

Call to Action Opportunity Summit

The Call to Action Opportunity Summit was a joint effort between President Obama, the First Lady, and leaders in higher education to expand college opportunity for low-income individuals and commit to action to make college more accessible and affordable. Through the Call to Action Opportunity Summit, the Administration partnered with colleges and universities, business leaders, nonprofits, and others to develop models and address current challenges.

Major Challenges

- **"Connecting more low-income students to colleges where they can succeed, and encouraging completion once they arrive on campus"**
 - *Undermatch*-Students of strong academic capabilities do not attend an institution that "matches" their capabilities, either because of the expense, or they are not fully aware of their options
 - According to the economists Jonathan Smith, Matea Pender, and Jessica Howell, half of all lower-SES (socioeconomic status) high school graduates undermatched in 2004; among students with the academic credentials to get into a selective institution, the rate of undermatch was even higher. High-achieving low-income students in the lower half of the SES distribution who are predicted to have access to selective institutions undermatch at a rate of 60 percent
 - Commitments from more than 15 organizations and over 80 colleges and universities, including but not limited to:
 - *The Posse Foundation*-The Posse Foundation will be increasing its STEM Posse Partner Institutions to 10 over the next 5 years, and will provide an additional 250 students scholarships to four-year universities (totaling \$35 million), to help students to complete STEM degrees
 - *The College Board*- Every income-eligible student who takes the SAT will receive four free waivers to apply to college for free
 - *Howard Hughes Medical Institute & Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust*- The Howard Hughes Medical Institute has announced an investment totaling \$65 million over five years, and the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust has announced an investment of \$30 million over three years to help students complete STEM degrees
 - *80+ Colleges and Universities*- Over 80 colleges and universities are taking actions such as: recruiting students who might not otherwise attend their university, expanding need-based aid for low-income students, setting new goals for increasing the share of low-income students, committing to additional community college transfers and taking new steps to improve outcomes for low-income students once they arrive on campus
 - Additional efforts to educate students on their options by providing information on colleges, expected costs, and financial aid, as well as application fee waivers

•"Increasing the pool of students preparing for college through early interventions"

- Commitments from more than 12 organizations and 30 colleges, including but not limited to:
 - *\$5 million effort to design pathways to success for careers*- Partnership between Deloitte, Darden, Walmart, AT&T, Mutual of America, and the Samberg Family Foundation- \$5 million over four years to support ScholarJob, which will help low-income individuals connect getting an education with getting a good career. ScholarJob will partner with College Summit student Peer Leaders to equip more than 100,000 high school students from low-income communities in 10 cities with cutting edge technology to help them explore careers, and to attend and complete college
 - *The Irvine Foundation & Pacific Gas & Electric*- The Irvine Foundation and Pacific Gas and Electric are making a combined \$4.5 million commitment to support President Obama's initiative to redesign high schools to include more real-world learning and business partnerships
 - *iMentor*- iMentor is matching 20,000 new first-generation college students with mentors, and Blue Engine is expanding academic preparation in college gateway skills to 10,000 additional students over the next 5 years
 - *\$12.5 million to Support Excellent STEM Teaching-100kin10* has announced an additional \$12.5 million in funding with support from JP Morgan Chase, the Overdeck Family Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation, and the New York State Attorney General to prepare 100,000 excellent STEM teachers
 - *35+ Colleges and Universities*- In addition to efforts in other categories, over 35 colleges and universities are taking actions such as: hosting summer enrichment programs for low-income students, partnering with local high schools to create programs that span high school and link students to college, and encouraging students or faculty to tutor and interact with low-income high school students
- Technology-based learning, increasing instructional time, and personalized approaches have been proven to improve high school algebra scores, including for students who enter high school underprepared in math
- Early intervention programs that use cohort-based models that identify students early and follow them through high school and college, providing student support are beneficial

•"Leveling the Playing Field in College Advising and Test Preparation"

- Recruit more counselors, advisors, and near-peer mentors to help guide low-income students through the college application and financial aid process
- Increasing access to school counselors has been shown to increase college-going
- *The Posse Foundation* cohort model recruits disadvantaged, high-achieving students during their senior year and provides each "posse" with senior workshops, mentoring, and full four-year scholarships
- Providing hands-on FAFSA assistance plus financial aid information has been shown to increase enrollment and persistence
- *National College Advising Corps*- National College Advising Corps, along with partner universities, has announced new commitments that will provide over 80,000 with three years of college counseling → shown to increase enrollment

- *National Association for College Admission Counseling*- Offering free resources and additional training to school counselors
- *Khan Academy*- Developing a new college advising and counseling section, and additionally, new college-prep features that focus students on specific content they need to be prepared for college math placement tests
- *College Prep Support*- College Possible, College Spring, College Track, OneGoal, Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America and a coalition of groups under the National College Access Network are making commitments to provide counseling services, high-quality SAT/ACT prep, and other options for students applying to college
- *20+ Colleges Offering Advice*- More than 20 colleges and universities are taking actions to expand summer college preparation programs for low-income students, creating new relationships with high schools to provide advising about college and financial aid, and expanding opportunities for current college students to work in high schools and middle schools to help advise students on college options\

•**"Seeking breakthroughs in remedial education"**

- Curriculum alignment across secondary and postsecondary education plus early assessments may reduce the need for remediation
- Improving assessments can also help ensure that remediation courses are for students who are substantially underprepared, and place better prepared students in traditional courses.
- *23 States Commit to Address Remediation*- 23 states, supported by Complete College America, have committed to comprehensive approaches to addressing remediation that will help them achieve a significant increase in the number of college students assigned to remediation completing college level math and English their first year, recognizing that most of these students will need additional academic support. Completion of these gateway courses will lead to many more students completing their degrees

The Department of Education is also taking the following actions:

- *Leveraging Work-Study Jobs to Support Near Peer Mentoring*- In the coming weeks, the Department of Education will announce a plan to encourage and support institutions to place students into college counseling and mentoring work-study jobs through the Federal Work Study program. This effort would assist institutions to establish, in partnership with school districts, work-study jobs that will help expand access and strengthen secondary-to-postsecondary transitions by raising awareness about college and financial aid among high school students, as well as provide on-campus work-study mentoring jobs that will help increase postsecondary persistence and completion
- *Building the Evidence Base for Early Intervention through GEAR UP*- The Department of Education will partner with the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP) to support NCCEP's efforts to develop and evaluate best practices from GEAR UP programs related to college fit and college readiness. In addition, the Department will announce that the approximately \$62 million GEAR UP grant competition scheduled for next year will focus on building and promoting the use of successful practices aimed at improving college fit, college readiness, and helping ensure students achieve the necessary milestones that provide a pathway to college success

- *Testing the Best Approaches to College Advising and Matching Through Upward Bound-* During 2014-15, the Department of Education will commit to developing and testing a new professional development program for Upward Bound staff that includes tools and resources building on lessons and strategies learned in the field to support college matching and in-person college advising. The tool kit and training are being developed in collaboration with the College Board, ACT, and the Council for Opportunity in Education, and will be designed for use with both Upward Bound staff and high school counselors.
- *Using FAFSA Completion Information to Support College Going-* The Department of Education commits to providing a process for sharing data on Free Application for Federal Student AID (FAFSA) completion with states, so states and school districts can better identify which students have completed their forms and target efforts to increase completion. This initiative would allow the scaling up of successful initiatives that the Department has launched around FAFSA completion in cities like Chicago, San Antonio, and Detroit, which raised FAFSA completion rates by more than 30% in some cases. This will be implemented formally through agreements between the Department of Education and state student aid agencies in early 2014, which coincides with the beginning of the FAFSA application cycle for the academic year 2014-15.