



AMERICAN  
TALENT  
INITIATIVE



A 2018 REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF  
THE AMERICAN TALENT INITIATIVE  
IN ITS FIRST TWO YEARS

**THE AMERICAN TALENT INITIATIVE**, supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, is co-managed by The Aspen Institute's College Excellence Program and Ithaka S+R. *If your college or university is interested in joining the American Talent Initiative, please email Benjamin Fresquez ([benjamin.fresquez@aspeninstitute.org](mailto:benjamin.fresquez@aspeninstitute.org)).*

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Since Bloomberg Philanthropies launched the American Talent Initiative (ATI) in 2016, our goal has been to provide more low- and middle-income students with a high-quality college education. The importance of this work is clear: A college diploma is more than a piece of paper. It's a ticket to social and economic mobility.

Unfortunately, many high-achieving, lower-income students across the country don't even apply to—let alone graduate from—the high-graduation-rate colleges and universities they're qualified to attend. These students lose out on the resources of the schools that give them the best chance for success. Schools lose out on some of the most talented and promising students. And our country loses out, too, because so many Americans aren't given the chance to reach their full potential and fully contribute to our society and economy.

Tackling this challenge is why we founded the American Talent Initiative. I'm glad to say that 108 of the top U.S. colleges and universities—with some of the country's highest graduation rates—have joined. These public and private schools have a common commitment to recruiting and educating more lower-income students. And these institutions, which have historically seen themselves as competitors, are now collaborating and sharing best practices, an encouraging development.

Together, the members of the American Talent Initiative have vowed to enroll and graduate 50,000 more low- and moderate-income students by 2025. Over two years, they have already increased their enrollment of students eligible for federal Pell grants by nearly 7,300—and that number is set to grow in the years ahead.

This report shows that our colleges and universities are on track to meet our 50,000 goal. It details some of the strategies that have led to success. And it reveals our plans for helping members measure and maximize the impact of their progress.

At Bloomberg Philanthropies, we look forward to continuing our work with ATI institutions, and helping more talented students graduate from great colleges and realize their full potential.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael R. Bloomberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Bloomberg" clearly legible.

In December 2016, 30 leading colleges and universities joined forces to address a persistent problem: Too few talented, low- and moderate-income students from across the country were enrolled at the U.S. colleges and universities with the highest graduation rates.

By joining the American Talent Initiative, these colleges and universities committed to work together to change this reality. Specifically, they set a goal that by 2025, the colleges and universities with graduation rates of at least 70 percent will increase the number of low- and moderate-income students enrolled by 50,000.

Since then, the initiative has more than tripled, to 108 institutions strong. In 2017–18, ATI members enrolled 7,291 more lower-income students—that is, those who receive federal Pell grants—than in 2015–16.

Of the 96 members that have been with ATI long enough to submit multiple years of data, 68 increased their Pell enrollment between 2015–16 and 2017–18; this includes 19 public colleges and universities and 49 private ones. Eighty-one ATI members have outlined concrete goals and related strategies in the areas of outreach and recruitment, enrollment, need-based financial aid, and retention and graduation. Their strategies include:

- setting a vision for socioeconomic diversity that is clearly prioritized by presidents, chancellors, and boards of trustees;
- increasing the size of the student body;
- expanding the pipelines of students they typically reach out to and enroll, through new approaches to recruitment practices and transfer admissions;

- shifting resources to need-based financial aid and taking other steps to make college more affordable; and
- improving on-campus supports to ensure that college is inclusive and navigable, designed to help all students learn and graduate.

ATI, co-managed by the Aspen Institute and Ithaka S+R, supports the work of its members by tracking quantifiable progress to goals (both by institution and collectively); shaping and encouraging mutual responsibility; supporting the sharing of promising strategies through research, convenings, and ongoing communities of practice; and elevating successes through internal and external communications.

There is still much work needed to achieve the 50,000-by-2025 goal. **But early evidence strongly suggests that the goal is within reach—a goal that will benefit students and society well beyond 2025.**

## Higher education, more than ever, is key to developing the talent and enabling the upward mobility needed to ensure opportunity for our citizens and economic health for our nation.

The individual benefits are clear: Americans with bachelor's degrees earn, on average, 66 percent more than those who only have high school diplomas, and \$1 million more over the course of their careers.<sup>1</sup> The benefits to society are evident too: college graduates vitally contribute to the economy, serve their communities, and create jobs and opportunities for the students of tomorrow.

Yet there is a wide chasm in our country between who gets a bachelor's degree and who does not. More than three-quarters of bachelor's degrees are granted to young adults from the top half of the income distribution.<sup>2</sup> This disparity is compounded when many of our nation's low- and moderate-income students never get the opportunity to attend the colleges and universities where they have the best chance to succeed. More than half of students at the colleges and universities with the highest graduation rates—those where at least 70 percent of entering students graduate—come from families in the top 20 percent of the national income distribution.<sup>3</sup>

These inequities are not the result of a shortage of talented, lower-income students. The talent is most certainly out there: Each year, tens of thousands of lower-income high school and community college students never apply to a high-graduation-rate institution despite their strong academic credentials. When high-achieving, lower-income students do attend these institutions, they have a greater chance of graduating and moving to the middle class and beyond than they otherwise would.<sup>4</sup>

With this in mind, in December 2016, Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Aspen Institute's College Excellence

Program, Ithaca S+R, and a group of 30 colleges and universities launched the American Talent Initiative (ATI) with a single purpose: To enroll an additional 50,000 low- and moderate-income students at the nearly 300 American colleges and universities with the highest graduation rates by 2025.

Since its launch, ATI membership has grown to 108 institutions, with more joining each month—an unprecedented collaboration for institutions that are, at the same time, individually aiming to attract exceptional students, top faculty, and other resources.<sup>5</sup> Each member sets its own goals that align to the collective goal, shares data with ATI to track progress, and works with other members to share and co-develop strategies for expanding opportunity. By joining ATI and deeply engaging in activities to meet these goals, members have demonstrated their commitment to strengthening their institutions and our nation by improving access and opportunity in higher education for talented students, regardless of their income or zip code.

This report offers the first look at the progress achieved during the initiative's first two years. Between the 2015–16 academic year (the year before ATI's founding) and the 2017–18 academic year, ATI members increased their enrollment of low- and moderate-income students by 7,291, an increase that represents about 15 percent of the 50,000-by-2025 goal, achieved by about a third of eligible schools. During this period, more than two-thirds of ATI members increased Pell enrollment, and for about half of those members, this increase represents a reversal of a downward trend. Although there is surely more work ahead, the early progress is very encouraging.

After providing greater detail on quantitative progress towards the 50,000-by-2025 goal, this report examines the enrollment trends among ATI members and highlights five key strategies that ATI members are employing in their efforts to expand opportunity:

- institutionalizing commitments to socioeconomic diversity through presidential leadership and board engagement,
- increasing the size of the student body or maintaining long-held commitments to access,
- forging new pipelines for nontraditional students,
- prioritizing need-based financial aid, and
- reducing gaps in retention and graduation rates.

These strategies are being pursued in the face of significant headwinds that threaten to derail progress toward more opportunity, including decreasing state financial support for higher education, persistent income inequality, and increasing public skepticism about higher education. The report shares some of the ways that participation in ATI can help members face these challenges. We owe it to talented students from every zip code and every background to maintain our momentum, and we know that together, we can do more than any one of us could do alone.

# ATI'S FIRST TWO YEARS

## MEMBERSHIP IMPACT

*ATI's progress to the 50,000-by-2025 goal*

## MEMBERSHIP INSIGHTS

*Strategies ATI members have employed to improve access and success for lower-income students*

## THE VALUE OF THE COMMUNITY

*How the American Talent Initiative supports colleges and universities in sustaining and expanding their commitments to socioeconomic diversity*

# MEMBERSHIP IMPACT

*ATI's progress to the 50,000-by-2025 goal*





## Which colleges and universities are ATI members, and what are the eligibility requirements for ATI?

Since launching in December 2016 with 30 founding members, membership in the American Talent Initiative has more than tripled. As of November 2018, there are 108 members of the American Talent Initiative, each committed to enhancing their own efforts to increase socioeconomic diversity on their campuses. ATI members comprise 79 private, not-for-profit institutions and 29 public institutions, including the entire Ivy League, many prominent state flagship universities, and a host of private liberal arts colleges and universities. ATI members are located in 31 states across the country and vary significantly in terms of their size, selectivity, endowment, and focus. In 2016–17, they collectively enrolled 1,077,502 students, with about 67 percent enrolled in public institutions and 33 percent in private institutions.<sup>6,7</sup>

To be eligible to join ATI, a college or university must consistently graduate 70 percent or more of its students in six years. Throughout this report, we refer to these colleges and universities as “ATI-eligible” or “high-graduation-rate” institutions. As of 2015–16, the most recent year for which graduation rate data are publicly available, there were 296 colleges and universities with six-year graduation rates at or above 70 percent that are therefore eligible to join ATI.<sup>8</sup>

## What is the goal of the American Talent Initiative, and how does ATI measure its progress?

ATI members are committed to a singular, collective goal: By academic year 2025–26, enroll 50,000 additional talented, low- and moderate-income students at the 296 high-graduation-rate colleges and universities. We classify students as low- and moderate-income based on their receipt of a federal, need-based Pell grant. Therefore, to meet our goal, we expect to increase the number of Pell students enrolled at the 296 institutions from 484,767 in 2015–16 to 534,767 by 2025–26.<sup>9</sup>

Because there is a lag in publicly available federal Pell enrollment data, we can measure trends for ATI members, from whom we collect information directly, but not yet for the 188 ATI-eligible institutions that are not currently members. Each year, ATI members submit data on enrollment, retention, and graduation; to date, 96 ATI members have submitted data through academic year 2017–18.<sup>10</sup> In addition, ATI members may opt to submit additional data on the detailed income distribution of their students, data that are not available in the public sphere. More than half of members have chosen to do so.

Detailed data on the income distribution allow us to analyze the relationship between the share of Pell students enrolled and the share of students in various income categories. For the subset of members who submitted these data, we find that the share of Pell students enrolled roughly corresponds to the share of students in the bottom three income categories—those whose families earn up to \$75,000 per year. These data suggest that both low- *and* moderate-income students are receiving Pell grants at these institutions. For an aggregate summary of members’ data, please review the report addendum, “Aggregate ATI Data on Enrollment, Success, and Income.”

## What progress have ATI members made towards the 50,000-by-2025 goal?

Between 2015–16 and 2017–18, ATI members increased enrollment of students who receive Pell grants by 7,291, nearly 15 percent of ATI's 50,000-by-2025 goal. During this time period, Pell enrollment:

↑ **increased from 210,250 to 217,541** at the 96 members that submitted data,

↑ **increased from 162,660 to 167,795** (+5,135 students) at the 26 public ATI members that submitted data, and

↑ **increased from 47,590 to 49,746** (+2,156 students) at the 70 private ATI members that submitted data. (The increases by public and private members were roughly proportional to their share of the total enrollment.)

During this two-year period, 68 of 96 ATI members increased Pell enrollment. Those ATI members that started with relatively low shares of Pell students were the most likely to increase Pell enrollment during this period—71 percent of ATI members that increased Pell enrollment started with low shares of Pell students enrolled compared to other ATI-eligible institutions.

Nearly half of ATI members that increased Pell enrollment between 2015–16 and 2017–18 reversed a downward trend in Pell enrollment in the years preceding 2015–16. In other words, these members had declines in Pell enrollment between 2012–13 and 2015–16, and increased Pell enrollment between 2015–16 and 2017–18. These institutions were largely those that started with relatively low

shares of Pell students enrolled. These findings reveal that, early on, ATI members that previously offered more limited opportunity have made the most significant gains.

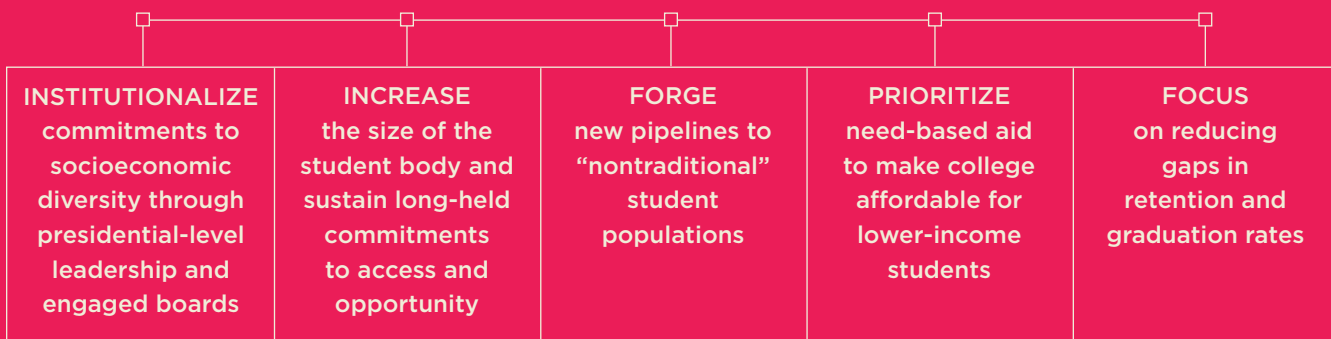
As importantly, our findings demonstrate that many ATI members with relatively high shares of Pell students are largely maintaining their commitments to Pell students, a critical element to ATI's success. In fact, 77 percent of ATI members in the top two quartiles of the distribution of Pell share amongst ATI-eligible institutions remained in their quartile of performance or moved to a higher quartile.

As a reminder, the 50,000-by-2025 goal applies to all 296 ATI-eligible institutions. Because of the lag in publicly available data for the 188 ATI-eligible institutions that are not currently members, we cannot yet know the full extent of our progress to the 50,000-by-2025 goal. If these institutions increased their enrollment of Pell students, we will have made additional progress to the 50,000-by-2025 goal. Alternatively, if Pell enrollment at these institutions has declined, our progress to the 50,000-by-2025 goal may be reversed. If enrollment trends at these 188 institutions, plus the 12 ATI members that have yet to submit data, have mirrored those of the ATI members that have submitted data, ATI will have achieved more than 35 percent of the 50,000-by-2025 goal, an increase in Pell enrollment of 17,596.

# MEMBERSHIP INSIGHTS

*Strategies ATI members have employed to improve access and success for lower-income students*

As part of their ATI commitment, each member sets goals and strategies to improve socioeconomic diversity on their campuses. Members submit these goals and strategies via a “Collective Impact Framework,” or CIF, which, along with numerous convenings, webinars, phone conversations, and campus visits over the past two years, allow for ATI staff to aggregate, analyze, and synthesize the goals and strategies employed across the membership.<sup>11</sup> In this section, we highlight five of the strategies that ATI members have employed to expand opportunity for lower-income and other underrepresented students on campus.





## Institutionalize commitments to socioeconomic diversity through presidential-level leadership and engaged boards of trustees.

■ Presidential leadership, with steady support from the board of trustees, is essential to expanding opportunity for lower-income students. ATI presidents and chancellors with demonstrated success in increasing socioeconomic diversity have taken a strategic and sustained approach to achieving results. These leaders set out an ambitious vision, build consensus and support for that vision from key constituents, and regularly and publicly report on progress. They consistently reiterate that strategies to increase diversity benefit new students admitted and the entire campus and community alike. They allocate the resources necessary to fund this vision, and they make the hard decisions to elevate expanded opportunity on the list of competing demands.

These leaders also engage board members, faculty, staff, and students in a shared vision for the future of the institution, a future where access and opportunity are central to the college's mission and embedded in institutional systems and processes. Presidents and chancellors who take this approach ensure that institutional commitments to socioeconomic diversity are bigger than themselves, so that the commitments will last beyond their tenure and persist in the face of future challenges.

For example, during his 10 years as provost and since he became president in 2013, ATI steering committee member and **Princeton University** President Christopher Eisgruber has consistently and publicly emphasized the centrality of diversity to Princeton's mission. In his 2018 commencement address, he said, "At Princeton we believe in socioeconomic diversity because we know that to achieve excellence as a University and as a nation we must draw talent from every sector of society... If we want to heal the divisions that inequality

has produced in this country, we must ensure that students from low-income backgrounds receive the educations they need to develop their abilities and contribute to our society."<sup>12</sup> By engaging the entire Princeton community in redefining Princeton's mission, President Eisgruber has worked to connect students, faculty, staff, alumni, and board members to a shared vision for Princeton's future, a future that students from all backgrounds can access and achieve. This shared vision has allowed Princeton to enroll nearly 500 additional Pell students since 2012–13, increasing the share of Princeton students who receive Pell grants from 12 percent to 21 percent.

Presidents and chancellors who have institutionalized their commitments have also emphasized the connection between diversifying the student body and other core purposes of their institutions, such as cultivating talent and pursuing excellence. For example, **Franklin & Marshall** College increased the academic profile of its student body while also increasing the share of students who receive Pell grants, from 10 percent in 2010–11 to 19.5 percent in 2017–18. Franklin & Marshall's former president, Dan Porterfield, now president and CEO of the Aspen Institute, recognized the synergy between pursuing academic excellence and expanding opportunity; he consistently referred to the college's effort to increase need-based financial aid and expand the pipeline of lower-income and first-generation applicants as a "talent strategy." Indeed, at Franklin & Marshall, six-year graduation rates for Pell recipients are comparable to those for other students, SAT scores have been stable, and the overall academic profile shows a positive trend. Faculty report that classroom discussion and college culture have improved.<sup>13</sup>

Presidential leadership is no less important at our nation's top public universities, where declining public funding for higher education, rising prices, and competitive pressures can intensify stratification of students by income and race. Public institutions with demonstrated success at expanding opportunity have leaders who have remained committed to increasing access and improving student success despite very real

constraints. Understanding that there is more work to be done, these leaders have demonstrated that pursuing excellence and expanding access are not competing strategies, even as hard choices must sometimes be made to ensure that investments in both remain a top priority.

Chancellor Robert Jones of the **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**, building on the work of his predecessor, Phyllis Wise, doubled down on Illinois' commitments to access for lower-income students at a time of extreme financial uncertainty. Between 2012-13 and 2017-18, Illinois enrolled 1,157 additional Pell students, with more than two-thirds of those students added in just the last two academic years. During this period, the Illinois state government failed to pass a complete budget for two years. Even with a massive state funding shortfall, the University continued to fully fund student financial aid.

Other ATI presidents and their teams have set ambitious goals to expand lower-income student enrollment. **Emory University, Lehigh University, Wofford College, the University of Michigan, and the University of Dayton** all have goals to move to 20 percent Pell enrollment.<sup>14</sup> **Wesleyan University** plans to add 90 Pell-eligible students, and the **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill** plans to add 140.

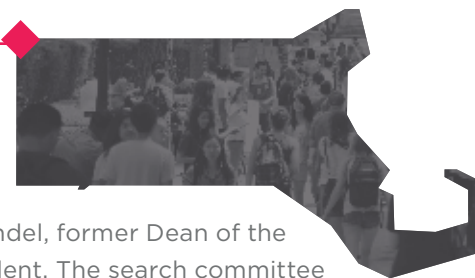
Like that of presidents and chancellors, the commitment of board members and trustees is critical to successful efforts to expand opportunity for students from low-income or underrepresented backgrounds. Board and

trustee buy-in further institutionalizes priorities and ensures that institutional commitments survive leadership transitions, endure economic uncertainty, and persist in the face of competing priorities. In January 2018, **Amherst College's** Board of Trustees, which first publicly asserted its commitment to diversity in 1996, reasserted "the goal of an Amherst College community that reflects the broadest and deepest possible range of talents that people of all backgrounds can bring to us."<sup>15</sup>

Vocal board members and trustees reinforce institutional commitments to access and opportunity and help sustain these commitments when a president or chancellor departs. Given that college presidents serve, on average, for six and a half years, we can reasonably expect that many ATI members will experience at least one leadership transition before 2025.<sup>16</sup> In fact, since ATI launched in December 2016, the presidents or chancellors of 18 ATI member institutions have departed or announced their departure.<sup>17</sup> In a few of these cases, the board of trustees and search committees sought presidential candidates with a demonstrated history of pursuing diversity and equity.

Colleges and universities are complex organizations that require leadership at all levels to effectively accomplish college-wide goals. While presidential and board commitment alone are not sufficient to achieve a goal such as socioeconomic diversity, leadership from these levels is needed to prioritize opportunity, and lay the foundation for pursuing the strategies described in the following sections.

At the outset of its search for a new president, **Williams College** trustees explicitly set out to identify a leader who would "continue and advance the College's commitment to a culture of diversity and inclusion in its intellectual and community life, and across its student, faculty, and staff populations."<sup>18</sup> Williams College appointed Maud Mandel, former Dean of the College and ATI liaison at Brown University, as the new Williams president. The search committee chose Mandel in part due to "her [stirring] commitment to deepening and enhancing inclusion and diversity."<sup>19</sup> At her presidential induction, Mandel shared her personal commitments to broadening opportunity with the Williams community, saying that Williams has "committed itself to providing access and opportunity to students of all kinds, from the widest array of backgrounds...and [we] must [continue to] nurture talent whatever its origins and forms."<sup>20</sup>





## Increase the size of the student body and sustain long-held commitments to access and opportunity.

■ ATI members that have made gains in expanding lower-income student access and success have employed a range of enrollment and retention strategies. Of the 68 ATI members that increased Pell enrollment from 2015–16 to 2017–18, 47 members (69 percent) did so by increasing the size of the student body. ATI members that are public universities were especially likely to use this tactic—95 percent of ATI public members that increased Pell enrollment increased the size of their student body. For instance, the **University of Iowa** increased the size of its student body by seven percent between 2015–16 and 2017–18—from 19,714 students in 2015–16 to 21,079 students in 2017–18. During this same period, the University of Iowa increased Pell enrollment by 450 students.

Some ATI private members have also employed this strategy. **Yale University**, for example, has publicly shared its plans to expand from 5,400 to 6,200 undergraduates in four years, and its 2017 entering cohort was the largest in Yale’s history.<sup>21</sup> In its Collective Impact Framework (CIF), Yale set an ATI goal to enroll 225 more Pell students by 2021. With 216 Pell students added between 2015–16 and 2018–19, Yale is well on its way to exceed that goal.

Finally, some ATI members have contributed to ATI’s success by continuing to serve large numbers of lower-income students, like **Spelman College** (48 percent), **Allegheny College** (34 percent), **Juniata College** (29 percent), and the schools in the **University of California** system (between 27 percent and 64 percent at UC campuses). Other ATI members, like **Amherst College**, **Vassar College**, **Franklin & Marshall College**, and the **University of Richmond**, made significant efforts to expand socioeconomic diversity in the years just before the American Talent Initiative began. These institutions play a vital role among the members, serving as leaders in

the identification of practices that have proven successful. ATI members that had the highest Pell shares prior to ATI’s launch have largely maintained their commitments over the past five years. In fact, 77 percent of ATI members in the top two quartiles of the distribution of Pell share amongst ATI-eligible institutions remained in their quartile of performance or moved to a higher quartile.

Increasing in size and maintaining longstanding commitments to diversity are effective strategies because they often involve scale—increasing or maintaining large numbers of Pell students. These strategies may also avoid the blowback that could result from appearing to reallocate existing seats to different populations of students. Growing the size of the class can thus avoid the challenges of increasing opportunity in a zero-sum context.

## Forge new pipelines to “nontraditional” student populations.

■ Each year, thousands of highly-talented low- and moderate-income students graduate from high school and, for a host of reasons, do not apply to the colleges and universities that best match their academic preparation and where they have the best chance to graduate. In some cases, these talented students enroll in four-year colleges and universities that have fewer resources and lower graduation rates. In other cases, they enter community colleges or join the military. To meet the 50,000-by-2025 goal and fulfill their missions to improve access and opportunity for all students across the country, ATI members must expand and shore up opportunities for all talented students, whichever path they choose.

### Developing New Relationships with High Schools.

Some ATI members are creating new relationships with high schools serving large numbers of lower-income students to try to improve immediate post-high-school match. **Rutgers University-New Brunswick**, for



example, is cultivating new pipelines of New Jersey high school students through its Future Scholars program. Future Scholars has provided academic preparation courses, cultural events, tutoring, and mentoring for over 2,000 New Jersey high school students, all of whom receive free- or reduced-price lunch and would be first-generation college students. Ninety-eight percent of the scholars graduate high school. While 69 percent of those students enroll at Rutgers (admission is not guaranteed, but is earned through the standard admissions process), 16 percent attend other four-year institutions and another 16 percent attend community college, with the hopes of transferring to Rutgers. Currently, more than 30 percent of Rutgers-New Brunswick students receive Pell grants, one of the highest rates amongst ATI public members.

### Expanding Pipelines for Community College Students.

Students who first enter community college are more likely to be Black, Hispanic, Native American, or lower-income than students who follow the more “traditional” high school-to-college pathway.<sup>22</sup> Thus, many ATI members

are building pipelines for community college transfer students as a way to contribute to the 50,000-by-2025 goal. Between 2015–16 and 2017–18, 49 ATI members increased the number of transfer students they serve.

Each year, there are tens of thousands of community college students whose grades suggest they could succeed at ATI member institutions, but who do not enroll. Recent research released by ATI, *The Talent Blind Spot: The Case for Increasing Community College Transfer to High Graduation Rate Institutions*, quantified this untapped pipeline, revealing that each year, an estimated 50,000 talented community college students fail to transfer to four-year colleges and universities. Of those 50,000 students, about 15,000 earn a GPA of 3.7 or higher at their community college. Research suggests that were these students to transfer, they would be as likely to graduate as students who enroll as freshmen.<sup>23</sup>

Of ATI members, the **University of California-Irvine** is a leader in using community college pipelines to increase socioeconomic diversity. UC-Irvine has made the single largest contribution to ATI’s 50,000-by-2025 goal to date, adding 2,323 Pell students from 2012-13 to 2017-18, with nearly 900 Pell students added in the last two years. Nearly half of these students enrolled as transfer students. The transfer cohort grew from 1,665 students in fall 2012 to 2,919 students in fall 2017, an increase of 75 percent. In fall 2017, 48 percent of incoming transfer students received Pell. UC-Irvine’s Pell share, 37 percent, remains near the top of all high-graduation-rate public institutions. Chancellor Howard Gillman feels deeply committed to increasing access, especially for transfer students, stating that “higher education institutions have an obligation to reach out to overlooked communities and create a pipeline for them to attend.”<sup>24</sup>



Some ATI members already serve large numbers of community college transfer students. The University of California system, whose campuses are all ATI members, enrolls approximately 18,700 new transfer students every fall, of which we estimate that at least 47 percent receive Pell grants.<sup>25</sup> Many other public ATI members, and some private members, have longstanding pathways for community college transfers. In the practical guide that accompanies *The Talent Blind Spot*, we featured the exemplary practices related to community college transfer from three ATI members: **Smith College**, the **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**, and the **University of California, Los Angeles**.<sup>26</sup>

Other ATI members recognize the benefits of substantially expanding their community college transfer pipeline. As of November 2018, 21 ATI members have stated goals related to expanding their community college transfer pipelines. For instance, **Elizabethtown College** intends to quadruple the number of community college transfer students enrolled, from 25 to 100 students, in the next four years. **Fordham University**, **Lebanon Valley College**, and **Georgetown University** are all also planning to enroll more community college transfer students through a range of strategies, including expanding partnerships and articulation agreements with regional community colleges. **UCLA**—which already enrolls about 3,200 new transfer students each year—and the **University of Denver** are focused on increasing the financial aid available to community college transfer students.

In 2017–18, 33 percent of the 52,982 transfer students enrolled at ATI members received Pell grants, a higher share than in the cohort of incoming freshman. This demonstrates that recruiting and enrolling community college transfer students is a strategy that can yield significant increases in lower-income student enrollment. Yet, while some ATI members already have exemplary practices related to community college transfer in place, many members have more work to do. Among ATI members, the number of transfer students who receive Pell has only modestly increased since 2015–16—from 17,244 in 2015–16 to 17,519 in 2017–18,

an increase of 275 students—and the share of transfer students enrolled at ATI institutions is still well below the national average for the four-year sector.<sup>27</sup> Through various ongoing and new efforts amongst ATI members, we expect to see more progress in the coming years.

### Expanding Pipelines for United States Military Veterans.

Like community college transfers, America's military veterans are underrepresented at high-graduation-rate institutions, where they, on average, incur less debt and have a higher likelihood of graduating than at the other colleges and universities they typically attend.<sup>28</sup> Educating military veterans is not just part of our national obligation—colleges and universities benefit directly when they recruit, enroll, and graduate veterans. Veterans bring rich personal and professional experiences that enhance the classroom and the campus community. Engaging military veterans is one way for ATI members to live up to their broad missions of access and opportunity. Further, an estimated 80 percent of active-duty service members are low- and moderate-income, so enrolling and graduating veterans is aligned with ATI's efforts to meet its 50,000-by-2025 goal.<sup>29</sup>

Recently, 34 ATI members came together to form a community of practice focused on improving student veteran access and success at high-graduation-rate institutions. Members in the community will focus on increasing veterans' enrollment, including as transfers from community colleges; providing more support to veterans once they are on campus; and helping students navigate the complicated world of financial aid, including GI Bill benefits. Throughout the year, participating members will work together to build knowledge through research and practice-sharing, convene virtually and in-person to co-develop tools to address needs, and collaborate with national organizations working on these same issues.

Many ATI members participating in this community of practice have longstanding commitments to serving veterans. **Columbia University** enrolled nearly 800

veterans in spring 2018, including nearly 500 student veterans in the undergraduate program. **Georgetown University** enrolled 950 service members and veterans in the 2017–18 academic year, and at the **Ohio State University**, about 1,500 service members and veterans enroll each year. Other ATI members have or will set concrete goals related to veteran enrollment and graduation. For instance, **Muhlenberg College** plans to increase student veteran enrollment by 25 percent over the next two years, and the **University of Michigan** plans to increase its new undergraduate veteran, National Guard, reserve, and active-duty enrollment by over 50 percent by 2020. Finally, **Cornell University** will more than double the number of student veterans enrolled, from 41 to 100 by 2020. All members of the community of practice will track and report progress towards their goals each year.

## Prioritize need-based aid to make college affordable for lower-income students.

■ Concerns about college affordability may prevent talented low- and moderate-income students from applying to and enrolling in the colleges and universities that best match their credentials and academic preparation. In some cases, sticker shock prevents lower-income students from applying to colleges with high graduation rates, even though these colleges may offer generous financial aid to offset the cost of attendance.<sup>30</sup> Even then, the cost of attendance may be too much for lower-income students to bear.



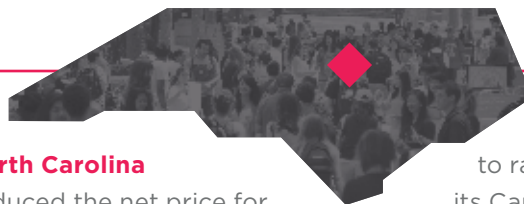
The **University of Michigan** has substantially decreased the average net price for students from families with incomes below \$48,000, including from \$7,156 in 2012–13 to \$4,117 in 2016–17, a decline of 42 percent. In 2015, Michigan launched the HAIL Scholarship program, which provides a four-year tuition and fees scholarship for qualifying lower-income, in-state students. In June 2017, Michigan expanded its financial commitment to talented, lower-income Michigan students with the announcement of the **Go Blue Guarantee**. Implemented in January 2018, the Go Blue Guarantee provides free tuition and required fees to in-state students from families with annual incomes at or below \$65,000. The guarantee is accompanied by

aggressive recruitment and outreach to lower-income families in order to increase applications from lower-income students. President Mark Schlissel said, “A goal of the Go Blue Guarantee is for each and every qualified student to feel that a University of Michigan education is within their financial reach.”<sup>31</sup> Under President Schlissel’s leadership, Michigan enrolled 552 more Pell students in 2017–18 compared to 2015–16 and expects to continue this upward trajectory through targeted outreach to lower-income students, continued investment in need-based financial aid, and focused supports to ensure that lower-income students graduate at rates equivalent to their higher-income peers.

Without proper attention and intervention, the challenges of college affordability will almost certainly grow. Rising tuition, stagnating wages, and increasing income inequality will continue to limit college opportunity for students from low- and moderate-income families. Nearly every year since 2008–09, increases in tuition and fees at public colleges and universities have outpaced inflation, while at the same time a college degree is now more necessary to enter the middle class and establish careers that can weather economic fluctuations and technological disruptions.<sup>32,33</sup>

Several ATI members have made reducing the cost of attendance for lower-income students a key feature of

their plans to expand access and opportunity on their campuses. For example, **Williams College** plans to raise an additional \$150 million for admissions and financial aid programs that seek out and support lower-income students. Similarly, access and affordability are central tenets to the **Time and Change strategic plan** launched under President Michael V. Drake at the **Ohio State University**, providing additional need-based scholarships for low- and moderate-income undergraduates.<sup>34</sup> President Drake, an ATI steering committee member, set an ambitious goal to generate an additional \$100 million for need-based aid by 2020. As of November 2018, Ohio State had met this goal, largely by identifying new streams of revenue and reducing administrative costs. This \$100



The **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill** has reduced the net price for lower-income students while increasing the number of those students enrolled. Between 2012–13 to 2015–16, UNC Chapel Hill reduced the average net price for lower-income students from \$6,750 to \$4,920, despite the fact that the state reduced per-student state funding and has still not returned it to pre-recession levels.<sup>35</sup> In addition to meeting students' full demonstrated need, UNC Chapel Hill's primary aid program is the Carolina Covenant, which provides financial, academic, and personal support to students from families with incomes at or below 200 percent of federal poverty level. Since its inception in 2004, the number of students served has grown from 200 in the initial class to over 750—approximately 13 percent—of the 2018 entering class. More than 7,000 students have been served by the Covenant scholarships and programming. Over the next several years, UNC Chapel Hill expects

to raise at least \$400 million to fund its Carolina Covenant obligations and cement its commitment to meeting students' full demonstrated need. Under the leadership of Chancellor Carol Folt, who recently joined the ATI steering committee, the University enrolled 461 more Pell students in 2017–18 compared to 2012–13, with nearly 200 added since 2015–16 alone. UNC expects to continue this growth by focusing strategically on outreach to lower-income students; doubling the number of lower-income, nontraditional, and military-affiliated students enrolling through the Carolina Student Transfer Excellence Program (C-STEP), and increasing on-time graduation rates from 81 percent to 92 percent.<sup>36</sup> Chancellor Folt believes that prioritizing socioeconomic diversity is a “matter of choice,” and advises other presidents and chancellors to “seek out [talented, lower-income] students, see them for the asset that they are, and provide that early support.”<sup>37</sup>

million allowed Ohio State to increase its need-based aid distribution over the last four years, and now the university aims to maintain an increase of at least \$45 million annually in need-based aid over the original 2015 baseline.

The rising costs of college and concerns about the value of a degree are common reasons cited in recent national surveys of Americans to explain their declining trust and confidence in American higher education. Improving affordability for low- and middle-income students, in a highly visible way, will not only contribute to expanding opportunity, it may also help shore up public trust in higher education.

## Focus on reducing gaps in retention and graduation rates.

■ At many colleges and universities across the country, lower-income students are significantly less likely to graduate than their higher-income peers. Even when they attend high-graduation-rate institutions, lower-income students often face personal and financial obstacles that hinder their academic progress. At ATI member institutions, however, lower-income students have a high likelihood of graduating in six years. Of the Pell students who entered ATI member institutions in 2011, 80 percent graduated within six years, a result not too far below the average graduation rate of 85 percent for all students at ATI colleges and universities. Even so, closing the gap in graduation rates between Pell and non-Pell students is an important part of many institutions' efforts to contribute to ATI's 50,000-by-2025 goal.

More than other colleges and universities, ATI members have the resources to support students while they are on campus, and many are committed to investing those resources in the academic and extracurricular areas that typically boost retention and graduation rates. In fact, 42 ATI members have included goals related to improving retention and graduation rates in their Collective Impact Frameworks. For instance:

- By 2024–25, the **University of Dayton** aims to improve lower-income student graduation rates by eight to 10 percentage points;
- The **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill** aims to significantly increase four-year graduation rates from 81 percent to 92 percent; and
- **Wake Forest University** plans to increase six-year graduation rates for lower-income students from 80 percent to 90 percent by 2025.

If ATI member institutions were to raise the average graduation rate for lower-income students to the level of the overall graduation rate, 1,959 additional lower-income students would graduate each year.<sup>38</sup>

**Spelman College**, a historically Black college and one of two all-women's colleges in ATI, is particularly focused on improving retention and graduation rates. Impressively, 48 percent of Spelman students receive Pell grants, a share unmatched by any other private ATI member. Spelman's commitment to access and opportunity is deeply ingrained in the fabric of the institution, and President Mary Schmidt Campbell believes Spelman can expand on this commitment by improving graduation rates and making a Spelman degree more affordable for lower-income students. As such, Spelman plans to redouble its effort to raise funds to increase scholarship support for low- and moderate-income students by 25 percent over the next five years. At 77 percent, Spelman women already graduate at rates that exceed the graduation rate of Black women at other liberal arts and women's colleges. Even so, President Campbell is investing in targeted academic supports to boost graduation rates.

A central reason that ATI sets a 70 percent graduation rate threshold for eligibility is that talented students from all backgrounds should have greater access to colleges and universities where they are likeliest to succeed. But as ATI members' individual goals reveal, there is a recognition that even this group of high-graduation-rate institutions has room for improvement—both in the overall success rate, and in closing gaps for students from lower-income backgrounds.

“Spelman has consistently educated large percentages of Pell students for a long time. Our goal now is to make it possible for every enrolled student to graduate and to graduate with a competitive edge. We are making our goal a whole college effort that gives everyone on campus a role in developing student success and college completion strategies and the possibility of a lifetime of productive work for each graduating senior.”

—**Spelman** President Mary Schmidt Campbell, February 2018, ATI presidential summit

# THE VALUE OF THE COMMUNITY

*How the American Talent Initiative  
supports colleges and universities  
in sustaining and expanding their  
commitments to socioeconomic diversity*

The American Talent Initiative was founded on the belief that, while individual institutions could make impressive gains in improving socioeconomic diversity on their own, change at scale would require purposeful collaboration, supported by an effective backbone organization.

After two years, we are starting to see some preliminary evidence that this approach can have a meaningful impact. At the same time, our work has refined our understanding of the mechanisms through which collaboration can yield the greatest benefits. **ATI's role is an enabling one, supporting members through four primary strategies:**



These strategies create the conditions, provide the information, and develop the relationships necessary to make our joint efforts more effective. But make no mistake: **The members are doing the most important work.**



**Collective Responsibility:** Institutions that normally compete are collaborating to achieve a singular, ambitious goal.

ATI is a presidential initiative. When a new ATI member joins, its president signs an invitation to participate, endorsing the national 50,000-by-2025 goal, and agrees—in collaboration with their team at the college or university—to set institutional goals, submit and review data on progress in lower-income student enrollment and success, and participate in the activities of the initiative. Importantly, the new member president only signs the invitation after a conversation with a current ATI president from the steering committee. This process is designed to make explicit both that the president is committed to his or her institution's participation in the initiative and responsible to peers at other member institutions.

This collective commitment is reinforced in several ways, at multiple levels of leadership within the institution. Each year, ATI presidents and chancellors receive a data report showing ATI's aggregate statistics on socioeconomic diversity, as well as their own institutions' statistics compared to those of peer institutions. At convenings of ATI presidents and meetings with the senior leaders who serve as ATI liaisons, the emphasis is always on the aggregate, net result and the accompanying strategies that can accelerate our collective progress. An annual, facilitated, self-review process of institutional goals presents an opportunity for institutional leaders to reset their priorities and amplify their commitments to the collective goal.

**Surfacing Effective Practices:** ATI's cross-institutional perspective and research can help illuminate practices and strategies to help members.

ATI supports its members and the broader field in fulfilling this collective responsibility in part through identifying and understanding practices that are effective in enrolling and graduating lower-income students at high-graduation-rate colleges and universities. ATI enables the staff at the Aspen Institute and Ithaca S+R, as well as its members, to look across 108 diverse institutions for promising and effective strategies that may not otherwise be apparent to those within a single institution, who might primarily interact with those from similar or geographically proximate institutions.

There are four main ways in which these strategies are surfaced and investigated. First, the ATI program staff conducts an annual review of members' Collective Impact Frameworks reflecting their goals, strengths, and needs. This process reveals practices and programs employed by one institution that may have value for others, common practices across multiple institutions that merit further investigation or would benefit from collaborative refinement, and common needs that would benefit from further research or new and innovative interventions. Second, the annual data collection may reveal institutions that have made substantial gains in or maintained high levels of lower-income enrollment or success, which prompts a deeper dive into the strategies deployed at those institutions. Third, discussions at the annual convenings of presidents and ATI liaisons are used to identify existing practices and pressing challenges that would benefit from research or technical assistance. Finally, ATI program staff stays on top of the relevant literature and developments in the broader field and connects those findings with issues that are important to members in order to identify potential topics for internal or commissioned research.

**Communications:** ATI can elevate and reinforce progress and practices that expand opportunity.

ATI aims to focus the attention of members and the broader public on ATI institutions that make concrete progress in increasing or maintaining high levels of socioeconomic diversity, as well as the practices those institutions used to achieve those results. As an organization, ATI has endorsed exemplary practice by highlighting institutions in research publications, media outreach, and internal presentations and newsletters. ATI staff has also facilitated opportunities for ATI presidents and chancellors and other senior leaders to talk about their progress and commitments to public or internal audiences. These communications efforts have reinforced the idea that socioeconomic diversity is a priority for the institutions held up as examples, and that having that priority can result in positive attention from the media and from leaders of peer institutions.

**Communities of Practice:** ATI's communities of practice can coalesce members around shared needs and focused practices in order to pursue their goals.

Over the past two years, it has become clear that sizable subgroups of ATI members are planning and implementing similar strategies for contributing to the ATI goal. To respond, ATI has begun to facilitate communities of practice focused on these strategies for interested members. Thus far, members have organized around three strategies: community college transfer, improving college opportunity for veterans, and incorporating an equity imperative into curriculum and pedagogy. Each community of practice is pursuing its strategy through a combination of goal-setting, data collection and reporting, research (such as the June 2018 report on community college transfer, *The Talent Blind Spot*), and convenings that incorporate technical assistance and opportunities to workshop ideas. In short, these communities of practice deploy many of the features of ATI writ large in the context of smaller groups of members focused on a specific, impactful set of strategies.

Two years in, the members of the American Talent Initiative have demonstrated early progress toward the national goal of enrolling 50,000 additional low- and moderate-income students by 2025. This progress stems from committed leaders and effective practices, many of which have their roots in efforts that predate the founding of ATI. At the same time, the initiative has galvanized members, surfaced and shared effective practices, and raised the profile and priority of socioeconomic diversity, thereby laying a foundation for further progress.

While continued progress is not guaranteed, the benefits of persisting are quite clear. By striving to reach the ATI goal, members can not only educate an increasing share of 50,000 untapped, incredibly talented lower-income students, but can prove that progress is achievable and sustainable in the decades that follow 2025. We look forward to working together towards this common goal:

**contributing to America's future as a diverse and prosperous nation where talent rises through higher education.**

## APPENDIX A: FULL LIST OF 108 ATI MEMBERS

ALLEGHENY COLLEGE Meadville, PA	COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY New York, NY	KENYON COLLEGE Gambier, OH
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY Washington, DC	CORNELL UNIVERSITY Ithaca, NY	KNOX COLLEGE Galesburg, IL
AMHERST COLLEGE Amherst, MA	DARTMOUTH COLLEGE Hanover, NH	LAFAYETTE COLLEGE Easton, PA
BARD COLLEGE Annandale-On-Hudson, NY	DAVIDSON COLLEGE Davidson, NC	LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY Appleton, WI
BATES COLLEGE Lewiston, ME	DICKINSON COLLEGE Carlisle, PA	LEBANON VALLEY COLLEGE Annville, PA
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY Waco, TX	DUKE UNIVERSITY Durham, NC	LEHIGH UNIVERSITY Bethlehem, PA
BOSTON UNIVERSITY Boston, MA	ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE Elizabethtown, PA	MARIST COLLEGE Poughkeepsie, NY
BOWDOIN COLLEGE Brunswick, ME	EMORY UNIVERSITY Atlanta, GA	MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE Middlebury, VT
BROWN UNIVERSITY Providence, RI	FORDHAM UNIVERSITY New York, NY	MUHLENBERG COLLEGE Allentown, PA
BRYN MAWR COLLEGE Bryn Mawr, PA	FRANKLIN & MARSHALL COLLEGE Lancaster, PA	NEW YORK UNIVERSITY New York, NY
BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY Lewisburg, PA	GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY Washington, DC	NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY Evanston, IL
CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY Pasadena, CA	GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY Atlanta, GA	OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE Los Angeles, CA
CARLETON COLLEGE Northfield, MN	GETTYSBURG COLLEGE Gettysburg, PA	PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY State College, PA
CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY Cleveland, OH	HAMILTON COLLEGE Clinton, NY	POMONA COLLEGE Claremont, CA
CENTRE COLLEGE Danville, KY	HARVARD UNIVERSITY Cambridge, MA	PRINCETON UNIVERSITY Princeton, NJ
CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE Claremont, CA	HAVERFORD COLLEGE Haverford, PA	RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN Providence, RI
COLBY COLLEGE Waterville, ME	INDIANA UNIVERSITY Bloomington, IN	RICE UNIVERSITY Houston, TX
COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS Worcester, MA	JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY Baltimore, MD	RIPON COLLEGE Ripon, WI
COLLEGE OF SAINT BENEDICT St. Joseph, MN	JUNIATA COLLEGE Huntingdon, PA	RUTGERS UNIVERSITY— NEW BRUNSWICK New Brunswick, NJ

ST. MARY'S COLLEGE OF MARYLAND  
Saint Mary's City, MD

SAINT MICHAEL'S COLLEGE  
Colchester, VT

SMITH COLLEGE  
Northampton, MA

SPELMAN COLLEGE  
Atlanta, GA

SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERSITY  
Selinsgrove, PA

STANFORD UNIVERSITY  
Stanford, CA

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE  
Swarthmore, PA

TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY  
Fort Worth, TX

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
Columbus, OH

THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER  
Wooster, OH

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,  
BERKELEY  
Berkeley, CA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS  
Davis, CA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE  
Irvine, CA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,  
LOS ANGELES  
Los Angeles, CA

UNIVERSITY OF  
CALIFORNIA, MERCED  
Merced, CA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,  
RIVERSIDE  
Riverside, CA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,  
SAN DIEGO  
La Jolla, CA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,  
SANTA BARBARA  
Santa Barbara, CA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,  
SANTA CRUZ  
Santa Cruz, CA

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
Chicago, IL

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON  
Dayton, OH

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
Newark, DE

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER  
Denver, CO

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT  
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN  
Champaign, IL

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA  
Iowa City, IA

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND,  
COLLEGE PARK  
College Park, MD

UNIVERSITY OF  
MASSACHUSETTS, AMHERST  
Amherst, MA

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
Miami, FL

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN—  
ANN ARBOR  
Ann Arbor, MI

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA—  
TWIN CITIES  
Minneapolis, MN

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH  
CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL  
Chapel Hill, NC

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
Philadelphia, PA

UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND  
Richmond, VA

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
Columbia, SC

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN  
CALIFORNIA  
Los Angeles, CA

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN  
Austin, TX

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA  
Charlottesville, VA

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
Seattle, WA

UNIVERSITY OF  
WISCONSIN—MADISON  
Madison, WI

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY  
Nashville, TN

VASSAR COLLEGE  
Poughkeepsie, NY

VIRGINIA TECH  
Blacksburg, VA

WABASH COLLEGE  
Crawfordsville, IN

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY  
Winston-Salem, NC

WASHINGTON & LEE UNIVERSITY  
Lexington, VA

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
IN ST. LOUIS  
St. Louis, MO

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY  
Middletown, CT

WILLIAMS COLLEGE  
Williamstown, MA

WOFFORD COLLEGE  
Spartanburg, SC

WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC  
INSTITUTE  
Worcester, MA

YALE UNIVERSITY  
New Haven, CT

## APPENDIX B: ATI ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Each year, ATI staff use data on colleges and universities' six-year graduation rates from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to determine the list of institutions that are eligible to participate in ATI. As of November 2018, there are 296 colleges and universities in the United States that meet the ATI eligibility criteria.

Using graduation rate data from academic years 2012–13 to 2015–16, we apply the following criteria to determine eligibility:

### **The institution must be:**

- Primarily located in the United States,
- Title IV-granting, and
- A four-year public or private, not-for-profit.

### **Of those 2,314 institutions, the institution must:**

- Enroll 500 or more undergraduate students in the most recent year of data (currently 2015–16);
- For at least three of the last five years (currently, 2011–12 through 2015–16), achieve a six-year graduation rate of 70 percent or higher; and
- Over the last five years, achieve an average six-year graduation rate of 70 percent or higher.

### **Any institution that does not meet the criteria may be eligible if:**

- The institution belongs to a state university system that, across all campuses, has an average six-year graduation rate of 70 percent or more.

*Note:* To be included, institutions must have six-year graduation rate data for all of the last five years, nor can institutions have any obvious data anomalies or accreditation issues. We plan to update the ATI eligibility list in spring 2019 using updated graduation rate data.

## APPENDIX C: OVERVIEW OF ATI DATA

The 2018 ATI data collection consisted of two parts, the “essential” collection and the “recommended” collection. In both collections, we requested that members submit data only on full-time, bachelor’s degree-seeking students. This request differs slightly from Pell enrollment data that are publicly-available through the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which include part-time students and non-bachelor’s degree-seeking students.

Specifically, the data elements included in each collection are listed below:

### **Ninety-seven members submitted the following **core** data elements:**

- Enrollment counts for all students and Pell students in the following categories:
  - Students in the entering cohort (i.e., first-time, freshman students)
  - All students enrolled
  - Students who enter as transfer students
  - All first-generation students enrolled
- Four- and six-year graduation rates
- First-to-second-year retention rates

*Note:* Due to data availability, one of these 97 members was unable to submit any data on Pell student enrollment. Therefore, we only include 96 members in the calculations of the progress to the 50,000-by-2025 goal.

### **Fifty-three members submitted the following **optional** data elements:**

- All students enrolled whose families earned incomes in the following categories:
  - \$0–30,000
  - \$30,001–48,000
  - \$48,001–\$75,000
  - \$75,001–110,000
  - \$110,001 and above
- We also requested enrollment counts for:
  - All students enrolled for whom the institution had no family income data available.
  - All students enrolled who were not U.S. residents (NCES refers to these students as “nonresident aliens”). Nonresident alien students, except for DACA students, were excluded from the income counts above.

### **Eleven ATI members either joined the initiative too recently to submit data or were unable to provide the requested data by the deadline.**

*Note:* As indicated in the above note, one ATI member was unable to submit any data on Pell student enrollment; thus, data from 12 ATI members are not included in the calculations of the progress to the 50,000-by-2025 goal.

To learn more about our data collection process, including our data definitions and our approach to collecting and aggregating data from ATI institutions, please email [Emily Schwartz \(Emily.Schwartz@ithaka.org\)](mailto:Emily.Schwartz@ithaka.org).

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education. (2015). **Fact Sheet: Focusing Higher Education on Student Success**; Trostel, P. (2015). **It's Not Just the Money: The Benefits of College Education to Individuals and Society**. *Lumina Foundation*. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2017). **Table A-4. Employment status of the civilian population 25 years and over by educational attainment**.
- <sup>2</sup> Cahalan, M., Perna, L., Yamashita, M., Ruiz, R., & Franklin, K. (2016). **Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States: 2016 Historical Trend Report**. *Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education*.
- <sup>3</sup> Authors' analysis of Opportunity Insights data.
- <sup>4</sup> Hoxby, C & Avery, C. (2013). **The Missing "One-Offs": The Hidden Supply of High-Achieving, Low-Income Students**. *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*; Chetty, R., Friedman, J.N., Saez, E., Turner, N., & Yagan, D. (2017). **Mobility Report Cards: The Role of Colleges in Intergenerational Mobility**; Wyner, J.S., Bridgeland, J.M., Diulio, Jr., J.J. (2007). **Achievement Trap: How America Is Failing Millions of High Achieving Low-Income Students**. *Jack Kent Cooke Foundation*.
- <sup>5</sup> For a full list of ATI members, see Appendix A.
- <sup>6</sup> Membership as of December 1, 2018. Enrollment counts from the 2016–17 academic year.
- <sup>7</sup> The 296 ATI eligible institutions are dispersed across 37 states. For more information on the geographic dispersion of high-graduation rate institutions, see [http://www.sr.ithaka.org/blog/prepare\\_to\\_travel/](http://www.sr.ithaka.org/blog/prepare_to_travel/).
- <sup>8</sup> For more details on the determination of an institution's ATI eligibility, please refer to Appendix B.
- <sup>9</sup> There is some debate about whether Pell status is an appropriate measure of low- and moderate-income. Recent research suggests that, nationally, ~90 percent of Pell students are from families who earn less than \$50,000 annually. Calculations by ATI staff using data from the U.S. Department of Education, **2015–16 Federal Pell Grant Program End-Of-Year Report**, Table 71. Further, analyses using ATI data confirm that Pell status approximates the bottom half of the income distribution at member institutions. However, we understand and will continue to explore the impact of the challenges to using Pell status to determine trends in socioeconomic diversity (<https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-pell-grant-proxy-a-ubiquitous-but-flawed-measure-of-low-income-student-enrollment/>). Refer to the report addendum, "Aggregate ATI Data on Enrollment, Success, and Income" for more information on the alignment between institution's Pell share and income distribution.
- <sup>10</sup> Since publicly-available data are often lagged by two academic years, we stay on top of the trends in Pell enrollment amongst our members by annually collecting up-to-date data directly from ATI members. Ninety-six of 108 ATI members submitted data in 2018. Eight ATI members did not submit data because they joined ATI too recently to complete the 2018 data collection. Four ATI members had not yet submitted their data by the deadline for publication of this report. Given trends in publicly-available data, we estimate that including the data from these four ATI members would lead to a net increase in our progress to the 50,000-by-2025 goal. Because of the lag in publicly-available data, we do not currently have any insights into the trends amongst the ATI-eligible institutions more broadly. We hope to be able to identify those trends in future reports as public data become available. For a full list of data elements that we collected from members, see Appendix C. For a full accounting of our methodology, see Appendix C.
- <sup>11</sup> Over the past two years, ATI has hosted two "presidential summits," with 76 presidents and chancellors attending in February 2018, and three "strategic support meetings," with over 88 senior administrative staff attending in June 2018. In October 2017, we brought together 64 institutional research representatives to discuss ATI's data and reporting strategy. In addition, ATI has hosted more than 10 webinars where members have discussed topics like recruiting lower-income students, facilitating data and other strategic partnerships, enrolling and supporting military veterans, and social media campaigns that feature lower-income and first-generation students.
- <sup>12</sup> Princeton University Office of the President. (2018). **Commencement 2018: The Value of a College Degree**.
- <sup>13</sup> Kurzweil, M. & Brown, J. (2017). **Funding Socioeconomic Diversity at High Performing Colleges and Universities**. Franklin & Marshall's new president, Barbara K. Altmann, remains "fully committed to continuing F&M's strong participation in the American Talent Initiative." *Personal correspondence with ATI staff, November 2018*.
- <sup>14</sup> Some of these goals relate to the incoming cohort of students; others relate to the total enrollment of students.
- <sup>15</sup> Amherst College. (2018). **Trustee Statement on Diversity and Community**.
- <sup>16</sup> Gagliardi, J.S., Espinosa, L.L., Turk, J.M., & Taylor, M. (2017). **American College President Study 2017**.



- <sup>17</sup> Baylor University, Cornell University, Dickinson College, Duke University, Elizabethtown College, Franklin & Marshall College, Gettysburg College, Harvard University, Rutgers University-New Brunswick, Saint Michael's College, University of Virginia, University of Southern California, Washington & Lee University, Williams College, University of California—Santa Cruz, University of Maryland—College Park, University of Minnesota, Washington University in St. Louis.
- <sup>18</sup> Bol, J. Gorman, M.B., Haertel, M.E. (2017). **Position and Candidate Specification: Williams College President.**
- <sup>19</sup> Williams College. (2018). **Maud S. Mandel Named 18th President of Williams College.**
- <sup>20</sup> **Induction of Maud S. Mandel as 18th president of Williams College.** (2018).
- <sup>21</sup> Yale University. (2017). **First students to be welcomed in two new residential colleges this week.**
- <sup>22</sup> Shapiro, D.; Dundar, A.; Huie, F. Wakhungu, P.; Yuan, X.; Nathan, A; and Hwang, Y., A. (2017). *Completing College: A National View of Student Attainment Rates by Race and Ethnicity—Fall 2010 Cohort* (Signature Report No. 12b). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.
- <sup>23</sup> Bowen, W.G., Chingos, M.M., McPherson, M.S. (2009). *Crossing the Finish Line: Completing College at American's Public Universities.* Princeton University Press.
- <sup>24</sup> University of California- Irvine. (2018). **Advancing the American Dream.**
- <sup>25</sup> University of California Infocenter. (2018). **Fall enrollment at a glance.** ATI estimates using member submitted data.
- <sup>26</sup> LaViolet, T., Fresquez, B., Maxson, M., & Wyner, J. (June 2018). **The Talent Blind Spot: The Case for Increasing Community College Transfer to High Graduation-Rate Institutions.** *The American Talent Initiative.*
- <sup>27</sup> According to ATI analyses of members' submitted data and publicly-available data, only 18 percent of students at ATI member institutions (n=108) are transfers, compared to 25 percent at all four-year public and private, not-for-profit institutions (n=1,947).
- <sup>28</sup> ATI analysis of data from U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and IPEDS; Hoxby, C & Avery, C. (2013). **The Missing “One-Offs”: The Hidden Supply of High-Achieving, Low-Income Students.**
- <sup>29</sup> Ochinko, W. & Payea, K. (2018). **Veteran Student Loan Debt Before and After the Post-9/11 GI Bill.** Veterans Education Success.
- <sup>30</sup> College Board. (2018). **Trends in College Pricing: 2018.**
- <sup>31</sup> Jordan, D. (2018). **Schlissel notes public impact, Go Blue Guarantee in budget testimony.** *The University Record.*
- <sup>32</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2017). **Table A-4. Employment status of the civilian population 25 years and over by educational attainment;** Carnevale, A.P., Rose, S.J., & Chea, B. (2014). **The College Payoff: Education, Occupations, Lifetime Earnings.** *Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce.*
- <sup>33</sup> Tuition increases are at least partly a result of declining public financial support—the per-student amount of funding that states and local municipalities appropriate to higher education has not yet rebounded to pre-recession levels, with appropriations per student 8 percent lower in 2016–17 than in 2006–07. Webber, D.A., (2017). **State divestment and tuition at public institutions.** *Economics of Education Review*, Volume 60, pgs. 1–4; College Board. (2018). **Trends in College Pricing: 2018.**
- <sup>34</sup> The Ohio State University Office of the President. (2018). **Strategic Plan: Time and Change.**
- <sup>35</sup> Mitchell, M., Leachman, M., Masterson, K., & Waxman, S. (2018). **Unkept Promises: State Cuts to Higher Education Threaten Access and Equity.** *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.*
- <sup>36</sup> For more information on the C-STEP program, see LaViolet, T., Fresquez, B., Maxson, M., & Wyner, J. (June 2018). **The Talent Blind Spot: The Case for Increasing Community College Transfer to High Graduation-Rate Institutions.** The American Talent Initiative.
- <sup>37</sup> ATI interview with Chancellor Folt, June 2018.
- <sup>38</sup> ATI analysis of members' submitted data.



# AMERICAN TALENT INITIATIVE

50,000 additional low- and moderate-income students at the top US colleges and universities by 2025







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50,000 *additional low- and moderate-income students at the top US colleges and universities by 2025*



Stanley  
Philanthropy



# American Talent Initiative

## Aggregate Data on Enrollment, Success, and Income

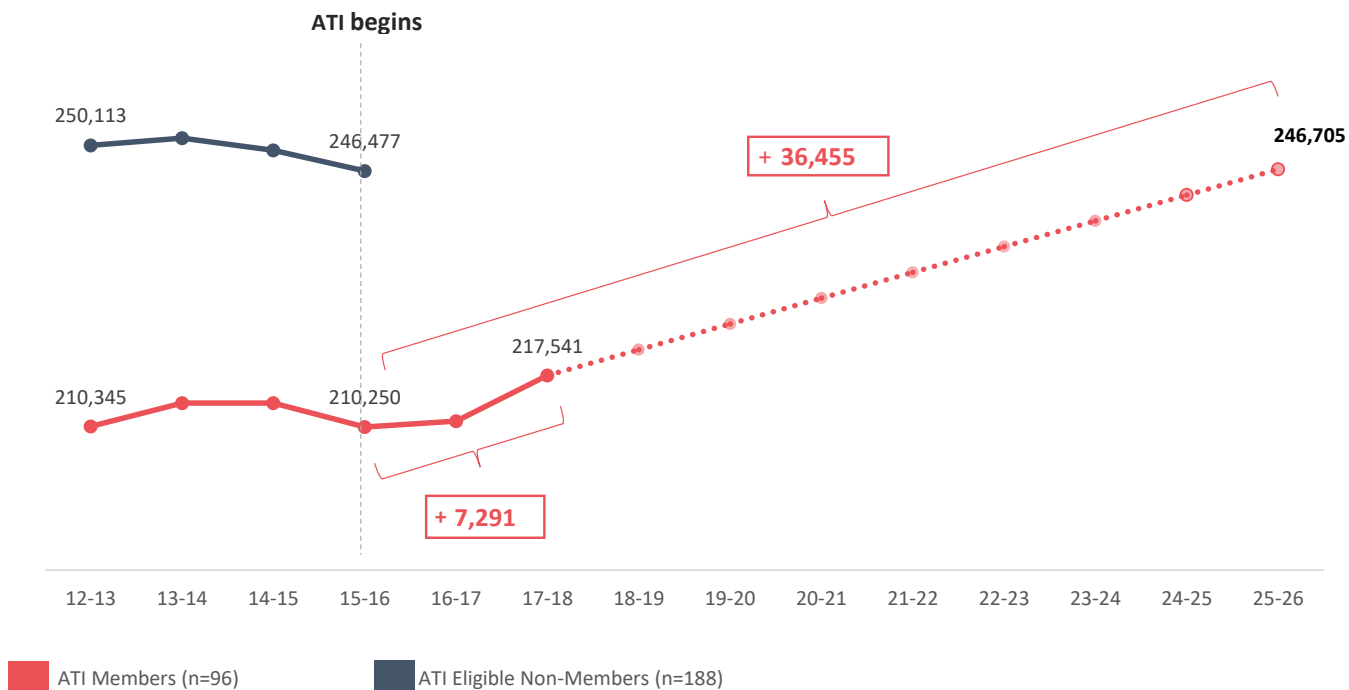
Release Date: 12/17/2018

This data addendum accompanies the American Talent Initiative's 2018 Impact Report, the first public report on aggregate progress toward ATI's goal: to increase enrollment of low- and moderate-income students by 50,000 at the nation's top colleges by 2025. The Impact Report and this data summary reveal that, between 2015-16 and 2017-18, ATI members increased enrollment of Pell student by **7,291**.

This addendum includes data submitted by ATI members on Pell student enrollment, first-generation student enrollment, and Pell student graduation rates. A subset of ATI members also opted to submit additional data on their student income distributions.

### Progress to the 50,000-by-2025 Goal

Members and Eligible Non-Members



### Collective Pipeline

**62,500**

Each year, at least 62,500 highly-qualified, lower-income high school and community college students don't attend institutions where they are most likely to graduate.

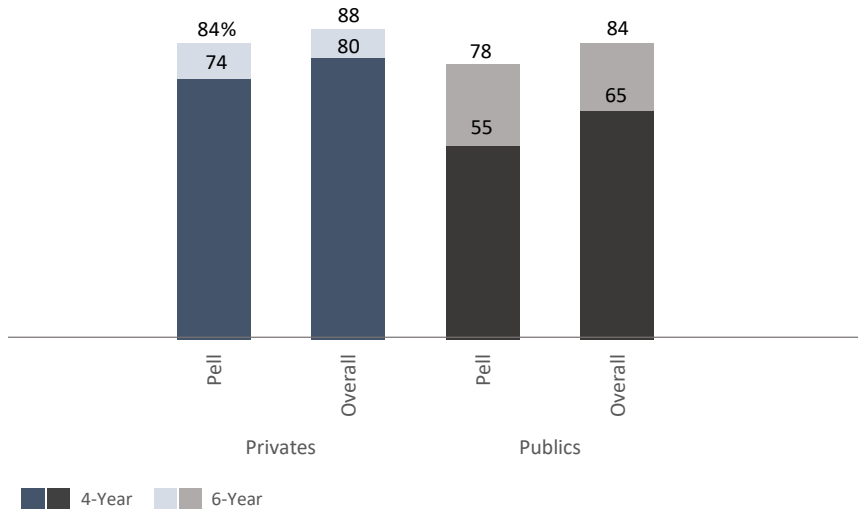
- Overall, ATI members added **7,291** Pell students between 2015-16 and 2017-18.
- ATI public members added **5,135** Pell students during this time period.
- ATI private members added **2,156** Pell students during this time period.
- If the current trend continues, ATI members will add **36,455** students by 2025. ATI-eligible, non-members would need to add **13,545** Pell students to meet the 50,000-by-2025 goal.

Note: Ninety-seven ATI members have been ATI members long enough to submit data as part of the 2018 Data collection. One ATI member was unable to submit any data on Pell student enrollment, so analyses in this addendum incorporate data from 96 members unless otherwise noted.



### 4-Year and 6-Year Graduation Rates

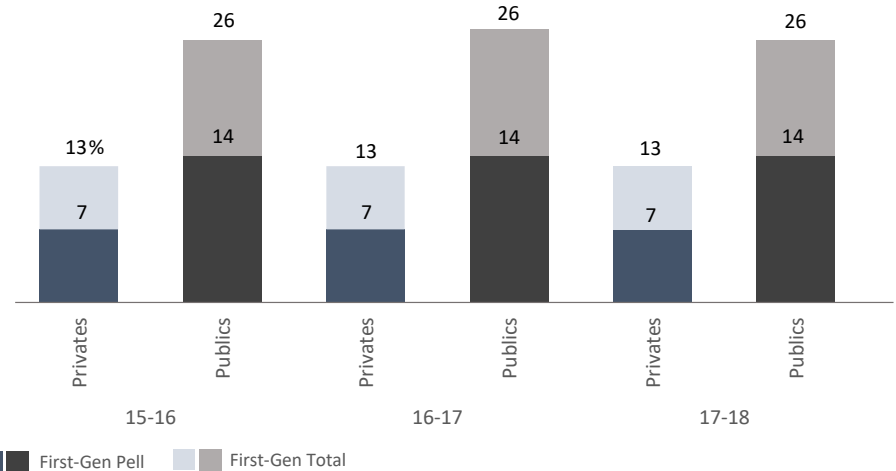
Member Privates and Publics, 2011 Cohort



At ATI privates (n=67), 84 percent of Pell students graduate in six years, compared to 88 percent of all students. At ATI publics (n=25), 78 percent of Pell students graduate in six years, compared to 84 percent of all students.

### First Generation Student Enrollment

Member Privates and Publics

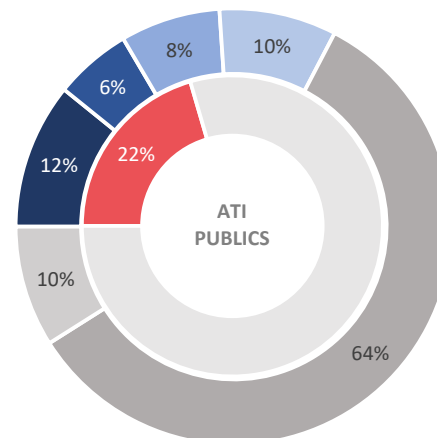
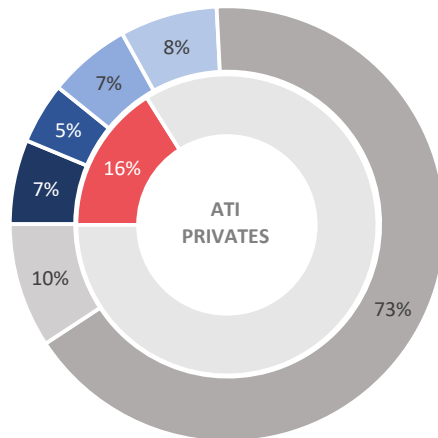


The share of first-generation students enrolled has remained fairly constant over time. At both public and private members, only about half of all first-generation students receive Pell grants.

### Detailed Income Distribution

Member Privates and Publics, 2017-18

- \$0-\$30k
- \$30-48k
- \$48-75k
- \$75-110k
- \$110+/Unknown\*
- Non-resident alien
- Pell



Fifty-three ATI members opted to submit income data; at these institutions, Pell share *roughly* approximates the bottom three income categories.

\*Many ATI members have students for whom there is no income data available, those students are assumed to be "high-income" and are included in the \$110+ category.