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“I am college material” • www.idra.org • September 2008

On the Road to College - Let High School Graduation Be a New Minimum

“Not long ago, it was considered unreasonable to believe that an elementary school education could be universal for all American children. Today, this level of education is taken for granted as an obvious minimum. Clearly 100 percent high school graduation – graduation for all – must be today’s new minimum.” – María “Cuca” Robledo Montecel IDRA President and CEO

Progress, A Call to Do More. Since 1994, enrollment in college by African American and Hispanic students has been on the rise, according to a new report by the American Council on Education, but continues to trail college participation of White students. The National Center for Education Statistics finds that “between 1976 and 2004, minority enrollments increased as a percentage of undergraduate enrollments, from 17 to 32 percent” but the percentage of Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native students with a graduate degree was not measurably different in 2005 than in 1995. And the percentage of Black students attaining a doctorate or first professional degree is persistently low (0.9% in 1995; 1.2% in 2005). These findings, from the 2007 Supplement to ACE’s 22nd Annual Status Report [“Minorities in Higher Education”](#) and NCES’ [“Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Minorities”](#) both paint a picture of progress and issue a call for action.

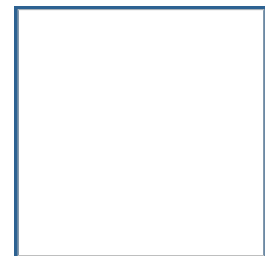
In Texas, where the Closing the Gaps Higher Education Plan was approved in 2000, the state is “below target” in closing enrollment gaps among Hispanic students. While Hispanic enrollment in higher education between 2000-06 grew faster than that of any other racial/ethnic group, participation in college is “still lower than for Whites, African-Americans and Other groups.” Investing in sound preparation for, access to and success for all students who participate in higher education is well worth it here as in every other state: Texas economist Ray Perryman reports that for every \$1 invested in higher education, the state will see an \$8.08 return. To learn more about the Closing the Gaps targets and progress to date, visit:

www.theccb.state.tx.us/reports/PDF/1377.PDF

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Schools and Communities in Action

PTA’s Call to Parent Leadership, Action. PTA’s Resolution, [“High School Graduation, College Preparation And Access,”](#) is intended as a guide and call for coordinated action to “support legislation and programs that foster... [a] diverse student population by increasing federal grants to students and other forms of financial aid, simplifying the application process... increasing access to information on financial assistance for postsecondary education, and expanding access to in-state tuition levels.” In July, Aurelio Montemayor, who directs IDRA’s Texas Parent Information Resource Center was elected to the National Board of the PTA.



P-16 Reform. Looking in depth at the role P-16 councils can play in aligning early learning, K-12 and postsecondary systems, Education Week finds that the most effective efforts have these “three A’s” in common: (1) Agenda – hone in on a narrow, specific plan of action; (2) Actors – reflect broad-based membership, including early learning, business, policymaking and foundation leaders; and (3) Appropriation of resources – to convert recommendations into policies and programs. Visit [Education Week online to learn more...](#)

Community-based Model – IDRA set to expand TECNO centers to provide college information, mentoring in San Antonio. With funding from TG Public Benefit Program, this year, IDRA will provide community-based college support to 600 low-income Hispanic and other

minority 11th and 12th grade students and their families. The project will be carried out in partnership with four community TECNO sites: Benitia Family Center, YMCA, Westside YWCA and Edgewood Family Network. Collaborating colleges (Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio College, and Northwest Vista College) will support work study students or retired high school and college counselors to staff the TECNO centers as college student mentors.

Recommendations for Policy and Practice. The IDRA TECNO model is coordinated with other local supports for students and families and grows out of IDRA's statewide forums, research and recommendations on increasing college access. InterAction, A Call to Action outlined a framework for increasing college access and success in the seven areas of (1) preparation, (2) access, (3) institutional persistence, (4) affordability, (5) institutional resources, (6) graduation, and (7) graduate and professional studies along with [31 policy solutions developed by leaders from K-12 educators to business, community, policy and higher education leaders](#).

Effective Higher Education Recruitment Strategies: Findings from a Research Study of San Antonio College, by IDRA researchers Josie Danini Cortez, M.A., and Albert Cortez, Ph.D. provides [models and recommendations on improving access through better recruitment](#).

Toolbox

"Paving a Path for Poor Students' College Dreams." The [final report in a seven-part series on college admissions](#), this NPR story by Wendy Kaufman, talks about making costs manageable, raising expectations and navigating financial aid.

College Board – visit the College Board (www.collegeboard.com) for resources for students, parents and professionals on testing, applying, planning and paying for college. The site includes a parent guide and is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

College Going Hopes of First-Generation Students on the Rise, Barriers Persist
To learn more, visit [First in My Family: A Profile of First-Generation College Students at Four-Year Institutions since 1971](#), one in a series of reports by HERI.

The [Pathways to College Network](#) is an alliance of 38 national organizations and funders committed to advancing college access and success for underserved students.

What is the state of integration? Visit the Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles (CRP/PDC) at the UCLA's Graduate School of Education and Information Studies for its recently released [Integration Report](#).

Youth Voices

"[When we're] not challenged by teachers and the curriculum...we enter college unprepared...Some may ask themselves why they should even be there..." - High School Students, Oklahoma City presenting at IDRA [Fulfilling the Promise of Mendez and Brown Community Blueprints Dialogue Meeting](#)

"The economic plight of many Hispanic students entering college is an issue that should be addressed. For me, attaining a college degree has always been a financial challenge, not an academic one" from Excelencia in Education's [VOCES \(Voices\): A Profile of Today's Latino College Students](#)

"I am college material" - tutor, IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, from ["Coca-Cola Valued Youth College Tours: On the Road to College Success"](#)

We want to hear from you. You received this e-letter either because you've expressed interest in the topic or somebody who likes you forwarded it to you. Have a story of school-community partnership that's raising graduation rates? - [Let us hear from you](#). To submit question or comment, send e-mail to gradforall@idra.org. **Tell a Friend.** Feel free to [forward Grad4All to anyone who shares a passion for every student's success](#). The [Intercultural Development Research Association](#) is an independent, private non-profit organization whose mission is to create schools that work for all children.

Thanks for reading!

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