



2009 College Opportunity Agenda **Endorsements and Supportive Statements**

Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans

Ilean Her, Executive Director

“The Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans supports the priorities being championed by the Minnesota Private College Council’s 2009 College Opportunity Agenda. We stand in partnership with the MPCC as we both invest our time and energy in ensuring that higher education is accessible and affordable for all Minnesota students and their families. In the past decade, one of the Council’s top priorities is to decrease the educational gap especially with regard to higher educational attainment between Asian-Pacific-American students and their white counterparts. We’ve made headway, but we’ve not done enough. Increasing the size and number of State Grant awards that help low- and middle-income students make their college dreams a reality will keep us on the right track. Additionally, Minnesota can also do more to help more students who are the least likely to go to college through proven TRiO access programs. Cutting back on these proven programs, will be a divestment on the state’s part in its future economic edge.”

Chicano Latino Affairs Council

Rogelio Muñoz, Jr., executive director

“Let’s address the demographic shifts facing our state. We have increasing numbers of low-income and diverse students in our K-12 schools and we must continue to find ways to support them towards higher education. Currently, Latino students in Minnesota have the lowest graduation rate when compared to their peers. In terms of enrollment patterns in the state, Latino students are the least represented full-time in both four- and two-year colleges and universities. If we do nothing differently, our students will not be prepared and graduate in the numbers that our economy will require in a new era. We are up to this challenge: We can expand college opportunity, focusing on the investments that the Minnesota Private College Council has highlighted in its 2009 policy agenda: expanding State Grant aid to students and growing proven access programs for the under-represented.”

Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys

Linda Keene, CEO

“Through the Girl Scout leadership experience, girls are engaged in age-appropriate activities to explore career possibilities. As part of the program, there is a significant emphasis on pursuing post-secondary education in order to prepare girls for their chosen

careers. Yet for many of our girls, finding the financial resources to make their educational dreams a reality is a huge barrier.

It is important for our state to put the right policies in place to build on the work that we — and other youth-serving organizations — are doing to encourage young people to attend college. The Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys support the changes called for in the Minnesota Private College Council's 2009 College Opportunity Agenda. Minnesota needs to increase the size and number of State Grants that help girls from low- and middle-income families. Minnesota can also do more to help students who are the least likely to go to college through proven TRiO access programs.

In these difficult times, it is critical that Minnesota continue to make the investments necessary to prepare our youth to face the challenges of tomorrow. They must be well educated in order to compete effectively in an increasingly global marketplace for goods, services and ideas. Unless we find a way to produce more college graduates to meet the needs of local employers, Minnesota will risk losing jobs to states with a better educated workforce.

We believe that the 2009 College Opportunity Agenda provides a good blueprint for moving forward on this important social need.”

Other supporters of elements of the College Opportunity Agenda

Growth & Justice

In its 2008 Smart Investments report, Growth & Justice recommends an additional \$115 million annual investment into the State Grant program.

Minnesota Chamber of Commerce

The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce has identified the State Grant program as its top priority for higher education during this legislative session. It supports an increase in funding.

*For more details on the State Grant and the College Opportunity Agenda,
visit www.mnprivatecolleges.org/agenda.*