

# THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT: APPROACHES TO COLLEGE PREPARATION

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## HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION,  
LIFELONG LEARNING, AND COMPETITIVENESS

COMMITTEE ON

EDUCATION AND LABOR

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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## **THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT: APPROACHES TO COLLEGE PREPARATION**

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**Thursday, March 22, 2007  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Subcommittee on Higher Education,  
Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness  
Committee on Education and Labor  
Washington, DC**

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The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 1:33 p.m., in Room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Rubén Hinojosa [chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Hinojosa, Wu, Bishop, Yarmuth, Courtney, Scott, Davis of California, Keller, Petri, Kuhl, Ehlers, and McKeon.

Staff present: Tylease Alli, Hearing Clerk; Denise Forte, Director of Education Policy; Gabriella Gomez, Senior Education Policy Advisor (Higher Education); Lamont Ivey, Staff Assistant, Education; Brian Kennedy, General Counsel; Danielle Lee, Press/Outreach Assistant; Ricardo Martinez, Policy Advisor for Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning and Competitiveness; Joe Novotny, Chief Clerk; Lisette Partelow, Staff Assistant, Education; Julia Radocchia, Education Policy Advisor; Kathryn Bruns, Legislative Assistant; Steve Forde, Communications Director; Jessica Gross, Deputy Press Secretary; Amy Raaf Jones, Professional Staff Member; Linda Stevens, Chief Clerk/Assistant to the General Counsel; and Sally Stroup, Deputy Staff Director.

Chairman HINOJOSA [presiding]. A quorum is present. The hearing of the subcommittee will come to order.

Pursuant to the committee rule 12(a), any member may submit an opening statement in writing which will be made part of the permanent record.

I want to say good afternoon and welcome to the subcommittee's second hearing of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

It is no accident that one of the key components of President Johnson's war on poverty was the Higher Education Act of 1965. The power of education to increase earnings and improve overall quality of life is well-documented. Higher education is an integral part of the American dream.

College access and success requires high expectations and aspirations, the know-how to act on them, rigorous academic preparation, and the financial resources to be able to pay for college.

From the beginning, the Higher Education Act has recognized that college preparation is an essential piece of the college access and success puzzle. The TRIO programs are part of an original federal policy in support of higher education.

The high-school equivalency program is part of that TRIO program. The high school equivalency program and college assistance migrants program were designed to address the unique needs of students from migrant farm-worker families. Before HEP and CAMP, there was no record of a migrant student achieving a college education.

In 1998, the higher education expanded these efforts by building partnerships for college preparation known as the GEAR UP program.

The sad truth is that these programs only reach a fraction of the eligible population. Some estimates are as low as nearly 10 percent. This is at a time when the level of educational attainment is increasingly the dividing line between the haves and the havenots.

Over their lifetime, college graduates earn approximately 73 percent more than high school graduates. Forty-nine of the 50 highest-paying occupations require post-secondary education.

The president's budget estimates that \$90 billion will be devoted to the student aid programs in the 2008 budget. However, only a little more than \$1.1 billion will be invested in the college preparation programs, including GEAR UP and TRIO.

This represents an actual decrease in funds from fiscal year 2005. It seems to me that we must do better than that.

One of the issues that we will need to tackle in this reauthorization of the Higher Education Act is ensuring that all students have access to the information and academic preparation that they need to be able to take advantage of post-secondary education opportunities. We need to increase the college know-how in the communities that have not had access to college opportunities.

That is why today's hearing is so important. We will discuss some of the key federal investments in college preparation and outreach. We will also learn about state and private-sector initiatives.

I am looking forward to the witnesses' testimony and thank all of you for joining us today.

I now recognize my good friend, the ranking member of the subcommittee, Congressman Rick Keller, from the state of Florida, for his opening statement.

Mr. KELLER. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good afternoon.

I want to thank you especially, Chairman Hinojosa, for holding today's hearing on approaches to college preparation.

I would also like to welcome all of our witnesses and thank all of you for taking your time to come and testify before the subcommittee today.

The discussion of access to a college education begins with college preparation. First-generation, low-income or minority students sometimes need personal guidance to prepare and navigate the world of higher education. And we are here today to discuss some of those programs and organizations that do just that.

Some of the TRIO programs, for example, have been around since the inception of the Higher Education Act. It became clear,

however, that additional student support or transition programs were needed to bolster college access and preparation for students. So the GEAR UP program was added in the most recent reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in 1998.

Still other programs, provided by organizations like College Summit, have been around less time but are, in fact, doing an outstanding job of providing additional service to students.

Let me first say that I agree that the programs highlighted in today's are worthy and important programs. If America hopes to remain competitive, we need to ensure that students are graduating from high school with the ability, the opportunity and the desire to pursue their dreams of a college education.

Currently, TRIO grants are awarded competitively to institutions of higher education and other public and private institutions and agencies. However, in selecting grantees, the Department of Education gives prior-experience points to applicants that have previously been awarded a grant.

The use of the prior-experience points often shuts new applicants out of the program. I fundamentally believe that competition breeds better products and services, that the competition should be fair, and the winners awarded on their merits as much as prior experience.

Before I conclude, I would like to thank our witnesses once again for agreeing to testify before the subcommittee today. And I look forward to hearing your testimony.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Without objection, all members have 14 days to submit additional materials or questions for the hearing record.

I would like to introduce our very distinguished panel of witnesses here with us this afternoon.

The first presenter is Dr. Maria Martinez—oh, forgive me, I have the wrong one. I apologize.

The first presenter is Dr. Martha Cantu. Dr. Cantu was raised in the Rio Grande Valley and is a product of the McAllen public school system. She has attended the University of Texas-Pan American and has earned a Bachelor of Arts in speech and hearing. She has also earned a Master's of Education in educational diagnostician, and she has just recently earned a Doctorate of Education in educational leadership.

Martha has worked as a speech therapist and education diagnostician and a special education administrator for 21 years before coming to the university in 2005 to lead the GEAR UP project.

Dr. Cantu, you are a very good role model, and I am especially proud to welcome you here today.

Mr. Courtney, I believe that you have someone who is very special from your district, and I wish to recognize you.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And it is an honor, actually, to introduce the next witness, Dr. Maria Martinez, who is director of the Center for Academic Programs at the University of Connecticut, which is located in the heart of my district and is the flagship public university in the state of Connecticut.

The Center for Academic Programs at U-Conn houses the oldest TRIO effort in Connecticut and administers four federally funded

programs: Educational Talent Search, Student Support Services, Upward Bound, and GEAR UP.

Dr. Martinez came to U-Conn in 1986 from Saint Joseph College in West Hartford, where she designed and conducted training programs for social workers and human-services workers throughout the state of Connecticut.

In 1995, she was named the director of U-Conn's CAP. And in her role as director, Dr. Martinez has been able to promote the center's mission, which is to increase access to higher education for high-potential students who come from under-represented ethnic or economic backgrounds and are first-generation college students through numerous educational opportunity initiatives.

And one of the schools that she works in, the Windham Middle School, is actually where my wife right now is working today as a pediatric nurse practitioner in the school-based clinic.

And it is just a really important effort that U-Conn and your center does to help these kids really broaden their horizons and get an opportunity to get ahead in life.

The Hartford Courant issued a report not too long ago which demonstrated the widening gap that the chairman described in his opening remarks that exists in Connecticut. The top quintile in Connecticut, 70 percent of children from those families go to higher education. Unfortunately the bottom quintile of income in Connecticut, only 16 percent.

So we are seeing this gap that is creating barriers for children from low-income backgrounds, and that is going to, as Mr. Keller indicated, create real problems for the future economic competitiveness of our economy.

I would just, again, thank the chairman for giving me the privilege of introducing this wonderful witness, who is going to share some great ideas with us today.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Thank you very much, Congressman Courtney.

The next presenter I wish to present is Dane Linn. Dane Linn oversees all education-related policy research, analysis and resource development at the NGA. He has authored numerous policy reports on issues ranging from school finance to teacher quality and school redesign to pay for performance. Mr. Linn recently spearheaded the division's initiative on redesigning the American high school.

He has been both a teacher and a principal in the elementary schools. Dane is a graduate of Cabrini College and has received a Master's Degree from Marshall University Graduate College and is currently a Ph.D. candidate at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Welcome.

And our final presenter will be J.B. Schramm. J.B. Schramm founded the organization in 1993, and since that time College Summit has served over 20,000 students and trained over 700 educators nationwide.

The enterprise has been recognized in the field of college access and social entrepreneurship by the Fast Company magazine, as well as Monitor Group. The U.S. Department of Education has recognized their service as well, and the National Association of Col-



lege Admission Counselors has given them the association's highest award.

Mr. Schramm is a graduate of Yale University and Harvard Divinity School.

Welcome, each and every one of you.

I believe that someone very special just walked in, a former congresswoman.

And I want to say, Congresswoman Pat Schroeder, welcome to our Higher Education hearing. It is a pleasure, and we are honored to have you.

Please give her a big round of applause. [Applause.]

For those of you who have not testified before this subcommittee, please allow me to explain our lighting system and the 5-minute rule.

Everyone, including members, is limited to 5 minutes of presentation or questioning. The green light in front of you is illuminated when you begin to speak. When you see the yellow light, it means you have 1 minute remaining. When you see the red light, it means your time has expired and you need to conclude your testimony.

Please be certain, as you testify, to turn on and speak into the microphones in front of you so that we can hear you.

The rules of the committee, adopted January the 24th, give the chair the discretion on how to recognize members of Congress for questioning. It is my intention, as chair of this subcommittee, to recognize those members present and seated at the beginning of the hearing in order of their seniority on this subcommittee. Members arriving after the hearing has begun will be recognized in order of appearance.

I am going to ask Dr. Cantu, if you wish, you may start.

**STATEMENT OF MARTHA CANTU, DIRECTOR, GEAR UP  
PROGRAM, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-PAN AMERICAN**

Ms. CANTU. Good afternoon, Congressman Hinojosa and committee members, and thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony today.

Our project provides services to nearly 9,000 GEAR UP students, their parents and teachers, in 28 different middle schools in the Rio Grande Valley of south Texas.

I would like to begin by sharing some recent survey data collected from the GEAR UP students and parents in our project. This data shows that students in our area have a strong desire to pursue a college education and that their parents support them in this pursuit of the American dream.

Of the 7,800 students surveyed, 94 percent reported that they would like to obtain a college degree. I remind you that these are 8th-graders that have already formed an aspiration to graduate from college.

Of the parents surveyed, 99 percent of them indicated they wanted their child to obtain a college degree.

These are compelling numbers. They show the passion for education shared by Hispanic parents and children that are traditionally under-represented in colleges and universities in our great nation. Clearly, aspirations are high.

But now I would like to share some additional information collected in the same survey, that shows that our parents lack knowledge on the processes involved in college enrollment and degree attainment. Therefore, parental involvement activities are a strong component of our grant services.

Only 34 percent of our parents accurately reported the cost of college, and only 43 percent reported knowing college admissions requirements.

This is why GEAR UP is critical. There is a perilous disparity between aspirations and the knowledge necessary to make those aspirations a reality.

With a grant such as ours, we are able to ensure that students and parents are learning about the college admissions process, college entrance exams, financial aid, the value of rigorous coursework in high school, and also receive constant support and guidance in making the right choices.

To facilitate this, each of the 28 GEAR UP campuses has both a GEAR UP coordinator and a family liaison to provide services to students, parents and teachers.

The Department of Education sets forth requirements for the GEAR UP projects across the country. This means that students, parents and teachers must be provided with an array of opportunities that will increase college aspirations and actual college enrollment and success.

I would now like to highlight for you some of the strides we are making in GEAR UP.

This year, our project tested over 8,000 8th-grade students with the EXPLORE exam, which is a precursor to the ACT. GEAR UP will also provide the ACT PLAN exam in the 10th grade and the ACT in the 11th grade.

GEAR UP provides summer camps in computer science, robotics, creative writing, clinical lab sciences, physics and math, to name just a few.

GEAR UP college tutors assist students in the core content areas, with a focus on math and science. This year, over 5,800 students have each received an average of 14 hours of tutoring.

By the 8th grade, 5,858 GEAR UP students have visited at least one college or university.

Volunteer parents enter an intensive training called Las Platicas Academy. It is a 15-hour course that includes topics such as NCLB, graduation plans, study habits, college and financial aid information. Once parents complete the training, they will share acquired knowledge to empower and train other parents by conducting community outreach and spreading the message that every student will have access to college with the GEAR UP project.

We have also partnered with the National Hispanic Institute to develop an 8th-grade comprehensive parent curriculum that was utilized to train parents in the middle school during monthly parent meetings.

We also have two annual parent conferences that are held to inform parents about college admissions, financial aid, core content training, and making sure their children are on track for college.

Additionally, we have partnered with Texas Instruments, FORD PAS, Princeton Review and other local entities, including UTPA and other local colleges.

So far this year, over 300 GEAR UP teachers have received comprehensive professional development to assist them in preparing our GEAR UP students for a post-secondary education.

My testimony today is that GEAR UP is needed to continue to train parents and teachers to significantly increase the numbers of students going to college.

In closing, I would like to quote a Grant 1 GEAR UP student who said, "GEAR UP has inspired me and has helped me to set my goals. Before GEAR UP, my plans were to continue field work as a migrant. When I started getting involved with GEAR UP, my whole life changed. I have decided to start applying for scholarships in admission to different universities to continue my education."

Again, I thank you for the opportunity, Congressman Hinojosa, to provide testimony this afternoon.

[The statement of Ms. Cantu follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Martha Cantu, Director, Gear Up Program,  
University of Texas-Pan American**

Good afternoon Committee Members and thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony today. My name is Dr. Martha Cantu and I am the Director for the University of Texas-Pan American GEAR UP Project. Our Project provides services to nearly 9,000 GEAR UP students, their parents and teachers in 28 different middle schools in the Rio Grande Valley of South Texas.

I would like to begin by sharing some recent survey data collected from the GEAR UP students and parents in our Project. This data shows that students in our area have a strong desire to pursue a college education and that their parents support them in this pursuit of the American Dream.

Of the 7800 students surveyed, 94% reported that they would like to obtain a college degree. I remind you that these are 8th grade students that have already formed an aspiration to graduate from college.

Of parents surveyed, ninety-nine percent of them indicated that they want their children to obtain a college degree.

These are compelling numbers. They show the passion for education shared by Hispanic parents and children that are traditionally underrepresented in colleges and universities in our nation.

Clearly aspirations are high, but now I would like to share additional information collected in the same survey that shows that our parents lack knowledge on the processes involved in college enrollment and degree attainment; therefore parental involvement activities are a strong component of our grant services.

Only thirty-four percent of parents accurately reported the cost of college, and only 43% report knowing college admissions requirements.

This is why GEAR UP is critical; there is a perilous disparity between aspirations and the knowledge necessary to make those aspirations a reality.

With a grant such as ours, we are able to ensure that students and parents are learning about the college admissions process, college entrance exams, financial aid, the value of rigorous coursework in high school, and also receive constant support and guidance in making the right choices. To facilitate this, each of the 28 GEAR UP campuses has both a GEAR UP Coordinator and Family Liaison to provide services to students, parents and teachers.

The Department of Education sets forth service requirements for the GEAR UP Projects across the country. This means that students, parents, and teachers must be provided with an array of opportunities that will increase college aspirations and actual college enrollment and success.

I would now like to highlight some of the strides we are making in GEAR UP.

- This year, our Project tested over 8,000 8th grade students with the EXPLORE exam which is a precursor to the ACT. GEAR UP will also provide the ACT PLAN Exam in the 10th grade and the ACT in the 11th grade.

- GEAR UP provides summer camps in Computer Science, Robotics, Creative Writing, Clinical Lab Sciences, Physics, and Math to name just a few.
- GEAR UP college tutors assist students in the core content areas with a focus on math and science. This year, over 5,800 students have each received an average of 14 hours of tutoring.
- By the 8th grade, 5,858 GEAR UP students have visited at least one college or university.

- Volunteer parents enter an intensive training called “Las Platicas Academy.” It is a 15 hour course that includes topics such as NCLB, graduation plans, study habits, college and financial aid information. Once parents complete the training they will share acquired knowledge to empower and train other parents by conducting community outreach, and spreading the message that every student will have access to college with GEAR UP Project support.

- We have also partnered with the National Hispanic Institute to develop an 8th grade comprehensive parent curriculum that was utilized to train parents in the middle school during monthly parent meetings.

- There are also two annual parent conferences that are held to inform parents about college admissions, financial aid, core content area training and making sure their children are on track for college.

- Additionally, we have partnered with Texas Instruments, FORD PAS, Princeton Review and other local entities including UTPA and other local colleges, over 300 GEAR UP teachers have received comprehensive professional development to assist them in preparing our GEAR UP students for a post secondary education.

My testimony today is that GEAR UP is needed to continue to train parents and teachers in significantly increasing the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in post secondary education.

In closing I would like to quote a Grant 1 GEAR UP student who said “GEAR UP has inspired me and has helped me set my goals. Before GEAR UP, my plans were to continue field work as a migrant. When I started getting involved with GEAR UP, my whole life changed. I decided to start applying for scholarships and admission to different universities to continue my education”.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

Due to the brevity of the oral testimony, I would like to provide additional information on the University of Texas Pan American GEAR UP grant and the services provided to students, parents, and teachers. Our grant is broken down into five major components, each of which is measured by a set of objectives that are evaluated annually and reported to the Department of Education. Below is a brief synopsis of each of the five grant components and some key initiatives in each area.

*Five Major Grant Components and Services Offered By GEAR UP:*

*Component 1: Academic Preparation*

The foundation of the GEAR UP Project is academic preparation. Our students must be exposed to the rigor of college level work and must be held accountable with high expectations of success. Our Project provides a variety of services that are aligned to the mission of GEAR UP and are intended to prepare students to complete high schools and enroll and succeed in college.

Services provided in this area include:

**ACT/SAT Exam Preparation**—Repeated exposure to college entrance exams is critical; GEAR UP allows for early testing on an exam called the EXPLORE which is a precursor to the ACT and given at the 8th grade. This year, our Project tested well over 8,000 students and we have been able to use those results to guide curriculum in the classroom. Furthermore, there is much weight in telling an 8th grader that he/she is about to take college entrance exam because it communicates high expectations and a belief in their ability. GEAR UP will also provide the ACT PLAN Exam in the 10th grade and the ACT in the 11th grade.

**Concurrent Enrollment and Dual Credit Courses**—Once our students reach the 10th grade, GEAR UP will provide opportunities for students to enroll in college level courses at the University of Texas Pan American and at South Texas College to earn college credit and high school credits concurrently. GEAR UP students have the potential to graduate from high school with up to 60 college hours.

**Math and Science Summer Camps**—GEAR UP provides summer camps at the University of Texas Pan American each summer and at other colleges in the area. Our intent is to provide a strong academic curriculum taught by college professors with the university as a backdrop and full exposure to dorm life, facilities, professors, intramural activities, and of course, the college cafeteria! Just last summer in the Electrical Engineering Camp, we had our 7th grade students study, construct, and test an electric car with a command box! This is hands-on science and math in a college environment made possible because of GEAR UP and resources offered

by our fiscal agent, UTPA. This summer we have 11 different camps planned for both boy and girls as they transition into the 9th grade in Computer Science, Robotics, Creative Writing, Global, Drama, Clinical Lab, Physics, and Math to name just a few.

**College Tutors**—Each GEAR UP middle school has college tutors that are made available using GEAR UP funds. These college tutors assist students in the core content areas with a focus on math and science. Furthermore, they serve as mentors because they are living the college dream and are eager to share that experience with our GEAR UP students. This year alone, 5,867 students have each received an average of 14 hours of tutoring hours through GEAR UP resources.

*Component 2: Academic Preparation Support Services*

This component of our grant supports the rigor of the classroom with consistent exposure to college type of activities that help to motivate students to do well in their classes. Many have heard the term “well-rounded” when referring to students and the GEAR UP Project contributes to that ideal by infusing real life experiences to support the mission of GEAR UP.

Services provided in this area include:

**Guidance and Counseling**—Each GEAR UP school has a GEAR UP Counselor that monitors and supports the progress of GEAR UP students. This advocate position is critically important because this same person began with the cohort in the 7th grade and will continue to serve in this position until the students complete the 12th grade. They are a constancy in the life of students and develop a true relationship with students, their parents, and their teachers to make sure that the needs of the GEAR UP students are being met and that all entities work together. This year alone, the GEAR UP Counselors in our grant provided extensive guidance and counseling services to 7,430 GEAR UP students.

**College Visits**—The Rio Grande Valley is home to the University of Texas-Pan American, the University of Texas Brownsville, South Texas College, Texas State Technical College, and variety of local intuitions of higher learning and/or certificate programs. The GEAR UP approach is to start locally and have students visit our local schools before leaving the area for state tours. By the 8th grade, 5,858 GEAR UP students have visited at least one college or university! Each year, the visits become more selective and include presentations from beyond the university’s outreach department, but also include presentations and tours of the different departments, classroom observations, college student discussions, and the exposure to different guest speakers, art exhibits, performing arts events, and countless other examples of college life activities. Universities are no longer a place to fear, but rather a place students long to be because they see the richness of the college experience and GEAR UP provides consistent support to make college trips possible.

**Educational Exhibits**—Instruction outside of the textbook is key to understanding the depth of content material. GEAR UP students are consistently exposed to educational field experiences. This year UTPA provided GEAR UP students a guided tour of The Henrietta Marie Slave Ship Exhibit. Students saw first hand the atrocities of slavery and were able to better understand this period of American History with artifacts such as shackles, slave sales books, replicas of transport cabins, and listen to recorded accounts based on historical accounts of the voyage. GEAR UP students also have hands on learning in science when they visit the UTPA Coastal Studies Lab at South Padre Island. Students board a vessel and take a brief excursion where nets are cast and specimen collected for examination and classification at the actual lab. South Padre Island is approximately an hour from most cities in the RGV, but the majority of students have never visited and/or taken account of the natural science resources our area has to offer. I have been on the sailing vessel with students and their excitement is evident in their wide eyes as the net is lifted and the movement of sea life is visible. The net is dropped and opened on deck into a tank and fish, shrimp, sea horses, sting rays, and plant life frolic about \* \* \* this moment is real learning and GEAR UP provides these types of real world connections to curriculum.

Through GEAR UP, 929 students have received hand-on learning such as this.

**Career Exploration**—During the 8th grade year GEAR UP students completed a career interest inventory that provided each student with a summary of work areas they may be interested in based on their responses to survey questions. GEAR UP then provides countless opportunities for students to explore those careers through fairs, job-site visits, online virtual job shadowing, and student conferences. Recently we hosted a Career Extravaganza held at the University of Texas Pan American with over 1000 students and collaborated with each College within the University to have guest speakers in professions that pertain to each , for example, in the College of Health Sciences students interacted with doctors, physical therapists, phar-

macists, and physicians assistants to name a few. At the end of the day, some may have changed their mind about what they want to be when they grow up, but at least now they are informed and can make better choices later. This past year, 7,570 students have received career exploration services through GEAR UP.

*Component 3: Family and Community Outreach*

The UTPA GEAR UP Project understands that a well informed parent is an active and engaged parent. With that premise, our Project strives to provide parents with up to date information on the needs of their children. Each GEAR UP campus has both a GEAR UP Coordinator and Family Liaison that plan monthly parent meetings to provide parents with GEAR UP awareness and information on testing, study skills, college awareness, school policies, educational opportunities, financial aid, and opportunities for their own personal and educational growth through G.E.D. and E.S.L class offerings. Furthermore, parents are also engaged in the same type of educational experiences as their children with sessions on how to use Texas Instruments graphing calculators and the Navigator System, participation in experiments on the UTPA Regional Biotech Mobile Lab, college tours to UTPA and other local community colleges, and online research in the UTPA Mobile Go Center that brings a wealth of college access information right to their doorstep!

Services provided in this area include:

**College Tours**—Parents are continuously invited by the GEAR UP family liaison to attend college tours at UTPA and other local colleges in South Texas. Transportation for parents to attend college tours is provided through local school district GEAR UP funds or through the university GEAR UP budget. Parents are given the opportunity to visit some classrooms and ask questions regarding college admissions and financial aid.

**Las Platicas Academy**—Each campus also identifies parents that are very involved at school and in the community and recruits those parents to complete an intensive training called the Las Platicas Academy. The Academy is a 15 clock-hour course that includes topics such as NCLB, growth and development, graduation plans, TAKS tests, study habits, organizational skills, college admissions, testing and financial aid information. After the 15 clock-hour course, the Family and Community Outreach Coordinator provides continuous updated monthly training for the Platicadoras. The training is conducted utilizing the Abriendo Puertas parent volunteer curriculum developed by Texas A&M University. UTPA and other local colleges also provide many resources for parent training. The intent is to continue to increase parents' knowledge about college requirements and build capacity to support their children with the goal of college made tangible through empowerment. Once parents complete the training, a graduation ceremony ensues at UTPA and they will be certified and known as "Platicadores" or parent volunteers. They will share acquired knowledge to empower and train other parents by conducting home visits, neighborhood walks and community outreach, spreading the message that every student will have access to college with GEAR UP Project support. The Project currently has graduated 100 Platicadoras and these parent volunteers are asked to in turn train a minimum of 25 parents in the community. This will result in approximately 2500 parents trained annually on college access.

**Monthly Parent Meetings/Training**—The UTPA GEAR UP project partnered with the National Hispanic Institute to develop an 8th grade comprehensive curriculum that was utilized by the GEAR UP family liaisons to train parents in the middle school during monthly parent meetings. The development of the 9th grade curriculum is currently in progress. The middle school training consists of 9 modules in which 8th grade GEAR UP parents are trained in social influences and psychological shifts their child will experience at this critical age, popular undergraduate majors, 8th grade academic planning and beyond, timeline for early college preparation, navigating the application process and paying for college, and the importance of pursuing a rigorous curriculum in high school. Monthly parent meetings are held in the school and they are usually conducted in the evenings, during school hours and on weekends. Due to our diverse population of parents, family liaisons offer ongoing monthly sessions. Parent meetings are also held out in the community in places such as public libraries or local places of worship. Home visits are conducted often by the family liaisons for parents that cannot attend meetings on campus. The family liaison conducts the parent training during the home visit.

**Parent College Summits/Conferences**—There are two annual parent conferences that are held to inform parents about college admissions, financial aid, core content area training and making sure their children are on track for college. The conferences utilized a workshop style approach to ensure parent engagement. This year each GEAR UP parent conference attracted approximately 300 parents. Parents evaluated the conference through the GEAR UP evaluation survey.

ESL/GED Classes—Parent literacy opportunities are made available through the Project. GEAR UP collaborates with the Educational Service Center and local school districts to support their parent literacy programs.

Parent and Student Engagement—The GEAR UP Family and Community Outreach Coordinator is always looking for opportunities to provide parent training through meaningful and exciting ways. Many times a student event is that perfect opportunity! The parent will attend the event with their child and as their child is receiving training in matters such as which classes to take in high school, the parent is receiving training on the benefits of a pre-AP or AP curriculum. The GEAR UP Project, the university and other local colleges have held such events. A Career Extravaganza was held recently in which approximately 1,200 students received information about career awareness, taking the appropriate high school courses and were given opportunities to explore the different majors available to them in college. Parents also attended the Career Extravaganza and received training from GEAR UP and university personnel regarding parental involvement in post-secondary institutions, financial aid planning and the understanding high school credits. Parents are also invited to listen to motivational speakers throughout the year to assist in reinforcing the message at home about making good grades and making plans to attend college. Our GEAR UP parents have also attended and assisted with community service activities with their children to better understand the meaning of a well rounded student.

#### *Component 4: Professional Development*

At the cornerstone of student success, is teacher preparation and the UTPA GEAR UP Project recognizes the need for continued professional development of teachers. Our goal is to provide teachers with training that will assist them in promoting rigor and challenging coursework in their classrooms.

Services provided in this area include:

Master's Degree Tuition Assistance Program—Our Project provides teachers the opportunity to attain a Master's degree in critical areas such as math and science. Each year, teachers that work with GEAR UP students may apply for tuition assistance to pay for the courses on their degree plan that will lead to a Master's degree in the area they teach. This is a systemic contribution to our area as teachers become more educated in their fields, then the more depth their teaching will hold in the classroom.

Texas Instruments—Through a partnership with Texas Instruments, over 150 GEAR UP teachers have received an intensive 12 day training on math strategies and the use advanced equipment called the TI Navigator that works in conjunction with graphing calculators. Once teachers completed the training, their classroom was equipped with a TI Navigator and a class set of TI-84 calculators to supplement instruction.

#### *Component 5: Higher Education Collaborative*

This component of our grant is critical in establishing a smooth transition of GEAR UP students into college and universities across Texas and the nation. Communication and planning must exist between public schools and institutions of higher learning and GEAR UP has become the active liaison between the two and continues to make strides in this area.

Services provided in this area include:

College for Texans Campaign: Go Centers—The establishment of Go Centers in schools can also be attributed to GEAR UP intervention. The Go Centers are an initiative established by the Texas Coordinating Board's College for Texans Campaign as a response to low college enrollment and post-secondary degree attainment throughout the state. The UTPA GEAR UP Project has collaborated with the UTPA Valley Outreach Center to help launch Go Centers at GEAR UP schools. The Go Center itself is a physical location where internet ready computers and countless types of college access information is available to students; the center is manned by a G-Force that is a group of students at the school that are peer mentors in the area of college access and enrollment. The Go Center makes college a part of the high school culture and defines college as an expectation for all students.

Adopt-a-School Mentoring—GEAR UP and the UTPA Division of Enrollment and Student Services have formed a mentoring program that pairs University employees with local GEAR UP middle schools to provide college access information. In this initiative, directors in the Division "adopt" a GEAR UP middle school and visit that school throughout the year to give presentations in rallies, classrooms, parent meetings, and one on one mentoring with a central message: You can and will go to college if you prepare early, study hard, and make the right choices!

Partnership with The University of Texas-Pan American—The services provided by our grant are facilitated by our fiscal agent and educational partner, The University of Texas-Pan American. UTPA educates the most Mexican American students in the nation and ranks second in the nation in the number of bachelor's degrees awarded to Hispanics. Recently, it was named by The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education as one of the nation's "Top 100 Colleges for Hispanics".

Approximately 67% of UTPA students receive need-based financial aid.

Of the 11,489 students awarded need-based aid in FY2006 (fall/spring), 8,354 students (73%) were Pell eligible (economically disadvantaged). Of the Pell eligible students, 4,966 (59%) had a zero Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

GEAR UP students are able to benefit from different access programs made available through UTPA; some of which include:

Texas Scholars—A state-wide incentive program to motivate a greater number of students to prepare for the future by completing the Recommended

High School Program, a more rigorous academic path. This program is through the Texas Business & Education Coalition (TBEC) and receives support from UTPA and local and state business leaders.

UTPA Concurrent Enrollment—UTPA invites high school juniors and seniors who attend high school in the surrounding Rio Grande Valley school districts to apply for admission to the Concurrent Enrollment program. In AY 2006, concurrent enrollment had increased its enrollment by more than 730% compared to its enrollment in 1998. AY 2006 enrollment was 1,227 while AY 1998 had only 167 students. Students earning satisfactory grades were over 91%. Between 2003 and 2005 an average of 59.6% of CE high school graduates matriculated to UTPA as entering freshmen. Of the graduation class of 2001, 33% of the students graduated from UTPA within four years and maintained a mean GPA of 3.4 on a 4.0 scale.

UTPA offers a unique program called University Scholars; it is a four-year tuition and fee scholarship awarded to students who have successfully earned college credit through Advanced Placement examinations and/or Concurrent Enrollment at UTPA. It is designed in 1998 to encourage high school students to enroll in rigorous academic courses that will prepare them for success at the college level. Participation in the program has increased from 19 students in 1998 to 301 students in 2006.

UTPA is also home to long standing TRIO federal programs such as CAMP, Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math and Science, Educational Talent Search, and HEP.

The merits of The University of Texas-Pan American are a true benefit to the GEAR UP program because they provide constant support to local school districts and provide access opportunities to GEAR UP students and their parents to make the aspiration to attend college a reality.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Thank you.  
I would like to call on Dr. Martinez.

**STATEMENT OF MARIA D. MARTINEZ, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR  
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT**

Ms. MARTINEZ. Chairman Hinojosa, Ranking Member Keller, Representative Courtney—

Chairman HINOJOSA. Excuse me, would you get the mike up closer to you, please? And turn it on.

Ms. MARTINEZ. Okay. Sorry about that.

Chairman HINOJOSA. There you go.

Ms. MARTINEZ. Chairman Hinojosa, Ranking Member Keller, Representative Courtney and members of the committee, it is an honor to testify before you today on the topic of "The Higher Education Act: Approaches to College Preparation."

I am Dr. Maria Martinez, director of the Center for Academic Programs at the University of Connecticut. My office oversees an array of programs that expand and improve college access and retention of disadvantaged students.

Connecticut may be the most affluent state in the union, and its citizens are definitely among the best-educated, yet there are also



pockets of poverty in our state which lead to serious inequities in college access and completion.

More than 300,000 of Connecticut's schoolchildren are eligible for free and reduced lunches, and 12 percent of families have incomes of less than \$15,000 a year.

In 1983, the university established our center. Annually, through federal, state, institutional and private funds, our center works with more than 2,500 college and pre-college students. Yet we, together with other college access efforts in Connecticut, are just scratching the surface of the students who could be served.

Our pre-college programs include GEAR UP, Talent Search, and Upward Bound. Our college program is Student Support Services. Pleased by the success of Talent Search and Upward Bound, the state of Connecticut has established the Conn-CAP program, built on the TRIO model.

I will concentrate my remarks on our highly effective TRIO programs.

The university has sponsored TRIO since 1967, because we know and can prove that they work. Over the past 40 years, thousands of students have been able to overcome the academic, social and cultural barriers to entering and completing college by participating in TRIO.

As you know, TRIO programs serve students who are low-income and/or first-generation, which means that neither parent earned a college degree. Most of our students fall into both categories.

Talent Search is a low-cost, early-intervention program serving young people in grades 6 through 12 in New Haven and Windham. I am proud to report that our Talent Search high school graduation rate is 94 percent. And then 91 percent of these students go on to post-secondary education.

Those numbers are truly remarkable when you consider that our state's overall high school graduation rate is 84 percent but only 60 percent of students graduate from districts with high percentages of low-income students.

Upward Bound targets students who have completed 8th grade and serves high-schoolers in New Haven, Waterbury, Hartford and Windham. A smaller and more intensive program than Talent Search, Upward Bound includes a 6-week residential program on campus.

Ninety-four percent of the Upward Bound students enroll in college, and 85 percent of them graduate from college. That is an extraordinary record of accomplishment for disadvantaged students. Nationally, only about 26 percent of students from families earning less than \$25,000 a year graduate from college in 6 years or less. This number jumps to 79 percent for students with family incomes between \$25,000 and \$75,000 a year.

Student Support Services, SSS, at the university serves students who are academically at risk, typically because of inadequate high school preparation. SSS helps students successfully enter and stay in college. They also participate in a 6-week summer program prior to entering the university.

Despite financial and other pressures common to students from working-poor families, nearly 100 percent of the SSS students are retained between the freshman and the sophomore year. This com-

pares very well with the 93 percent rate for the general population at the university and 75 percent across the Connecticut state university system.

About 60 percent of the SSS students graduate in 6 years or less. To put this in context, the Connecticut state university system has an overall 6-year graduation rate of 40 percent. Graduating 60 percent of at-risk students in 6 years is truly an achievement and clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the SSS program.

We strictly document all of our services and maintain databases to record students' progress. I think you will agree that I am understandably satisfied with the result of our TRIO programs.

But what I need you to appreciate is that our record of achievement confirms the success of TRIO programs and its impact nationwide. TRIO is a pipeline of powerful programs that help nearly 900,000 students per year to prepare for, enter and complete college.

I would like to briefly share the story of one of our many distinguished alumni, Dr. Franklin Chang-Diaz. Franklin Chang-Diaz is the first Hispanic astronaut. Long before he stepped onto the space shuttle, he was a student making progress toward the undergraduate degree with the help and support of TRIO SSS. Dr. Chang-Diaz flew seven space missions, and today he credits TRIO with helping change his life. And he puts it best. He says, "TRIO is one of the ways this country really becomes the land of opportunity."

I thank Congressman Courtney for his interest in our program, and I thank the committee for allowing me the chance to address you.

[The statement of Ms. Martinez follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Maria D. Martinez, Director, Center for Academic Programs, University of Connecticut**

Chairman Hinojosa, Representative Courtney and Members of the Committee: It is an honor to testify before you today on the topic of The Higher Education Act: Approaches to College Preparation. I am Dr. Maria D. Martinez, Director of the Center for Academic Programs at the University of Connecticut. My office oversees an array of programs that expand and improve college access and retention for disadvantaged students.

Connecticut may be the most affluent state in the Union and its citizens are definitely among the best educated. Yet, there are also pockets of poverty in our state, which leads to serious inequities in college access and completion. More than 300,000 of Connecticut's school children are eligible for free or reduced lunches, and 12 percent of families have incomes of less than \$15,000 a year.

In 1983 the University established our Center. Annually, through federal, state, institutional and private funds, our Center works with more than 2,500 college and pre-college students. Yet we, together with other college-access efforts in Connecticut, are just scratching the surface of the students who could be served.

Our pre-college programs include GEAR UP, Talent Search, and Upward Bound; our college program is Student Support Services. Pleased by the success of Talent Search and Upward Bound, the state of Connecticut has established the Conn-CAP program, built on the TRIO model. I will concentrate my remarks on our highly-effective TRIO programs.

The University has sponsored TRIO programs since 1967 because we know and can prove that they work. Over the past 40 years thousands of students have been able to overcome the academic, social and cultural barriers to entering and completing college by participating in TRIO. As you know, TRIO programs serve students who are low-income and/or first generation, which means that neither parent earned a college degree. Most of our students fall into both categories.

Talent Search is a low-cost early intervention program serving young people in grades six through twelve in New Haven and Windham. I am proud to report that

our Talent Search high school graduation rate is 94 percent, and that 91 percent of these students go on to post-secondary education. Those numbers are truly remarkable when you consider that our state's overall high school graduation rate is 84 percent but only 60 percent of students graduate from districts with high percentages of low-income students. (Swanson, C.B., 2004).

Upward Bound targets students who have completed eighth grade and serves high schoolers in New Haven, Waterbury, Hartford and Windham. A smaller and more intensive program than Talent Search, Upward Bound includes a six-week residential program on campus. Ninety four percent of the Upward Bound students enroll in college, and 85 % graduate. That is an extraordinary record of accomplishment for disadvantaged students. Nationally only about 26 percent of students from families earning less than \$25,000 a year graduate from college in six years or less. This number jumps to 79% for students with family incomes between \$25,000 and \$75,000. (Vincent Tinto, 2004)

Student Support Services (SSS) at the University serves students who are academically at-risk, typically because of inadequate high school preparation. SSS helps students successfully enter and stay in college. They also participate in a six-week summer program prior to entering the University.

Despite financial and other pressures common to students from working poor families, 100 percent of the SSS students are retained between the freshman and sophomore years. This compares very well with a 93% rate for the general population at the University and 75% at the Connecticut State University System.

About 60 percent of SSS students graduate in six years or less. To put this in context, the Connecticut State University System has an overall six-year graduation rate of 40 percent. Graduating 60 percent of at-risk students in six years is truly an achievement, and clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the SSS program.

We strictly document all of our services and maintain databases to record students' progress. I think you will agree that I am understandably satisfied with the results of our TRIO programs. But what I need you to appreciate is that our record of achievement confirms the success of TRIO and its impact nationwide. TRIO is a pipeline of powerful programs that help nearly 900,000 students per year to prepare for, enter and complete college.

I would like to briefly share the story of one of our many distinguished alumni. Dr. Franklin R. Chang-Diaz was America's first Hispanic astronaut. Long before he stepped onto the space shuttle, he was a student, making progress toward his undergraduate degree with the help and support of the TRIO-SSS program. As a teenager Dr. Chang-Diaz did not speak English very well. But he dreamed of studying physics and engineering. Through hard work and the assistance of the SSS program, he graduated from the University, earned a Ph.D. in plasma physics at MIT, and ultimately was recruited by NASA.

Dr. Chang-Diaz, who flew seven space missions (which is the current world record), vividly remembers the challenges of his early years, and credits TRIO with helping change his life. When asked about TRIO's impact, Dr. Chang-Diaz, said it best: "TRIO is one of the ways this country really becomes the Land of Opportunity."

TRIO programs have been changing lives for generations. I urge you to consider the information I have shared with you today in making decisions about; not only keeping TRIO but also expanding our reach.

I thank Congressman Courtney for his interest in our programs, and I thank the committee for allowing me this chance to address you.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Thank you.

Now I would ask Mr. Linn if he would please make his presentation.

**STATEMENT OF DANE LINN, DIRECTOR, EDUCATION DIVISION, CENTER FOR BEST PRACTICES, NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION**

Mr. LINN. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee. It is my honor to testify to you this afternoon on behalf of the National Governors Association.

As Chairman Hinojosa mentioned, my name is Dane Linn, and I serve as director of the Education Division for the National Governors Association's Center for Best Practices.

As the bipartisan organization representing the nation's governors, NGA promotes visionary state leadership, shares best practices, and speaks with a unified voice on national policy.

It is an honor to testify on the recently released NGA federal legislative package on innovation and other governor-led state efforts to prepare students for post-secondary education.

A recent public opinion survey conducted for the NGA found that nine out of 10 Americans, both Democrats and Republicans alike, believe that if our nation fails to innovate, our children and our economy will be left behind.

And while Americans believe we currently have the most innovative nation in the world, they see us losing ground in 20 years. Why is that? Simply put, Americans believe other nations are more committed to education. We cannot lead the global economy if our educational system is lagging behind.

What can we do to secure our economic position in the world? Americans believe the solution is innovation. Asked in the NGA survey what action would have the most positive impact on the economy, nearly half selected "encouraging and supporting innovation in our schools and business."

Governors are meeting this challenge head-on through a bold, comprehensive, nationwide initiative entitled, "Innovation America." Led by NGA Chair and Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano, the initiative is guided by a bipartisan task force of governors and business and academic leaders.

From coast to coast, governors are developing and implementing strategies to ensure their students are equipped to take advantage of the opportunities a knowledge-based economy offers.

Congress can assist governors by supporting the NGA Innovation America partnership. Together with the Council on Competitiveness, this federal legislative policy framework will assist states in developing collaborative efforts between the public, private and education sectors.

This framework emphasizes science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM, education, and foreign language proficiency; enhances workforce systems; and promotes economic development strategies that harness state and regional assets.

More detailed information can be found in the written testimony that I have provided.

But for the purpose of my testimony today, NGA was asked to specifically focus on what is commonly referred to as P-16 councils and other state activities to prepare students to not only access post-secondary education but to succeed as well.

Today, over 30 states have what is called P-16 councils. In some states they are known as P-20 councils. These coordinating bodies, led or created by governors through executive order or legislation, vary from state to state, but each shares the common focus of improving the education and economic conditions of their state.

Governors are also investing in the development and improvement of longitudinal data systems. These data systems, which allow states to make data-driven decisions to improve student results, will provide transparency and accountability in the education system.

Both longitudinal data systems and P-16 councils are necessary steps for developing a coordinated and aligned education system with an overarching goal of increasing post-secondary and work readiness.

Governors are leading these efforts in several ways. In Arizona, for example, the P-20 council is chaired by Governor Napolitano. That council is focused on developing a strong foundation in STEM education and strengthening curriculum and standards to prepare students for post-secondary education and to meet the demands of the workforce.

Virginia Governor Tim Kaine pushed the state's P-16 council to define college readiness, and led the development of a P-16 longitudinal data system. Virginia has focused on two areas: the identification and the replication of high-performing schools and using its data system to identify student weaknesses before they find themselves placed in remedial classes in college.

And in Indiana, the governor and the state superintendent co-chaired the Indiana Education Roundtable. Working in conjunction with the state board of education, the roundtable raised the state's high school standards and aligned them with the expectations of the state's post-secondary institutions. As a result, Indiana has moved from 40th to 17th in the nation in measures of college attendance.

While each state's P-16 council is working toward a common goal of college readiness, each state's council is unique in its structure and leadership. Such flexibility is critical in allowing governors the opportunity to create the most effective councils for their states.

Congress can partner with governors to create and fund a number of grants that support P-16 councils and the enhancement of state longitudinal data systems. These grants will allow states to link and use student performance data to coordinated K-12 and higher education planning, budgeting and goal-setting.

I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your interest in the governor-led actions to help states prepare students, again, for both college and work through P-16 councils and longitudinal data systems.

Governors stand ready to work with you to ensure our nation remains a leader in innovation by giving our students a world-class education system.

Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Linn follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Dane Linn, Director, Education Division, Center for Best Practices, National Governors Association**

On behalf of the National Governors Association (NGA), it is an honor to testify before you today on the recently released NGA federal legislative package, Innovation America: A Partnership, and other governor-led state efforts to prepare students for postsecondary education.

Founded in 1908, NGA is the collective voice of the nation's governors. It promotes visionary state leadership, shares best practices and speaks with a unified voice on national policy.

*A Call for Action*

Today's U.S. economy is confronted with a new and remarkable paradox. While the economy continues to grow and roughly two million new jobs were created each year since 2004, many American families have a feeling of uncertainty and concern

about the economy and their future. When asked the question, “Will your children or grandchildren have a better life than you?” for many the answer is, “No.”

According to a recent nationwide public opinion poll conducted by Dr. Frank Luntz for the nation’s governors, 9 out of 10 Americans—Democrats and Republicans alike—believe that if our nation fails to innovate, our children and our economy will be left behind. And while Americans believe we have the most innovative nation in the world at the moment—ahead of China and Japan—they see America losing ground in 20 years. Why? According to the poll, Americans believe that other nations are more committed to education. America’s economic future is inextricably linked to education and the public’s perception of our education system. Simply put, American cannot lead the new global economy if our educational system is lagging behind.

Our nation has a powerful incentive to improve the education pipeline. In the next decade, two-thirds of new jobs will require some postsecondary education beyond a high school degree. To be competitive and create the conditions for strong economic growth, states need to help all their residents increase their skills and be prepared for lifelong learning. Much is at stake.

“Good jobs”—jobs that are growing quickly and pay enough to support a family of four—require postsecondary education or training. More than two-thirds of workers in occupations and industries that are growing have at least some postsecondary education, compared with one-third of workers in occupations and industries that are declining. Moreover, 67 percent of new jobs created by 2010 will demand skills that require at least some college education. This rapid increase in the demand for postsecondary education will be accompanied by baby-boom retirements, resulting in a predicted shortage of more than 14 million college educated workers by 2020.

While the American higher education system has long been a centerpiece of the U.S. economy, and the launching pad for the jobs of the future, the skills needed by students today are far different than the expectations and education of yesterday. Today, integrating diverse subject matters is as important as mastering individual ones. Students not only need to be well-rounded, they also need entrepreneurial skills, and the capacity to imagine and adapt to the unknown.

What can be done to secure our economic position in the world? Americans believe the solution is innovation. Asked in the Luntz survey what action would have the most positive impact on the economy, nearly half (46 percent) said it’s “encouraging and supporting innovation in our schools and businesses.” Interestingly, focusing on innovation had more support than either tax incentives for small business (28 percent) or raising the minimum wage (24 percent).

#### *Governors’ Innovation America Agenda*

Across the nation, governors are confronting these challenges through a bold, comprehensive nationwide initiative, entitled Innovation America, lead by NGA Chair, Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano.

Governor Napolitano’s Innovation America represents a multi-tiered, comprehensive strategy to propel the rapid deployment and development of innovation in America by improving education, encouraging economic development, and ensuring worker competitiveness. Under the initiative, Governors have taken the lead with the following concrete acts:

- **Innovative Thinking:** Established a bipartisan Innovation America Task Force of governors, business leaders, and academics to develop innovation-based education and economic strategies in three sectors:
  1. Improving science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education;
  2. Enabling the post-secondary education system to better support innovation; and
  3. Encouraging business innovation through supportive state policies.
- **State Action:** Collected best practices in education and economic development to inform governors’ work and raised private funds to help implement innovation policies; and
- **New Federal Partnerships:** Developed a package of federal legislative recommendations to focus on the role of states in promoting innovation and to compliment federal efforts.

#### *Governors Lead Innovation State Strategies*

Given the seriousness of the competitive challenge to our nation, governors are developing strategies to accelerate innovation opportunities within their states. Governors are improving and realigning state programs to encourage cross-sector collaboration, target investments and measure outcomes in the critical areas of education, economic development and workforce training. These state strategies, developed by the NGA Innovation America Task Force, are further detailed below:

*K-12 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education*

Governors know that ensuring a quality education for all students at the K-12 level is critical for the economic well-being of their states. The Innovation America initiative seeks to improve the rigor and relevance of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) teaching and learning in K-12 classrooms in order to (a) increase the supply of students interested in and prepared for STEM related careers; and (b) help provide all high school graduates the higher level critical thinking, adaptive, and problem solving skills necessary for success in postsecondary education and the workplace.

*Postsecondary Education*

The American higher education system has been a centerpiece of the U.S. economy, producing much of the nation's innovative talent—scientists, engineers, technicians, and managers—and the majority of its publicly-funded research. Over the past several years, however, other nations and regions have entered the global marketplace by successfully duplicating and even improving upon this model. The Innovation America initiative seeks to engage governors in rethinking the role of higher education: what are the new models that will carry our country to the next level of innovation and prosperity.

*Regional Innovation*

All states can develop innovation-based economies by building innovation capacity and establishing policies that support their most promising industries and regions (i.e., those areas within the state that contain clusters of high-growth, innovative businesses). States must recognize their inherent competitive strengths and align policies and investments to support these business sectors and the regions in which they reside. This means that workforce training and educational institutions must address the skills needed to meet the demands of fast-growing firms. R&D investments must be aligned with regional business strategies, and entrepreneurial support efforts must take into account the products and services unique to the region. The Innovation America initiative will enhance a state's innovation environment by helping state businesses move into a stronger position to exploit the opportunities presented by changes in technologies and markets—opportunities to increase productivity, develop new products, and expand into new markets.

The federal government, notably the work of the House Education and Labor Committee and this Subcommittee, can play a pivotal role to ensure the economic position of our nation and the future of our children through the NGA Innovation America: A Partnership.

*Innovation America: A Partnership with the Federal Government*

America's continued economic prosperity and growth will be driven by the nation's ability to generate ideas and translate them into action. The National Governors Association, together with the Council on Competitiveness, developed a federal legislative proposal to complement federal legislative activity and encourage state efforts to accelerate the rate of U.S. innovation and economic prosperity. The NGA federal package proposes a federal policy framework to assist states in developing collaborative efforts between public, private and education sectors.

A full copy of NGA's legislative package, Innovation America: A Partnership, and related NGA education policies are enclosed with my testimony. Our federal legislative proposal contains three broad areas for reform: Education, Workforce Development, and Regional Investment. The following is a brief summation of each section and related governors' federal recommendations.

*Part One: Education—Math, Science, and Foreign Language Proficiency*

Aligning and refocusing education from birth to college (P-16) is essential to ensure our nation's competitiveness. The skills needed for individuals to compete and prosper in the global economy require a strong foundation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and foreign languages. Governors' seek to create a targeted, but flexible and coordinated approach to address these critical national education needs through federal recommendations in the following key areas:

- Support for Students and Teachers. Programs to encourage students to pursue higher education and careers in mathematics, science, technology, engineering, and critical foreign languages, and to infuse the education pipeline with high quality STEM and critical foreign language teachers, particularly in high-need and hard-to-staff schools.
- STEM Education Improvement Grants. Matching grants to governors or a consortium of governors to provide resources and technical assistance to implement or expand STEM education and infrastructure activities.

- High School Redesign Enhancement. Programs to expand and replicate governor-led high school redesign efforts around the country.
- Voluntary International Benchmarking. Grants to allow governors to request a voluntary analysis of state standards with the skills being measured on Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and incentive grants to implement governor-led solutions.
- State P-16 Alignment. Matching grants to implement or develop aligned state P-16 councils and implement solutions to patch holes in the P-16 pipeline, and direct grants to create efficient state P-16 longitudinal data systems.

*Part Two: Workforce Enhancement*

The strength of America is our citizens—their innovation, creativity, and hard work. Governors’ proposal would help states create efficient workforce systems aligned with regional education and economic development; enhance services to workers; and reduce costly administrative burdens to regions, states, and localities, while creating more transparent accountable systems. Specifically, governors recommend changes to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and related programs to create the following:

- State and Regional Economic Alignment Program. The program will increase coordination, innovation, and effectiveness of state workforce programs.
- Common Outcome Measures. The program will increase workforce system alignment through NGA common accountability measures, while focusing on meaningful customer outcomes related to education and employment readiness, reducing administrative costs and increasing transparency to evaluate federal, state, and local investments.
- State and Regional Economic Development through Workforce Investment. The program will award matching grants to states to carry out innovative and coordinated WIA programming consistent with the statewide, regional, or sector specific economic and educational interests.

*Part Three: Regional Innovation*

Because competition and innovation will be driven by high-growth economic regions in the 21st century global economy, economic development strategies must encompass and harness state regional assets. Governors’ recommend the following to pull together diverse sectors to create a culture of collaboration and cooperation that will accelerate innovation and economic growth for our nation.

- Competitive Innovation Grants. Competitive planning grants used to establish Innovation Councils. The mission of the councils would be to facilitate collaboration between public, private and education sectors to accelerate the rates of innovation.
- Competitive Research and Development Grants Program. This program will provide state and regional innovation Councils with the research and development funds to stimulate the rate of innovation and implement their strategic plans.
- Grants for Broadband Deployment. This program will provide states with funds needed to increase access, adoption and usage of broadband technology, as well as provide financial assistance to continue to update technology.
- Competitive Stimulus Grants. This program will provide states with continuing incentives to extend economic development opportunities for innovation-driven industries and services.

For the purposes of today’s hearing, NGA was asked to address in further detail State P-16 Councils and recommendations that would prepare students for higher education.

*Education Innovation Begins with P-16 Alignment*

The engines of education—early, elementary and secondary, and post-secondary—must move in the same direction for the U.S. economy to charge ahead and remain competitive. In the 21st century, our economic strength will depend on the ability of each state, and our nation as a whole, to develop a coordinated and aligned education system that supports, trains, and prepares skilled workers.

*State P-16 Councils*

The first step is corralling the fragmented education system with P-16 councils. Across the country, governors are leading efforts to create state P-16 councils to oversee the integration of early, elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education. From California to Georgia to Delaware, approximately 30 states have state P-16 councils or governance bodies.

Through executive orders and state legislation, Governors are creating integrated education systems in which all levels of education coordinate, communicate, and educate as one system instead of separate, isolated silos. While the structures and



names of the state councils may vary, the goals are always the same: to create a seamless education system to improve academic achievement and economic development.

Several of the major advantages of state P-16 councils include:

- smoothing student transitions from one level of learning to the next, e.g. high school to college;
- aligning teacher preparation with the demands of today's and tomorrow's classrooms;
- reducing costly administrative inefficiencies, duplication, or inconsistencies;
- identifying and fixing holes in the education pipeline; and
- closing the achievement gap and improving outcomes for all students.

Most notably, for the purposes of our discussion today, state P-16 councils are critical to help prepare students for postsecondary education. Specifically, state P-16 councils can:

- identify the skill gaps for students to prepare and be successful in higher education;
- redesign high school graduation standards to match college entrance requirements;
- target for improvement schools that produce students with high remediation rates; and
- improve student postsecondary success and attainment rates.

#### *Governors Leading State P-16 Councils*

Governors are uniquely positioned to provide vision and leadership for P-16 initiatives in their states. The bully pulpit of the governor's office is critical to increase public awareness and engagement, assemble the right team at the table, and build and sustain consensus for change. As governors demand results, turf wars or institutional resistance are overcome and traded-in for a common, collaborative vision. Creating a more integrated, seamless education system involves grappling with a host of complex issues, including standards, testing, teacher education, college admissions policies, governance, and funding streams, to name just a few.

#### *One-Size Does Not Fill All*

P-16 Councils vary in structure, leadership, and membership. Such flexibility is necessary to ensure that the councils will be effective within the context of their individual state and local education systems. Flexibility is vital to both a governor's ability to work within the existing infrastructure as well as to draw informed, committed leadership to participate in the process. The following examples illustrate the different ways in which governors created effective state P-16 councils.

In Arizona, in order to bring business leaders, policy makers and educators to the table, the P-20 Council, chaired by Governor Napolitano, was established by Executive Order No. 2005-19 in 2006. The Council, comprised of educators, university presidents, elected officials, and business leaders, is focused on developing a strong foundation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and strengthening curriculum and standards to prepare students for post-secondary education and meet the demands of the workforce. The result is an education continuum, with classes building on ideas that were taught in years prior, and students better equipped with industry-specific skills in high-growth, high-wage occupations that await them when they graduate.

Since taking office, Virginia's Governor Tim Kaine has embraced high school redesign. He pushed the state's P-16 Council to define college readiness and lead the development of a P-16 longitudinal data system. Virginia funded two studies now underway: 1) to identify high-performing high schools and the qualities that make them successful; and 2) to examine academic weaknesses of recent high school graduates, focusing on graduates who are required to take remedial courses upon college entrance—an analysis utilizing the state's longitudinal data system.

Statutory and constitutional changes gave Florida's governor the authority to appoint the state commissioner of education and other members of a single governing board that oversees kindergarten through postsecondary systems. With a centralized education governance structure, Florida designed a unified, P-16 longitudinal data system that identifies school districts whose graduates have high remediation rates in postsecondary programs.

In Indiana, the governor and state superintendent co-chair the Indiana Education Roundtable, which consists of representatives from K-12, higher education, business, labor, and community groups, as well as state legislators. Working in conjunction with the state board of education, the roundtable raised the state's high school standards and aligned them with the expectations of the state's postsecondary insti-

tutions. As a result, Indiana moved from 40th to 17th in the nation in measures of college attendance.

The governor-created Georgia P-16 Council includes gubernatorial appointed members from a broad range of businesses, community groups and education agencies, including the Board of Regents and the State Board of Education. The challenge to the council was to work together to “raise the bar’ of academic achievement for all students at all levels.” Successes to date include increased enrollment in preschools, changes in students’ course-taking patterns towards a more challenging curricula, a rising number of college-ready high school graduates, and revised teacher preparation policies aimed at supporting students from diverse backgrounds in meeting high standards.

Oregon’s K-16 system inspired by a Governor’s Executive Order calls for meetings between representatives of the K-12 and higher education systems. Since then, the state has embraced two primary initiatives: aligning teacher preparation programs with K-12 performance standards, and developing the Proficiency-based Admissions Standards System (PASS). The Oregon University System developed PASS for two reasons. First, PASS aligns university admission standards with the statewide K-12 school improvement plan based on demonstrated competencies and grades. As a result, high schools across the state have begun redesigning their curriculum.

Delaware’s P-16 Council, as part of the state’s communication strategy around increased high school graduation requirements in math and science, held focus groups with parents and business leaders to determine their level of awareness about and support for the increased expectations for high school graduates. Focus group participants questioned whether the state and its districts and schools have the necessary capacity—in the form of highly qualified teachers, facilities, district and state support, public support, and funding—to meet the demands. In response to the concerns raised by these focus groups, Delaware developed recommended math and English language arts curricula; it has also charged subcommittees with the task of making recommendations for providing supports to teachers and students that would help students meet higher expectations.

#### *Congressional Action to Innovate & Help Prepare Students for College*

Governors would like to partner with Congress to accelerate education innovation. Let me point to several additional specific ways that Congress can support state innovation and best practices.

- Support State P-16 Councils and Solutions: P-16 councils are innovative and proven best practices that should be accelerated across our nation. Funding for this activity remains an issue. Though some P-16 councils (Georgia, Maryland and Wisconsin) have sustained funding and dedicated staff, most do not. Moreover, the lack of funding impedes implement of innovative council-identified solutions.

Congress can overcome this barrier by partnering with governors to create and fund state P-16 Council Development Grants, and P-16 Council Solutions Grants to governors, as outlined in the NGA Innovation America: A Partnership proposal. In those states with existing P-16 councils, Congress can support immediate action with incentive grants and technical assistance to implement solutions. Now is the time for action. Governors are willing to commit resources to this important endeavor, if you will partner with them. This work could be supported through new programs or new allowable uses of existing federal resources.

In addition, Congress can help innovate in education through other strategies, such as:

- Support State Determined P-16 Longitudinal Data Systems: Governors are also engaged in developing longitudinal data systems that are capable of tracking individual students, through the use of a numerical identifier, through the K-12 system and into the postsecondary education system. Such systems allow schools to track the progress of individual students as well as grade level cohorts of students as they move through the P-16 systems. Congress accelerate this important work by supporting, or allowing federal funds to be used, for P-16 Data System Grants as recommended in the NGA Innovation America: A Partnership proposal.

- Leverage and Expand State High School Redesign Efforts: Governors are also leading other college readiness initiatives, including increasing access to Advanced Placement coursework, improve statewide access through virtual schools, strengthening P-16 longitudinal data systems, and increasing access to dual enrollment and early college options. This myriad of strategies provides a wide range of students with an increased opportunity for college readiness and a better chance for success in all of their post secondary pathways. Congress can support governors’ work by expanding access to Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) and certificate programs for all students and preparation for teachers and developing and enhancing state dual enrollment and early college programs. Additional rec-

ommendations are also proposed by governors' in this exciting and promising area of reform.

*Conclusion*

Governors heard the clarion call of their citizens to take action. And I am pleased to report that in every corner of our nation, governors are leading.

Governors' federal recommendations—education, workforce, and economic development—form the foundation for a new state-federal partnership to propel our nation forward and stay ahead in the new global economy. America's greatest asset has always been our human capital. Our nation was built by passion, creativity, and sheer determination. Each generation successfully worked to produce a better life than the last, and to pass on that dream to their children. This quintessential "American" dream endures.

A new revitalized, coordinated, and targeted approach will help ensure our collective fate. Governors hope to forge a new state-federal partnership to ensure that America remains competitive in the 21st Century through Innovation America: A Partnership. Our nation must provide students and workers with the foundation for lifelong learning.

The nation's governors stand ready to work with you.

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Chairman HINOJOSA. Thank you.

Now I ask our fourth presenter, Mr. Schramm, you may start.

**STATEMENT OF J.B. SCHRAMM, FOUNDER, COLLEGE SUMMIT**

Mr. SCHRAMM. Thank you, Chairman Hinojosa, Mr. Keller, members of the subcommittee, for holding this hearing on college preparation.

My name is J.B. Schramm, and I am the founder of College Summit. And it is an honor to be here and to be joined on this panel by leaders from NGA as well as from TRIO and GEAR UP, initiatives that we see making a big difference in the lives of young people around the country and that work in collaboration with College Summit programs in a number of states.

And it is also an honor to have Ms. Schroeder here. I grew up in Colorado's 1st Congressional District.

College Summit is a nonprofit organization that began 13 years ago in the basement of a low-income housing development here in Washington.

I had spent the 5 years before starting College Summit running a teen center in that basement. And I learned two things.

The first was lots of talented young people graduate from high school in our neighborhood and don't go on to college. National data shows that there are 200,000 students a year who are low-income high school graduates, college-ready, but don't go on to college.

The second thing I learned was that the high schools in our neighborhood didn't want any more programs that would come and disappear. They wanted someone to come in and help them build their capacity so that they could help their students succeed in college.

So, based on that, we started College Summit to help low-income communities raise their college-going rates by helping high schools build college culture.

So, why is this important? Every student who is first in their family to get through college basically breaks the cycle of poverty in their family line forever. They are going to make \$2 million more in the course of their career. Their children are going to be almost twice as likely to go to college.

So, if we could fix the system so that these 200,000 students succeeded in college every year, we would have these young people contributing about \$80 billion more in taxes. So when programs like GEAR UP and TRIO and other effective efforts actually produce measurable results, the American taxpayer gets a return on their investment.

So, where is College Summit? Today we work in 10 states. We work in high schools, serving 60,000 students around the country. For example, we work with a majority of all high school seniors in the cities of Oakland, St. Louis, Denver. Thanks to the Gates Foundation, we will be working throughout 100 high schools in New York City. We also work in rural areas, such as McDowell County, West Virginia.

Our partner superintendents tell us they like four elements of our model.

Number one, we are capacity-builders. We teach them to fish so they can do this work on their own.

Secondly, we work district-wide. So we give them tools so that they can manage success across their different high schools.

Number three, our results are measurable. Our schools have been producing significant college enrollment rate increases school-wide over baseline based on externally verified data.

And we provide significant financial support. The schools pay for our tools, but we also bring matching dollars from philanthropy to support our communities—over \$30 million to date.

What is it that College Summit does? Four things.

One, we provide a course for all seniors in post-secondary planning. The thought is, when a young person has a good plan for what they are going to do after high school, they are more likely to finish successfully.

Secondly, we provide professional development for teachers and counselors: 3-day-long trainings where they learn to run the course, to build college culture in their schools, and to raise their expectations of what their young people can accomplish.

Number three, we help the school find the most influential students in the school, and we train them in 4-day summer programs, so that by the start of senior year those students have completed their financial aid and college admissions applications and they are ready to start supporting younger students in their community.

And then fourth, we provide data measurement and management tools so that the school leaders see real-time what is happening with all the students in their classrooms, but also can see each month and each year what the outcomes are, so that they can spot what is working and spread it.

I have three recommendations given by our partners from around the country, and I have included those in my written remarks. If any of you have any questions, I would be happy to discuss those in the question period.

But I would just like to thank you for holding this session. The need for higher education is so great, and the potential reward if we can tap more of the talent in our diverse communities is so great that it is wonderful that you are focusing attention and resources on initiatives that can produce measurable results.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The statement of Mr. Schramm follows:]

**Prepared Statement of J.B. Schramm, Founder, College Summit**

Thank you, Chairman Hinojosa, Mr. Keller and members of the Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness Subcommittee for holding this hearing today on Approaches to College Preparation. I'm J.B. Schramm, founder of College Summit. It is an honor to appear before you today, and to be on a panel with leaders from TRIO and GEAR UP, initiatives that make a big difference in the lives of young people, initiatives that College Summit is pleased to collaborate with in communities across the country.

College Summit is a nonprofit organization that began 13 years ago in a low-income housing project here in Washington, D.C. For five years, I'd been running a teen education center there and learned two major things:

1. Lots of impressive, promising young people graduated from high school college-ready and did not go to college.

- Nationally, every year, about 200,000 students from low-income backgrounds graduate from high school prepared for college but don't go.<sup>1</sup>

2. The second thing I learned was that the high schools in our neighborhood didn't want any more programs (that would come, and disappear). The high schools wanted to build their own capacity to get their students to college.

Based on these two ideas, we started College Summit to help low-income communities raise their college-going rates by helping high schools build college culture.

Why are efforts like this important for our nation?

- Every student who is first in their family to graduate from college basically ends poverty in their family line forever

- They'll earn over an additional \$2 Million over the course of their careers;<sup>2</sup> and

- Their children will be almost twice as likely to enroll themselves.<sup>3</sup>

- If we were able to correct the systems so that the 200,000 students went to college each year, those students would contribute an additional \$80 Billion in federal tax revenue annually.<sup>4</sup> Programs like GEAR UP, TRIO and quality state and local efforts provide a great return on the taxpayer's investment.

Today, College Summit works in 10 different states, with high schools serving 60,000 students. For example, we work with a majority of all high school seniors in Oakland, St. Louis, Denver, and, thanks to the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, we will soon be working throughout 100 high schools in New York City.

Our partner superintendents, e.g., Kim Statham in Oakland and Ron Duerring in Kanawha County, WV, tell us that they value four things about our model:

1. We are capacity builders. We teach the districts "to fish" and to do this work themselves.

2. We work district-wide, with tools that help leaders manage work across schools.

3. Our results are measurable. Our schools have been significantly increasing their college-going rates school-wide over baseline, based on externally verified data.

a. We have received the highest award from the National Association for College Admission Counseling. For four years in a row, Fast Company Magazine has selected College Summit as one of the top nonprofit organizations "Changing the World." The Skoll Foundation, The Lumina Foundation for Education, and Venture Philanthropy Partners have recognized College Summit with major grants. We have been awarded two competitive grants from the Department of Education's FIPSE program, and have appreciated the support of Congressman Clyburn and Congressman Regula for our work.

4. And we provide significant financial support. While school districts pay for our tools, we bring significant private matching dollars to support our communities. Major supporters, including Capital One, Samberg Family Foundation, Jenesis Group, Charles Harris III and ECA Foundation have enabled us to contribute over \$30 Million to date.

What do we do?:

- We provide a course for all seniors in postsecondary planning.

- When all students have a plan for what they will do after high school, they are more likely to finish high school successfully.

- We deliver professional development for teachers, and guidance counselors

- Through 3-day Educator's Institutes, we train school staff to deliver the course and raise expectations for what their students can accomplish.

- Through a 4-day residential workshop held on a college campus, we train influential students to foster college-going culture

- Data just released by the Gates Foundation found that low-income students are four times more likely to go to college when a majority of their peers plan to go to college.<sup>5</sup>

- These student influencers start senior year with a complete college application, including financial aid, completed, ready to support classmates and younger students.

- We help school leaders use data to manage and evaluate progress
- With support from Deloitte, we help the schools use real-time tracking of student progress in the classroom; and
- Review monthly and annual outcomes reports so that the school leaders can spot innovations and spread them.

I would like to share three college access recommendations from our partners around the country.

1. Help give high schools real time metrics on their college-going rates.

John Deasy, the superintendent in Prince George's County Maryland says, "Wouldn't it be great if every year every Superintendent and principal got real-time feedback telling us our college-going rate so we could spot what works and spread it." The good news is that this can be done without student-level tracking.

2. Simplify the FASA process.

Brian Kruger, a teacher at Roosevelt High School in St. Louis, MO, tells us that the FAFSA leaves his students "confused and discouraged." Efforts to simplify the FAFSA process would make a big difference for our students, and we applaud the efforts of Mr. McKeon and Mr. Miller to achieve this.

3. Engage the private sector to work with the schools.

Tim and Bernie Marquez contributed \$50MM towards a \$200MM endowment to create the Denver Scholarship Foundation providing need-based scholarships for every graduate of the Denver Public Schools, the largest city-wide scholarship program in the nation. Importantly, he has worked closely with Denver superintendent Michael Bennet who brought on College Summit to help maximize this public-private partnership and drive the academic goals of the district. Private and nonprofit support; federal and local government: every sector has a role to play.

The need for higher education is so pressing, and the reward for fully tapping the promise of our diverse communities is so great, that we need to support local efforts and national programs like GEAR UP and TRIO to enhance opportunities for America's young people in ways that produce measurable results for our young people and their families, and for America at large.

Again, thank you Chairman Hinojosa and Congressman Keller for the opportunity to discuss the importance of expanding access to higher education.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Empty Promises: The Myth of College Access in America: A Report of the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, Washington, DC, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, Earnings for full-time, year-round workers by educational attainment for work life of approximately 40 years.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Students Whose Parents Did Not Go to College: Postsecondary Access, Persistence, and Attainment, NCES 2001-126, by Susan Choy. Washington, DC: 2001.

<sup>4</sup> Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, Access Denied: Restoring The Nation's Commitment To Equal Educational Opportunity, U.S. Department of Education, February 2001.

<sup>5</sup> Susan P. Choy, "Access & Persistence: Findings from 10 Years of Longitudinal Research on Students," American Council on Education, 2002.

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Chairman HINOJOSA. I want to thank each and every one of you. And now I would like to let you know that we are going to start the questioning of the witnesses.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Dr. Martha Cantu, you mentioned in your testimony that counseling was provided to 7,430 students. How extensive was the counseling? And can you give an example of how these records informed the curriculum and instruction in the schools?

Ms. CANTU. Absolutely. Our counselors work with our students to inform them about rigorous coursework, A.P. curriculum and how important it is that they enroll in those classes. They also work with them on high school graduation plans. They also inform

them about concurrent enrollment, which is something that is very important as well.

One example that I can give you is, for example, the pre-pharmacy program requires certain math and science courses in high school in order for these students to qualify for those programs in college. So our GEAR UP coordinators are working with these students one-on-one, ensuring that they are taking these classes that they need in high school, so that they have the proper curriculum to succeed in college.

Chairman HINOJOSA. I was very pleased to see that you included the effort that is being made on parental involvement—

Ms. CANTU. Absolutely.

Chairman HINOJOSA [continuing]. And that adds to the success of your program.

What about the work that your program is doing with leading students to the STEM careers that you addressed?

Ms. CANTU. Right. We work also, of course, with students, we work with teachers, and we work with administrators and parents about the importance of STEM careers and the need that there is. And so, we counsel them on the importance of the courses that they need to take in order to participate or to qualify for those courses once they enter college.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Dr. Maria Martinez, you indicated that the university maintains documentation of all your services and records of student progress. Is this typical of your program, or is it a requirement of the Department of Education?

And finally, how are your records compatible with departmental requests?

Ms. MARTINEZ. There are several ways that we keep a record of our student services.

One is that we do follow the guidelines from the U.S. Department of Education in relation the submission of annual performance reports, which is what documents the progress of our programs. And it documents graduation rates, moving from one grade level to the next, information like that.

We also supplement that information with the work that we do with the Office of Institutional Research in our own institution. We work with the registrar's office and the Office of Institutional Research to document the records of our college component.

We also recently started integrating what is called Blooming in our records, because that will keep track of all of our pre-college information on the pre-college graduation rates and success rates of the students. We document counseling contact hours, for instance. We document graduation rates. We document when students move from one level to the next, in terms of grade levels, if we are talking about the middle school.

So we have several ways to document the success of our programs. And, again, it depends whether or not we are dealing with the pre-college or the college component, and those two call for different pieces of data to be recorded.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Thank you.

My next question is to J.B. Schramm.

Mr. Schramm, there are many critics of high-school-to-college support programs, but for a minimum federal investment, the na-

tion receives a great return on the taxpayers' investment. My question to you is, do you find that program cost is a central issue in your efforts, or is it one of the many important features?

Mr. SCHRAMM. I am sorry, could you phrase the last sentence again, please?

Chairman HINOJOSA. Yes. Do you find that program cost is a central issue in the efforts that you all are making? Or is it just one of the many important features in the program?

Mr. SCHRAMM. What we find is that when high schools are seeking to engage the kind of reform that Mr. Linn talked about, they need to make the reward of college real, so that the students can see why they should stay in school, why they should take the tougher courses, why they should engage in the STEM approach.

And so, making that real helps the high school and the school district align their different goals toward having all students graduate college-ready and ready for career.

So when the schools are looking at the costs and the community members are looking at the costs, I think what they see is college-transition efforts that can produce measurable results are ways for a community to get financial benefits, including increased taxes paid and so forth, but it is also a way for the school district and the community to see better academic outcomes.

So I think there is the financial incentive for a community, but just as importantly is the longer-range goal of having more academically prepared students succeeding in college.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Thank you.

My time has run out, and I would like to yield time to the ranking member, Congressman Keller.

Mr. KELLER. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Mr. Schramm, let me start with you. You mentioned this course that College Summit provides for seniors. Talk to me a little bit about how that course works. Is it a once-a-week thing? Is it after school, or is it during the summer? Tell me about that.

Mr. SCHRAMM. This course is provided for all the students. And that is an important point. The idea is that not just some students should be going to college. The school is saying, "Everybody needs to make their plan, whether they think they are planning on going to college or not."

Mr. KELLER. When?

Mr. SCHRAMM. That is right; they need to be doing that in their high school. And so, some of the courses, depending on the school, have it for 1 hour a week in an advisory period. Other schools have it 5 days a week as a course. So we try and set it up so that the school can make a choice about how to do it that fits their schedule.

Mr. KELLER. So it is during the normal school day. They don't have to come an hour early or stay an hour late?

Mr. SCHRAMM. That was a lesson that we learned a few years ago. We originally had it very flexible, so they could do it before school. And what we found is, when the school made the commitment that having every student plan is a part of our structure, they started to get much better results.

So it is in the school day. Though sometimes it is infused within a civics course, or sometimes it is part of an advisory period.



Mr. KELLER. So they still get, in many schools, credit for going? It counts toward their credit?

Mr. SCHRAMM. That is right.

Mr. KELLER. Okay. I would think you would get a better turnout then.

Mr. SCHRAMM. We could have you advising our program development team.

Mr. KELLER. You have been doing this College Summit business for about 13 years. And one of the stats you used was that about 200,000 students graduate high schools, are prepared for college, but they don't go.

In your experience with dealing with some of these 200,000 students, what are the reasons that you are hearing, usually, for why they don't go? Is it, you know, "I would rather be a cosmetologist"? "I would like to go but I don't have money"? "I need to work to provide for my family"?

What are the themes that you are hearing about why some of these students aren't going to college?

Mr. SCHRAMM. What we are hearing—and they reflect some of the points that the chairman made at the beginning—but we are hearing that there is—having students aware early on that college is real for them. And we find that when peer influences, when students from their neighborhood are communicating to them that fact, they believe it more effectively than any other way.

Also, the know-how element. There are steps in this process that they need guidance to go through. And when a young person's parents haven't been through the process, even though the parents are very supportive of their education, they need somebody to help them stay on track step by step.

Mr. KELLER. But do you see what I am getting at? On a more basic level, I mean, are a lot of these kids not going because they don't understand they can afford it? Or are they not going because they want to do something else, like working, for example?

Mr. SCHRAMM. What we are finding is that there are, in a school, some students who want to become a plumber or they want to go get trained for Cisco Systems. What we do find is that there are a disproportionate number of low-income students who track themselves not to college, or feel tracked not to college.

Mr. KELLER. Right.

Mr. SCHRAMM. And so, when a school really makes it possible for them to explore all their options, a higher percentage of those students opt for college than did beforehand.

Mr. KELLER. Take my area of Orlando. I know you all aren't in my particular area, but if you were, and I was having a chance to talk with thousands of young people who are prepared for college but ordinarily wouldn't go, one of the things I would probably tell them is, "Don't go to college because you can't afford it. I mean, community college in Florida is \$1,500 a year, and the Pell Grant alone is \$4,310, so it can happen for you."

Would your courses provide that sort of information to these students, to talk to them about how much a community college costs and what you may get in financial aid and provide them that sort of information?

Mr. SCHRAMM. That is right. When you talk about the financial aspect, there are real financial barriers—the cost of going to college—and there are perceived financial barriers.

Mr. KELLER. Right.

Mr. SCHRAMM. And a key part of the curriculum is helping the students break through those perceived financial barriers that are not real.

Mr. KELLER. And do you actually help them fill out, like, the financial aid forms and college applications, that sort of thing?

Mr. SCHRAMM. That is right.

And we would strongly urge any efforts to simplify the FAFSA process, which we know that Mr. Miller and Mr. McKeon are working on. It is an unnecessarily complicated process. And if that could be simplified, it will be easier. And that is an important part of what our schools do, but efforts you can take to simplify that would be very appreciated.

Mr. KELLER. Well, thank you.

And, Mr. Chairman, my time is about expired, so I will yield back.

Chairman HINOJOSA. For your information, we are going to have a second round of questioning, so feel free to save some of your questions.

I would like to recognize Congressman Courtney.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Martinez, your testimony described, obviously, your experience with the whole array of TRIO programs, including Upward Bound. And I just wanted to ask you about the U.S. Department of Education's new priority, which has issued guidelines that seem to be sort of pushing the programs more toward the older students in the Upward Bound program.

I just wondered what your thoughts or reaction to that is.

Ms. MARTINEZ. At the University of Connecticut, just like I put in my testimony, we recruit 8th-graders and start working with them when they are 9th-graders. So we are doing already what the Department of Education wants us to do.

However, I personally believe, and also my staff is in agreement with this, that imposing on the Upward Bound program to have to recruit a certain time, it really prevents us from helping students that can be at any point in the high school career. I believe that those decisions should be left to the local individuals, the people that are running the programs, the people that are directly involved with the students. Because they are the people that are better equipped to determine who needs the program and who doesn't.

I think that by imposing guidelines like that, it will limit our capacity to help as many students as we are helping right now.

Mr. COURTNEY. I mean, is your experience that going younger actually is even more successful?

Ms. MARTINEZ. It is more effective if you think in terms of when you work with students in the middle school, like we do in Talent Search and also GEAR UP, that you have an opportunity to impact what it is that they are going to do in the middle school but also the courses that they will be taking in high school. It is our experience that sometimes when they are in high school, we work very hard with them but a lot of the issues, a lot of the barriers could

have been avoided if we worked with them before they got into high school.

So the sooner, the better. But the point here is that any help is better than no help. So if you get a student when they are in 10th grade, 11th grade, or even when they are in the 12th grade and they are having difficulties with the FAFSA process, for instance, it is better than nothing.

Mr. COURTNEY. And in your testimony, I think you sort of answered this question, but just to confirm it, you indicated that your program is really just scratching the surface in terms of the number of student that potentially could benefit from it.

And I guess the question I would ask is just, if, hypothetically, the program were to be doubled, in terms of the number of participants, would there be students out there that you could help if that capacity was increased?

Ms. MARTINEZ. Many students out there. As a matter of fact, with our program—I do know about many of our programs in Connecticut because we talk to our colleagues too—our programs have, many times, waiting lists.

In the Upward Bound program, which is a smaller program, every single year since I have been there—and I have been there for 20 years—we always have a waiting list of students that we cannot service.

It is the same issue with the SSS program, with the Student Support Services program. A lot of students wants to come to the University of Connecticut. We can take a certain number, the numbers that we are funded for. We can't take any more students, and we have to turn those students away.

With the Upward Bound program, it is more noticeable, because those are students that we interview families, we interview students, we go through a very long selection process, but at the end we only have a certain number of spaces available. And whoever doesn't make it, with those numbers, we have to turn them away.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Thank you.

Now I would like to recognize the gentlelady from California, Susan Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I certainly appreciate all of you being here.

You focused partly in these programs at reaching students at a younger age, at least in middle school. And I know that we know from all the research that kids pretty much make the decisions that they are going to make about their future by 9th grade, that that is a time that many students are deciding one way or the other. And perhaps you can contest that point of view, but I think that it is not that they can't make them later but a lot of students do make them earlier.

So I was interested in the key elements at that age in the programs that you are working on, whether there should be greater emphasis on that, whether, you know, if we had to make decisions about resources, just like people tell us—we have been looking at No Child Left Behind—“Put some of them in early childhood education,” where do you think that would be appropriate?

And of the elements that we talk about, whether it is peer support, parent involvement, of the elements—and we know they are all important—but is there any one of those that is of greater importance that we should put a lot more of our energy in? I would be curious to hear your views about that.

And I also wonder if you are familiar with the AVID program, Advancement via Individual Determination. And where do you see that program fitting into some of the work that you do? Because I think what is important is that we are working in students in a tutoring fashion over the course of 3 or 4 years, in many cases, and how helpful that might be.

Ms. CANTU. Do you want me to speak to the AVID program?

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Yes. Where is the emphasis early on? I mean, again, if resources are limited—and we wish they weren't in this area—where is the focus?

Ms. CANTU. Currently we have grown from having AVID in three schools; we are now in 34 schools. It is a very—we have partnered with AVID, and it is very powerful when both programs work together. We have it in the middle school, and we have it at—we have it at most of our middle schools and most of our high schools, as well. And we are seeing great results from that.

Our students that are involved in AVID also have the benefit of GEAR UP. But, as you know, AVID is a much smaller program, so we are not able to serve as many numbers.

But what we strive to do is to implement the strategies and techniques from AVID into the entire school, so that all students at that campus would benefit from those different strategies and techniques that are so successful through AVID. And that is what we have found through GEAR UP, with AVID.

Your other question was on resources and where we should—

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Well, of the elements that are important in some of these programs—and we haven't discussed parent involvement too much—but the peer support, time management—I guess I am going back to AVID a little bit there—but is there one area that, without that piece, we really could not be successful at this? And what is it, particularly? Where should the emphasis be?

Ms. CANTU. I have to say that since we have been so successful with parental involvement, we see that so many of our students are being much more successful in school. We do a lot of training with parents, and as we get them involved we have seen that their children are succeeding in school, both with Grant 1 and now that we have Grant 2. So we do put a lot of emphasis in parental involvement.

And, as I mentioned, we have a family liaison in each of our middle schools who works with the parents directly and provides that kind of, I guess, support that the parents need. There are monthly parent meetings. There are also one-on-one kind of meetings with parents. We conduct home visits. We do townhall meetings.

We do whatever it takes to inform the parents. We find that, when the parents are informed what kind of coursework their child should be taking, of course that child is going to be much more apt to be enrolled in those courses. And there are a lot of misconceptions out there that parents have that we have to clarify.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you.

Anybody else want to chime in quickly?

Ms. MARTINEZ. I have to agree that the parent involvement component is extremely important.

I also feel that the exposure of the students of the participants to a college world is also important. A lot of our students are not familiar with the college process. Many of them have never even been on a college campus. And I believe that if they are exposed and they know what to expect and they know that it is possible, that it is a reality, that they will be more open to the college application process, to everything that comes along with that.

And the parents have to be involved, because you need to have everybody on the same page.

So I think parent involvement, exposure to college, and also the advising regarding the courses that they need to take. Because it is very, very important that, once they get to the point that they can apply to college, that they are ready, that they have all of the courses that they need to apply to college.

Because it is very difficult to advise the students once they are all done and they can't do the coursework, they can't go to the schools that they want to go. And you have to advise them differently because they don't have what they need to have.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Thank you.

I now would like to recognize the gentleman from the state of Virginia, Congressman Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Martinez, do you have an Upward Bound program at your college?

Ms. MARTINEZ. Yes.

Mr. SCOTT. Are some Upward Bound programs residential and others just during the day?

Ms. MARTINEZ. It is a summer residential program where students stay on campus for 6 weeks.

Mr. SCOTT. Do all the programs have the residential component?

Ms. MARTINEZ. All of the Upward Bound programs?

Mr. SCOTT. Right.

Ms. MARTINEZ. My understanding is that they do. My program has had a residential component since 1967. It has always been like that.

Mr. SCOTT. And after the summer program, what do they do during the rest of the year?

Ms. MARTINEZ. We have an academic year component that goes along with the summer component. What happens during the year is that we hold team meetings in all of the cities that our presence is in. And that includes meetings with the advisers and the group of students, and it also includes individual meetings one-on-one. It also has a parent component, which includes an orientation.

And we also have a series of academic days which happen throughout the year. And what we do during the academic days is that we bring the students together, on a Saturday usually, with the parents, and they participate in a series of workshops and programs that are going to prepare them to get ready for college.

So that happens throughout the year between September and May. And then at the end of June, beginning of July, they start their 6-week summer program.

Mr. SCOTT. And did you indicate how many of your students actually go to college?

Ms. MARTINEZ. Upward Bound has a placement rate between 97 and 98 percent, college placement. Out of that, 85 percent of them graduate from college.

Mr. SCOTT. And your population would be considered an at-risk population, where you would not expect a high college attendance rate?

Ms. MARTINEZ. They are considered at-risk.

Mr. SCOTT. But 97 and 98 percent of your students actually go to college?

Ms. MARTINEZ. They do. They are placed in college.

Mr. SCOTT. Now, there is an income eligibility. You have to be low-income to get into Upward Bound, is that right?

Ms. MARTINEZ. Correct.

Mr. SCOTT. How do they afford to go to college?

Ms. MARTINEZ. We work with them throughout the year, identifying scholarships. Because they are low-income, they qualify for the Pell Grant and for other grants. We work with them regularly during the year, identifying primarily scholarships and grants.

Because one of the issues that we deal with, that we try very hard not to get our students in a bind of having loans. So we try everything other than the loans first. And we are pretty successful at doing that. Especially because our students are low-income, they qualify for a lot of gift money.

Mr. SCOTT. And when they get to school, I mean, how much of the tuition, room and board can they raise without having to go to loans?

Ms. MARTINEZ. It depends on the institution that they go to. For instance, we have students that we recommend a community college for them. We have students that we recommend the Connecticut State University, which is a 4-year institution; the flagship university, which is the university I represent, the University of Connecticut. So it depends on which institution they choose to go.

If they choose to go to the community college, obviously they are not going to have to pay a lot of money.

If they choose to go to the flagship university, what we do is that we work very closely with the Office of Financial Aid, in terms of preparing their financial aid package so they don't end up paying for loans. We try very, very hard to get our students at least a first, second and third year without any loans. And we are pretty successful at doing that.

Mr. SCOTT. And do you follow up with your students throughout college?

Ms. MARTINEZ. Yes, we do. As a matter of fact, we are working on our alumni now.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay. Does the work-study program—is that very helpful?

Ms. MARTINEZ. It is very helpful.

Mr. SCOTT. And how much money can they make, and how many hours can they work on work-study?

Ms. MARTINEZ. It depends which one you are referring to. We do have a work-study component, which is during the summer, residential component. And we submitted an application to the Depart-

ment of Education, and we were awarded to put our students in a work-study program during the summer, 6 weeks. They are placed in different departments and different units.

Now, they do work probably 4 or 5 or 6 hours, no more than that, because we don't want that to impact on the college component that we do during the summer.

If you are referring to the academic year, we do not encourage our students to work more than 10 hours a week. We know that low-income students tend to work too much during the academic year, and we know that is an issue.

Mr. SCOTT. Now, I have heard that if it gets above 15 hours a week, it has a significant effect on academics. Is that what—

Ms. MARTINEZ. It does. It does. And we discourage our students from doing that.

Mr. SCOTT. You indicated you have a waiting list for Upward Bound?

Ms. MARTINEZ. Yes, we do.

Mr. SCOTT. And do you do any recruiting, or do you just have so many applicants you don't even have to recruit?

Ms. MARTINEZ. No, we recruit every year. We recruit every year. We have an application process that every student that wants to join the Upward Bound program has to comply with the application process. There is an interview included. We do it every year during the spring.

But every year we end up with a waiting list, which is frustrating, because there are many students out there that we know would benefit from the program but we are not able to bring them in.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Thank you.

At this time, I would like to acknowledge and recognize the gentleman from New York, Congressman Bishop.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for holding this hearing.

And thank you to the panel. The testimony has been very enlightening. Thank you very much.

Let me start with this. One of the findings of Secretary Spellings' Commission on Higher Education is that there is insufficient articulation between what high schools teach and what colleges expect, and that that is an impediment to student success.

And, Mr. Linn, do you have thoughts, A, on that subject? And B, if you agree with that, do you see any role for the federal government in trying to encourage high school curricula that matches up more with what college expectations are?

Mr. LINN. Thank you for the question, Congressman.

What we have seen across the country is really through the P-16 councils that I talked about, governors are bringing both the K-12 community and the post-secondary community and key institutions in those states to not only identify the number of math courses you need to take in order to get into the University of Connecticut but the conversations are actually digging much deeper into what those courses need to look like.

We know in many states across the country that Algebra I content doesn't necessarily match the course title. And so, those P-16 councils have really been used to forge stronger working relation-

ships to dig deeper so that we know the content matches what the professor of chemistry expects a science major to know when he gets into that university.

Mr. BISHOP. Okay, thank you.

Mr. Schramm, did you want to comment on that?

Mr. SCHRAMM. When we are working in communities, we pull together the superintendent and the principals as well as the deans of admission from the surrounding colleges. And it is seeing how the superintendent responds when the dean of admissions is saying, "We have been admitting your students, but we are finding that they are way behind, in terms of their math requirements." So allowing for those conversations to take place we are seeing is beneficial for the superintendents.

Mr. BISHOP. Okay, thank you.

The other issue I want to raise is, we deal here a lot with the concern of rapidly escalating costs of higher education. And one of the cost drivers in education, obviously, is personnel. And usually 60 to 70 percent of higher education costs are salary and fringe benefits for personnel.

And one of the changes in higher education over the last 30 years, I would say, has been the increased provision of student support services—counseling, remediation and so on.

Dr. Martinez, you cite a statistic, 85 percent of your students graduated in 4 years or 6 years?

Ms. MARTINEZ. The high school component, the Upward Bound program.

Mr. BISHOP. Yes.

Ms. MARTINEZ. Yes.

Mr. BISHOP. But 85 percent of that cohort—

Ms. MARTINEZ. Correct.

Mr. BISHOP [continuing]. Graduates in 5 or 6 years.

Ms. MARTINEZ. Correct.

Mr. BISHOP. And to what extent would you credit the student support services aspect of the program, in terms of helping students persist through to graduation?

Ms. MARTINEZ. Well, I think that the Upward Bound students, the fact that they spend 3 years in the program—because these are the same students that we recruit when they are in 9th grade—they spend three summers with us, in residence, taking rigorous courses, such as English, math, science, study skills, SAT prep, all of the courses that they are going to need to become stronger once they apply to college.

They also come in contact with a lot of people from the college scene, a lot of professors. They get an opportunity to be in classes, to participate in lecture form of classrooms. And we believe that preparing the students like that, when they get to college, they know what to expect.

Mr. BISHOP. Okay. I guess what I am searching for is, often schools are criticized for providing these services because they drive up the price. But I guess what—my bias has always been that what we ought to be doing is encouraging success. And the provision of these kinds of services to either at-risk populations or not-at-risk populations helps students graduate in larger numbers, which is really what we ought to be focusing on, right?



Ms. MARTINEZ. Correct. Correct.

Mr. BISHOP. And so, do you see the kinds of services that TRIO programs provide, do you see them as replicable for, you know, student populations that wouldn't be considered at-risk?

Ms. MARTINEZ. It is interesting that you say that, because we are experiencing exactly that in our institution.

What we are experiencing is that, since 1967, the SSS and the Upward Bound have been on campus, we have been doing all of the things that we feel work to get the students prepared to go to college, to be retained and to graduate.

And recently what we are seeing is that the institution is implementing some of the programs that we have been doing for years for the general population, because they work, because the students graduate.

Mr. BISHOP. Okay. Thank you very much.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Thank you.

At this time, I would like to recognize a gentleman who is highly respected in our Education and Science Committee, the congressman from Michigan, Congressman Ehlers.

Mr. EHLERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I apologize for being late. I was tied up on the floor. Not literally. I was on the House floor. [Laughter.]

At any rate, we had some exciting times down there.

I am sorry, my questions may have been asked earlier. They may not be pertinent.

First of all, I believe, Dr. Martinez, you are involved with Upward Bound. Is that correct?

Ms. MARTINEZ. Yes, I am.

Mr. EHLERS. I have a college in my district who was active in Upward Bound for quite a few years, and it was a very effective program. And at one point, they simply dropped it and did their own program, which they thought accomplished the goals better than Upward Bound did.

Have you encountered that feeling, that Upward Bound is either too high-bound, let's say, or is not the most effective way of doing it? Or are you quite happy with Upward Bound as it is currently structured?

Ms. MARTINEZ. Well, we have had the Upward Bound program since 1967, as I was saying before. And the state of Connecticut, in 1997, came up with their own program, modeled after Upward Bound. So right now we are running two concurrent programs in Connecticut under the Upward Bound model. So we have the Upward Bound program, which is federally funded, and we have what we call the Conn-CAP program, which is state-of-Connecticut-funded.

They are both the same exact program. Obviously the Conn-CAP program came later, in 1997. They felt that the Upward Bound program was working very well and they wanted to replicate the model.

So, for us, it has been a little bit of a different story. The Upward Bound program in Connecticut has worked very well. And at the University of Connecticut, we have been, I have to say, very successful at placing our students in college, and not only placing them but see them through graduation.

And one of the statistics that I quoted before was the 85 percent student graduation rate that we have for Upward Bound. But every year, we fluctuate between 97 and 98 percent placement rate in college. So, obviously, our program has been extremely successful.

Mr. EHLERS. All right. So you started the Connecticut program simply because you wanted more money and more program—

Ms. MARTINEZ. We wanted to help more students. And the Upward Bound program that was have right now, it is small. And what I was mentioning before is that every year we do have a waiting list. So we were hoping to be able to help more students with funding coming from the state of Connecticut.

Connecticut is a very interesting state. We have some of the richest cities, but we also have some of the poorest cities. And that is where our Upward Bound program is.

So right now, we are servicing more students in Hartford, thanks to the department of education in Connecticut. We were not able to do that with the federal funds that we get.

Mr. EHLERS. Yes. I appreciate that. And I agree with you. I think Upward Bound is an extremely good program, and I was very delighted that the institution in my district did it for a number of years. I am delighted that they are carrying it on now with private money instead of Upward Bound money, for various reasons which we don't have to get into here. But I just wondered what your comparison was.

Ms. MARTINEZ. Thank you for the question.

Mr. EHLERS. Then, Mr. Linn, your testimony mentioned the need for innovation. And I think you mentioned the WIRED grant as well.

My district received a WIRED grant, which, for those who aren't familiar with it, it is Workforce Integration Regional Economic Development, which sounds like a title that was invented to fit the acronym, which we often do around here. [Laughter.]

The project is relatively new. It is still ongoing.

I wondered if you could comment on some of the ways WIRED grantees are aligning their innovative practices with college access and K-12 education. Do you have any comments on that?

Mr. LINN. Well, I think the best way to respond to your question is to provide an example, where we have a state in the Midwest who has forged a partnership with the Workforce Investment Agency, the community college system, the K-12 system as well, and the private sector. And they are coming together to identify what are the key economic drivers in a particular state.

So, for example, they have a number of companies that focus on medical devices, but yet they have a workforce that doesn't want to go into those occupations. What they have done is to work in partnership to encourage those students to take more challenging courses in those sciences and math courses, get them hooked into the occupations and stay in that particular area.

This is a state where few students will leave the state or let alone that region in which they currently live. So they can get interested in that career early on, earn a decent wage once they get out of college. And some of those occupations are not just bachelor degree occupations but they are occupations in which you just need an associate's degree.

So that is a way in which I think the education and workforce and private sector can all work together and, in some cases, through the governors' P-16 councils to figure out: How can we do a better job of coordinating the monies that we currently have?

Mr. EHLERS. Thank you. I am very pleased with the WIRED program. I think that is giving us some real opportunities in Michigan. And I think other states are experiencing the same.

But you mentioned a very key point, and that is individuals have to be willing to aim for a different vocation than they had intended for.

A major problem we have in Michigan—and I can assure you it is a very hot political question, because our economy has gone south with the decline of the auto industry. And the people who are angriest about it are not necessarily those who have lost their jobs but parents of children who cannot get jobs in Michigan so they move out of state to get the job. And the parents are extremely angry that their children had to move because they couldn't get a job in Michigan. They, of course, want their kids to live near them.

And this is a major problem we have to address. WIRED is part of it. We need a lot more help than just that. But I was pleased with your comments about it and your explanation of it.

Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions. Thank you.

Chairman HINOJOSA. We thank you.

I would like to recognize the gentleman from Kentucky, Congressman Yarmuth.

Mr. YARMUTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank you all for your testimony. I enjoyed it very much and appreciate what you are doing.

I also apologize for having to step out, so if I ask a question that has already been asked, just tell me that you have already answered that, and I will check it out.

But, Mr. Linn, those of who have been interested in this area, we read a lot about the need for increased science and math education. And I admit that I am scientifically deficient myself, having been a journalist and not knowing anything about those things.

But I can't help but wonder whether this extreme focus on science and math education may not inure to the detriment of liberal arts education, specifically in reading as well. I think the numbers are something like 71 percent of 8th-graders and 65 percent of 12th-graders read below grade level and that only 34 percent of graduates are literate enough to do college work.

Should we be worried that this focus on science and math education may end up kind of de-emphasizing the importance of reading and history and other liberal arts instruction?

Mr. LINN. Congressman, I will act like my wife is sitting behind me. She is a middle school history teacher.

I would be remiss to suggest that the focus in our educational system should be exclusively focused around science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

If you look at some of the work that NGA has been doing over the past couple of years, particularly in 10 of our states that are focused on high school redesign—and Kentucky has been intimately involved in our work, as has the state of Michigan—we are working with a number of governors in those states who are trying

to create many different models for students who go through our high school system.

So that there are students, for example, who want to go to the North Carolina School for Math and Science, and Governor Easley has created a couple of those schools. But we also have states that have created new-tech or high-tech highs, for students that are particularly interested in technology. And, yes, there are students who are entering specific schools designed around the arts because that is where their strengths are and their interests.

But we should, as we have seen across the state, really focus on ensuring that all students—and we have seen this in Michigan, actually, last year—who raise the graduation requirements for all students, so that they have to take a certain number of math courses, English courses, science and social studies.

So governors aren't specifically increasing the graduation requirements for math and science only. It is really across the curriculum, so that they are equipped to succeed in whatever path they choose with the supports of some of the programs that we have heard about here this afternoon.

Mr. YARMUTH. There is one other thing I want to ask, and anyone can respond. And I am not sure exactly how it fits specifically in this discussion.

But in some of the conversations I have had recently, groups that are very concerned about funding for scientific research, what they are saying is that we are trying to push young people into science, and yet on the other end we are reducing the opportunities that they have for employment, because we are cutting back funding of NIH and some other areas like that.

So as we are pushing them to say, "You ought to go into science," the other end we are, at least maybe superficially, but visibly, saying to them, "But there are not that many opportunities for you here."

Is that a concern that you see, that we need to make sure that what we do from the federal government level, in terms of creating the opportunities so that when we educate these young people that they do have fields that are attractive to them?

Mr. LINN. I was recently in Arizona, where I think that is a very good example of where the governor, in partnership with in this case Arizona State University, have really identified some of the emerging careers in that state.

And just to give you the context, you see a significant number of companies in that state in the optics field. And what they are trying to do is partner with, in this case, again, Arizona State University to identify: What are the range of occupations that students who are interested in going into some of those jobs, what are some of the majors they might consider when they go into college?

But we have got to touch those students well before they get into 9th grade, because some of those students get turned off by the time they get into 9th grade. And that is where I think some of the work that governors are beginning to do, stretching down to the middle school—and to help teachers in the middle school and high school understand the new ways to deliver some of the content that 9th- and 10th-graders aren't particularly attracted to.

My daughter, for example, isn't particularly fond of physics. And I think, in large part, a lot of students aren't, and that is because we don't connect it to what they can do with that content in the real world.

Chairman HINOJOSA. The gentleman's time has expired.

I want to ask a question of Mr. Linn.

The National Governors Association is supporting advanced placement/International Baccalaureate programs for students, and this has great merit. How are the governors assuring that low-income, at-risk students have access to these programs?

And I ask this question because, most recently, in the last 5 years, I have seen with great interest a business periodical Newsweek, which has listed our top 100 high schools in the country. And they actually find 1,000, but they feature the top 100.

So if you could answer my question, I will ask you one final one.

Mr. LINN. Over the past 2 years, NGA has been working with six states in particular, and we have asked each of those six states—like the state of Kentucky—to partner with a consortia of rural districts and an urban district in that state. And the purpose of this project has been to forge a local-state partnership to increase access to advanced placement courses for low-income students.

Using the Kentucky example, I have to say that, given some of the recent data we have collected from the work we have been doing, there are a significant number of students in those districts, Louisville being one of them, that has increased the access of low-income students, particularly African-Americans, to A.P. courses.

The real test will be the end of this year, when we find out not only how many students have accessed those courses but how well have they done on the exams. That is the true measure of whether or not students are succeeding in more rigorous courses.

You will see it is our intent to continue to focus on helping governors, as not just in Kentucky but many other states, forge partnerships so that we are not just talking at the state level about the goal of increasing access but we are actually doing it. And I think that that is something that we are committed to as an organization.

And the data we have is quite compelling, not just in Kentucky but also in Georgia, Alabama, and I believe in Wisconsin is another state.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Well, I asked that question because in the state of Texas, we have had as many as five high schools listed in that top 100 high schools in the country, and so of course I am very happy and proud to say that two of them come from my congressional district.

Mr. Ehlers, I believe you have another question.

Mr. EHLERS. I thank you. I congratulate you on that. As usual, Texas is always the best in everything. [Laughter.]

Chairman HINOJOSA. We brag about it.

Mr. EHLERS. I know you do, endlessly. [Laughter.]

Thank you very much.

Just a few wrap-ups, in a sense a follow-up on Mr. Yarmuth's question, and not so much a question as a comment that I wish to make, but you can feel free to discuss it or comment on it, on the

question raised about teaching math and science versus teaching reading.

There should be no “versus” in there. That is the important point.

And I am a very strong advocate for teaching math and science. People think it is because I am a scientist, but that is only part of it. The major part is they need math and science in order to get a meaningful job at some point in the future.

But also it is directly related to reading. And most people don't realize that. I have had a number of individuals, including a former chairman some years back of this committee, say, “First, reading. When we get that down-pat, then we will start math and science.”

The point is, the research shows that studying math and science improves the ability to read. They go together. It is a simple fact of doing the sorts of things you do in early math, the sorting, classification skills, things of that sort, are very useful to help children develop reading skills.

And so, the point is simply the curriculum has to be designed for the whole person and how do you teach most effectively for the whole person.

And that is why I have fought consistently for including science and math in the early curriculum. I would like to see it in preschool, because I have seen the results of what it does in preschool, but particularly in elementary school. If they don't get started in math and science there, they are behind the eight ball in high school, tend not to take it, and then when they get to college they are automatically unable to take a whole host of courses unless they want to stay 5 years, even 6 years, in the university.

So I didn't mean to give a sermon here, but I think it is important to get that on the record and get that word out: that we have to consider the whole child and all the aspects of learning simultaneously. And not just math and science and reading, but there are a lot of other things as well.

The other comment I wanted to make is about your daughter. I would be happy to talk to her about physics. [Laughter.]

Mr. LINN. Could you tutor her? [Laughter.]

Mr. EHLERS. I might, if I can keep up with her.

But, again, there is a lot of misunderstanding about the role of science. And you were right-on when you said that—physics is the one subject that relates mathematics to the real world. So you are taking the abstractions of mathematics and relating it to the motion of objects, the study of movement, energy and so forth. And so, it is a very concrete thing, even though a lot of kids think it is theoretical.

And I have had endless students say, “I hate word problems,” and I say, “That is because you were never taught how to approach them.” Everyone tries to approach it as a math problem. It is not a math problem. It is relating math to the motion of objects in the real world.

So I would be happy to talk to your daughter. Maybe I can give her an inspirational talk and tell her that physics—I have always told my students, “Once you know physics, you can do anything.” And little did I know, when I was teaching and I said that, that

I would become a congressman and become living proof of it, that physicists can even be legislators.

And, with that, I will yield back, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much.

Chairman HINOJOSA. Thank you very much for those closing remarks.

Once again, I would like to thank the witnesses and the members of the subcommittee for a very informative session.

As previously ordered, members will have 14 days to submit additional materials for the hearing record. Any member who wishes to submit follow-up questions in writing to the witnesses should coordinate with majority staff within the requisite time.

Without objection, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:07 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

