Plenary Session II
Higher Education: Public Good and/or Private Benefit – Policy Directions in Five State Case Studies

Monday, May 12, 2014
2:00 – 3:15 pm
Anasazi Ballroom
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Plenary Session II:
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This second session on whether American higher education is a public good, a private benefit, or both, will present the findings of a recently released book, *Renewing the Promise: State Policies to Improve Higher Education Performance*, coauthored by Joni Finney (who will present at this session), Laura Perna, and Patrick Callan. Many of you will remember Dr. Finney from her association with Dr. Callan in presenting the *Measuring Up* series published by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education from 2000 through 2008. *Renewing the Promise* examines the performance and policies of five states – Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Texas, and Washington – from the early 1990s through the first decade of the new millennium with respect to issues related to finance, accountability, structure, and governance. Each of these states faced challenges quite similar to those faced by most states during the last quarter century, and they found three struggles that dominated their public policy: using fiscal resources strategically, aligning educational opportunities to student needs, and easing student transitions between education sectors. These findings lead to a number of recommendations aimed at reinforcing a contemporary public agenda for higher education.

Speaker: Joni Finney, professor of practice and director of the Institute for Research in Higher Education (IRHE), University of Pennsylvania

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Facilitated Discussion on Higher Education: Public Good and/or Private Benefit – Policy Directions in Five State Case Studies

Facilitator: Dianne Harrison, WICHE chair and president, California State University, Northridge

Biographical Information on the Speaker & Facilitator

Joni Finney is director of the Institute for Research on Higher Education (IRHE) and a practice professor at the Graduate School of Education of the University of Pennsylvania. She is also a faculty affiliate with the Wharton Public Policy Initiative. Finney is co-author of *The Attainment Agenda: State Policy Leadership in Higher Education* (2014) by Johns Hopkins University Press. Prior to joining the University of Pennsylvania, Finney was vice president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education where she developed and directed the nation’s first biennial state-by-state report card for higher education, *Measuring Up*. Prior to that, she held senior leadership roles at the California Higher Education Policy Center and the Education Commission of the States. She has worked with governors and state legislators across the country for over 25 years. Finney co-authored three other volumes, *Public and Private Finance of Higher Education: Shaping Public Policy for the Future*; *Designing State Higher Education Systems for a New*
Century; Financing American Higher Education in an Era of Globalization, and numerous policy reports and articles on higher education. She is a founding board member for the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center and a board member of several non-profit organizations. She is chair of the national selection committee for the Virginia B. Smith Innovation Award in American Higher Education.

Dianne Harrison is the fifth president of California State University, Northridge, and began her appointment in June 2012. Before her appointment, she served as president of California State University, Monterey Bay, a position she had held since 2006. Prior to CSU Monterey Bay, she worked at Florida State University, where she served for nearly 30 years in various capacities, starting as a faculty member, then as dean of social work, associate vice president for academic affairs, dean of graduate studies, and vice president for academic quality and external programs. She holds a Ph.D. in social work from Washington University in St. Louis and a master’s of social work and a bachelor’s in American studies, both from the University of Alabama. Her academic and research areas of expertise include HIV prevention among women and minority populations and higher education issues related to university leadership. Harrison has published dozens of articles and two books. She has served on boards and committees of over 65 national, state, and local organizations. She currently serves on the board of the AAC&U, the executive board for the California Campus Compact, the Steering Committee of the American College and University President’s Climate Commitment, and the NCAA Division I Committee on Institutional Performance. She is the chair of the WICHE Commission.