strategies for Producing the Mathematics and Science Teachers Our Schools Need,” brings attention to several teaching programs around the country modeling success in STEM education.

Finally, despite the nationwide trend to expand math and science education at the k-12 level, a 2006 survey from the American Council on Education indicated that Americans are divided about whether or not colleges and universities should require students to increase math and science courses.

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people who are earning college degrees,” said Martha D. Lamkin, president and CEO of Lumina Foundation. “Even more important, the attainment gap between income groups is widening at the same time that low-income students constitute a growing share of the college-age population. We must reach out to these low-income students, so they can earn better opportunities, and so that America will have the educated population to sustain its economic and social vitality.”

The campaign will run for approximately two years. The PSAs are being distributed to 28,000 media stations nationwide throughout January. New television and radio advertising, created specifically for the Hispanic community, will be available in upcoming weeks.

Visit www.knowhow2go.org to explore resources provided for students, parents, and educators.

Visit www.luminafoundation.org for relevant research and program development information.

SMITH COLLEGE COMMITS TO WOMEN IN MATHEMATICS

Smith College is positioned to send more undergraduate and post-baccalaureate women into mathematics, with a \$1.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation. The five year grant will fund the nation’s first post-baccalaureate mathematics program, as well as an intensive program for college juniors.

“Many female math majors discover their love of the subject late in their undergraduate careers – too late to take the necessary preparation for graduate school,” said James Henle, professor of mathematics and statistics, and architect

of the Center for Women in Mathematics, in a Smith press release. “We want to address this largely ignored group of women.”

Smith’s approach, similar to yearlong programs for aspiring medical students, is the only mathematics post-baccalaureate in the country. Students will complete an intensive year of mathematics coursework and projects, in preparation for applying to graduate school. Full tuition, plus a \$12,500 living stipend, will be available to participating students.

The junior-year-at-Smith program is the second prong of the new programming at the Center for Women in Mathematics. Women majoring in math at coeducational colleges and universities are welcome to apply for the program, which boasts mathematical research, advanced courses, and the benefits of an all-female learning community.

Smith sends ten percent of its math graduates on to further education in the field, compared with the three percent yield of coeducational colleges and universities. Over the next five years, the Center will track academic and career progress of participants.

Visit <http://www.math.smith.edu/center/> for more information about the Center for Women in Mathematics at Smith College.



NEW STUDY EXPLORES TYPES OF STUDENTS WHO BORROW PRIVATE LOANS TO FUND COLLEGE EDUCATION

Tia Gordon, Managing Director for Communications & Marketing, Institute for Higher Education Policy

Private loans are becoming an essential part of financing postsecondary education in today's market of rising tuition costs and fees, according to a new report issued by the Institute for Higher Education Policy titled, *"The Future of Private Loans: Who Is Borrowing, and Why?"* Supported by The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Institute's national report examines recent developments in the private loan industry, characteristics of private loan borrowers, and trends that might impact the growth of private loans in the future. It draws on recent financial aid data and in-depth information from finance professionals to offer the most comprehensive look at private loans within the student lending industry.

Key findings from the highly anticipated publication shows:

- Nearly a quarter of all professional students took out a private loan, compared with five percent each of all undergraduates and graduates. More than three-quarters of private loan borrowers also receive federal aid available through the Stafford loan program. Private loan borrowers tend to be students who: attend private institutions, enroll full time for the full school year, or work less than full time; as well as undergraduates who are dependent (those under 24 years old) and more apt to come from middle-income families; and undergraduates and graduates who are financially independent and likely to have low incomes.
- Of all student loans awarded, \$16 billion (19%) was in the form of private loans, compared to less than five percent just 10 years ago. Of all private loan borrowers, 83 percent are undergraduate students, nine percent are graduate

students, and seven percent are professional students (e.g., medical or law). Yet, professional students borrow an average of \$11,000 per year in private loans, compared to about \$6,000 per year for undergraduates and \$8,000 per year for graduate students.

- The vast growth in private loans is being facilitated by several factors, including rising prices of attendance and remaining need faced by students, combined with stagnant federal loan limits; and developments within the private loan industry.
- Private and federal loans are distinct from one another in a number of important ways, including funding and guarantee structure; associated risk of default; terms of interest rates, repayment, and fees; and variability in products offered and the borrowing process.
- Private loan borrowers mostly take out federal Stafford loans at the maximum level. Ninety percent of professional and nearly three-quarters of graduate private loan borrowers receive a Stafford loan, and the majority of those who receive a Stafford loan borrow at the maximum. Yet some private loan borrowers do not take out the maximum Stafford or receive a Stafford at all.

To download a free copy of the Institute's new report on private student loans, *"The Future of Private Loans: Who Is Borrowing, and Why?"*, visit its website at www.ihep.org. To receive free printed copies of any Institute publication, send a request via e-mail to publications@ihep.org.

PRESCHOOL ROCKS: POLICYMAKERS AROUND THE COUNTRY ARE INVESTING IN PRESCHOOL

Excerpt from *State Legislatures* magazine, National Conference of State Legislatures

States are on the move with preschool. Thirty-one have increased funding – more than \$1 billion in the past two years. Illinois and West Virginia are joining Florida, Georgia, and Oklahoma in making sure preschool is available to all children whose parents want it, not just for low-income families. Other states are targeting children most at-risk of school failure. And some states are establishing task forces to look at what they can do. But most are doing something.

Research on brain development, concerns about how many children come to kindergarten already behind their peers, and countless studies about the benefits of preschool have made the years before kindergarten a new focus of attention for governors, legislators, economists, doctors, law enforcement officials and researchers. One approach states are taking is to create or expand preschool programs. Forty states now have state-funded prekindergarten programs.

The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study of 22,000 children found that children who start school behind, stay behind. Brain researchers and child development experts know that cognitive

skills and behaviors are developed very early in life. And they are finding that the achievement gap that's there at the start of kindergarten doesn't go away.

Kids who go to good preschools are less apt to end up in special education classes, repeat a grade or get in trouble with the law. Experts say investing in preschools can increase graduation rates, college attendance and lifetime earnings.

This article appeared in its entirety in the January 2007 issue of State Legislatures, a publication of the National Conference of State Legislatures. It was authored by Steffanie Clothier and Julie Poppe.

ADDITIONAL PRE-K RESOURCES

- National Institute for Early Education Research, www.nieer.org
- National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, www.nectac.org
- National Task Force on Early Childhood Education for Hispanics, www.ecehispanic.org
- Pre-K Now, www.preknow.org
- Starting at 3, www.startingat3.org

INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT: IRELAND INVESTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Ireland's remarkable economic growth has dwarfed their peer European Union countries, and higher education is at the heart of the discussion concerning economic sustainability. In the Winter 2007 issue of "National Crosstalk," published by The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, Ireland's efforts to invest in higher education, and in science and technology in particular, is investigated.

To read the full article, "The Celtic Tiger: Ireland Invests Heavily in Higher Education, and Benefits Mightily," visit http://www.womeningovernment.org/highered/higher_education_info.asp



Kate Crisham, Graduate Fellow, Women In Government Access to Higher Education Policy Research Center, has prepared and contributed to this edition of AccessEd.

RESOURCES ON HIGHER EDUCATION

- **Education Commission of the States Launches New Research Database**
<http://www.ecs.org/rs/>
- **Lumina Foundation for Education**
<http://www.luminafoundation.org>
- **KnowHow2Go Campaign**
<http://www.knowhow2go.org>
- **Education Sector**
<http://www.edsector.org>
- **National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education**
<http://www.highereducation.org>

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you would like more information on access to higher education issues, or to receive a free copy of Women In Government's Legislative Toolkit, please call the InfoLine at 1-888-333-0164 or email at highered@womeningovernment.org. You can also visit our website at: www.womeningovernment.org/highered.

Women In Government is a national 501(c)(3), non-profit, bi-partisan organization of women state legislators providing leadership opportunities, networking, expert forums, and educational resources to address and resolve complex public policy issues.

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