



HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP 20 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

SLUAC is Just Around the Corner!

July 2018 HEP Newsletter

Supporters of Higher Education,

The team at the Higher Education Partnership has an exciting conference planned for our university advocates! We cannot wait to welcome nearly 130 students, legislators, faculty and other advocates of higher education to the 2018 Stars Leadership & University Advocates Conference on August 8.

We have a strong slate of speakers who will share valuable information on Alabama's budgeting process, the economy, leadership and advocacy. In addition, we will have student leaders highlight advocacy efforts on their campuses that have been used to develop and strengthen grassroots advocacy. Here is a copy of the proposed [agenda](#). I know attendees will leave the conference with new tools and relationships to further share the excellence of our public universities.

As we prepare for a new quadrennium in Montgomery, we have a unique opportunity to share the importance of higher education with the newly elected and re-elected legislators. It is critical that we continue to develop positive relationships with these decision makers. The Higher Education Partnership is planning programming opportunities to connect decision makers to our team of advocates. More information about that will be shared at the conference.

In closing, I want to say a special **THANK YOU** to Dr. R.T. Floyd, Chair of the Higher Education Partnership, and Bill Jones, Treasurer of the Higher Education Partnership. We are grateful for their leadership to the mission of our organization. While they are stepping down from their leadership positions, I know they will continue to be strong advocates of higher education in Alabama.

Gordon Stone, Executive Director

P.S. Our Campuses are close to resuming Fall activities. Stay tuned for important information about College Colors Day!

Primary Runoff Election

With the Primary Runoff Election completed, Alabama 's candidates running in the General Election have been chosen. Over the course of the next few months, candidates will be out meeting with voters and asking for votes. As always, we encourage our members to ask strategic questions to determine if these candidates support higher education.

Below is a guide to the candidates who are running in statewide races.

Governor

Kay Ivey (R)
Walt Maddox (D)

Lt. Governor

Will Ainsworth (R)
Will Boyd (D)

Attorney General

Steve Marshall (R)
Joseph Siegleman (D)

Secretary of State

John Merrill (R)
Heather Milam (D)

State Auditor

Jim Ziegler (R)
Miranda Joseph (D)

Public Service Commission--Place 1

Jeremy Oden (R)
Cara McClure (D)

Public Service Commission--Place 2

Chris "Chip" Beeker (R)
Karl Powell (D)

College Completion: A State's Goal

By: Gordon Stone

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) authors multiple reports analyzing higher education and the percentage of people who have completed college degrees. Recently, SREB identified that there are many areas across the United States without a competitive balance of degree and non-degree holders. Specifically, when they look at Alabama, they recognize that only 37.9 percent of the working population have degrees from a post-secondary institution or a four-year university. One of the stated goals of the report is to increase the percentage of state residents who hold college degrees or certificates.

SREB illustrates that only 24 percent of working Alabamians are holders of four-year degrees. Compare this to the national average which shows 30 percent of working adults holding a four-year degree. Particularly important is the growing appreciation, that since the year 2000, a college degree is becoming increasingly important to success.

SREB reports that the majority of states now recognize the need for a larger percentage of young adults to complete a degree. Reasons for this realization center around the importance of a degree to economic development. Also, achieving the college degree has been shown to be a contributing factor for individuals seeking to enter the middle class.

Many states have attempted to address this issue by promoting college readiness as an academic goal for secondary schools. States are working to create a consistent awareness among instructors of the critical areas of learning necessary for success at the next level of education.

Beyond academic preparation, there is also a growing awareness that other factors contribute to the successful completion of a college program: motivation, affordability, knowledge of how to apply, and having options.

What can be done to improve the motivation level of the students? Some will argue that motivation is a result of the work that occurs at home. Others say that motivational seeds are planted by teachers and counselors. However, the digital age has created another means for motivating young people to pursue higher education. Through the power of the

internet, potential students are reachable on a frequent basis.

It is important to share the economic and quality of life values of having additional degree holders. When high school students hear that a person with a four-year degree can earn as much as 1.5 million dollars more during their lifetime than a person who does not have a degree, this is valuable lesson in support of higher education.

Having the financial capacity to afford to attend college is a blessing. Clearly, there is a direct relationship between state appropriations and the cost of a degree. If the state fails to adjust upward the university appropriations, then the institutions traditionally will have no choice but to raise tuition and fees. The greater the cost, the less likely the average person can attend. The answer to affordability is for the states to provide universities with their fair share of the annual appropriations.

Universities and other post-secondary institutions are making the application process easier by the day. Technology makes applying available on an as-needed basis. Institutions eliminate barriers to participation by placing information on the internet and making it easy to register.

Not every higher education institution is the right choice for every applicant, so young people should be willing to explore the spectrum of options. A person should be tenacious and apply to multiple institutions to discover what they have to offer. Applicants no longer have to "put all their eggs in one basket." Knowing that there are many public university options available is a great way to engage more young people.

A state can increase the likelihood that a high school student is moving to the next level of education by fostering policy that encourages higher education. Creating programs that promote the value of a four-year degree and build the confidence of the young people is a win - win scenario.

Anniston Kiwanis Club

The Higher Education Partnership was recently invited to share our mission and discuss the economic impact universities have to the state's economy with members of the Anniston Kiwanis Club.

We value the opportunity to speak to civic groups about what the Higher Education Partnership does on behalf of our public universities. If you need a speaker at an upcoming civic lunch or dinner meeting, give us a call!



PHOTO: Higher Education Partnership Executive Director Gordon Stone visits with Tim Wilson, President of the Anniston Kiwanis Club after the club's meeting on Thursday, July 19.

News From Around University Campuses

[Business Alabama:](#) Transformative Ideas and Innovations Are Key to Moving the Economy-Blog by Auburn President Steven Leath

[Shelby County Reporter:](#) UM named among national colleges of distinction

[The Brunswick News:](#) Troy professor lends a hand to Puerto Rico recovery effort

[The West Alabama Watchman:](#) UWA welding students get offers from Ingalls Shipbuilding after assessment

[WSFA-NBC-Montgomery:](#) Coca-Cola thanks ASU football team for community service

[The News Courier:](#) Farewell, Dr. Glenn

[WAFF-NBC-Huntsville:](#) July 1 marks UNA's first day of Division 1

[AL.Com:](#) - Auburn, Alabama universities go greener with more electric car charging ports

[AL.Com:](#) UAH President Robert Altenkirch announces retirement

[Birmingham Business Journal:](#) Innovation Depot firm lands major partnership with UAB

[Dothan Eagle:](#) Troy launches Community Hero tickets for regular season

[Al.Com:](#) Bug battle: USA helping track mosquito-borne viruses

[WSFA-NBC-Montgomery:](#) AUM one step closer to full NCAA status

[WAFF-NBC-Huntsville:](#) Alabama A&M student publishes first novel, gets 3-book deal

[Birmingham Business Journal:](#) University of Alabama launches new office to serve gifted children statewide

[Anniston Star:](#) JSU football: Gamecocks set to face UNA in 2019-2022

Questions? Thoughts? Concerns? *Connect with Us!*

Do you have a story idea or issue in focus we should include in an upcoming newsletter? Email partners@higheredpartners.org and let us know!

