COMMUNITY COLLEGE READINESS, COMPLETION, and SUCCESS … ON WHOSE TERMS?
Message from the Chair

Last year at this time I welcomed you to the Alliance’s first annual meeting. In that letter, I underlined the spirit of our alliance by stating the following:

There is no doubt that the challenges facing higher education are many and complex. The Alliance was formed out of the recognition that these issues are bigger than any one campus or system. The changes we face in economic restructuring, technological innovation, attainment rates, and workforce alignment, as well as in defining quality and success, all speak to a sense of urgency.

A year has passed since the Alliance’s first annual meeting, and it’s time for reflection on our beginnings and where we are headed. The recent recession has caused Americans from all quarters to question and rethink many standard American institutions. In many cases this has given way to pessimism. Everything from our financial systems to college degrees has come in for heavy doses of rethinking. A recent article in the Huffington Post focused on concerns around our educational systems.

Some Americans spend thousands – even hundreds of thousands – of dollars on higher education. As the cost of a degree continues to rise, it appears some have begun to question the worth of a college education.

The article goes on to state that the actual number of people who believe in the value in education is way down. Certainly, the economic downturn has a detrimental impact on hope in general. Education as a social value has always been about hope and promise. Reflecting the Alliance’s mission, innovating for more success and more promise was the spirit of our first meeting, “Completion by Design.” Our second conference pauses and asks about the driving elements of such innovation and its agenda: What is success and completion?

The Alliance is committed to serious and well thought out ways forward. It is committed to engaging new directions in change and improvement, but it is equally committed to avoiding headlong leaps towards unexamined trajectories. In this light, The Alliance offers a serious and multi-voiced discussion on “success and completion.” What is it? How do we know? Who is ahead of the curve? This term has different values depending on one’s position in the education industry. Professors, accreditation leaders, business leaders, students, academic administrators, parents, all have a different take on what constitutes success and even completion. This conference will tackle these essential issues and more.

We’re especially pleased to be holding part of the meeting this year in conjunction with the California Community Colleges Chief Academic Officers (CCCCIO). On Wednesday, CCCCIO members will attend our breakfast and morning sessions before we convene for a joint lunch. During the afternoon, Alliance members are invited to attend the CCCCIO sessions. This will be a great opportunity to share perspectives with more colleagues and we look forward to some lively discussions on many timely and important issues facing two-year institutions.

Peter Quigley, Alliance Chair
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Hawaii System

About the Alliance

The Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (known as the Alliance) was founded by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) in 2010. The Alliance’s members are the chief academic officers of the community colleges and technical schools along with their associated system and state agencies located in the 15 WICHE states. Through the Alliance, these top academic leaders share perspectives on current issues, work together on regional projects that are beyond the scope of a single institution or state, and contribute resources and expertise to build a stronger future for higher education in the West.
Program Sessions and Speakers

Monday, April 1
Hilton San Francisco Financial District

12:00 - 4:30 pm  Registration
Outside Pine Meeting Room (4th Floor)

1:00 - 4:30 pm  Executive Committee Meeting (executive committee members only)
Pine Meeting Room (4th Floor)
Dinner on your own

Tuesday, April 2

7:00 am - 4:30 pm  Registration
Grand Ballroom Foyer (3rd Floor)

7:30 - 8:30 am  Breakfast
Grand Ballroom Foyer (3rd Floor)

Welcome from the Chair and Meeting Overview

8:30 - 8:45 am
Grand Ballroom

8:45 - 9:45 am  Is the Success Agenda Succeeding?
The community college completion agenda is upon us and here to stay. This session, calling on student voices, research, and lessons from the field, focuses on what we know from emerging evidence about what matters most in promoting community college student progress and success ... and why we must do more of what we know.

Introducer:
Peter Quigley, University of Hawaii System

Speaker:
Kay McClenney, The University of Texas at Austin

9:45 - 10:00 am  Break

10:00 - 10:50 am  External Change Agents: Partners for a Better Future
Frequently one finds that constituencies outside the college may have a different sense of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and purposes of the college. This panel presents voices that attempt to engage and influence colleges from outside the campus.

Moderator:
Maria Harper-Marinick, Maricopa Community Colleges

Speakers:
Barbara Beno, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College, Western Association of Schools and Colleges
Lara Couturier, Jobs for the Future
Hilary Pennington, The Bridges Initiative
Holly Zanville, Lumina Foundation

10:50 - 11:00 am  Break
11:00 - 11:50 am  
**Fast-Tracking College to a Credential or Career Success**

Students are taking many routes on their way to higher education. The world is full of experiences that equate to higher education courses or competencies. What is the process for equating these competencies? What can we anticipate will be the barriers to these processes? How will they benefit students? These are some of the questions that an expert panel will discuss.

*Moderator:*
Barry Russell, *California Community Colleges*

*Speakers:*
Ruth Olmsted, *Excelsior College*
Sebastian Thrun, *Udacity*
Sunny Lee, *Mozilla Foundation*

11:50 - 12:00 pm  
**Break**

12:00 - 1:00 pm  
**Lunch**

Enjoy a delicious lunch and engaging conversation about the morning’s presentations. Be sure to share your opinions.

1:00 - 2:15 pm  
**Initiatives Making a Difference**

Choose four topics of interest below. Every 15 minutes a bell will ring and attendees will move to a new topic.

- **Carnegie Foundation: Improving Developmental Math Outcomes in Community Colleges**
  The vast majority of community college students referred to developmental mathematics do not successfully complete the required courses and many leave college for good. The Carnegie Statway™ and Quantway™ Networked Improvement Communities have embraced an audacious goal – to increase from 5 percent to 50 percent the percentage of students who achieve college math credit within one year of continuous enrollment. Find out about their progress in achieving this goal.
  Bernadine Chuck Fong, *Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching*

- **Chaffey College Success Center**
  The Chaffey College Success Center network of services enhances the college learning experience through a variety of instructional practices with a demonstrated positive impact on student success. Scaled appropriately to meet the volume and diversity of the changing needs of a dynamic community, the Success Centers provide instructional support through directed learning activities, workshops, learning groups, tutoring, supplemental instruction (SI), and other lab resources.
  Sherrie Guerrero, *Chaffey College*

- **The Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence**
  The purpose of the Aspen Prize is to recognize and seek replication of practices at community colleges with outstanding academic and workforce outcomes in both absolute performance and improvements over time. What are some of the strengths of the finalists in the first two years of the Prize that allow them to achieve exceptional results in the four areas the Prize assesses: learning, completion/transfer, labor market and equitable outcomes?
  Josh Wyner, *Aspen Institute*

- **Career Ladders Project**
  The Career Ladders Project works in partnership with California Community Colleges statewide to provide educational and career advancement opportunities for Californians. They foster these opportunities through research, policy initiatives and strategic assistance to colleges and their workforce development partners. Drawing on lessons learned from several large-scale, innovative pathway initiatives, we will consider key practices and strategies for helping students earn meaningful credentials and degrees.
  Linda Collins, *Career Ladders Project*
Career Empowerment Program (EmpowerED)
EmpowerED is an innovative and comprehensive public-private partnership that fuses traditional continuing education programs with cutting edge technology and a fully engaged career counseling system to provide ongoing career assessments and personalized guidance to help students achieve their individual career goals. Find out how this program is helping students succeed.

Jason Taksony Hewitt, UCLA Extension

Alternative Educational Delivery – Learn on Demand, Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS)
Launched in 2009, KCTCS Learn on Demand is an initiative representative of efforts to pave the way for new, sustainable, scalable models that accelerate college readiness by focusing specifically on the individual learner. KCTCS worked with a major partner, Pearson, to plan and implement this initiative. Tennessee’s Competency Based A100 Guidelines and West Virginia’s Comprehensive Literacy Program also create and support alternative educational delivery models that reward students for prior knowledge and accelerate their path to graduation. These models will be discussed as well.

Debra Volzer, Pearson

2:15 - 2:30 pm Break

2:30 - 3:30 pm Certificates: What is Their Value?
What is the evidence of the labor market value of certificates? Should certificates have a requirement that involves a level of demonstrated math and English skill? Should certificates be less than a year or more? Should they only be industry certified? What are the success and placement rations of students with certificates in the labor market? These and other issues will be addressed by our expert on certificates speaking in this session.

Introducer:
Michael Cartney, Lake Area Technical Institute

Speaker:
Brian Bosworth, FutureWorks

3:30 - 3:45 pm Break

3:45 - 4:30 pm Alliance Membership Meeting
All are welcome to attend. Only Alliance members may vote.

5:00 - 6:00 pm Welcome Reception
Unwind from the busy day as you catch up with old friends and make new ones!

Wednesday, April 3

7:30 - 9:00 am Joint Breakfast: Members of the Alliance and California Community Colleges Chief Instructional Officers

Common Core State Standards and College Readiness
Spokespersons for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) will discuss the status of their work, especially related to the development of tools to be used to assess student progress and success with the Common Core State Standards. Among other topics, they will describe the role that higher education is playing to enhance the success of common core and the assessments,
discuss how cut scores will be set, and describe the anticipated relationship between cut scores, college readiness, placement and remediation.

Moderator:
Jeff Fox, College of Southern Idaho

Speakers:
Cheryl Blanco, Smarter Balanced
Emmy Glancy, Colorado Department of Higher Education for PARCC

9:00 - 9:15 am  Break

9:15 - 10:30 am  Measuring and Researching Success
Community colleges have been significantly challenged within legislative and business forums to hold themselves accountable. If we are to do so meaningfully, those accountability measures must encompass fully the diversity of open access students and the full breadth of the community college mission. AACC, though the Voluntary Framework of Accountability, has taken on that challenge, but knowing how we stack up often raises more questions than it answers. Research organizations, like MDRC, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization, and the RP Group, which works with institutions to look at data, can significantly strengthen our understanding of the community college student and provide insight into effective (and ineffective) practices aimed at improving their success. Meanwhile, STAR, a tool developed in Hawai`i for use by students, provides more information about student preferences and choices.

Moderator:
Chris Picard, Salt Lake Community College

Speakers:
Bernadette Ferro, American Association of Community Colleges
Eva Schiorring, The RP Group
Gary Rodwell, STAR, University of Hawaii
Mary Visher, MDRC

10:30 - 10:45 am  Break

10:45 - 11:45 am  Supporting Underserved Students for Pathways toward Completion
With more students entering college from nontraditional pathways, how can community colleges and technical schools work to ensure that all students – especially those from historically underserved populations – succeed? From WestEd’s Regional Educational Laboratory West and Excelencia in Education learn about the recent research findings on the most effective strategies for raising academic achievement for low-income, first-generation, minority, and underserved students.

Moderator:
Rhonda Epper, Colorado Community College System

Speakers:
Alfredo Gonzalez, Excelencia
Andrea Venezia, California State University, Sacramento

11:45 - Noon  Wrap-up and Adjournment

**California Community Colleges Chief Instructional Officers**

This year the Alliance is holding part of its meeting in conjunction with the California Community Colleges Chief Instructional Officers (CCCCIO). Members of both groups can participate in the sessions and breakfast and lunch on Wednesday, April 3, on a complimentary basis. CCCCCIO members are also invited to attend the Alliance meeting on Tuesday at a fee of $250 and Alliance members are invited to attend the CCCCCIO meeting on Thursday at a fee of $250. Attendees must pre-register with their respective member organization for both its functions and those of the other organization.

The California Community Colleges Chief Instructional Officers is a nonprofit organization composed of the chief instructional officer for each of the California Community Colleges and serves to provide a central voice for academic matters in the state of California; promotes and advances teaching and learning in California public community colleges; provides an instructional administrative perspective on community college issues in California; and participates with the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office in the consultation process seeking and representing CIOs and others.
Hosts and Sponsors

Special appreciation to California Community Colleges Chief Instructional Officers

And to our generous sponsors who helped make this meeting possible... Welcome reception

Tuesday breakfast JENZABAR Tuesday lunch Wednesday joint breakfast Pearson

Join your colleagues today!
Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders

Membership in the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders is open to new, eligible institutions. Members are public and private community colleges and technical schools and their associated system offices, and state governing and coordinating boards in the WICHE states (see page 12). The member representatives are the chief academic officers of the institutions or organizations.

Member Benefits

• An active listserv for instant access to advice from your colleagues across the region
• Opportunity to participate in regional initiatives addressing common areas of interest
• Complimentary registration for your institution’s or organization’s official representative at the Alliance annual meeting
• Discounted registration fees for members of your staff with expertise in the topics covered at the meeting
• Opportunity to serve on the Alliance Executive Committee if selected as the state representative

Dues Schedule
The membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. The dues schedule is set by the Executive Committee.

• Community colleges and technical schools under 5,000 headcount: $500
• Community colleges and technical schools with 5,001+ headcount: $750
• System offices and statewide governing and coordinating board offices: $1,200

Volume Discount: The Alliance offers a 25% volume discount when a system or state agency joins with all eligible public institutions in the system or state and pays via one invoice.

Apply today!
www.wiche.edu/alliance/membership

Got a great process for decision making to share with your colleagues?
Submit it to our Academic Leaders Toolkit! www.alt.wiche.edu

Need some quick advice from your colleagues?
Post your question on the Alliance listserv! Alliance-ALL@listserv.wiche.edu
Biographical Information on the Speakers

Barbara Beno has served as president of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), since 2001. Prior to her appointment, she served as commissioner for both the ACCJC and the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, WASC. Previously, she served as president of Berkeley City College (formerly Vista Community College) for 12 years, assistant chancellor of the San Mateo Community College District, research and planning director for the Peralta Community College District, and a university faculty member in sociology. She was chair of the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions from 2006 to 2009. Beno received her B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. in history (B.A.) and sociology from Stony Brook University.

Cheryl Blanco, vice president for Special Projects at the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), oversees special policy initiatives on college readiness and college completions, with emphasis on connections between postsecondary and K-12 education. Previously, Blanco was vice president for National College Access Programs and Executive Director of the Pathways to College Network at TERI and held senior positions at the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) and the Florida Postsecondary Education Planning Commission. Blanco was a tenured associate professor in the University of Puerto Rico system. She earned a Ph.D. in higher education from Florida State University.

Brian Bosworth is the president of FutureWorks, a consulting and policy R&D firm based in Seattle and focused on regional economic and workforce development and postsecondary education. Bosworth’s experience includes more than a decade of international development assistance work and 12 years of running state-based economic growth programs in the U.S. He also worked for several years as an independent consultant with many state and regional economic development groups. FutureWorks is now partnering with national and state-based organizations to develop and implement strategies that will increase postsecondary completion and strengthen labor market success for low-income youth and working adults.

Linda Collins is executive director of the Career Ladders Project, founded in 2003 under the sponsorship of the Foundation for California Community Colleges (CCC) to foster educational and career advancement for Californians through research, policy, and strategic support to community colleges. She is also the executive director of LearningWorks, a new center linking knowledge, policy, and practice to improve student completion. Previously, Collins taught at Los Medanos College and served as president of the Academic Senate for CCC. Collins received her B.A. in psychology from University of Colorado and an M. A. in sociology from University of California, Berkeley.

Lara Couturier leads research and publications for Jobs for the Future’s Postsecondary State Policy Team, and provides technical support to the state policy teams in Achieving the Dream, the Student Success Center Network, and Completion by Design. Previously, Couturier conducted research and evaluations as an independent consultant and served as the interim principal investigator for the Futures Project: Policy for Higher Education in a Changing World, a higher education think tank at Brown University. Couturier has a Ph.D. in history from Brown University, a master’s from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and a bachelor’s from the University of Richmond.

Rhonda Epper is assistant provost for the Colorado Community College System, where her responsibilities include development of academic innovations across the system’s 13 community colleges; policy direction for online learning; transfer and articulation issues; and development of major grants. Previously, she managed CCCOnline and other systemwide consortial initiatives, such as the enterprise learning management system, 24/7 help desk, and digital textbook programs. Epper also served at the Community College of Denver, California State University Office of the Chancellor, and State Higher Education Executive Officers. Epper received her undergraduate degree in finance from University of Texas at Austin and a M.B.A. and Ph.D. from University of Denver.

Bernadette Ferro has been the project manager for the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) since February 2010. From its Washington, D.C. headquarters, AACC represents more than 1,100 associate degree-granting institutions and some 12 million students. The VFA is an initiative to identify and define the most appropriate measures for community colleges to assess their effectiveness and performance. Prior to joining AACC, Ferro worked in both the non-profit and private sectors as a business development specialist and project manager for 9 years. Most recently, as a program manager for a national science organization, Ferro led grant-funded initiatives related to professional development and technology for community college professors, the public understanding of science, National Science Foundation partnerships, and science education via data consortia and online digital resources.

Bernadine Chuck Fong is senior managing partner for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and president emerita of Foothill College. She directs the foundation’s developmental mathematics initiative for 30 community colleges and universities in eight states and leads its national expansion. Through this initiative the foundation is building a networked improvement community to increase students’ success through advances in the practice of teaching. She is a fellow of the American Leadership Forum of Silicon Valley and the American Council on Education, and she was named a “Phenomenal Woman,” an award given by Chicago’s Harold Washington College Chapter of the American Association of Women in Community Colleges. Her B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. are from Stanford University.

Emmy Glancy is the Academic Policy Officer - P20 Alignment for the Colorado Department of Higher Education. She manages the engagement of higher education stakeholders in Colorado’s reform efforts aimed at ensuring more high school graduates are college and career ready. Glancy oversees postsecondary participation and alignment with recent K12 reforms, including the common core state standards and aligned assessments. Previously, Glancy was a Program Manager for the Colorado Department of Education. She completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Iowa, earned a Masters of Public Administration from the University of Colorado, and was recently selected for
the Institute for Educational Leadership’s Education Policy Fellowship Program.

Alfredo Gonzalez is senior associate with Excelencia in Education, an organization based in Washington, D.C., that works with a broad range of other organizations to increase Latino college graduation rates. He is dean and professor emeritus at California State University, Los Angeles. For over 20 years, Gonzalez served as dean of undergraduate studies, responsible for areas that included the university academic advisement, tutorial and writing centers, general education, and the introduction to higher education courses for first-time freshmen and transfer students. He received his B.S. from Cal Poly Pomona and his M.S.W. and D.S.W. from the University of California, Berkeley.

Sherrie Guerrero currently serves as the associate superintendent of instruction and student services for Chaffey College. While at Chaffey she has also served as dean of instructional support and dean of language arts. Prior to Chaffey College, Guerrero earned tenure at San Bernardino Valley College as a speech instructor. While at San Bernardino Valley College, Guerrero also served as department chair for speech and performing arts, senator, curriculum chair, and dean of humanities. Guerrero holds an associate of arts degree in liberal arts from San Bernardino Valley College; a bachelor of arts degree in communication studies from California State University, San Bernardino; a master of arts degree in speech communication from California State University, Fullerton; and an educational doctoral degree in educational leadership from the University of Southern California.

Jason Taksony Hewitt is the recently appointed director of the Office of Instructional Enhancement at the University of California, Los Angeles, Extension. This office includes units dedicated to distance learning, instructional development, and online collaborative programs. He has previously served as an information architect and knowledge manager at MySpace.com and in several academic administration positions. Taksony Hewitt received a B.A. Religious Studies from Pomona College, an M.A. Interdisciplinary Studies: Semiotic Ecology from Naropa University, and a Postgraduate Certificate Ecological Theology from the University of Wales, Lampeter. He will graduate from UCLA in spring 2014 with an M.L.I.S. Informatics, an M.A. American Indian Studies: Semiotic Sustainability, and a Ph.D. Information Studies.

Sunny Lee is the project lead of Open Badges. In this role she talks to people tirelessly about badges and the potential for open badges as an alternative system for credentialing; strategizes partnerships that would grow and advance the ecosystem; and works to promote badges as a viable and evidence-based way to evaluate candidates for career and educational opportunities. Lee has a master of information management and systems degree from U.C. Berkeley with an emphasis in education and technology. In another lifetime she used to develop TV shows in Los Angeles.

Kay McClenny is director of the Center for Community College Student Engagement and a faculty member in the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin. The center conducts the Community College Survey of Student Engagement and the Survey of Entering Student Engagement; it has surveyed nearly 2 million community college students at over 800 colleges in 50 states. McClenny also directs the center’s Initiative on Student Success, a long-term student focus group research initiative supported by the MetLife Foundation and Houston Endowment.

Ruth Olmsted is associate executive director of the Center for Educational Measurement at Excelsior College, a pioneer in prior-learning assessment, especially credit by exam. Her primary role is to oversee the development of credit-by-exam offerings – Excelsior College examinations and UExcel – along with their supporting documentation and learning resources. Olmsted has also overseen Excelsior’s electronic and paper-based portfolio assessment programs. She holds master’s and Ph.D. in comparative literature from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and nourishes a lifelong love of puzzles.

Hilary Pennington is an independent consultant working on postsecondary education, transitions from high school, and intergenerational change. She also leads The Bridges Initiative, a project funded by national foundations to develop effective responses to the challenges and opportunities of the dramatic demographic shifts occurring in the U.S. From 2006 to 2012, she served as director of education, postsecondary success, and special initiatives at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, where she led the postsecondary education initiative. Before joining the foundation, Pennington served as a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, a progressive think tank, and as president and CEO of Jobs for the Future (JFF), a research and policy development organization she cofounded. Pennington is a graduate of the Yale School of Management and Yale College. She holds a graduate degree in social anthropology from Oxford University and a master’s of theological studies from the Episcopal Divinity School. She was a fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government in 2000.

Peter Quigley is the University of Hawai‘i System community colleges’ associate vice president for academic affairs. He is responsible for academic program planning, evaluation, and assessment; course and program articulation; regional accreditation; federal higher education and workforce development issues, and collaboration with external agencies. He also has served as interim vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo and chancellor at Leeward Community College. Prior to coming to Hawai‘i, Quigley served as dean of the College of Arts and Humanities at Minnesota State University and as dean of academics/chief academic officer at Embry Riddle University.

Gary Rodwell is the architect and lead programmer for the STAR Academic Journey. He and an outstanding team have developed a revolutionary, enterprise-wide software platform that adds business intelligence to the University of Hawai‘i (UH) system. The platform has been the subject of multiple awards, newspaper articles, and recent grants. Rodwell believes that students, faculty, staff, administration, and alumni should rightfully expect to receive significant educational and business value from their investment in information technology. Evidence of the sustainable success of STAR is fairly widespread through the UH campuses, with average usage of 1,000 to 10,000 students a day. Rodwell’s educational background is in electrical engineering. Prior to working at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa, he worked with British Telecom and Chubb Australia on engineering projects.
Eva Schiorring is the Senior Researcher of the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges. Since joining the RP Group in 2000, Schiorring has served as project director for ten major projects, including a statewide, multi-year research project to increase transfer in professional majors, including engineering and nursing. She recently led an evaluation team assessing the impact of a project designed to improve advising in engineering at San Jose State University's College of Engineering. Schiorring researched and co-authored a major report on how community colleges can increase diversity at multiple levels of their institutions. Eva has extensive experience with research and evaluation design and with the development, testing and application of measurement instruments. The author of a wide range of research articles, Eva holds a Master’s Degree in Public Policy from Harvard University.

Sebastian Thrun is CEO of Udacity, a start-up focused on democratizing higher education. He is also a part-time Google Fellow and a research professor at Stanford University. Thrun is known for his work at Google X, home of the Google self-driving car. He was elected into the National Academy of Engineering at age 39 and started and sold two companies after winning the DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) Grand Challenge, a historical robot race. Fast Company magazine named him the fifth most creative person in business in 2011. He’s on Vanity Fair’s new establishment list; his work has been featured among the best 50 inventions by Time magazine; and one of his robots was named the top robot of all time by Wired magazine.

Andrea Venezia serves as associate professor of public policy and associate director of the Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy at California State University, Sacramento (Sac State). Venezia’s work is focused on improving student readiness for, and success in, some form of postsecondary education, with a particular focus on students who are traditionally underserved. Prior to joining Sac State, Venezia was senior research associate and project director at WestEd; prior to that, she was senior policy analyst at the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Before that, she directed Stanford University’s Bridge Project, the first large-scale national study that documented state policy barriers that inhibit student progression from high school to college. She received a B.A. in English from Pomona College, an M.A. in administration and policy analysis in higher education from Stanford University, and a Ph.D. in public policy from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin.

Mary Visher is a senior associate at MDRC, a nonprofit public policy research organization. At MDRC she designs and leads large, multisite, national evaluations of interventions designed to promote student success in both the K-12 and postsecondary sectors. Among these was a randomized, controlled trial of learning communities in six community colleges, in which nearly 7,000 students participated. She has held similar positions at MPR Associates, SRI, Berkeley Planning Associates, and Abt Associates in the last 25 years. Visher holds a doctorate in sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Debra Volzer is the vice president and national director for institutional partnership for Pearson Higher Education. She focuses on large-scale, complex initiatives at the state, consortia, system, or foundation-sponsored level, in an effort to collaboratively identify models and solutions that increase student success and streamline pathways to completion. In this role she works to identify and align a shared vision and promotes collaboration of next-generation education solutions. Prior to joining Pearson, Volzer held numerous academic and teaching positions, including the Ohio State University, University College and honors director for the Fisher College of Business; distance-learning specialist for the Ohio Learning Network for the Ohio Board of Regents; director for the Community College Alliance Program at Franklin University; director of instructional technology and e-learning for Ohio Dominican; and director of academics for Rasmussen College. She received her bachelor’s degree from the University of Kansas, her master’s from Yale University, and her doctorate from Ohio State.

Joshua Wyner is the executive director of the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program, which aims to strengthen practice and develop leadership to substantially improve college student success. Started in early 2011, the program’s first two initiatives are the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, which strives to reward and shine a spotlight on community colleges that deliver exceptional student results and stimulate replication of successful campus practices; and the New College Leadership Project, which works to strengthen efforts to recruit and train college presidents who are driven by – and capable of – substantially improving student success. He has a B.A. in history from Vassar College, holds a master’s in public administration from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University, and is a cum laude graduate of New York University School of Law.

Holly Zanville is a Strategy Director at Lumina Foundation where she leads the development of strategies to help create new systems of quality credentials and credits defined by learning and competencies, clear and transparent pathways to students, and alignment with workforce needs and trends. Zanville’s work experience spans the educational pipeline with service in K-12, community colleges, universities, and higher education governance systems. Most recently, Zanville served as Coordinator of Oregon’s Joint Boards K-20 Redesign Initiative; Senior Academic Officer, Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board; and Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Oregon University System. Zanville received her Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Minnesota; MA in English from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and BA in English and Biology from Lindenwood University.
Local Attractions

Only in San Francisco can you find so many tours, one-of-a-kind sights and other attractions. Activities within the city and around the Bay Area are limitless. Below are a few possibilities if you arrive before the meeting begins. More information is available at the San Francisco Travel website: http://www.sanfrancisco.travel/todo/.

**Alcatraz** – (www.alcatraztickets.com/). Tour Alcatraz, the infamous and notorious former federal prison, which is home to the likes of Al Capone, George “Machine Gun” Kelley, and Robert “The Birdman” Stroud.

**Aquarium of the Bay** – (www.aquariumofthebay.com/) Share a cocktail with a shark as you stroll through crystal tunnels just inches away from 20,000 of the San Francisco Bay’s most amazing marine animals. Sevengill sharks - the Bay’s largest predators - circling overhead are a great conversation starter. Visit the lair of the Giant Pacific Octopus and enter the mesmerizing world of Moon Jellies. Enjoy panoramic views of the Bay from the Farallon Room and East Deck.

**Muir Woods National Park** – (www.nps.gov/muwo/index.htm) When John Muir learned that William and Elizabeth Kent were naming a redwood forest near San Francisco in his honor, he declared, “This is the best tree - lovers monument that could possibly be found in all the forests of the world.” The couple had purchased the land to preserve its beauty and restful wilderness; and in 1908, they donated it to the federal government to protect it from destruction.

**Napa Valley Wine Country** – (napavalley.com/) Napa Valley is one of the premier travel destinations in the world. Breathtaking views abound at every turn – mustard in the late winter, picturesque rolling hills planted with vineyards year-round and wineries of every stature dot the landscape. Whether you are wine tasting, dining at renowned restaurants like the French Laundry, pampering yourself with a mud bath in Calistoga, or just enjoying your stay at quaint bed & breakfasts, hotels or resorts ... Napa Valley is your spot of heaven on earth.
Alliance Executive Committee

ALASKA
Bernice Joseph
University of Alaska, Fairbanks

ARIZONA
Maria Harper-Marinick
Maricopa Community Colleges

CALIFORNIA
Barry Russell
California Community Colleges

COLORADO
Geri Anderson
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