



STRATEGIC PLAN 2013–2016 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE BIG GOAL

To increase the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees, certificates and other credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025.

THE NEED

The percentage of Americans between the ages of 25 and 64 with a two- or four-year degree is 38.3 percent. Yet we know that 65 percent of U.S. jobs will require some form of postsecondary education by 2020. To reach Goal 2025, the nation must produce 62 million high-quality degrees and credentials over the next 12 years.

At current rates, the U.S. will produce around 39 million two- and four-year college degrees by 2025, leaving a gap of **23 million**. To close that gap, we must join forces to expand access and success in education beyond high school, particularly among low-income and first-generation students, racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants, veterans and adults who have some college but lack a credential.

KEY LEARNING

In 2009, Lumina released its first four-year strategic plan based on the goal that 60 percent of Americans obtain a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential by 2025. Much has changed since then, and key lessons were learned that are reflected in Lumina's new strategic plan. For example:

- Goal 2025 is gaining widespread support and acceptance. The goal, or some version of it, has been formally adopted by or is a major influence on the federal government, most states, national higher education associations, many individual higher education institutions, and communities around the U.S., including several large metro areas.
- Progress on reaching Goal 2025 is being made slowly but steadily. In 2008, the attainment rate for *working-age* adults (ages 25-64) was 37.9 percent. It increased to 38.1 percent in 2009, and then to 38.3 percent for 2010, the most recent year for which data are available. In 2010, the higher education attainment rate of *young* adults (ages 25-34) was 39.3 percent, which is a good leading indicator of where overall attainment rates are headed.
- Fifty-five percent of high school graduates from the lowest income quintile enroll in college directly from high school, compared to 80 percent of those from the top quintile. Low-income students are more likely to attend institutions with lower graduation rates and attend part-time. As a result of all of these factors, four out of five 24-year-olds in the upper income quartile hold four-year college degrees, compared to only one out of ten in the lowest income quartile.
- The attainment rates across several racial and ethnic groups also remain challenging, especially for African Americans (24.7 percent), Hispanics (17.9 percent), and American Indians (16.9 percent). The attainment rate of immigrants tells a similar story. Because educated people earn more throughout their lives, these gaps in attainment exacerbate income inequality and threaten the health of our democracy.

- During the Great Recession of 2008-2010, four out of five jobs that were lost were held by Americans with a high school education or less. By comparison, Americans with a bachelor's degree or above steadily gained jobs during the recession and have seen an increase of more than 2 million jobs during the recovery that began in 2010.
- Most Americans now agree that, as a nation, we desperately need more citizens with postsecondary credentials. Perhaps the clearest evidence of that comes from the fact that many employers say they cannot find people with the skills they need to fill current job openings.
- Numerous economic, social and equity benefits are linked to increased education attainment. Progress toward achieving Goal 2025, will lead to: greater civic and social engagement, higher rates of voter participation and volunteerism, healthier lifestyles, less dependence on public assistance, and more.
- To reach Goal 2025, we need a student-centered education system that focuses on: 1) who will get the additional degrees; 2) what those degrees will represent in terms of learning, and 3) how the degrees will be delivered.

LUMINA'S NEW STRATEGIC PLAN: 2013-2016

As the nation's largest private foundation focused exclusively on getting more Americans into and through higher education, Lumina has a unique leadership opportunity — and responsibility — to help create a national sense of urgency for action in higher education and public policy to achieve Goal 2025. Lumina's new strategic plan outlines how the Foundation will approach its work to help the country reach Goal 2025 and better position America for success in the knowledge economy. Lumina has defined two high-level imperatives necessary for reaching the 60 percent attainment goal. While distinct, these imperatives are interrelated and mutually supportive.

The first — *Mobilizing to Reach Goal 2025* — is to mobilize action to increase education attainment at the local, state and national levels and in higher education institutions and other organizations throughout the nation. To reach the goal, thousands of educators (including faculty and administrators), elected officials, community leaders, business leaders and other citizens must understand and embrace the need to increase attainment.

Lumina's second strategic imperative — *Designing & Building a 21st Century Higher Education System* — is to develop specific approaches to create the fundamental change needed in higher education to reach the attainment goal. Specific structures within the U.S. higher education system — particularly finance and credentialing models — must be changed for attainment to increase to the levels required to reach the goal. Lumina will work to develop new models and to implement them throughout the higher education system.

The strategic roadmap defines mobilization strategies that include:

- Building a Goal 2025 social movement for target audiences by creating a call to action, building partnerships among stakeholder groups and developing a common language and plan of action around the need to significantly increase attainment.
- Working side by side with employers, metro areas and regions to encourage broader adoption of Goal 2025, create and strengthen the collaborative partnerships needed to increase attainment and more closely align postsecondary education with workforce and civic needs.
- Mobilizing higher education institutions and systems to increase the adoption of data- and evidence-based policies, partnerships and practices that closes attainment gaps for underserved students and improve overall completion rates.

- Advancing state policy for increased attainment by encouraging states to adopt formal goals and implementation plans that are specific, challenging and focused on addressing the attainment gaps for underrepresented populations.
- Advancing federal policy for increased attainment by developing a federal policy agenda that includes recommendations for linking federal workforce development and higher education policy, creating new models of student financial support, and advancing stronger public information and quality-assurance mechanisms.

The new strategic plan also includes strategies focused on designing and building a 21st Century higher education system, including:

- Creating new models of student financial support that make college more affordable, make costs more predictable and transparent, provide incentives to increase completion, and align federal, state and institutional policies and programs.
- Creating new higher education business and finance models that significantly expand the nation's capacity to deliver affordable, high-quality education — supported by public finance and regulatory policies that create incentives for, and remove barriers to, innovation.
- Creating new systems of quality credentials and credits defined by learning and competencies rather than time, clear and transparent pathways to students, high-quality learning, and alignment with workforce needs and trends.

The national demand for talent to power our economy and support our democracy is growing rapidly. The vast majority of that talent can only be attained in high-quality postsecondary education learning environments and will come overwhelmingly from low income, first generation, adults and students of color. Lumina Foundation will work over the next four years to help develop the talent necessary to spur economic growth, support lasting prosperity, and improve the quality of life for all Americans.

GOAL 2025

To increase the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees, certificates, and other credentials to 60% by the year 2025

LUMINA FOUNDATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2016

MOBILIZING TO REACH GOAL 2025

Mobilize action at the local, state and national levels to reach the goal of 60% higher education attainment.

Build a Goal 2025
Social Movement
to Increase
Attainment

Mobilize Employers,
Metro Areas and
Regions to Increase
Attainment

Mobilize Higher
Education to
Increase Student
Success

Advance State Policy
for Increased
Attainment

Advance Federal
Policy for Increased
Attainment

DESIGNING AND BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Develop specific models leading to the creation of a student-centered, learning-based system of higher education.

Help Create New
Models of Student
Financial Support

Help Create New
Higher Education
Business &
Finance Models

Help Create New
Systems of Quality
Credentials