



# Mobilization Toolkit

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## Core Message and Talking Points

### CORE MESSAGE

Every student – of every race and every income level – needs quality education beyond high school. Right now, nearly half of all students who begin a college or credential program do not graduate within six years. In the coming decade, nearly two-thirds of all new jobs will require some level of education beyond high school. But, only 40 percent of Americans currently earn an associate or bachelor’s degree by age 27. Change is possible with straightforward solutions that help more students afford college and that better align college programs with the needs of students and the workforce. Now is the time to act!

### TALKING POINTS

**Every student – of every race and every income level – needs quality education beyond high school.**

Every year, millions of students work hard to earn their place in a degree or credential program. But **nearly half of those students are unable to graduate** within six years, in part, because our system does not provide them with the supports needed to succeed academically while balancing life, family and work demands.

**Our economy needs more college graduates now.** Today, 97 million U.S. jobs require high-level skills while only 45 million Americans currently qualify for such positions.

**We all stand to benefit from increasing completion.** If we can boost the number of Americans completing college degree and credential programs, we will:

- Decrease unemployment and provide millions of people and families with the opportunity to live better lives.
- Increase America’s competitiveness globally.
- Improve society, as college graduates are more likely to vote and get involved in their communities.

**The gap between job requirements and workers’ skills is growing.** In the coming decade, nearly two-thirds of all new jobs will require some level of college education. But today, only 40 percent of Americans earn an associate or bachelor’s degree by age 27.

**Some people are impacted much more than others.** In 2010, the unemployment rate for those with just a high school diploma was about 10 percent, compared to about 5 percent for those with a bachelor’s degree. The ethnic and racial groups with the least college education also have the highest rates of unemployment.



**We all have an interest in creating change right now.** The fastest growing segments of our society include those from underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds and are also those with the lowest educational attainment. By 2019, a majority of the U.S. population under 18 will be comprised of African-American, Asian-American and Pacific Islander, Hispanic and other non-White youth.

The continued growth of minority populations in the United States, paired with the need for a more educated workforce in the future means that **these groups' success in college is relevant to all of us.** Everyone, from federal and state elected officials to community and technical college administrators, needs to do more to support students.

**Today's student is different from students of prior generations.** Today's students are older, juggle more demands on their time and come from more diverse economic and ethnic backgrounds compared with students from 50 years ago. In fall 2009, 19 percent of all undergraduates attending four-year schools part-time were students 25 and older. Among those attending two-year schools part-time, 30 percent were students 25 and older while more low-income, minority and first-generation-to-college students are entering college than ever before.

**A student-centered approach is critical.** Solutions should take into account the mobility of today's student – not the student of fifty years ago. Solutions must also align quality curriculum with the needs of today's workforce.

**Change is possible through straightforward solutions.** 1) Policymakers must ensure that investments and budget decisions are in line with the national priorities of graduating more students and building our workforce. 2) Higher education institutions must align their educational programs with the current and future needs of students and the workforce to keep America competitive.

**Celebrate, Elevate, Activate.** This is the NCCC approach to increasing completion: We're celebrating those higher education institutions that are helping students succeed; elevating the importance of the issue among policymakers and education leaders; and activating the communities outside of the education sector in a powerful, coordinated way. Now is the time to act!

## **ABOUT NCCC**

The National Coalition for College Completion is a diverse, nonpartisan group representing business, civil rights, community-based, faith-based, labor, student and youth advocacy organizations. The purpose of the Coalition is to be the voice of stakeholders outside the education sector in support of federal and state programs, policies and funding to increase college completion. In addition, the Coalition urges support for best practices of higher education institutions, of states and of communities that are transforming the post-secondary experience to better sustain today's students.



## Sample Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**DATE**

**CONTACT:**  
**NAME**  
**XXX-XXX-XXXX**

### **[ORGANIZATION] Brings Message of College Completion Crisis to [LAWMAKERS/ EDUCATION LEADERS]**

*More college grads needed now for our economy to recover*

**PLACE** – Today, in response to our nation’s urgent need for more college graduates, **[members/staff]** of **[Organization]** reached out to **[lawmakers/education leaders]** in **[CITY]**. The message: We need more college graduates now, and that requires better supports to help low-income and minority students finish an education beyond high school.

“College” can refer to any quality education program beyond high school, whether it is a traditional four-year degree, a two-year degree, a recognized credential or certificate or even a structured apprenticeship. It is anything that provides specific training to prepare students for a productive career.

“Twenty years ago, the focus was on helping more students get into college,” said **NAME, TITLE of ORG.** “And that was and continues to be important work. But it’s not enough. We must do more to help students graduate once they get in to college. That’s why we’re doing this outreach.”

According to the latest data, *nearly half* of all four-year college students are not graduating within six years. The numbers are even lower for those attending community college. Low rates of completion have a direct and alarming impact on the U.S. economy. Today, 97 million U.S. jobs require high-level skills, but only 45 million Americans currently qualify for such positions. In the coming decade, two-thirds of all new jobs will require some level of college education. Our current workforce does not have the skills to fill these new jobs. **[INSERT STATE OR INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC STATS, IF APPLICABLE]**

“Boosting college completion is critical to our economy, our current recovery and future growth, especially as more and more of our workforce comes from minority and low-income backgrounds in the coming years,” said **NAME, TITLE** of **DIFFERENT ORG.** “Helping more students complete their degree is the right – and smart – thing to do.”

To make a real difference, we all must recognize the realities faced by students of today—not the students of 20 or even 10 years ago. For example, more students today work while attending college than ever before. Among those attending a four-year college, 45 percent work more than 20 hours per week. The number is even higher among two-year college students, with 60 percent working more than 20 hours per week and more than a quarter working full-time. Today’s students differ in other ways as well, as only 25 percent live on-campus in “traditional” college settings, and nearly a quarter have



children and juggle parental duties along with their education. Real change will require making college more affordable to students and aligning college programs with the reality and needs of today's students and the workforce.

"For too long, we have thought of it as the student's fault if he or she didn't finish college," said **NAME, TITLE** of **ORG**. But the trends are far too large *not* to view this as a systemic problem. It's not a question of student motivation or dedication; it's the lack of supports to help students succeed academically while balancing work and family."

Even in the midst of the current fiscal crisis, it is essential that college completion be a priority and that programs supporting students stay strong. Otherwise, we risk creating an even larger gap between the needs of the workplace and the skills of the labor force, and that will have dire consequences for our economy.

###

**[ORGANIZATION]** is part of the National Coalition for College Completion, a group of leaders from outside the education space, including business, civil rights, community-based, student and youth advocacy organizations, ranging from CEOs for Cities and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America to the National Urban League and mobilize.org. The Coalition is especially focused on helping more minority and low-income students finish college, as those students are also the fastest growing segments of our society and the populations with the lowest educational attainment. Other partners in the Coalition are also reaching out to lawmakers and education leaders at the federal, state and local level, all across the country. Learn more at [FinishHigherEd.org](http://FinishHigherEd.org).

**INSERT ORG BOILERPLATE IF APPLICABLE**



## NCCC Op-Ed How-To

An op-ed (short for opposite the editorial page) is an outside submission accepted by most daily and weekly newspapers, magazines and websites for publication in their opinion section. It is most likely to be accepted if the writer is an expert or represents an organization whose position is relevant to the issue, so you should be sure to designate your affiliation.

### Here are a few pointers to help you compose your op-ed:

- Feel free to **use NCCC's official talking points** which include relevant facts and statistics to support your argument.
- Check the news outlet's website for op-ed submission guidelines, including a word count limit. Unless otherwise noted, keep your submission to **fewer than 750 words**.
- In your first paragraph, focus intensely on the main issue – **make your strongest point straightaway**, then prove that point as the op-ed progresses.
- Direct the reader to [www.FinishHigherEd.org](http://www.FinishHigherEd.org) to get a full picture of the needs of today's students and information on how you can speak directly to leaders who are needed to create change NOW – for every student of every race and income level.
- **Use short, concise sentences** to maintain the reader's attention.
- Make sure that the position you take is clear. **Do not waver**, definitively take a side.
- **Partnering with a co-author who would not seem to be a natural ally**, but who agrees with your position on this issue, can make for a powerful op-ed. Be sure to focus on why you are both arguing for better support of college completion and do not focus on differences.
- **Personal anecdotes and metaphors** (e.g. popular culture, sports, movies) can help the reader better understand complex or detailed subject matter.

### A Few Logistical Tips:

- Closely **follow the newspaper's submission guidelines**. They usually appear at the bottom of the editorial page or on the publication's website.
- Include a short biography (if possible) and **contact information** (name, address, email) at the top of your submission.

### About NCCC

The National Coalition for College Completion is a diverse, nonpartisan group representing business, civil rights, community-based, faith-based, labor, student and youth advocacy organizations. The purpose of the Coalition is to be the voice of stakeholders outside the education sector in support of federal and state programs, policies, and funding to increase college completion. In addition, the Coalition urges support for best practices of higher education institutions, of states, and of communities that are transforming the post-secondary experience to better sustain today's students.



## NCCC Sample Op-Ed

### COLLEGE COMPLETION: HOW TO ENSURE AMERICA'S INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS

*Summer.* For some who recently obtained college degrees, summer means savoring the last few weeks or months of “freedom” until they officially enter the workforce. Even in a tight economy, statistics still indicate they are in-demand and a job is on the way. It’s a different story for hundreds of thousands of students who have no degree at all – many who actually did the hard work of getting in to college but couldn’t finish. Their schools didn’t give them the support needed to balance education with outside demands. Nearly half of all students pursuing education beyond high school are in this situation – they are not graduating. This is unacceptable.

Every year, millions of students work hard to earn their place in a degree or credential program. But more than half of those students are unable to graduate within six years because our system does not provide them with the supports needed to succeed academically while balancing life, family and work demands.

How do these facts connect to the workforce and our economy? Well, in the coming decade, two-thirds of all new jobs will require some level of college education. Our current workforce does not have the skills to fill these jobs. Worse, the fastest growing segments of our society, including those from underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds, are also those with the lowest percentage of college degrees.

***[Insert a paragraph describing your personal connection to the issue. Are you a teacher? Parent? Student? Community leader? A concerned citizen who recognizes the importance of college completion? If possible, include a personal story involving you or your community. This can help the reader better understand and identify with the issue.]***

Fortunately, there are many examples of proven solutions to the challenges of college completion and workforce preparation being implemented all around the country. For example, the University of Texas-El Paso (UTEP) created the Promise Plan, a financial aid program covering all tuition and fees for low-income students. The program features several academic and economic prerequisites. Most importantly, it is only available for students who attend UTEP for four consecutive years – incentivizing students to finish college on-time.

Another solution enables our workforce to be able to react quickly and align to the ever-changing, international economy, through continuing education and adult learning programs. The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) offers training centers which focus on continuing education in areas like information technology, cyber security and engineering. Programs like those offered at UMBC provide a crucial and effective blueprint for our country to follow. ***[Consider replacing these examples of promising practices with one in your state. Contact NCCC if you need help finding one.]***



Additionally, organizations like the National Coalition for College Completion (NCCC) have worked to shed a brighter light onto the issue of college completion and workforce alignment. To get a full picture of the needs of today's students and information on how you can directly affect change, visit [www.FinishHigherEd.org](http://www.FinishHigherEd.org).

Most importantly, tap the easy-to-use tool on the website to contact your member of congress, individual policymakers, higher education institutions and anyone else who can help our country keep pace with other leaders throughout the world.

Every student of every race and every income level needs quality education beyond high school. This is a readily attainable goal that we all should strive to achieve.

[NAME]

[TITLE; ORGANIZATION]

###



## Template Letter to the Editor

A letter to the editor is generally sent in response to an editorial, op-ed or article published in a local or national newspaper. In this case, consider responding to a piece about education, the economy or the U.S. workforce.

You must include your name, address and daytime telephone number when submitting a letter to the editor. Visit your local paper's website for full details on what is required to have your letter considered for publication.

[DATE]

Dear Editor,

[SELECT LEAD]

### Educator

As an educator for the past [XX] years, I understand the importance of completing a secondary degree. In today's economy, I also understand how difficult it can be for today's students and parents to pull together enough money to pay for college.

### Parent

When I send (sent) my child off to college, I do (did) not want to worry about whether or not he/she will finish school. Saying goodbye to your child for the first time is difficult enough without having to think about his/her long-term career prospects without a degree.

### Student

As a student, my college experience shouldn't be defined by worry – worry each semester about whether I have enough money to pay for tuition, books or even food; or worry that my school doesn't give me the flexibility I need to juggle life, family and work demands. Unfortunately, for many students, this is their reality. And as a result, too many students are not graduating from college.

I noted with interest your recent [EDITORIAL/ARTICLE/OP-ED] about [EDUCATION/THE WORK FORCE] entitled [INSERT HEADLINE]. I believe that to compete in an increasingly competitive and international workforce, students of all social and financial backgrounds need a quality education beyond high school. Without an influx of college graduates into the U.S. economy, there will be too few people to fill the vacuum of talent that today's job market requires.

The student body today is very different from prior generations. Most students today do not attend the four-year residential college typically envisioned. Today's students are more ethnically and socioeconomically diverse. They fit college into their lives, along with work, family and other outside demands.



With these new realities, more than half of college students are unable to graduate within six years because our system does not provide them with the adequate supports needed to balance coursework with the many demands outside of school. We can and should do more to help our students – that includes rethinking the way institutions make financial aid available while also ensuring that colleges better align their curriculum with the needs of today’s workforce.

For the first time in U.S. history, a generation of Americans will be less educated than the generation before them –unless we act now! I urge any reader who cares about our country’s current and future competitiveness to visit [www.FinishHigherEd.org](http://www.FinishHigherEd.org) for a full picture of the needs of today’s students and information on how you can speak directly to leaders who are needed to create change NOW – for every student of every race and income level.

Sincerely,

[NAME]



## **Sample Letter to a Policymaker**

U.S. Senators /Representatives  
The Honorable (full name)  
United States Senate / House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510 /20515

Dear Senator/Representative (last name),

The federal Pell Grant program is the foundation of student need-based aid in the United States. Without this program, many students would lose the opportunity to attend college. This hurts both their economic prospects and the country's. People with college degrees are only half as likely to be unemployed as those without a degree. It is critical that Congress maintain the long-term sustainability of the Pell program while ensuring it meets the needs of an evolving student population.

To address shortfalls in the program, Congress and the administration have proposed either cutting the maximum grant or decreasing the program's flexibility by not allowing it to be used for summer classes or by students enrolled less than part time. Neither option serves the students. In 1972, the maximum Pell grant bought three times more college than it buys now. Additionally, flexibility in the program is not only important for accelerating time to graduation, it is also vital for non-traditional students who now represent the majority of our nation's college population. In fact, 60 percent of Pell grants go to students who are financially independent from their parents. Rather than cutting the Pell grant's buying power further, we encourage you to find ways to improve the long-term sustainability of the program.

Additionally, Congress should explore ways to hold institutions accountable for ensuring that low-income students complete the credential for which they enrolled. For example, the program could be changed to provide interventions for schools that fail to graduate a certain percentage of Pell students. Alternatively, Congress could consider giving institutions bonuses for each student who successfully completes.

The Pell Grant program helps provide equal opportunity to a quality education and is also an investment in human capital that otherwise might be left undeveloped. We urge you to maintain the federal commitment to the Pell Grant program and ensure its long-term stability. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter, and please do not hesitate to contact me for additional information on this topic. I look forward to hearing more about your position on this issue.

Sincerely,

# AFFORDABILITY

Due to dramatically rising tuition costs, students around the country are increasingly dependent on financial aid and are in need of guidance on how to access it. At the same time, federal and state budgets are being stretched, and policymakers are proposing ways to decrease public spending, including by cutting or eliminating crucial student aid programs. As these policy conversations progress, it is important to explore options that align public investments at the federal, state and institutional levels with focused attention on keeping college affordable and increasing degree completion.

The National Coalition for College Completion urges policymakers and institutional leaders to take immediate action:

- **Provide financial aid information to parents and students early and often.** Getting clear information about aid eligibility and costs to students, starting in middle school, can significantly increase college access. Students and parents — especially first-generation college students — need a realistic view about college costs and eligibility for financial aid. To help students and parents plan, states like Washington, Indiana, Oklahoma, Nevada and North Carolina have implemented statewide college access marketing campaigns to educate citizens on available financial aid resources and information.
- **Simplify financial aid.** The many financial aid programs at both the state and federal levels can be confusing for even the savviest students. For families without a strong college-going tradition or support from guidance counselors, it can be downright daunting. States and the federal government can align eligibility requirements, combine programs and simplify financial aid applications to improve the process and lower this significant barrier to education.
- **Increase state commitment to need-based student aid.** Limited state resources for financial aid should be targeted towards students with the greatest need. College costs are a significant barrier to low-income students attending and completing college, while students with higher incomes tend to go to college regardless of financial aid. Given this fact, states should include a need-based component in all student financial aid programs. A robust state need-based aid program is vital to fill the gap left by the Pell grant and to create incentives for underrepresented students to graduate.

## POLICY IN ACTION

### WASHINGTON STATE'S COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CHALLENGE:

Increasing enrollment rates for Washington's College Bound Scholarship (Covering in-state public college tuition for low-income students who meet academic and citizenship requirements)

**SOLUTION:** Washington's efforts focus on providing information about aid early to low-income students, who sign up for the program in seventh or eighth grade. To raise awareness, Washington has produced a statewide media campaign on signing up for the scholarship and other aid, tripled the number of 'College Goal Sunday' sites and engaged in school-based efforts to increase enrollment. As a result of these efforts, enrollment in the College Bound Scholarship has increased significantly.<sup>1</sup>

**OKLAHOMA'S PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP CHALLENGE:** Increasing the number of Oklahoma residents enrolling at an in-state, public four-year institution

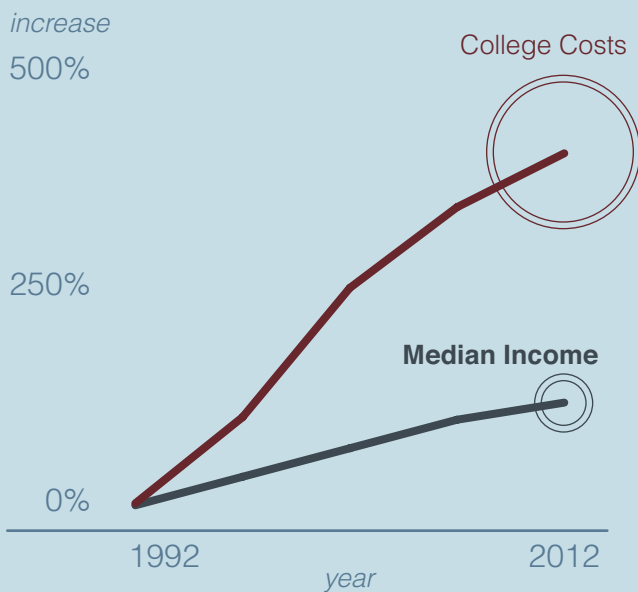
**SOLUTION:** Oklahoma created the Promise Scholarship which covers the full cost of tuition at an in-state, public four-year institution. The state is clear in its commitment to students: They will pay for college if students prepare, keep up their grades and are in need. The program encourages students to apply in eighth grade and gets middle school students thinking about college early on. The scholarship further encourages completion by funding students for a maximum of five years. And, the Promise Scholarship is working. Eighty-two percent of students who complete the Promise course of study enroll in college compared to 57 percent of the general high school population.<sup>2</sup>

**MARYLAND EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY INITIATIVE CHALLENGE:** Lowering costs for students and Maryland institutions of higher education

**SOLUTION:** Maryland froze tuition at its University System for 5 years between 2005 and 2010, redesigned basic courses, increased teaching loads and increased transfer rates, which steers students towards less expensive campuses. The ongoing efforts have saved the system \$130 million and saved significantly more money through cost avoidance.<sup>3</sup>

- **Ensure the long-term sustainability and purchase power of Pell Grants.** To ensure the long-term sustainability of the Pell Grant program, the federal government should take action in two important areas:
  1. hold institutions accountable for ensuring that low-income students complete the credential for which they enrolled; and
  2. rethink the way financial aid eligibility is determined, so low-income students receive the support they need to complete their degree.
- **Restrain college costs, minimize tuition increases and help keep student debt within reasonable limits.** College prices are increasing at four times the rate of inflation.<sup>4</sup> This growth is not sustainable for American families and restricts access for students who need it most. We must continue to encourage institutions to address their costs and keep tuition low. Increased tuition should be a last resort rather than the default way to deal with budget pressures.

College costs have risen more than 400 percent in the last 25 years, while the median family income has increased less than 150 percent<sup>5</sup>



Sources:

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- 2 College Productivity, "Oklahoma's Promise": Free Tuition For Students Who Take Strong High School Courses" factsheet, HCM Strategists. [http://collegeproductivity.org/sites/default/files/Oklahoma's\\_Promise\\_0.pdf](http://collegeproductivity.org/sites/default/files/Oklahoma's_Promise_0.pdf)
- 3 National Governors Association, "Ready for Tomorrow: Helping All Students Achieve Secondary and Postsecondary Success" guide, Kazis, Pennington and Conklin, 2010. <http://www.nga.org/cda/files/0310READY.pdf>
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- 4 CNN Money, "Is college still worth the price?" article, Wang, 2009. [http://money.cnn.com/2008/08/20/pf/college/college\\_price.moneymag/w](http://money.cnn.com/2008/08/20/pf/college/college_price.moneymag/w)
- 5 The National Center for Public Policy and Education, "Measuring Up 2008" report, 2008
- 6 U.S. Department of Education, "Federal Pell Grant Program End-of-Year Report," 2008. <http://www2.ed.gov/finaid/prof/resources/data/pell-2007-08/pell-eoy-07-08.pdf>
- 7 Public Agenda, "With Their Whole Lives Ahead of Them" report, Johnson and Rochkind, 2009. <http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/theirwholivesaheadofthem.pdf>

The average Pell grant<sup>6</sup> received in 2008:

\$2,648

Covered only:

13% of the cost of a 4-year education

- or -

33% of the cost of a 2-year education

About 7 in 10 of those who leave school report that they did not have scholarships or financial aid,

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

compared with about 4 in 10 of those who graduate.<sup>7</sup>

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

# WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT

National research on education and workforce trends shows that low-income and other underrepresented populations not only have much lower college persistence and graduation rates than their peers, but they also experience lower success rates in the labor market. These outcomes persist even though many students have overcome tough odds and worked hard to earn their place in school. Better alignment between postsecondary courses of study and the workforce needs of an evolving economy can help ensure that students leave college prepared.

The National Coalition for College Completion urges policymakers and institutional leaders to take immediate action:

- **Continue support for the Department of Labor grant programs and encourage innovative applications for these funds.** To address the gap between the job skills needed in today's economy and current postsecondary programs of study, the U.S. Department of Labor will award approximately \$500 million in grants this year and a total of \$2 billion over the next four years.<sup>1</sup> These funds will support the development and improvement of postsecondary programs of two years or less. These programs must use evidence-based or innovative strategies to prepare students for careers in growing and emerging industries such as the health and green technologies fields. This federal policy lever for alignment is a key tool to ensure there is a feedback loop between higher education and the skills needed for employment.
- **Support more effective collaboration between the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Labor.** Though both of these federal agencies have workforce training programs, they fail to effectively coordinate. With different measures of student success, the departments fail to promote the best outcomes with their programs. The agencies should develop similar benchmarks and requirements.
- **Establish industry and higher education partnerships that align workforce needs with the skills that students are learning in college.** During this "great recession," 30 percent of unemployment can be attributed to a mismatch between available jobs and the skills of unemployed Americans.<sup>2</sup> We need to significantly upgrade the skills of our population. One way to do this is to create partnerships between businesses and higher education to align curriculum and degree programs to the needs of employers. Done well, such partnerships can provide broad skills that will enrich the economy and increase employment.

## POLICY IN ACTION

**WASHINGTON STATE'S CHALLENGE:** To increase earnings for adult students who participate in adult basic education or in a limited number of college classes

**SOLUTION:** Washington State implemented the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program (I-BEST) in its community colleges. The program pairs English language and adult basic instruction with college-level technical instruction, giving students valuable technical job training while enhancing basic skills. This pairing allows students to immediately apply newly acquired skills in the workforce. A study of the program found that I-BEST students achieved at higher levels than other basic skills students. They were more likely to continue their studies, earn a certificate and improve basic skills.<sup>3</sup>

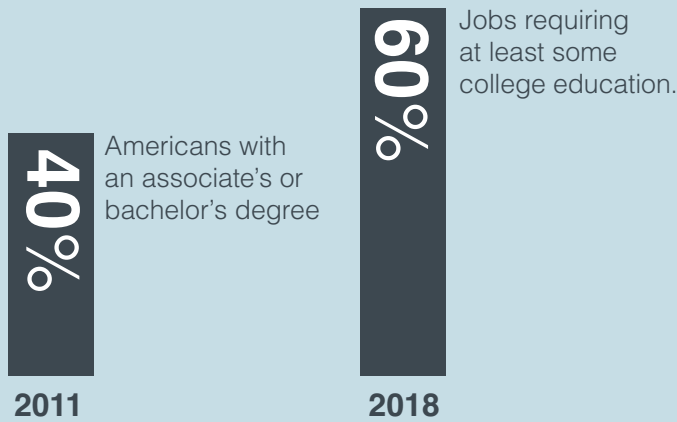
**SOUTH CAROLINA'S CHALLENGE:** To better align education with economic development in the state

**SOLUTION:** South Carolina established the Strategic Compass program, which provides workforce development agencies, K-12 education, higher education and guidance counselors a simple dashboard with data that facilitates just-in-time decision making, analysis and planning. Users can track trends in industry and demand for occupations. They also can identify the education and training necessary for each occupation and monitor whether current programs are meeting industry demand.<sup>4</sup>

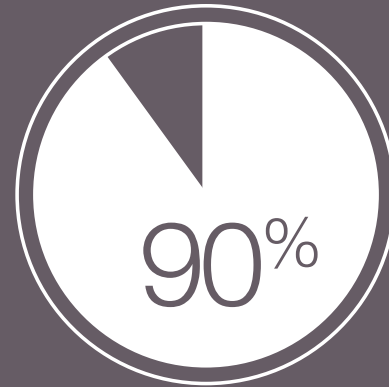
**VERIZON WIRELESS and PIMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S (ARIZONA) CHALLENGE:** To provide better flexible education and training to a nationwide technical workforce

**SOLUTION:** Over the last 10 years, Verizon Wireless and Pima Community College have worked together to provide training for technical support staff and retail staff at 2,400 stores and 34 call centers. The partnership offers training in everything from industry certifications to English as a second language. For the technical support staff, much of the course work translates into college credit providing them with a base of credit for further college-level work.<sup>5</sup>

By 2018, over 60 percent of jobs will require at least some college education. Today, only 40 percent of Americans have earned an associate's or bachelor's degree by age 27.<sup>6</sup>



90 percent of jobs in the fastest growing occupational groups require postsecondary education.<sup>7</sup>



Demand for workers with college educations will outpace supply to the tune of 300,000 per year. By 2018, the postsecondary system will have produced 3 million fewer college graduates than demanded by the labor market.<sup>8</sup>



Sources:

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- 3 Education Commission of the States, "Revving the Education Engine" report, Vandal, 2009. <http://www.ecs.org/docs/RevvingEdEngine.pdf>
- 4 Education Commission of the States, "Revving the Education Engine" report, Vandal, 2009. <http://www.ecs.org/docs/RevvingEdEngine.pdf>
- 5 Corporate Voices for Working Families, "From an 'Ill-Prepared' to a Well-Prepared Workforce, The Shared Imperatives for Employers and Community Colleges To Collaborate" report, Walton and Siu, 2011. [http://corporatevoices.org/system/files/u822/CVWF\\_III\\_Prepared\\_UPDATED\\_2011.pdf](http://corporatevoices.org/system/files/u822/CVWF_III_Prepared_UPDATED_2011.pdf)
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