



Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

# media release

## **WICHE Wins Additional Funds to Work with Adults to Finish College**

**Boulder, Colorado** — The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has been awarded a \$412,000 supplemental grant by Lumina Foundation for Education to expand its project *Non-traditional No More: Policy Solutions for Adult Learners*. The goal of *Non-traditional No More* – originally funded by Lumina at \$755,100 – is to increase adult learners’ access to and success in postsecondary education. The new funding allows WICHE to work with two additional states over the next two years to stimulate and guide policy and practice changes that will create a more navigable path to degree attainment for adults. WICHE selected New Jersey and South Dakota to participate in the project through a competitive process.

*Non-traditional No More* provides state and institutional leaders with a unique opportunity to address critical needs in the adult population. “Expanding this project is an important step forward, as those students we called ‘non-traditional’ in the past become more and more common on our college campuses,” says WICHE President David Longanecker. “Helping states bring these students back into the system will be a crucial factor in recovering from the current economic downturn.”

Last year *Non-traditional No More* helped Arkansas, Colorado, and Nevada begin to identify their “ready adult” population: those adults who are just shy of having enough credits to obtain a degree but have not yet returned to college. New Jersey and South Dakota will begin the process this year. The project will also help the states create a navigable path to college success for adults through a comprehensive focus on academic policies, financial aid and financing, student support services, and information sharing, including marketing and communications designed to reach out to the ready adult population. Further, states will be aided in enacting new policies and practices and sustaining them.

New Jersey and South Dakota will each receive \$65,000 over the next two years and be an integral part of a coordinated effort organized by WICHE to conduct this important work. WICHE staff will oversee state-level activities, publish policy and research papers, speak at conferences and meetings, and work to expand the impact of the project beyond the states that receive direct services.

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## **About WICHE & Lumina Foundation for Education**

The **Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education** and its 15 member states work collaboratively to expand educational access and excellence for all citizens of the West. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy among states and institutions, WICHE strengthens higher education's contributions to the region's social, economic, and civic life. Our programs – Student Exchange, WCET, Policy Analysis and Research, and Mental Health – are working to find answers to some of the most critical questions facing higher education today. WICHE is the only organization in the West that focuses exclusively on higher education issues, from access and accountability to tuition and fees to distance learning and innovation. Public higher education is the backbone of the Western economy, and WICHE's policy research and collaborative programs support the West's citizens and its constantly evolving cultures. WICHE's 15 member states include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. For more information about WICHE, please visit [www.wiche.edu](http://www.wiche.edu).

**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 details on the foundation, visit its website at [www.luminafoundation.org](http://www.luminafoundation.org).

**February 5, 2009**

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