**2018 AnnualMeeting   
Fairfax, Virginia | April 18 - 20, 2018**

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| **Wednesday, April 18** | |  |
| **Pre-Meeting Events** | |  |
|  |  |  |
| 12:00 p.m. | Luncheon |  |
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| 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. | College Access Program Swap Meet | Go Alliance State Team Representatives |
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| **Opening Session** | |  |
| 4:00 p.m. | Keynote Address: *College Access Marketing in an Era of Changing Workforce Needs and Higher Education Skepticism* | Brandon Busteed, Gallup |
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| 5:30 p.m. | Break |  |
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| 6:00 p.m. | Reception |  |
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| 6:30 p.m. | Dinner |  |
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| 7:00 p.m. | Welcome and Opening Remarks | Atif Qarni, Virginia Secretary of Education (invited) |
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| **Thursday, April 19** | |  |
| 7:30 a.m. | Breakfast available in meeting room |  |
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| 8:30 a.m. | Introductions and Meeting Overview | Alice Anne Bailey, SREB |
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| 8:45 a.m. | *Informed Action: Using Market Research and Data to Drive Success in College Access Campaigns* | Renee Daly, Simpson Scarborough |
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| 9:45 a.m. | *Know Your Audience: Strategies and Best Practices for Engaging Gen Z on Social Media* | Rachel Weatherly and Rebecca Vander Linde, American University |
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| 10:45 a.m. | Break |  |
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| 11:00 a.m. | *Panel: National Update on College Access & Success* | Carrie Warick, National College Access Network |
| 12:30 p.m. | Luncheon |  |
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| 1:30 p.m. | *Program Evolution: Growth and Change in College Access Events Across Grade Levels* | Mary Nelle Hall and  Courtney Rogers, Tennessee Higher Education Commission |
| 2:30 p.m. | Break |  |
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| 2:45 p.m. | *Requiring the FAFSA: Louisiana’s Plan to Provide All Students with a Pathway to Prosperity* | Ken Bradford, Louisiana Department of Education |
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| 3:45 p.m. | *Padres Promoviendo Preparacion: Engaging Spanish-Speaking Parents through College Knowledge and Support* | Laura Gonzalez, UNC Greensboro |
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| 4:45 p.m. | Thursday Meeting Conclusion |  |
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| 6:00 p.m. | Meet in Lobby for Dinner Outing |  |
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| **Friday, April 20** | |  |
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| 7:30 a.m. | Breakfast Available |  |
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| 8:30 a.m. | Break Out Sessions  *Three Things You Can Do to Build a College-Going Community*  *Implementing Support Strategies for At-Risk Students: Lessons Learned from North Carolina’s Multiple Measures Study* | Michelle Sarumova, Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education  Susan Barbitta, North Carolina Community College System Office  Sue Clery, Coffey Consulting |
| 9:30 a.m. | Updates from College Board and ACT  *Let’s talk about Equity in Education and Career: It’s Everyone’s Business!* | Juan Garcia, ACT |
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|  | *Guiding Students Along the Opportunity Pathway: Interventions and Incentives* | Melanie Storey and Jessica Howell, College Board |
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| 10:45 a.m. | Break (hotel check out) |  |
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| 11:15 a.m. | *The Common Application: Expanding the Future of Higher Education Access* | Scott Anderson, The Common Application |
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| 12:00 p.m. | Meeting Conclusion |  |
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**Session Descriptions**

*College Access Marketing in an Era of Changing Workforce Needs and Higher Education Skepticism*

Brandon Busteed, Gallup

This session will address recent changes in public perception of the value of postsecondary education as well as how advances in technology are driving making education beyond high school a necessity. With growing concerns about the “return on investment” of a college degree, questions about the work readiness of college graduates, and major demographic shifts in the U.S., how should the college access and completion community adjust its strategies and messages?  Mr. Busteed will provide a thorough overview of Gallup research on these topics and stimulate attendees to think and act differently as a result.

*Informed Action: Using Market Research and Data to Drive Success in College Access Campaigns*

Renee Daly from Simpson Scarborough will lead a “how to” session on how to conduct qualitative and quantitative market research of a target audience as part of a college access campaign. This session will show why conducting market research is important, how market research data is used make informed decisions, and how to collect market research data, including how to run a focus group on a limited budget.

*Know Your Audience: Strategies and Best Practices for Engaging Gen Z on Social Media*

Rachel Weatherly and Rebecca Vander Linde, American University

Learn from American University’s social media mavens about how to engage high school and college students on social media in your college access and success efforts, including which platforms to use and what content works best where. Rookies and seasoned users alike will take home ideas and how-tos you can use immediately to boost your engagement with Gen Z.

*National Update: College Access and Success Policies, Practices, and Trends*

Carrie Warick, National College Access Network

Carrie Warick will lead a brief presentation on federal college access and success policy issues, followed by commentary and question and answer time with a panel of national college access professionals.

*Better Make Room and Reach Higher Update*

Don Yu, Civic Nation

Mark your calendars! Reach Higher is celebrating the 5th National College Signing Day in May! We have a new how-to toolkit and are thrilled to invite Go Alliance partners to join us again to host celebrations of support for all of your students who commit to continue their education after high school. Through Reach Higher and Better Make Room, more than 1,500 events in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and several U.S. territories recognized students last year. We hope that even more partners will join our movement to shine a spotlight on graduating students in 2018.

In addition to College Signing Day, this session will provide an update on all of the latest updates to Better Make Room and Reach Higher, including the Up Next texting program and our continued partnership with the American School Counseling Association to recognize the national school counselor of the year, now that these programs have moved to Civic Nation.

*Steps2College: Professional Resources to Support Students through the College-Going Process*

Melissa Caperton, American College Application Campaign

Laura Owen, American University

Christina Gordon, Center for Equity in Learning, ACT

Representatives from the American College Application Campaign, the Center for Postsecondary Readiness and Success, and ACT will share how they are aligning efforts to support and celebrate seniors year-round. Attendees will learn about the resources available, effective practices of implementing the four campaigns, and opportunities to engage with Steps2College partners and their national efforts.

In March 2017, ACT’s Center for Equity in Learning convened a working group to strengthen partnerships between national efforts representing the four major steps students must successfully navigate during their senior year: American College Application Campaign (college application process), National College Access Network (FAFSA completion), Better Make Room (deciding and committing to a postsecondary plan), and the Center for Postsecondary Readiness and Success (transition from secondary to postsecondary education). The goal of the partnership is to support college-going students on the path to success, elevate individual campaigns, and set an example of collaboration for other national, state, and local partners.

Together, the group has developed Steps2College, a national repository of activities and resources to support school counselors, college access professionals, and other educators as they work with senior-year students through the college-going process.

Steps2College focuses on four key milestones in the journey to college:

* September – November: *American College Application Campaign*. School-day events designed to assist high school seniors as they navigate the college admissions process, ensuring each student submits at least one admissions application.
* October – April: *Form Your Future* works to help students get money for college, no matter what. Through social media and online toolkits, the campaign shows students their great odds of getting financial aid when they file the FAFSA and supports the professionals who help them do so.
* April – May: *College Signing Day*. Better Make Room, along with schools, organizations, community leaders, and influencers host College Signing Day, a chance to rally around local students, show them support, and celebrate their choice in making a commitment to higher education.
* June – September: *College Transition*. Resources are provided to assist students, their families, and the professionals who work with them in identifying and successfully navigating those key transitional activities, supporting students as they journey from secondary to postsecondary education.

*Program Evolution: Growth and Change in College Access Events Across Grade Levels*

Mary Nelle Hall and Courtney Rogers, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

In Spring 2017, the College Access and Success Division took on a new approach to recruit and support schools interested in implementing college access events across grade levels. Through a three-pronged approach, the team increased the registrations for Path to College by over 100% in just one year. In this session, representatives from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) will share their strategies and continued improvement plans in each of the following areas:

1. *Proactive Outreach*: Our recruitment efforts prior to 2017 primarily focused on high schools and nonprofits that support high school students. In order to grow our impact and reach middle and elementary schools, we knew that we would need to collaborate with stakeholders who had more of a presence in the lower grades. THEC staff worked with Tennessee’s School Counseling Coordinator to host eight regional meetings across the state for K-12 school counselors in order to promote Path to College. The Tennessee Department of Education and Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation also provided recruitment support, sharing about Path to College in newsletters and when financial aid outreach specialists visited schools.
2. *Collaboration*: The best ideas come from practitioners! But with all of the daily tasks that counselors are responsible for, opportunities to collaborate are too often few and far between. During our meetings, round table time was provided for counselors to hear from one another about the kinds of college and career activities that were already happening in their schools. Each counselor was provided a graphic organizer worksheet to write down their ideas for both things they’re doing and for aspirational ideas that they would like to implement in coming years. At lunch time, Mary Nelle collected all of the worksheets and photocopied each one, eventually compiling hundreds of pages of best practices and ideas into a detailed document. These ideas are now being used to transform our current guidebooks into 3 volumes: an elementary guidebook, a middle school guidebook, and a high school guidebook for how to support college and career exploration throughout the year.
3. *Innovative Acknowledgement*: For the first time, High Schools are eligible to earn the designation of “Path to College School” if they implement each of the four Path to College events and complete a short survey after each event. The College Access and Success team plans to announce the Path to College schools via a press release and provide each school a banner or poster recognizing their achievement. Schools have been enthusiastic about earning this designation, and it has helped solve a problem that has plagued our events since the beginning: low survey responses. After College App Week 2016, we received surveys from 59 schools, but with the new event format and the Path to College designation as an incentive, we received survey responses from 250 schools after College Application and Exploration Week 2017. This represents a 424% increase in survey responses.

*Requiring the FAFSA: Louisiana’s Plan to Provide All Students with a Pathway to Prosperity*

Ken Bradford, Louisiana Department of Education

A high school diploma is no longer enough to earn graduates a living wage in today’s economy. Some form of postsecondary education or training is essential. A major barrier to accessing postsecondary education and training is financial resources. Most Louisiana high school graduates are eligible for some form of state or federal financial aid – either merit-based or need-based. State and Federal Financial Aid can be accessed by submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Financial Aid can remove the barriers to accessing four-year universities, two-year community colleges, and technical training programs. This form is used to determine the amount of money a family is expected to contribute to the price of attending a postsecondary institution. The results of the FAFSA are used in determining student grants, work study, and loan amount.

In December of 2015, the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) approved a [policy regarding postsecondary planning](http://www.louisianabelieves.com/courses/financialaid) for graduating public high school seniors. The policy sought to increase student access to state and federal financial aid by requiring graduating seniors to either complete the TOPS application or the FAFSA, declare a hardship, or submit a waiver to the local school system. The policy was made effective this school year and will apply to the Class of 2018.

Furthermore, the Department convened the [Louisiana Financial Aid Working Group](http://www.louisianabelieves.com/newsroom/news-releases/2017/01/26/study-group-identifies-unprecedented-gain-in-statewide-fafsa-completion), a group of 50 representatives from various state education and workforce entities convened by the Department to identify means of supporting students in need of financial aid for universities, colleges and workforce training programs. And it has continued to support professional school counselors in their mission to advise all students--not just university-bound ones--to apply for federal aid.

This year, the Department will provide an updated tool kit to school counselors, including materials to host FAFSA-related events for families on their campuses and information about new resources, such as the Frank FAFSA mobile application, to help students and families complete the process.

*Padres Promoviendo Preparacion: Engaging Spanish-Speaking Parents through College Knowledge and Support*

Laura Gonzalez, University of North Carolina Greensboro

Padres Promoviendo Preparacion (PPP) was a three-year Spanish-language outreach program in Forsyth County, NC (funded by the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust from 2014-2017). Our goals were to increase college knowledge and college-going self-efficacy among Latino immigrant parents, with the belief that more confident and informed parents could be better advocates for their college-bound children. The intervention was created by university faculty (Dr. Laura Gonzalez and Dr. José Villalba) in partnership with Latino-serving entities in the community (churches, non-profits, and schools). The partnering sites first hosted the 8-week program for their Spanish-speaking parents (with a PPP facilitator), then observed the program in order to learn to lead it, and finally facilitated the sessions collaboratively with us or independently. In the first two years of the outreach program, 113 Latino immigrant parents started the groups, and 86 parents finished all sessions. The parents were primarily low-income earners who had been in the United States between 10-20 years and rated their own English fluency as low.

The session will include (1) information about the content and structure of the 8-week outreach program, (2) pre-post survey data and themes from interviews with participants, and (3) suggestions for those who may want to implement a similar outreach program. Of note, the survey data showed positive gains across the groups, and the interviews shed light on how parents were able to interact differently with their children and the schools based on their newly acquired knowledge and confidence. Overall, PPP was a relatively low cost and low burden way to address college access for Latinos at the family level, bringing parents into the conversation in ways they had not been before.

*Three Things You Can Do to Build a College-Going Community*

Michelle Sarumova, Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education

The Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education (ACPE) is seeking support to build a 3point “student momentum chain” from high school into college, with a goal of building a self-sustaining college-going community for each participating high school or district.1 The ACPE College and Career Goal Arizona (C²GA) Campaigns aim to accomplish this by bringing Title 1 high schools, postsecondary institutions, and their communities together to support low-income high school students and their families in applying and gaining financing for their chosen postsecondary education opportunities. Partners include postsecondary institutions across the state, the Helios Knowing and Going Initiative, the Arizona Association of Financial Aid Administrators, and the Arizona School Counselors Association.

The goals of C²GA are:

* every senior completes at least one postsecondary education application,
* every eligible senior files, on time, a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and
* all Arizona high schools set an expectation and provide support for every senior and their family to take the steps to participate in a postsecondary education experience, creating a college-going community.

The Commission leads Arizona’s College Application Campaign and College Goal FAF$A events for the state. This presentation will cover the current data and growth of C2GA along with state and national goals. Tied into the presentation is a discussion focusing on the economic impact that the campaigns serve and the educational equity effect produced by the campaigns. The presenter will highlight the three C2GA programs and how schools can increase their college-going community using this model.

Implementing Support Strategies for At-Risk Students: Lessons Learned from North Carolina’s Multiple Measures Study

*Susan Barbitta, North Carolina Community College System Office*

*Sue Clery, Coffey Consulting*

Research has shown that high school grade point average (HS GPA) is a better predictor of postsecondary student success than traditional placement tests. In 2014, North Carolina adopted a Multiple Measures for Placement policy that uses the student’s HS GPA as the primary means for placement. Although many colleges and states consider HS GPA in making placement decisions, North Carolina is one of the premier states currently relying solely on HS GPA. Upon implementing this Multiple Measures for Placement policy, and using HS GPA as the primary means for placement, the North Carolina colleges saw an increase in the share of their first-time students entering college-ready—increasing from 21 percent to 53 percent of students at a sample of the colleges. Although vetted by a range of stakeholders, there was concern that students with HS GPAs near the waiver cut-off may struggle to succeed in college-level coursework.

In response to this concern, six of the North Carolina community colleges participated in a research study and evaluation. Through this study, staff at these six colleges developed intensive student support strategies, which were required of students in the target group - those deemed potentially academically at-risk, and would have likely been placed into developmental education using traditional placement tests -- successfully complete foundational college-level courses. Upon implementing the support strategies, the six North Carolina colleges closely monitored and evaluated their student outcomes and made adjustments to their strategies, as needed.

During this session, the experience of the participating colleges will be discussed, including their approach to strategy design and implementation, challenges and facilitators, and the students’ experiences and academic outcomes. Evaluation findings will be shared, including evidence that the support strategies made a difference for the targeted students and worked to close equity gaps. The policy’s current evolutions will also be discussed; the North Carolina Community College System Office recently assessed students’ academic achievement levels by HS GPA. They are in process with proposed system-wide adjustments to the multiple measures policy, including (1) the high school GPA threshold for allowing students to go directly to college level coursework, and (2) adding a requirement for academically borderline students to enroll in a defined corequisite support.

*Let’s talk about Equity in Education and Career…It is everyone’s business!*

Juan Garcia, ACT

In this session we will review the findings of the newly released 2017 report and discuss the changes from the 2016 report Condition of College and Career Readiness among minority U.S. high school graduates who took The ACT test, which shows slow but steady improvement, particularly in the key areas of math and science. This has occurred as the number of test-takers continues to dramatically increase.

We will also discuss ACT’s new initiative to help ELL students with accommodations for testing, including a word to word glossary available in ten languages and instructions for the test in the student’s native language. New for 2018 is the opportunity for students taking the test with fee waivers to send score reports at no charge, this initiate starts the fall of 2018 as a way to remove barriers for underserved students and fulfill ACT’s non-profit mission.

The session includes a discussion on the importance of working in the earlier grades to make sure students are taking rigorous classes and preparing themselves to succeed in high school. Free resources will be shared to support student learning, persistence, and graduation as well as parental engagement. Resources available in English and Spanish.

*Guiding Students Along the Opportunity Pathway: Interventions and Incentives*

Jessica Howell and Melanie Story, College Board

Founded on the principle of expanding opportunities for students, the College Board has been a leader of putting research into practice to support students. Through rigorous evaluation and continuous improvement, the College Board leverages data and evidence to drive actions that best serve students in reaching their goals.

This session will discuss how the College Board, through its Access to Opportunity Program and other partnerships, is leveraging its programs and tools to support students to and through college. Presenters will discuss results from recent efforts including:

* Student “nudging” and texting campaigns
* Data driven student outreach through the Realize Your College Potential campaign, in which students receive personalized packets with guidance and resources,
* Free SAT practice through our partnerships with Khan Academy
* Virtual advising, and
* Policies at the federal, state, and institutional levels that drive degree completion

All our efforts are designed to identify and break down barriers that prevent students — particularly low-income students, first-generation college students, rural students, and students of color — from applying to and enrolling in colleges that are their best academic, social, and financial fit. Our mission is to help all students recognize and make the most of the opportunities they’ve earned.

*The Common Application: Expanding the Future of Higher Education Access*

Scott Anderson, The Common Application

Join Common Application staff for a discussion of these initiatives, their effectiveness, and ideas for how the association can harness its reach among college-intending students to connect them with essential resources for success.

The Common Application is a not-for-profit member organization committed to the pursuit of access, equity, and integrity in the college admission process. Founded in 1975, The Common Application has long been a leader in the college application transaction – that point in time where students complete and submit an application. Now, with an applicant pool of over 1 million students, a recommender base of 600,000 educators, and a diverse membership nearing 800 institutions, the association is building on its four-decade legacy by collaborating with educators, researchers, foundations, and like-minded organizations to expand educational opportunities for all students.

Central to these efforts are partnerships, information campaigns, and educational resources specifically designed to address concerns of college affordability through increased financial aid awareness. Among these initiatives are:

* A [FAFSA completion campaign](http://www.commonapp.org/whats-appening/news/national-nudge-campaign-prompting-low-incomefirst-generation-students-complete) and research project that reached 450,000 first-generation and low-income students
* A streamlined [fee waiver process](http://www.commonapp.org/whats-appening/news/common-app-members-awarded-more-55-million-need-based-college-application-fee) that resulted in $55 million in waived application fees
* Embedded [financial aid resources](http://www.commonapp.org/whats-appening/application-updates/financial-aid-information-available-within-common-app), [mentoring connections](https://www.commonapp.org/whats-appening/news/common-application-and-strive-college-announce-partnership), and [scholarship opportunities](http://www.commonapp.org/resource/common-app-and-scholar-snapp-your-scholarship-connection) within the application
* A [network for educators](http://www.commonapp.org/whats-appening/news/help-more-students-complete-fafsa-formyourfuture) of national awareness and advocacy campaigns within the recommendation system