

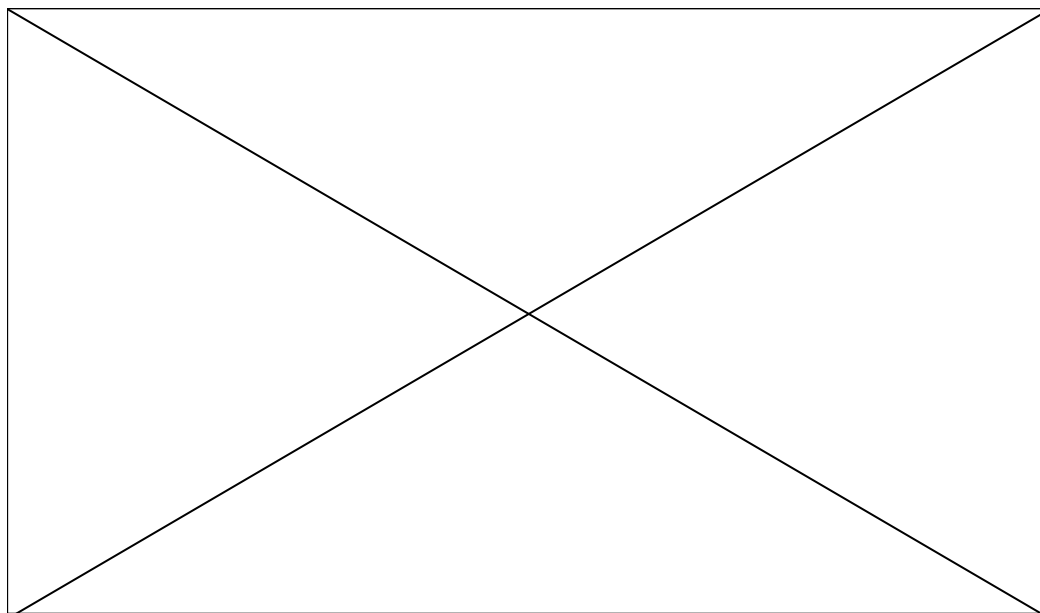


July 2012 | Why College Matters

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[Merisotis emphasizes the importance of postsecondary credentials at Aspen Ideas Festival](#)

Andrea Mitchell from NBC News sat down at the Aspen Ideas Festival with Lumina President/CEO Jamie Merisotis and Miami Dade College President Eduardo Padron to explore college-going options for today's students. [Watch the full session | 66 minutes »](#)



[A stronger South through higher education](#)

A talented workforce drives economic growth, and higher education is the lever for developing that talent, said Lumina President/CEO Jamie Merisotis in his remarks for the 2012 Chairman's Conference of the [Southern Growth Policies Board](#). Read Merisotis' entire speech [here](#).



[College, Rewired](#)

The new issue of [Lumina Foundation Focus](#) profiles three institutions and their efforts to improve college productivity with innovative new models for serving today's 21st century students. Extra [features](#) and [videos](#) can be found [online](#).

Mayors tie economy to Latino higher ed achievement

Cities can't succeed economically or socially until they develop the full potential of every resident, says [Memphis Mayor Mayor A C Wharton](#). Wharton recently led a symposium in which state and national leaders shared strategies to connect education with economic development to help more Latinos enroll and succeed in college. Watch this video to learn more.

Critical Outcome **1:** Preparation

Attainment | Financial aid and student success

Financial aid is an effective and necessary policy lever to promote college-completion pathways, says this [report](#) from [Jobs for the Future](#). [Aid and Innovation](#) examines how state policy leaders and financial aid experts are overcoming financial aid rules and regulations with innovative solutions that help more students, especially low-income student, progress toward a postsecondary credential.

Affordability | Unemployment & recent high school grads

The cost of a higher education remains an obstacle for many young high school graduates. Despite a widespread recognition that they will need further education, only 38 percent say they definitely plan to attend college in the next few years. Read [Left Out. Forgotten? Recent High School Graduates and the Great Recession](#).

Insight | Higher education drives economic mobility

Higher education is both a pathway to individual economic advancement and a key factor for improving intergenerational mobility, according to [The Economic Case for Higher Education](#) from the [U.S. Department of the Treasury](#) and the [U.S. Department of Education](#). The report shows that without a degree, children born to parents in the lowest income bracket have a 45-percent chance of staying there as adults. With a degree, they have less than a 20-percent chance of remaining there.

Critical Outcome **2:** Success

Degree completion | Strategies to help adults complete their degrees

[Going the Distance](#) from the [Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education](#) documents the efforts of six states to improve policies and practices designed to bring adults with some college but no degree back to complete their degrees. Recommendations in the report include mining student record databases to identify former students who left higher education after earning a significant number of credits and creating a single point of contact on campuses to help returning adults navigate the readmission process.

Outcomes | Improving degree quality via competency-based frameworks

A new [report](#) from the [Council for Adult and Experiential Learning](#) examines the current state of competency-based postsecondary education and the role it plays in improving the quality of a degree or credential. [Competency-Based Degrees Programs in the U.S.](#) includes profiles of competency-based models and the extent to which the programs assess the competencies expected of graduates.

Research | California's degree gap

California needs to produce an additional 2.3 million postsecondary credentials by 2025 to remain economically competitive, says this [report](#) from [California Competes: Higher Education for a Strong Economy](#). The report calls for streamlining community college management and greater policy emphasis to ensure that the degrees or credentials students earn are meaningful and relevant.

Critical Outcome **3:** Productivity

Policy | New models for productivity

High-quality, lower-cost academic delivery models are essential to addressing national college attainment goals and equipping more Americans with the postsecondary training necessary to fill future jobs. The summer edition of [Tracking Momentum](#), from [HCM Strategists](#), reports on the progress of states and systems in meeting this goal.

Outcomes | Report card on higher ed

State policymakers need to find new and better ways to measure higher education quality by focusing on performance, transparency and accountability, says a [state-by-state report card](#) from the [Institute for a Competitive Workforce](#). [Leaders & Laggards](#) reviews two- and four-year institutions in every state on six measures: Student access and success; efficiency and cost effectiveness; meeting labor-market demand; transparency and accountability; policy environment; and innovation.

Attainment | Timely degree completion

Earning a bachelor's degree in four years pays off in dollars and cents for Tennessee graduates. [A Profile of Non-Completers in Tennessee Higher Education](#) by the [Center for Business & Economic Research](#) shows students who completed their bachelor's degrees in four years earn \$11,500 to \$13,000 more than those who attend college but fall short of getting a degree. The report profiles college completers and non-completers throughout Tennessee and examines the economic gains from college persistence and completion.

Workforce development | Addressing U.S. skills shortage

A [report](#) from the [Center for American Progress](#) offers a plan reform the federal workforce system to one that provides a dependable way to attain a postsecondary education as a pathway to a good-paying job. Read [Let's Get Serious About Our Nation's Human Capital](#).

Policy | Putting value in college degree

Providing access to higher education should be accompanied by educational programs that deliver real value to students, says [Assuring Academic Quality in the 21st Century: Self-Regulation in a New Era](#), from the [American Council on Education](#). The report provides six recommendations that it believes higher education leaders need to strengthen and improve the quality and public accountability of the institutional accreditation process.