**EMBARGO:**

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**[INSTITUTION]Joins American Talent Initiative, Aiming to Educate More High-Achieving, Low-and Moderate-Income Students**

*[****INSTITUTION****] joins 100 institutions working to attract, enroll, and graduate high achieving, low- and moderate-income college students*

**[CITY, STATE] –**[**INSERT YOUR INSTITUTION**] announced today that it has joined the American Talent Initiative (ATI), partnering with top-performing institutions to commit to the collective goal of enrolling 50,000 additional talented, low- and moderate-income students at colleges and universities with strong graduation rates by 2025. As part of ATI, a Bloomberg Philanthropies initiative led by the Aspen Institute’s College Excellence Program and Ithaka S+R, [**INSERT YOUR INSTITUTION**] will develop strategies to attract, enroll, and support more high-achieving, lower- and moderate-income students from before they arrive on campus to graduation and beyond.

Launched in December 2016 with 30 institutions, ATI member institutions must meet the standard of graduating at least 70 percent of their students in six years. Membership in ATI now includes the entire Ivy League, 17 state flagship universities, and private colleges.

**[INSERT INFORMATION HERE ABOUT YOUR INSTITUTION’S COMMITMENT AND/OR ONGOING WORK]**

“Family income shouldn’t determine a child's chances of attending a top college — but too often, it does,” said **Michael R. Bloomberg**, founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies and three-term Mayor of New York City. “That's why we created the American Talent Initiative, and colleges have responded enthusiastically. They recognize that it benefits them as much as it does the students, and the more schools that join, the more it will benefit our country.”

**[INSERT A QUOTE HERE FROM YOUR INSTITUTION’S PRESIDENT.]**

As part of the national effort to increase opportunity for talented, low- and moderate-income students at top-performing colleges and universities, all member institutions are implementing several strategies designed to attract, enroll and graduate high-achieving, lower-income students, including:

* Identifying talented students through better recruitment of qualified high school graduates and high-achieving transfer students from community colleges and other schools;
* Increasing the number of applications from Pell-eligible students, the number of Pell-eligible students who are enrolled, and the number of first-generation students enrolled;
* Prioritizing need-based aid to make attendance more affordable; and
* Retaining and graduating lower-income students at rates comparable to their higher-income peers.

At this time, approximately 290 colleges and universities nationwide achieve a graduation rate of 70 percent of their students in six years. The initiative aims to increase the total number of low- and moderate-income students enrolled at these institutions by 50,000 - from about 480,000 to 530,000 students - by 2025. Member institutions of the American Talent Initiative commit substantial resources to increase opportunity for lower-income students, as well as collect institutional data which will be annually published to assess their aggregate progress toward meeting the 50,000-by-2025 national goal.

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**About Bloomberg Philanthropies:**

Bloomberg Philanthropies works in over 120 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg’s charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving. In 2017, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed $702 million. For more information, please visit [www.bloomberg.org](http://www.bloomberg.org/) or follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/bloombergdotorg), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/bloombergdotorg/), [Snapchat](http://snapchat.com/add/bloombergdotorg), and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/bloombergdotorg).

**About The Aspen Institute’s College Excellence Program:**

The Aspen Institute’s College Excellence Program ([www.aspeninstitute.org/college-excellence](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/college-excellence)) aims to advance higher education practices, policies, and leadership that significantly improve student outcomes. The Program is part of The Aspen Institute [www.aspeninstitute.org](http://www.aspeninstitute.org), which has a mission of fostering leadership based on enduring values and providing a nonpartisan venue for dealing with critical issues.

**About Ithaka S+R:**

Ithaka S+R ([www.sr.ithaka.org](http://www.sr.ithaka.org)) is a not-for-profit service that provides research and strategic guidance to help the academic and cultural communities serve the public good and navigate economic, technological, and demographic change. Ithaka S+R is part of ITHAKA ([www.ithaka.org](http://www.ithaka.org)).