What’s Up in the WICHE West? And What’s WICHE Been Up to Lately?

Speakers: David A. Longanecker, executive director, WICHE; Cheryl Blanco, director, Policy Analysis and Research, WICHE

In this two-part discussion, we’ll first examine how well the WICHE states fared with respect to protecting educational quality and access in the FY 2004 legislative budget-setting cycle. WICHE’s recent work, Policies in Sync, sponsored by the Lumina Foundation, will provide the template for examining the states’ relative success or lack thereof in supporting these broadly held public goals. In addition, we’ll present and discuss two projects from WICHE’s current workplan. One project examines the state tax and revenue structures supporting public services in the West, identifying the strengths and weaknesses endemic in various approaches to revenue generation and the possible implications for higher education and other critical public goods. The other project is WICHE’s update of high school graduate projections, Knocking at the College Door. For the first time this publication will include projected graduates based on family income, research that will help policymakers better understand the implications of the distribution of family income and socioeconomic status on the future demand for educational services, particularly within higher education. Commissioners will receive preliminary information on what Knocking’s projections appear to show, with particular emphasis on changes from our previous reports.

Biographical information on speakers

David A. Longanecker is the executive director of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education in Boulder, Colo. Previously he served for six years as the assistant secretary for postsecondary education at the U.S. Dept. of Education, developing and implementing national policy and programs providing more than $40 billion annually in student aid and $1 billion to institutions. Prior to that he was the state higher education executive officer (SHEEO) in Colorado and Minnesota. He was also the principal analyst for higher education for the Congressional Budget Office. Longanecker has served on numerous boards and commissions and was president of the State Higher Education Executive Officers. He has written extensively on a range of higher education issues. His primary interests in higher education are: access, teacher education, finance, the
efficient use of educational technologies, and academic collaboration in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. He holds a Ed.D. in education from Stanford University.

Cheryl Blanco is senior program director for Policy Analysis and Research at the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) in Boulder, Colo. She monitors historical and emerging socioeconomic and political trends that impact higher education; directs the work of several policy projects; and produces a variety of publications to improve policymaking in higher education. She was appointed by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley to the Advisory Council on Education Statistics for the National Center for Educational Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Education, and is past chair of the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative. Prior to joining WICHE, she was educational policy director at the Florida Postsecondary Education Planning Commission. She has held faculty and administrative positions at Arecibo Technological University College, University of Puerto Rico, including assistant to the vice president for academic affairs, director of the division of continuing education, coordinator for professional development, and tenured associate professor in the English Dept. She received her Ph.D. in higher education from Florida State University.