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American Talent Initiative Opens College Doors for Veterans

Coalition of Leading Colleges and Universities Seeks to Boost Enrollment and Graduation of Students Who Have Served in Military

WASHINGTON, DC – Dozens of leading colleges and universities, already working together as part of the American Talent Initiative (ATI), have made new commitments to enroll and graduate more of the nation’s military veterans.

This week, as America celebrated Veterans Day, leaders from higher education, military, and veterans’ organizations met at a national convening in Arlington, Virginia, to declare their determination to open new doors to veterans. The American Talent Initiative, one of the organizations featured at the convening, announced that more than 30 ATI members have joined a community of practice focused on improving military veterans’ access to high-graduation-rate institutions. The commitments of these public and private colleges and universities from across the nation will help achieve ATI’s mission to enroll 50,000 additional low- and moderate-income students at top institutions by 2025.

The conference, hosted by the College Board and Ithaka S+R, brought together organizations such as the American Council on Education, the Posse Foundation, the Coalition for College, the Common Application, Service to School, and ATI. Together they explored effective strategies for recruiting and enrolling veterans and for supporting their success on campus through graduation.

The American Talent Initiative, formed in 2016 with support from Bloomberg Philanthropies and led by the Aspen Institute’s College Excellence Program and Ithaka S+R, has brought together more than 100 of the nation’s colleges and universities with graduation rates of more than 70 percent to act on their shared commitment to increasing access and success for students from low- and moderate-income households.

“Fewer than a third of the military veterans who have served since 9/11 have gone on to get bachelor’s degrees. Our country needs their leadership and owes these brave women and men the educational opportunities that so dramatically improve career opportunities and lifetime income,” said University of Dayton President Eric Spina, an ATI steering committee member, who spoke at the conference. “The American Talent Initiative is committed to do its part because we know that we can do so much more when we join together, sharing best practices and supporting a common message for those who have served.”

Through the new ATI community of practice, participating ATI members will set goals related to improving access and success of veterans; share best practices about recruiting and enrolling veterans, and supporting them once they are on campus; develop better, simpler pipelines for

veterans transferring from community colleges and with prior credits; report data on veterans' enrollment and success; and press for changes that will improve veterans' college choices.

"It is time that we provided veterans with greater opportunities at institutions where they can flourish and achieve the degrees—without taking on onerous debt—that allow them to thrive in whatever career they choose," said Catharine Bond Hill, Ithaca S+R Managing Director, who helped initiate the Posse Foundation's Veterans Program while she was President of Vassar College. "Military veterans have the potential to succeed on ATI members' campuses, and their peers on campus will, in turn, benefit from the diverse experiences and perspectives that veterans bring to the classroom and community."

Many military service members come from low- and moderate-income backgrounds, so improving veterans' access and opportunity through this new community of practice will help ATI make strides towards its 50,000-by-2025 goal. Many ATI members have already taken steps on their own campuses, and together through knowledge sharing and supporting a common message, they will be able to support veterans in achieving their fullest potential.

ATI members participating in this community of practice are:

Allegheny College	Marist College
Amherst College	Muhlenberg College
Bard College	The Ohio State University
Bates College	Penn State University
Bowdoin College	Princeton University
Carleton College	Rutgers University-New Brunswick
Claremont McKenna College	St. Mary's College of Maryland
Columbia University	Swarthmore College
Cornell University	University of California, Davis
Emory University	University of Maryland, College Park
Georgetown University	University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
Harvard University	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Indiana University	University of Dayton
Johns Hopkins University	Vassar College
Juniata College	Williams College
Lebanon Valley College	Yale University
Lehigh University	

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About Ithaka S+R:

[Ithaka S+R](#) a not-for-profit service that provides research and strategic guidance to help the academic and cultural communities serve the public good and navigate economic, technological, and demographic change. Ithaka S+R is part of [ITHAKA](#).