



EXECUTIVE BRIEFING FOR ATI PRESIDENTS

Summary:

- Today, a college degree is more critical than ever, and it's incumbent upon educational institutions to ensure that talented students from every part of society have access to an excellent education.
- Unfortunately, at present, too few students from low- and moderate-income backgrounds have access to the full breadth of higher education opportunities available.
- The American Talent Initiative brings together a diverse set of public and private institutions committed to:
 - Enhancing individual efforts to reach out to and enroll lower-income students
 - Learning from each other about how best to support lower-income students
 - Sharing what they learn to expand higher education access across hundreds of colleges and universities
- As of April 25, 2017, 68 leading state flagship, Ivy League, private universities and liberal arts colleges have joined the initiative. The membership is incredibly diverse, representing 26 different states, 5 different Carnegie Classes, and a wide range of institution sizes.

What is at Stake?

- Highly-talented lower-income students are much less likely to graduate with a college degree than their high-income peers.
- When qualified high-achieving, lower-income students attend top colleges and universities, their probability of graduating increases significantly, as do their potential earnings and long-term quality of life.

What is at Stake? (cont.)

- These students have earned the opportunity to enroll in institutions with the highest graduation rates and best track records for post-graduate success, but for a variety of reasons—a lack of information about their options, confusion about costs, inadequate financial aid offers—many of them simply lack access.
- Our nation and our economy benefit from cultivating and supporting talented young people from every zip code and income level. Growing disparities in household income make equal opportunity for all talented Americans one of our nation’s most important goals, and ATI seeks to be part of the solution.

What do we aim to accomplish?

- The American Talent Initiative was founded with one central, ambitious goal: by the year 2025, attract, enroll, and graduate 50,000 additional high-achieving, lower-income students at the nation’s 270 colleges and universities with the highest graduation rates by 2025.
- ATI is a long-term alliance between the nation’s top college and universities and the philanthropy and research communities designed to increase the enrollment and success of talented lower-income students while, at the same time, catalyzing broad public awareness about this critical issue and proven solutions.
- While there are many good examples of progress and best practice at individual institutions, an alliance like ATI can—through collective learning and shared commitment—bring about a scale of national change that no institution can accomplish alone.

Who we are:

- ATI is a Bloomberg Philanthropies-supported collaboration between the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program, Ithaca S+R, and a growing alliance of top colleges and universities committed to expanding access and opportunity for lower-income students.
- As of April 25, 2017, 68 leading state flagship, Ivy League, private universities and liberal arts colleges have committed to resolving this national imperative together (see list of members below).
- To maximize the initiative’s reach and impact, in the years to come, ATI aims to expand, including at least 100 more of the 270 colleges and universities with six-year graduation rates consistently above 70 percent.
- Each year, we will reassess institutional eligibility for ATI using the most recently available data in order to expand the reach of our collective work, as well as to incentivize institutions to improve graduation rates to gain full access to our growing knowledge-sharing community.

How Will We Accomplish Our Goals?

The American Talent Initiative will focus on three major areas of activity:

- **Committing to Visible Goals:** To contribute to the shared goal of an additional 50,000 lower-income students, Members commit to stepping up their own efforts to recruit, support, enroll lower-income students and ensure that they thrive on campus, graduate, and are positioned to succeed after college.
- **Facilitating Research and Knowledge Sharing:** To inform our collective actions and activities, members will share what they learn about making progress toward this goal with one another and with the broader higher education community and the public. Members will also report data on lower-income student enrollment and success, so that ATI can measure its aggregate progress on an annual basis.
- **A Sustained National Campaign:** To amplify the impact of our individual and collective actions, ATI members will lead the way in contributing to a national campaign that unites leaders around the importance of socioeconomic diversity on college campuses and motivates those in and beyond the membership to act on this important issue.

American Talent Initiative Participating Institutions (<i>*members joining in January–April 2017</i>)	
Allegheny College*	Rice University
Amherst College	Rutgers University*
Bard College*	Saint Michael’s College*
Bates College	Smith College*
Baylor University*	Spelman College
Brown University*	Stanford University
Bucknell University*	Swarthmore College*
California Institute of Technology*	The Ohio State University
Carleton College*	University of California, Berkeley
Claremont McKenna College*	University of California, Davis*
Colby College*	University of California, Irvine*
Columbia University*	University of California, Los Angeles
Cornell University*	University of Denver*
Dartmouth College	University of Maryland, College Park
Davidson College	University of Massachusetts, Amherst*
Dickinson College*	University of Miami*
Duke University	University of Michigan - Ann Arbor
Elizabethtown College*	University of Minnesota*
Fordham University*	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Franklin & Marshall College	University of Pennsylvania*
Georgetown University	University of Richmond
Georgia Institute of Technology	University of South Carolina*
Gettysburg College*	University of Southern California*
Harvard University	University of Texas at Austin
Johns Hopkins University	University of Virginia*
Kenyon College*	University of Washington
Lafayette College*	Vanderbilt University
Lawrence University*	Vassar College
Lebanon Valley College*	Wake Forest University*
Lehigh University	Washington University in St. Louis
Marist College*	Wesleyan University*
New York University*	Williams College
Pomona College	Wofford College*
Princeton University	Yale University

Questions? Please contact Tania LaViolet, Senior Program Manager at the Aspen Institute (tania.laviolet@aspeninstitute.org), and Elizabeth Davidson Pisacreta, Senior Researcher at Ithaka S+R (elizabeth.pisacreta@ithaka.org).