Plenary Session III: What’s Up in the West? Making Opportunity Affordable (MOA) in Arizona, California, Colorado, and Montana

Monday, November 10, 2008
2.00 - 3.15 pm
Salon ABC
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Making Opportunity Affordable (MOA) in Arizona, California, Colorado, and Montana

The Lumina Foundation for Education has initiated a project known as Making College Affordable (MOA), which has two simple goals: increasing substantially the number of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and communities of color who not only attend college but also succeed in completing their degrees; and doing so by increasing the cost effectiveness of higher education, so that the increase in degree productivity does not result in a substantial increase in costs to either students or taxpayers.

In May 11 states were selected from 38 applicants to receive planning grants of up to $150,000 to prepare their concept of Making College Affordable for the final grant competition. It is anticipated that next year about five of these 11 will receive awards of $1 to 3 million to implement their plan. Four of the 11 states selected for planning grants are WICHE states, and they have each been invited to share the essence of their plan with the commission as a whole. A very brief summary of the thrust of each state’s plan is provided below.

**Arizona:** The Arizona proposal, which is being directed by the governor’s office, is intended to revise the way in which the state funds higher education, so that Arizona institutions will be rewarded within the state funding formulas for accepting and graduating more students from economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Although initially envisioned as focusing on the three universities that fall under the Arizona Board of Regents, the proposal’s scope has been extended to include the locally controlled Arizona community colleges. Joel Sideman will present the Arizona proposal to the commission.

**California:** The California proposal was submitted by the California State University (CSU) system and will focus exclusively on the institutions governed within the CSU system. This proposal focuses on reforming the curriculum of the CSU institutions on a systemwide basis; adopting the principles developed by the National Center for Academic Transformation; and using technology-mediated instruction to reduce costs and enhance student learning. Keith Boyum will present California’s proposal to the commission.

**Colorado:** The Colorado proposal, submitted by the Department of Higher Education, has the general theme of “More for More.” Colorado currently ranks near the bottom of all states in per student support for higher education. Governor Bill Ritter has indicated that he is committed to increasing the funding for higher education over a multiyear timeframe. But in a higher education summit he sponsored with WICHE last year, he indicated that these increases in funding had
to be accompanied by an increase in productivity within the higher education system. A significant component of this initiative will be to dovetail these productivity initiatives with Colorado’s efforts to enhance degree completion of adults who already have some college but not a degree. Colorado is pursuing this specific thrust through WICHE’s Non-Traditional No More program, another Lumina-funded project. David Skaggs will present the Colorado plan to the commission.

**Montana:** The Montana proposal, submitted by the Montana University System, will focus on the development of two-year college opportunities in Montana. Today, Montana is greatly underinvested in higher education below the baccalaureate level, and this proposal plans to radically expand access and success within two-year programs and institutions, both at the transfer and the applied degree levels. The first concrete evidence of this thrust was the recent ascension of Commissioner Mary Sheehy Moe to the position of deputy commissioner for two-year education within the Montana System; she will present this proposal to the commission.

**Moderator:** David A. Longanecker, president, WICHE

**Panelists:**
- Keith O. Boyum, associate vice chancellor, academic affairs, the California State University
- Mary Sheehy Moe, deputy commissioner for two-year education, Montana Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education
- Joel Sideman, executive director, Arizona Board of Regents
- David Skaggs, executive director, Colorado Department of Higher Education

**Biographical Information on the Moderator**
David A. Longanecker is the president of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education in Boulder, CO. Previously, Longanecker served for six years as the assistant secretary for postsecondary education at the U.S. Department of Education. Prior to that, he was the state higher education executive officer 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. He has written extensively on a range of higher education issues. His primary interests in higher education are: access, promoting student and institutional performance, teacher education, finance, the efficient use of educational technologies, and academic collaboration in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. He holds an Ed.D. from Stanford University, an M.A. in student personnel work from the George Washington University, and a B.A. in sociology from Washington State University.

**Biographical Information on the Panelists**
Keith O. Boyum is associate vice chancellor for academic affairs for
the California State University. In that role he is principal policy advisor
to the systemwide executive vice chancellor/chief academic officer
and oversees the work of the academic affairs division in the Office
of the Chancellor. He works closely with trustees, campus presidents
and provosts, systemwide faculty, and others in developing and
implementing education policy for more than 400,000 students at
23 university campuses. He previously served as professor of political
science and as dean of graduate studies at California State University,
Fullerton.

Mary Sheehy Moe became deputy commissioner for two-year
education in Montana’s Office of the Commissioner of Higher
Education in June 2008. The position was newly created in response
to interest from regents, legislators, and the governor in making
Montana’s two-year college “system” more fully subscribed and
degree-productive. Moe came to the position after serving as CEO of
MSU-Great Falls College of Technology for seven years and as CAO
there for the previous two years. Her faculty experience spans 27 years,
18 in the high school setting and nine in the two-year college sector.
She was named Montana Teacher of the Year in 1986 for her work as
a high school English teacher and received the Governor’s Award for
Outstanding Educational Leadership in 2004 for her leadership in two-
year education advocacy. She has an Ed.D. in educational leadership, an
M.A. in curriculum and instruction, and a B.A. in English, all from the
University of Montana.

Joel Sideman was appointed to the position of executive director for
the Arizona Board of Regents in July 2004. He previously served the
board in a dual capacity: as deputy executive director (since 1995) and
as chief legal advisor to the board (since 1991). Prior to coming to the
Arizona Board of Regents, Sideman served as in-house legal counsel
for the Roosevelt School District in Phoenix and as project director
for the Arizona Statewide Legal Services Project. He received both his
B.S. in business administration and his J.D. degree from Northwestern
University.

David Skaggs is executive director of the Colorado Department of
Higher Education (CDHE), which has coordinating and oversight
authority for Colorado’s public institutions of postsecondary education,
licenses and regulates private occupational schools, and manages
the state’s student loan program and tax-exempt tuition savings
plans. Skaggs also serves as chair of the Colorado Higher Education
Competitive Research Authority. Prior to his position at CDHE, Skaggs
was executive director of the Center for Democracy & Citizenship at
the Council for Excellence in Government, of counsel to a Washington-
based law firm, and an adjunct professor at the University of Colorado.
These positions followed 12 years in Congress (1987-99) as the U.S.
Representative from the 2nd Congressional District of Colorado and
three terms in the Colorado House (1981-87), the last two terms as
minority leader. Skaggs serves on a number of boards: he is chair of the board of the U.S. House of Representatives’ Office of Congressional Ethics and vice chair of the U.S. Public Interest Declassification Board. After earning a B.A. in philosophy from Wesleyan University, he received an LL.B. at the Yale Law School. He served on active duty in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1968 to 1971 and then with a Marine Reserve unit in Colorado, attaining the rank of major.