**EMBARGOED: HOLD FOR RELEASE AT 12:01 AM EASTERN TIME ON APRIL 25, 2017**

**[INSERT YOUR INSTITUTION] JOINS GROWING ALLIANCE OF COLLEGES WORKING TO EXPAND ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY FOR 50,000 TALENTED LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME STUDENTS**

***American Talent Initiative brings together 68 of nation’s most respected colleges and universities committed to attracting, enrolling, and graduating more high-achieving, lower-income students***

**WASHINGTON, D.C. AND NEW YORK, N.Y.** -- (***For release at 12:01 a.m., April 25, 2016***) -- **[INSERT YOUR INSTITUTION]** joined sixty-seven of the nation’s most respected colleges and universities in an alliance to substantially expand the number of talented low- and moderate-income students at America’s undergraduate institutions with the highest graduation rates. This growing alliance, called t[he American Talent Initiative](http://www.americantalentinitiative.org/) (ATI), supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, brings together a diverse set of public and private institutions united in this common goal. ATI members will enhance their own efforts to recruit, enroll, and support lower-income students, learn from each other, and contribute to research that will help other colleges and universities expand opportunity. (See below for a list of ATI members.)

**[INSERT QUOTE FROM YOUR INSTITUTION’S PRESIDENT]**

Launched in December 2016, the American Talent Initiative is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies and was founded with a national goal of educating 50,000 additional high-achieving, lower-income students at the 270 colleges and universities with the highest graduation rates by 2025. Based on the most recent federal data available, there are approximately 430,000 lower-income students enrolled at these 270 institutions. ATI’s goal is to increase and sustain the total number of lower-income students attending these top-performing colleges to about 480,000 by 2025. To reach this ambitious goal, ATI aims to add more top-performing colleges to its membership in the coming months and years.

**[INSERT YOUR INSTITUTION]** recognizes that America’s top-performing colleges have an important role to play in this effort. Research shows that when high-achieving, lower-income students attend these institutions, they graduate at higher rates, and access to those institutions provides them with a much greater chance of attaining leadership positions and opportunity throughout their lives. Yet in each graduating high school class, there are at least 12,500 lower-income young people with outstanding academic credentials who do not enroll at institutions where they have the greatest likelihood of graduating.

These students have earned the opportunity these schools offer, but for a variety of reasons—including a lack of information about their options, confusion about costs, and inadequate financial aid offers—many of them simply lack access. The American Talent Initiative seeks to ensure that these “missing” students have a path to attend and thrive at the institutions with the highest-graduation rates and best track records for post-graduate success.

Colleges and universities participating in theAmerican Talent Initiative will further the national goal of developing more talent from every American neighborhood by:

* Recruiting students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds through robust outreach;
* Ensuring that admitted lower-income students enroll and are retained through practices that have been shown to be effective;
* Prioritizing need-based financial aid; and
* Minimizing or eliminating gaps in progression and graduation rates between and among students from low-, moderate- and high-income families.

**[INSERT YOUR INSTITUTION]** and other ATI members will share lessons learned as well as institutional data, and throughout the coming the coming years, will annually publish their aggregate progress toward meeting the national goal of 50,000 additional lower- income students by 2025. The Aspen Institute’s College Excellence Program and Ithaka S+R, the two not-for-profit organizations coordinating the initiative, will study the practices that lead to measurable progress and share that knowledge with field through regular publications. The first of these publications focusing on financial strategies to bolster lower-income student success was published in February on the [ATI website](https://americantalentinitiative.org/research-publications/).

Member institutions of the American Talent Initiative ([http://www.americantalentinitiative.org](http://www.americantalentinitiative.org/)) are committing substantial resources to attract, enroll, and graduate students at their individual campuses. This initiative is co-managed by the Aspen Institute’s College Excellence Program ([www.aspeninstitute.org/college-excellence](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/college-excellence)) and Ithaka S+R ([www.sr.ithaka.org](http://www.sr.ithaka.org/)) and funded with an initial $1.7 million, multi-year grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies. Grant funding will be used for best-practice research and dissemination, convenings of college presidents and staff, and data analysis and reporting.

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| **American Talent Initiative Participating Institutions (*\*members joining in January–April 2017*)** | |
| 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 |