

# Educating More of Our Children, and Educating Them Together

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In a recent opinion piece in *The Star Ledger*, I asked a question on the minds of many of us: What does it mean to “make America great again?” While there are many answers, today, on the release of the Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland’s 2016 Report to the Community, I think there might well be some agreement on one answer. Namely, that, as I wrote: “Fully cultivating America’s diverse talent pool is key ... we can’t recapture the land of opportunity without educating in a fulsome way more of our children, and educating them together, so they can work and play and vote and dialogue over solutions together.”<sup>2</sup>

## Educating More of Our Children, and Educating Them Together

*The Star-Ledger*

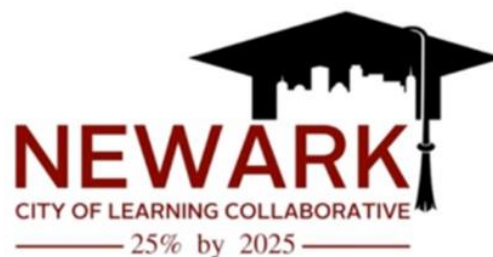
Making America great again?  
N.J. can lead the way

By Nancy Cantor  
January 29, 2017

“Fully cultivating America’s diverse talent pool is key...we can’t recapture the land of opportunity without educating in a fulsome way more of our children, and educating them together, so they can work and play and vote and dialogue over solutions together...Where do we start? We start with each of us examining what our particular institutions, organizations, sectors, communities can do.”



HIGHER EDUCATION  
COMPACT  
OF GREATER CLEVELAND



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<sup>1</sup> This is an extended version of the keynote address presented at the Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland 2016 Dashboard Report Launch, Cleveland, Ohio, March 16, 2017. I want to thank my colleagues, Reginald Lewis, John Gunkel, Alexander Gates, and Peter Englot for major contributions to this talk, including descriptions and data about the various programs mentioned. I also thank Roland Anglin, Dale Anglin, Jeremy Johnson, and Mahako Etta for their foundational work on the Newark City of Learning Collaborative.

<sup>2</sup> Nancy Cantor, Making America Great Again? New Jersey Can Lead the Way, *Star Ledger*, Jan 29, 2017.

In actuality, we are far from that reality, facing instead a perfect storm of our own making. The diversity of America's population is exploding, as demographer William Frey notes, with an aging, retiring white workforce and a majority minority youth population, way too many of whom are being left unprepared on the side-lines of educational and therefore economic opportunity.<sup>3</sup> In the most recent *High School Benchmarks* report of the National Student Clearinghouse,<sup>4</sup> large disparities in college completion by both race and class emerged, such that for high school graduates from the class of 2009, 45% of the students attending higher income high schools had attained a college degree within six years as compared to 24% of students from lower income schools. Slicing the same graduation data by minority status of a school produced similarly discouraging disparities, with 48% of students from low minority high schools obtaining college degrees within six years of graduation as compared to 28% from high minority schools. And from the perspective of Cleveland, or Newark where I live and work, the urban (36% completion) versus suburban (45% completion) and rural (42% completion) disparities are a clear wake-up call, even as no one in America should be proud of any of these post-secondary attainment facts, as the Lumina Foundation repeatedly reminds us.<sup>5</sup>

## Educational Perfect Storm



### U.S. High School Class of 2009 College Completion Rate (Six-Year)

Higher income schools	45%
Lower income schools	24%
Low minority enrollment schools	48%
High minority enrollment schools	28%
Suburban schools	45%
Rural schools	42%
Urban schools	36%

\*Data from National Student Clearinghouse, *High School Benchmarks* 2016

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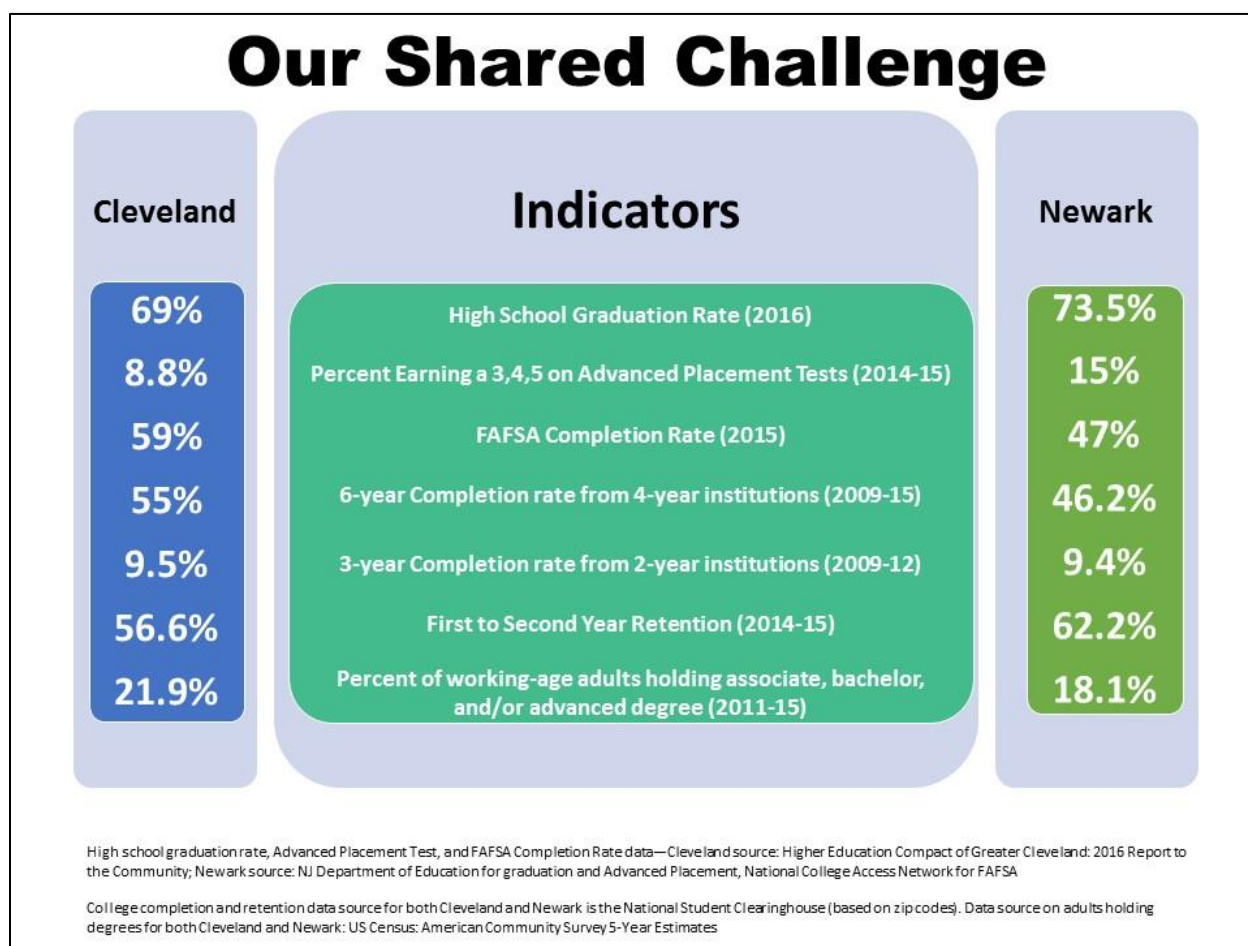
“Since 2011, the U.S. economy has added 11.5 million net new jobs for workers with postsecondary education but only 80,000 for those with a high school diploma or less.”

<sup>3</sup> William H. Frey, The “Diversity Explosion” is America’s Twenty-First-Century Baby Boom, Earl Lewis & Nancy Cantor (Eds.), *Our Compelling Interests: The Value of Diversity for Democracy and a Prosperous Society*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2016, 16-35; Anthony Carnevale & Nicole Smith, The Economic Value of Diversity, Earl Lewis & Nancy Cantor (Eds.), *Our Compelling Interests: The Value of Diversity for Democracy and a Prosperous Society*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2016, 106-157.

<sup>4</sup> <https://nscresearchcenter.org/high-school-benchmarks-2016-national-college-progression-rates>.

<sup>5</sup> A Stronger Nation 2016: Postsecondary Learning Builds the Talent that Helps Us Rise, Lumina Foundation Report, 2016, Indianapolis, IN.

In fact, far too many Americans, urban, rural, black, brown, yellow, red, or white, are being left out of this economy, and post-secondary attainment is at least one great divider, as Anthony Carnevale noted in his recent report on the jobs recovery after the Great Recession, entitled *America's Divided Recovery: College Haves and Have-Nots*.<sup>6</sup> Of the 11.5 million jobs added in the recovery, only 80,000 went to those with high school diplomas or less—that is less than 1%. These data on the escalating importance of a college degree to economic prosperity, combined with data on the rather dismal rates of college completion for poor and working class students, especially in predominantly minority communities, underline the imperative behind the work of the Greater Cleveland Compact and in our case, the similar efforts of the Newark City of Learning Collaborative. According to 2015 Census data, only 21.9% of Cleveland's working age adults hold 2-or-4-year college degrees or advanced degrees, while the comparable percent for Newark is even lower at 18.1%, so both collective impact efforts have hard work ahead. In both contexts, as the attached chart suggests, there are still gaps to work on at every stage along the educational pathway, especially in terms of college enrollment, retention, and completion, even as real progress has been made.



### *Separation Anxiety; Diversity Bonus*

As we consider this collective mandate to educate more of our children, we also need to be cognizant of the importance of educating them together, bridging the gaping divides of American

<sup>6</sup> Anthony Carnevale, *America's Divided Recovery: College Haves and Have-Nots*, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce report, 2016.

society in our classrooms from pre-K-20. Now a days, however, this simply isn't happening, as residential segregation and escalating income inequality conspire in a map of what Gary Orfield and his colleagues at the UCLA Civil Rights Project, call "double segregation" by race and class.<sup>7</sup> Far too few of our children are learning together, playing together, or imagining living together in the richness of our diversity, let alone in a trusted "community of communities," as political theorist Danielle Allen describes the America we should aspire to be.<sup>8</sup> Instead, we continue to splinter as a people, along intersectional lines of race x class x geography, such that the commonality of the concern of finding a secure footing in a more and more exclusive knowledge economy, as articulated in both *Black Lives Matter*<sup>9</sup> and *Hillbilly Elegy*<sup>10</sup> gets lost, and we succumb as a nation to our worst xenophobic and polarizing zero-sum rhetoric. Sadly, neither the military nor our schools and colleges and universities, historically America's institutional equalizers and forces of integration, are mounting a strong enough defense against these our worst instincts under pressure.<sup>11</sup>

Separation Anxiety	Diversity Bonus
<p>"We call the country's attention to the striking rise in double segregation by race and poverty for African American and Latino students who are concentrated in schools that rarely attain the successful outcomes typical of middle class schools with largely white and Asian student populations."</p> <p>Gary Orfield, et al., <i>Brown at 62: School Segregation by Race, Poverty and State</i></p>	<p>"...the path to leadership must be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity... today we endorse Justice Powell's view that student body diversity is a compelling state interest that can justify the use of race in university admissions."</p> <p>Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, <i>Grutter</i>, 2003</p>
<p>"In New Jersey, more than 49 percent of black students and 43 percent of Hispanics in 2013-14 were attending schools that were at least 90 percent nonwhite."</p> <p>Colleen O'Dea, "Interactive Map: Segregation Continues to be NJ's State of the State," <i>NJ/Spotlight</i>, Dec. 2, 2016</p>	 <p>The image shows two book covers. The left cover is for 'THE DIFFERENCE' by Scott E. Page, with a black background and yellow and red text. The right cover is for 'OUR COMPELLING INTERESTS' edited by Earl Lewis and Nancy Cantor, with a red background and white text. The subtitle for the right book is 'The Value of Diversity for Democracy and a Prosperous Society'.</p>

<sup>7</sup> Gary Orfield, Jongyeon Ee, Erica Frankenberg, and Genevieve Siegel-Hawley, *Brown at 62: School Segregation by Race, Poverty and State*, Research Brief of UCLA Civil Rights Project, May 16, 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Danielle Allen, *Toward a Connected Society*, Earl Lewis & Nancy Cantor (Eds.), *Our Compelling Interests: The Value of Diversity for Democracy and a Prosperous Society*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2016, 71-105.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, the call for economic and racial justice from Mayors Ras J. Baraka and Ryan P. Haygood, *Cities Have the Power to Finally Bridge MLK's 'Two Americas,' The Nation*, January 16, 2017.

<sup>10</sup> J.D. Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*, N.Y.: HarperCollins Publishers, 2016.

<sup>11</sup> Rebecca Klein, *What School Segregation has to do with the Rise of Donald Trump*, *Huffington Post*, Nov 15, 2016.

In the face of this divided reality, which I see in Newark all too starkly (in a State that ranks third in the nation in its share of immigrants and yet is just behind New York, Illinois, and Michigan in terms of having the most segregated K-12 schools),<sup>12</sup> we clearly have a long way to go. At the same time, we also know that there is not a one and done solution likely to change these figures dramatically in any one year. Instead, progress will require hard work sustained over the long haul. (I am tempted to say, there is no executive order that can make it happen.) And in light of the need for robust, cross-sector, inter-institutional collaboration over extended periods of time, we need to constantly remind ourselves of the moral imperative to keep at this work together. That is, how can we be seen as legitimate institutions in a democracy when, as Justice O'Connor said in articulating the compelling state interest in diversity in higher education, the pathways to leadership are not accessible to all?<sup>13</sup> While she was referring to higher education pathways, the same can be said about legitimate access in business and government as well. And speaking of the business case for valuing educational attainment for broader swaths of the American populace, this is not just a matter of values, it is also, as organizational theorist Scott Page frequently reminds us, a matter of good business. There is a demonstrable "diversity bonus" to be gained when organizations have access to a wider talent pool with more different perspectives and experiences to draw upon in the complex, problem-solving and innovation settings of today's economy.<sup>14</sup> To reap that diversity bonus, not only do we have to reach a wider talent pool, but those talented students (our future workforce) need to prepare to work together, drawing out the best in each other; full participation in inclusive teams is the name of the game in a fast-moving, competitive global knowledge economy – and that is what our next diverse generation will face for sure.

### *Educating More of Our Children, Together*

Hence the double meaning to my title today, we need to commit to educating more of our children, educating them together, and doing the education on our part together, exactly as your Greater Cleveland Compact is doing. Bravo, and as many around the nation, from Strive to Say Yes to Education, and happily, the Newark City of Learning Collaborative, are too. There is reason for cautious optimism at the robust commitment in many metro regions to increasing post-secondary attainment rates, as the Lumina Foundation has galvanized a movement toward this national objective. These regional efforts are critical to moving the needle on this collective goal, for no one institution or even sector can do it alone. Moreover, as the economist Raj Chetty and his colleagues have recently shown in a robust data set on economic mobility and college attainment, far too few colleges and universities, especially in the so-called elite, are currently making that difference.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Colleen O'Dea, Interactive Map: Segregation Continues to be NJ's State of the State, *NJ Spotlight*, Dec 2, 2016.

<sup>13</sup> Sandra Day O'Connor, writing for the majority in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, No. 02-241, Supreme Court, June 23, 2003, 3-4.

<sup>14</sup> Scott Page, *The Diversity Bonus: How Great Teams Pay Off in the Knowledge Economy*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, forthcoming volume in *Our Compelling Interests* book series, edited by Earl Lewis and Nancy Cantor, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

<sup>15</sup> Raj Chetty, John N. Friedman, Emmanuel Saez, Nicholas Turner, & Danny Yagan, *Mobility Report Cards: The Role of Colleges in Intergenerational Mobility*, report released January, 2017.

# Educating More of Our Children, Together



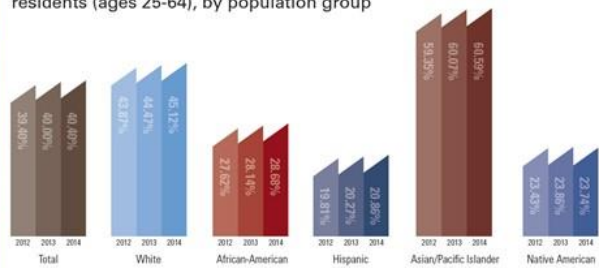
## Say Yes to Education Higher Education Compact

Scholarships at 90+ Private Colleges and Universities



Lumina Foundation projects 35.7 million Americans will earn postsecondary credentials by 2025, but to reach the goal of 60% attainment by then, 10.9 million more would be needed.

The trend in degree-attainment rates for United States residents (ages 25-64), by population group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) files

As I used to say when leading Syracuse University's participation in the city-wide Say Yes to Education mobilization effort, it takes a whole league of partners investing in the children of a city, much as the teams in Major League Baseball each nurture a farm team and then share the talent pool going forward.<sup>16</sup> In this instance private gain and public good go together, and encourage us to educate more people, together, which brings us to the central question of how exactly do we effect change, nurture these farm teams, and unite in common purpose?

### *Changing our Ways to Move the Needle on Access, Affordability, and Success*

Whereas the work here is and will continue to be hard, the answers as to how to effect change I believe begin with changes in our "normal" ways of doing things, and this certainly applies to my sector of higher education. And I should say that my comments will focus from that reference point, even as I fully acknowledge the urgency and impact of college readiness programs (both academic- and non-academic) within the public school districts themselves, including the wrap-around supports that an organization like Say Yes to Education brings. Even with the best results in terms of college readiness, and the Cleveland Municipal School District seems well on a path to success in that regard, the gaps between readiness, and access and success can be formidable, and require deliberate mobilization of all of the relevant partners. In particular, I believe that to effect change in city-wide outcomes, we in higher education need to change too, by working together (at all levels) on several fronts that relate to college

<sup>16</sup> Nancy Cantor, "Diversity and Higher Education: Our Communities Need More Than 'Narrowly Tailored' Solutions," *Huffington Post*, August 2, 2013, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nancy-cantor/diversity-higher-education\\_b\\_3695503.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nancy-cantor/diversity-higher-education_b_3695503.html).

access, affordability, and success, especially for the many talented students in our urban schools that currently miss out on opportunity.

It starts with who we are looking for as prospective students and how we find them and then select them to come. With respect to access, we give all the wrong messages – more like ‘you come to us – and you better already look like what we want’ rather than ‘we’ll come find you and show you that you can succeed with us and contribute to us.’ As Bill Gates famously described this typical college admissions approach: “You’d think people would say, ‘we take people with low SATs and make them really good lawyers.’ Instead they say, ‘We take people with very high SATs and we don’t really know what we create, but at least they’re smart when they show up here so maybe they still are when we’re done with them’.”<sup>17</sup>

Whereas I am advocating a much broader talent search than is captured by this selection-via-tests model inherent in most “normal” admissions processes, it is also important to recognize that many high achieving students in urban schools simply don’t apply to colleges for which they already have the (test) qualifications, as economists Christopher Avery and Caroline Hoxby have demonstrated.<sup>18</sup> And colleges and universities and their collective impact partners can help smooth that process with FAFSA and college application workshops, while improving the chances of admissions of everyone through ACT/SAT test prep.

At the same time, an emphasis on selectivity based on rather narrow (and famously non-predictive) standardized test indicators alone most likely will not change the college access equation dramatically for students in school districts like the Cleveland Municipal School District or the Newark Public Schools. We need partnerships with teachers, principals, counselors, and as importantly with local community-based organizations, to help identify and encourage students with a range of talents, passions, experiences that could well translate into successful college careers if given the chance. We need to identify with the help of our school and community partners, cohorts of high school youth to be mentored and engaged regularly in activities that make college seem plausible. We also need to do the same with youth who might not be connected at the moment to school but who could be re-engaged, populations of so-called “disconnected or opportunity youth.” And our business partners can get involved too, especially with internships and summer youth employment.

### *Connecting Newark Youth to College*

Let me illustrate here with some of the work that we are doing in Newark, through the Newark City of Learning Collaborative (NCLC) to connect our youth to college. For the past two years, NCLC – a collaboration of college readiness partners including the Newark Public Schools, the Office of Mayor Ras Baraka, corporate citizens, community based organizations, and five higher education institutions in the immediate region<sup>19</sup> – has engaged in collective impact efforts to create and expand a citywide college going culture to increase Newark’s post-secondary attainment to 25% by the year 2025.

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<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Jeffrey Young, “A Conversation with Bill Gates about the Future of Higher Education,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 25, 2012.

<sup>18</sup> Christopher Avery and Caroline Hoxby, “The Missing ‘One-Offs’: The Hidden Supply of High-Achieving, Low-Income Students,” (NBER Working Paper No. 18586, National Bureau for Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, December 2012).

<sup>19</sup> The NCLC higher education partners include: Rutgers University-Newark, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Essex County College, Pillar College, and Bloomfield College. NCLC is also in discussion to expand with additional higher education partners in the region.

# Connecting Newark Youth to College

**NEWARK**  
CITY OF LEARNING COLLABORATIVE  
— 25% by 2025 —

**Prudential**  
**audible**  
an amazon company  
**Panasonic**  
Newark Public Schools  
CITY OF NEWARK  
**ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE**  
**BLOOMFIELD COLLEGE**  
**NJIT**  
New Jersey Institute of Technology  
THE EDGE IN KNOWLEDGE  
**RUTGERS**  
UNIVERSITY | NEWARK  
**PILLAR**  
COLLEGE

**FREE SAT BOOT CAMP**  
"Approach Is Everything"  
A workshop designed to help high school students improve their SAT score  
Saturday, September 24, 2016  
10am – 2pm  
Rutgers University - Newark  
Ackerson Hall - Rm 123  
180 University Avenue  
Newark, NJ 07102  
Eventbrite Registration:  
Visit [CollegeAllEventbrite.com](http://CollegeAllEventbrite.com)

**College Application Fair**  
(High School Seniors only)  
Apply to Colleges & Universities for FREE  
Saturday, October 15, 2016  
10am – 3pm  
Rutgers Business School  
1 Washington Park  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Student Lounge  
Newark, NJ 07102  
Students must bring:  
1. Official High School Transcript  
2. Copy of ACT/SAT Scores  
3. Copy of Senior Class Schedule  
4. Minimum of 2.5 GPA, 17 ACT, 800 SAT  
Register for: 10am – 12pm or 12pm – 3pm  
Free admission for students and parents/guardians  
[freecollegefair.eventbrite.com](http://freecollegefair.eventbrite.com)

- 6 College Success Centers launched across Newark by RU-N's Abbott Leadership Institute, serving 400 students since 2015
- 1,200 Newark students in Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program
- City-wide college fair
- NCLC Leadership Institute monthly workshops on academic and soft skills
- 8-Week SAT prep course taken by 125 local students
- Monthly professional development for Newark guidance counselors at all 16 Newark Public Schools high schools
- Parent engagement & FAFSA completion
- 200 students annually in College Freshman Institute

In much the same way as has happened here in Cleveland, in Newark, the NCLC partners have collaborated to connect students in the city schools with “college knowledge” before they graduate. For example, since 2015, over 1200 youth taking part in the Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program, have also attended college readiness and leadership workshops, including financial literacy, career readiness, and arts and wellness. Recognizing the need for follow-up support in these program areas throughout the school year, NCLC partnered with the City of Newark to create the NCLC Leadership Institute – a monthly workshop series to provide students with academic supports, and the information and soft skills necessary for college success. The Abbott Leadership Institute, an NCLC partner, launched six College Success Centers across the city, providing free tutoring, peer support, college application assistance, support in completing FAFSA, post-secondary planning courses, computer access, and college tours. To date, nearly 400 students from Newark high schools have utilized services from the Centers since the creation of the initiative in 2015. Additionally, a partnership with Princeton Review has enabled 125 local district and charter school students so far to enroll in eight-week SAT prep courses during the school year, with some demonstrable progress in standardized test results.

NCLC has also deepened its relationship with the local school district during the 2016-17 academic year in particular. Responding to the need to augment the District’s training for guidance counselors, NCLC leverages its college readiness partners to provide monthly professional development sessions to ensure that every Newark School can benefit from best practices that can lead to an increase in student achievement and more students remaining on track to college enrollment. Now, regardless of whether a student is enrolled in a magnet school already known for promoting a college going culture or a



neighborhood school that has grappled with chronic underachievement, college readiness resources are available for all 16 district high schools.

NCLC and the District now share a dedicated staff person known as the Higher Education Liaison. This individual conducts school-level follow-up with guidance counselors in such areas as parent engagement in the college admission process and FAFSA completion. The Liaison will also assist the District and NCLC in its first citywide College Fair, sponsored by all five higher education partners in the Collaborative. We anticipate representation from public and private colleges across the State, HBCUs and HSIs, and of course, our New Jersey two-year institutions. 700 hundred district students will take part in this exciting day in April.

NCLC also runs an annual summer College Freshman Institute, partnering with local corporations and non-profit organizations to provide incoming college students from Newark with career and professional development opportunities, including paid summer internships aligned with their career aspirations. Because we know the value of social capital, we provide these students access to networks that can lead to permanent employment in the city. Each year, approximately 200 students receive supports from the College Freshman Institute programming.

#### *Pre-College to College Pathway Initiatives*

A central focus of NCLC's programming is to create a post-secondary ecosystem in the city that reaches into the high schools and paves the way for Newark students to enter and succeed in college. Each of the higher education partners in the Collaborative has a tradition of engagement in pre-college programming and the intent is to build on those experiences. For example, NJIT has developed dual enrollment programs, enrolling Newark high school students in college-level mathematics, science, English, and macroeconomics courses, while Rutgers-Newark has supported cohorts of 50 students a year from Newark public schools in the Rutgers Future Scholars Program, starting in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and continuing on to college, and since inception in 2008, the RU Ready program of career and work readiness has sent 82% of its high school graduates on to post-secondary institutions. And in the summer of 2016, all five of the NCLC higher education partners piloted programs for small cohorts of high school students who could potentially become a part of a pipeline of scholars prepared to succeed at the post-secondary level. Collectively, these Newark Achieves! pilot cohorts reached 135 students, with on-campus summer academies for college preparedness and courses tailored around specific curricular paths, such as coding at NJIT, STEM at Bloomfield, media production at Rutgers-Newark, mathematics at Essex County College, and writing at Pillar College.

# Pre-College to College Pathways

## Pathways to Achievement & Success

- Youth empowerment through creative place-making
- 3D design, photo portraiture, printmaking, theater, gallery curation, public speaking
- Goal mapping, SAT prep, college advising
- Initial cohort of 150 10<sup>th</sup> graders; 600 by year four

THE KRESGE FOUNDATION



- Blended cohort of 50: traditional 10<sup>th</sup> graders & opportunity youth 16-24
- Mapping individualized paths to college/career development
- Saturday Academies social justice curriculum supports youth voice, empowerment, development of global perspective on justice and citizenship: life planning, self-awareness, leadership, Newark history, advocacy
- Grow to 200 participants by year four



With the intent of institutionalizing such cohort programs across the district, NCLC recently launched two signature pre-college to college pathway programs. Each program is a multi-year pathway for high school students recruited from across the city, providing academic programming, opportunities for civic and cultural engagement in the city, and social-emotional supports from trained mentors who will follow the students into college.

***Pathways to Achievement and Success (PAS)*** provides the city's youth (starting in tenth grade) with an empowerment experience organized around the theme of "creative place-making." PAS exposes students to various artistic mediums in *Express Newark*, the new 50,000 square foot university-community arts collaboratory that Rutgers-Newark and its community partners created in the heart of downtown Newark. Students work directly with local artists and university faculty in workshops that include portraiture, digital 3D modeling, and theatre arts and public speaking. Moreover, students learn about goal mapping, receive free SAT Prep, and guidance in determining the best fit for college – two- vs. four-year, small liberal arts, or large public institutions. PAS will grow from an initial cohort of 150 to 600 by year four of the program. We will follow these 10<sup>th</sup> graders as they matriculate through high school, support them as they successfully transition into college, and continue supports to enable them to complete their degrees.

Since launching PAS in January, we have observed an enormous level of enthusiasm among students and their families, all across the city. On the day of the orientation, students and parents lined up outside the Newark Museum an hour in advance of the kick off. Attendance has remained high during each of the Saturday Academies – an average of 73% of the cohort.

*The Youth Leadership and Success Project (YLSP)* is the first program of its kind in Newark that intentionally blends a cohort of traditional (10<sup>th</sup> graders) and opportunity youth (ranging in age from 16-24) in support of college and career planning and development. YLSP utilizes a social justice curriculum to support the development of youth voice and empowerment, enabling young people to develop a global perspective on justice and citizenship. The ultimate aim is to prepare each YLSP Fellow in mapping a path to college and/or career. Saturday Academies include life planning, exercises on self-awareness, seminars on leadership, the city's history, and advocacy.

The Fellows will also engage in service learning, and participate in college tours and cultural excursions. Students are consistently asked to share their experiences, bond with each other, and reflect on ways in which they might shape the world around them.


An initial cohort of 50 young people was selected from 116 applicants for this first year. We worked with the Newark School District, and Newark Youth Build and its Opportunity Youth Network to identify and recruit strong candidates. Enthusiasm among program participants remains high – we are averaging a 66% attendance rate, despite a number of inter-related challenges faced by the opportunity youth who make up half of the cohort. YLSP will eventually grow to 200 participants by year four of the program.




PAS and YLSP are supported in part by two forward-looking philanthropic foundations, Kresge and Ford, respectively. And both programs are designed to empower the voices and aspirations of urban youth (in this case in Newark) to become agents of social change through a pathway into and successfully through college.


#### *Educate Together: Inter-Institutional Pathways to Facilitate Success*

These assertive efforts at local talent searches, including pre-college cohorts and college knowledge programming to encourage a sense of plausible access for a wider array of talented students, are necessary but not fully sufficient to reach our collective goals. That is, as higher education institutions committed to local and regional investment, we need to also relinquish our habitual and competitive obsession with “market share” (that is, with getting our fair share of the students who typically already come to us). If we are going to open up the marketplace of possibilities for more students, it is time to collaborate to make it happen. We need to move beyond competition to collaboration, forming robust partnerships across institutional types, especially between community colleges and four year institutions.

## Collaborating on Tailored Pathways: From 2- to 4-Year Institutions






**RU-N 3-Year  
Graduation  
Rate for New  
Jersey County  
College  
transfers: 72%**

Garden State  
LSAMP



- Cohorts of underrepresented minority students in STEM at 7 predominantly public 4-year institutions
- Over 1,000 students graduating annually across 4-year institutions
- 211 GSLSAMP Scholars currently at RU-N

Northern New Jersey  
Bridges to the Baccalaureate

- 5 two-year HSI county colleges
- 1,000 students currently enrolled in program
  - STEM research opportunities
  - Online math bridge
  - Peer-led team learning
  - Peer mentoring
  - Career and transfer advising

In fact, as part of the Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland, Cuyahoga Community College and Cleveland State University are doing just that, and our Newark City of Learning Collaborative is similarly depending upon better articulated and more robust pathways from Essex County College to NJIT and Rutgers-Newark, as well as from the other county colleges in NJ. Creating 2-4-year college attainment pathways with explicit curricular connections (in a range of majors from biology to the arts, business, and criminal justice) makes college seem more like a realistic option for more students (as, after all, the vast majority of first generation students have their first taste of higher education at a community college). It also makes degree attainment more affordable, putting it in reach for more students from our metropolitan school districts. And, interestingly, there is growing evidence that students who successfully navigate the 2-4 year transfer pathway actually out-perform students with comparable background profiles who come directly from high school to college.<sup>20</sup> We are seeing just such a pattern of college completion at Rutgers-Newark, where the 3-year graduation rate for associate-degree holding New Jersey county college transfers has risen to 72% -- a full 4 points above the comparable 6-year rate for our first year students.

<sup>20</sup> *Bridging the Higher Education Divide: Strengthening Community Colleges and Restoring the American Dream*, The Century Foundation, NYC, 2013.

As we think about these inter-institutional pathway partnerships, it is worth looking closely at the value of broad regional approaches that while not necessarily limited to students from a particular school district (like Cleveland Municipal School District or Newark Public Schools) can create momentum in fields where such students have typically been under-represented. That momentum in turn adds to the likelihood that our local students will pursue similar opportunities, and it facilitates connections for them to a wider range of still geographically close higher education institutions. As an example, in Northern NJ, Rutgers-Newark serves as the lead on the Garden State LSAMP Alliance of 7 four-year institutions who have doubled the number of under-represented students graduating with STEM degrees, reaching now to over 1000 across the Alliance, since the start of the program (which includes a range of high-impact practices from research experiences to peer-peer mentoring to conference presentations to online preparation resources). And as part of the GSLAMP program, four year institutions in the Alliance work closely with 2-year county colleges in a Bridges to Baccalaureate STEM Program, including matching peer mentors across the institutions to smooth the transfer pathway. For example, Rutgers-Newark has worked closely with our local partner, Essex County College, to facilitate their Newark students completing an Associate's degree in STEM and transferring to us, with 36 such transfers to date.

#### *Public-Private Collaboration for Affordability*

As we all experiment with new pathways to and through college, we are reminded of the obvious but critical point that pathways require not only coordinated programming but financial aid to individual students to solidify the expectations that it is indeed a feasible dream. We have certainly seen this to be true in Newark. For example, with a quite high concentration of undocumented students graduating from NJ high schools, it has been critical not only that the State allow for in-state tuition under the NJ-DREAMER provisions, but that foundations like DREAM.US provide financial aid, and that institutions like Rutgers-Newark hold college fairs for first-generation American families, and regular information sessions through our immigration and child advocacy law clinics. It is critical that higher education also makes very clear its commitments institution by institution. And in that vein, Rutgers-Newark announced last year the Rutgers University-Newark Talent Opportunity Pathways (RUN to TOP) financial aid program in which any resident of Newark entering Rutgers-Newark with an adjusted family income of \$60,000 or less receives a full (last-in) tuition scholarship. More recently, we extended RUN to TOP to any county college graduate meeting the income threshold and desiring to transfer to Rutgers-Newark.

# Affordability is Essential

## RU-N Talent & Opportunity Pathways

### RU-N to the TOP

- All Newark residents who gain admission and whose household adjusted gross income (AGI) is \$60,000 or less will be offered scholarships covering 100% of undergraduate tuition and fees (after federal, state, and external scholarships have been awarded).
- Admitted students who are transferring to RU-N after earning an associate's degree from a New Jersey county college, and whose household AGI is \$60,000 or less, will be offered scholarships covering 100% of undergraduate tuition and fees (after federal, state, and external scholarships have been awarded).
- All students admitted to RU-N's innovative new Honors Living-Learning Community (HLLC) will receive 100% residential scholarships covering the full cost of room and board.

### Impact to Date

- Undergraduate enrollment up 13.2% since 2013
- 637 RU-N to the TOP scholars in 2016
- Newark resident enrollment up 23% from 2015, 47% from 2013
- NJCC transfer enrollment up 21% since 2013
  - 43% of NJCC transfers are from Essex, Hudson & Passaic CCs



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Please note, any information provided on the registration website will remain confidential and will not be shared with any other organization or agency, both private or governmental.

In this first year of the RUN to the TOP program, we have covered close to 700 students under it, and in general over the last three years of our intensified commitment to Newark residents and to county college transfers, we have seen a 47% and 21% increase, respectively, in undergraduate enrollment for those students.

### *Building Inclusive Learning Communities for Success*

As we invest in a broader range of talent in our cities and move students more seamlessly along affordable pathways from 2-4-year institutions, especially in fields that promise much opportunity post-college, we also, of course, need to maximize the chances of successful completion within our institutions. Not surprisingly, this also requires a bit of an about-face on our parts, thinking not of the deficits that need to be "remedied" for these students to prosper, but rather of the strengths they bring to the learning table; looking not to separate them from their communities but to bring their community experiences to actively inform a diverse, inclusive learning community. This is not at all to undervalue the critical impact of appropriate supports, especially those based on predictive analytics about student success that can inform advising, streamline financial aid processes, and accelerate college completion. (Clearly there are many good examples of the efficacy of such systems, as Georgia State's experience amply demonstrates, and we are also working on one-stop student support programs and advising platforms to wrap our arms around our students and facilitate completion.) Rather, it is only to say that our university communities can so benefit from making the most of the insights, creativity, and voices that this next diverse generation of students can bring to us – if we work deliberately to build inclusive, dynamic learning communities with them.

In many ways, this effort is analogous to what organizational theorists like Scott Page and Katherine Phillips mean when they note that diverse groups of problem-solvers have to work deliberately to gel as innovative, well-functioning teams. Yet, when they do learn to listen to each other, to jump off one-another's ideas, to combine each other's expertise, there is a diversity bonus to be garnered, especially on challenging tasks – and who would argue that college life isn't challenging!

# Building Inclusive Learning Communities

## HLLC Admissions

- Application + Group Interviews + Individual Interviews
- 180 faculty/staff from all schools/colleges trained as admissions evaluators
- 1,100+ applicants for 60 first-year slots in 2017
- 200+ applicants for 20 transfer slots in 2017

## HLLC Entering Class 2016

- 60 students; 38 first-year, 22 transfer
- 52% from Newark
- 86% students of color
- 47% first-generation college-going
- Includes students who are parents, formerly incarcerated, formerly homeless, formerly in foster care

**Tim Eatman, Dean**

**2016 HLLC New Faculty Mentors**



Coming in 2018



Cosmopolitan Magazine Founder  
Helen Gurley Brown (1965)



Helen Gurley Brown BOLD Fellows

To instantiate this strength-based approach to diverse learning groups in the context of our common efforts to engage more of the talent of our cities in post-secondary attainment, at Rutgers-Newark (and in alignment with the goals of the Newark City of Learning Collaborative), we have embarked on an effort to “revolutionize honors” with an eye toward local talent. Specifically, we want to engage the next diverse generation of change makers in our midst by creating a residential, inter-generational learning community dedicated to local citizenship in a global world. With a soon-to-be-built facility, the Honors Living Learning Community (HLLC) will grow to 400 students, based on an expansive talent search that moves well beyond the typical narrow indicators of merit, interviewing for leadership skills, grit, commitment to social justice. While we are intent on enrolling and fully supporting students from all over with residential scholarships, we have a special commitment to strong and talented and persistent students from the city of Newark and its close neighboring region, whether they come straight from high school or transfer from a community college or re-enter after incarceration or military service or any of several paths well-travelled in our city and region.

The admissions process for HLLC, including extensive interviews with peer group problem-solving sessions (evaluated by 180 trained faculty and staff from across the university), is a signature part of what it means for us to expansively engage the talent in our midst. The HLLC is built on intense cohort experience and so we can only accept a small fraction of the applicants in any given year (this year, for example, we had over 1100 first year applicants for 60 spots and over 200 transfer applicants for 20 spots). However, this process also has a very positive spill-over effect on the local college-going culture in Newark. For example, at Rutgers-Newark, we have seen a real uptick in the local students enrolling, and we think that part of that is their engagement in the outreach and application process of the HLLC. Many of these applicants come to us through our partnerships with our local schools, community organizations, and community college mentors, as well as through recruiting events at local churches, YMCA's, public libraries, and city festivals, and their nominations are therefore seeded in a sense by the collective impact collaborations that NCLC and our community college pathway programs spur. In fact, in last year's entering cohort, over half of the HLLC students were from Newark, and we expect that this next year's class will be similarly strong in local talent. In general, the diversity of HLLC mirrors the remarkable diversity of our undergraduates as a whole, with no majority racial or ethnic group (86% students of color in last year's entering cohort), numerous first generation college-going students (47%), and students whose life paths (whether from foster care, from having experienced homelessness, from being a veteran or a parent) allow them to bring deeply-informed understandings of the obstacles and the possibilities for social justice.

The HLLC is decidedly built on a "strength model" in which the interdisciplinary curriculum focused on pressing issues of urban communities at home and globally, from mass incarceration to economic inequality to environmental degradation, taps not only the expertise of publicly-engaged faculty scholars and their community partners who teach HLLC courses, but the insights of our next generation students as they become change agents. The HLLC students not only take a range of such "hot topic" elective courses, while pursuing majors in their respective schools and colleges, from criminal justice to arts & sciences and business and public affairs, but they also operate as cohorts with faculty mentors, meeting regularly to develop the kinds of cultural competencies and skills to interact effectively across difference to maximize their education as effective local and global citizens. The faculty who teach and mentor in the HLLC constantly remark on how much their own scholarly work and cultural competence is informed and stretched by these interactions. This interactive, strength-based model also allows us to develop special cohorts, such as the BOLD Scholars, a cohort of 10 women in the HLLC, participating in a program funded by the Helen Gurley Brown *Pussycat Foundation* to network women across four institutions in the U.S., with women in business, leadership, education, and the like.

We believe that the inclusive, dynamic, inter-generational and highly diverse learning environments created in the HLLC, engaging students and faculty and staff expressly committed to unpacking the world's most taxing challenges from a ground-up perspective and with insights garnered both from personal experience and from learning how to really listen to and talk to others who travelled different paths, is a recipe for college success (and beyond). Most importantly, we think it will help Newark and cities and regions like it move the dial significantly on educational achievement. In fact, while Rutgers-Newark undergraduates in general complete college at a significantly higher rate than their incoming profiles would predict (12 percentage points above predicted for six-year completion, using a standard national norm calculation),<sup>21</sup> we expect the HLLC students to not only do so as well, but perhaps even at a higher rate.

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<sup>21</sup> See Washington Monthly's 2016 rankings of actual versus predicted 6-year graduation rates for national universities.



*Reaching Beyond our Walls, Together*

Just as the HLLC feeds off of the vibrancy of a two-way street between experiences as a student or scholar and those as a citizen of Newark, so too does the broader work of increasing post-secondary attainment in our city go hand in hand with other collective impact collaborations in which we as higher education institutions take our place as institutional citizens, anchor institutions, investing in the prosperity and well-being of our city and its people.<sup>22</sup> In Newark, as I know is also true for Cleveland’s anchor institutions, Rutgers-Newark is joined by other “eds and meds,” cultural institutions, non-profit CBOs, corporate and government partners, in several broad initiatives that define the challenges and opportunities of the city, from public safety to public health and the environment, from an ever-expanding cultural district downtown to investments in live-buy-hire local by all the major anchors. In each instance, there are subprojects that will feed positively into NCLC’s goal of increasing post-secondary attainment in Newark.



There are many examples of synergy between and across such collective impact initiatives in Newark, and their connections to youth development. Consider the work of The Opportunity Youth Network (OYN), a consortium that works to re-engage the thousands of young adults in Newark who are not in school. For example, the OYN engages opportunity youth in greening vacant lots that might

<sup>22</sup> See examples from the work of members of the Anchor Institutions Task Force at [http://www.margainc.com/files\\_images/general/AITF\\_Journal\\_2016\\_Vol\\_1.pdf](http://www.margainc.com/files_images/general/AITF_Journal_2016_Vol_1.pdf).

otherwise be sites of crime, and as they do so not only do community public safety and environmental health improve, but the educational landscape benefits by getting more young people back on track to graduate. Similarly, as our Center for Urban Entrepreneurship and Economic Development spurs capacity building amongst local entrepreneurs, faculty and community partners also reach back into the high schools in Newark to capture the attention of the next generation of business students. The same thing happens when the multimedia digital storytelling collaborative called the *Newest Americans* narrates the experiences of immigrant families in Newark, producing both great art and empowering more children aspiring to be like the college students narrating these stories.

In this vein, I want to end by noting that any goal of educating more of our students (be they children or adults) can only be reached in tandem with these other goals for community well-being and prosperity, and the synergy between these efforts needs relentless reinforcement from us all. As historian Thomas Sugrue recently reminded an audience at Rutgers-Newark, real progress was made by the social movements that followed the urban rebellions of 1967 in Newark, Detroit, and many similar cities, but much of it has since eroded.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, the stories of cities like ours has, after all, always been a tale of two cities, with one grown from within by the strength and persistence and aspirations and intelligence of the people, and one coming from without, based upon a set of practices, from redlining to predatory loans and inadequate school financing as examples, that hold progress back.<sup>24</sup>

Today, as in 1967, we face again the need to build structures for the long term to move the needle, replacing an architecture of segregation and inequality with an architecture of inclusion and equitable prosperity. As such, I would say that the Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland and the Newark City of Learning Collaborative sit right at the center of that new architecture. It is our job to join forces with other collective impact consortia, to make long-term, sustainable change in arenas from education to economic development to public health and safety. As was true in the years after 1967, these collaborative efforts can build on long-standing legacies of strength and vibrancy and cultural diversity in our cities, and in so doing they can make a real difference once again. And although no one consortium, no one arena, will define the future of our cities alone, if we do what often seems impossible and align our goals and our resources – our intellectual, financial, social, cultural and human capital – and thereby create a “community of communities,”<sup>25</sup> we can make progress, together.

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<sup>23</sup> Thomas Sugrue, *City Moves: Black Urban History Since 1967*, Marion Thompson Wright Lecture, Rutgers University-Newark, Feb 18, 2017.

<sup>24</sup> Nancy Cantor, Remarks at 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Marion Thompson Wright Lecture Series, Rutgers University-Newark, Feb 18, 2017.

<sup>25</sup> Danielle Allen, *Toward a Connected Society*, Earl Lewis & Nancy Cantor (Eds.), *Our Compelling Interests: The Value of Diversity for Democracy and a Prosperous Society*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2016, 71-105.