



News Release
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Lumina Foundation renews commitment to Achieving the Dream

Indianapolis – Lumina Foundation for Education has committed up to \$18 million in additional funds over five years to **Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count**, a multiyear initiative aimed at improving student success at the nation's community colleges.

The appropriation, approved unanimously by the Program Policy Committee of Lumina's Board of Directors, brings Lumina's total expected investment in **Achieving the Dream** to nearly \$74 million and extends its commitment to the initiative through 2012.

"We're very proud of what our partners and the colleges in Achieving the Dream have already accomplished," said Martha D. Lamkin, Lumina's president and CEO. "There's real momentum here. We feel this new appropriation will help us capture that momentum and create the kind of self-sustaining movement we always envisioned for Achieving the Dream."

Such a movement is important, Lamkin added, because community colleges are the point of entry for large numbers of students who have been underserved by traditional higher education. "These students deserve and need an education beyond high school," Lamkin said. "Because they represent a growing share of the college-age population, their success is becoming more and more crucial to the nation's economic vitality and social stability."

Achieving the Dream is a national initiative to help more community college students succeed, particularly students of color and low-income students. The initiative, launched by Lumina in 2004, is being implemented by a partnership of more than a dozen organizations and is attracting interest among colleges and funding organizations all over the nation. Currently, 58 colleges in nine states are participating. Thanks in part to the involvement of several additional grant-making organizations, the initiative is expected to expand in 2007. Further growth is expected in coming years, fueled by funds from the colleges themselves and from other foundations that have expressed interest in joining the **Achieving the Dream** partnership.

Lumina's \$18 million appropriation will not fund participation of new colleges, however. Rather, it will help the Foundation and its partner organizations work toward four goals, according to Sam Cargile, Lumina's senior director of grantmaking. Those four goals are:

- Creating and implementing a plan that will ensure the long-term future of **Achieving the Dream**.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the initiative to glean lessons about what works best to increase student success.
- Developing tools and processes that can assist colleges in adopting the initiative's tenets on their own campuses.
- Communicating about the initiative to effect changes in public policy that can support student success.

The initiative emphasizes the use of research to improve student success at the colleges. With help from **Achieving the Dream** coaches and research experts, campus leaders collect and analyze data to identify gaps in student achievement. Subsequently, they implement strategies to close those gaps, evaluating and refining those strategies as they proceed.

In addition to fostering positive change on the campuses, the initiative also works to improve the environment in which these campuses operate. Through the use of community dialogues and efforts to engage state and local leaders, **Achieving the Dream** seeks to highlight the importance of community colleges and create strong partnerships that support these colleges and the students they serve.

Currently, the other foundations supporting the initiative in their service areas are: College Spark Washington (Washington state); The Heinz Endowments (Pennsylvania); Houston Endowment Inc. (Houston, Texas); KnowledgeWorks Foundation (Ohio); and the Nellie Mae Education Foundation (Connecticut).

For more information about **Achieving the Dream**, visit www.achievingthedream.org.

About Lumina Foundation

Lumina Foundation for Education, an Indianapolis-based, private, independent foundation, strives to help people achieve their potential by expanding access and success in education beyond high school. Through grants for research, innovation, communication and evaluation, as well as policy education and leadership development, Lumina Foundation addresses issues that affect access and educational attainment among all students, particularly underserved student groups, including adult learners. The Foundation bases its mission on the belief that postsecondary education remains one of the most beneficial investments that individuals can make in themselves and that society can make in its people. For more information, visit our Web site (www.luminafoundation.org) or contact [Dianna L. Boyce](mailto:Dianna.L.Boyce@luminafoundation.org), Lumina Foundation's communication associate, at 317.951.5116.

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