

## **Walmart Foundation, AIHEC, HACU, and NAFEO Student Success Collaborative**

The Walmart Foundation has awarded a \$3 million grant for the *Walmart AIHEC HACU NAFEO Student Success Collaborative* to three partnering organizations to increase college success rates at MSIs: the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, AIHEC (Tribal Colleges and Universities, TCUs); the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, HACU (Hispanic-Serving Institutions, HSIs); and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, NAFEO (Historically Black Colleges and Universities, HBCUs, and Predominantly Black Institutions, PBIs). Combined, these minority-serving institutions (MSIs) educate a large segment of African American, American Indian and Hispanic students, who are disproportionately low-income, first generation, and historically underserved.

The *Collaborative*, as a pilot project, will: 1. identify successful intervention strategies for supporting student success; 2. disseminate and support implementation of these strategies; 3. build a community of practice among participating MSIs around student success; and 4. assist participating institutions to increase the number of students completing their academic programs. These activities will strengthen the MSI contribution to the 2020 national goal of 60 percent of Americans with a college degree.

Phase one includes the selection of mentor institutions with effective graduation and retention strategies and practices. Following an extensive review of applications, eight institutions were selected: Institute for American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, NM; Leech Lake Tribal College, Cass Lake, MN; Wylie College, Wylie TX; Kentucky State University, Frankfort, KY; J.F. Drake Technical College, Huntsville, AL; California State University-Fullerton Fullerton, CA; St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX; and Community College of Denver, Denver, CO.

The mentor institutions bring a breadth of successful strategies to the project, including early outreach to high school students, summer enrichment programs, student orientation, learning support centers, first year seminars, family nights, developmental education programs, tutorials, and faculty/staff to student mentoring and support. The institutions have incorporated use of data, including the National Survey of Student Engagement, diagnostic testing, and institutional change plans. In addition several institutions have mentoring experience, having already conducted professional development seminars and conferences on minority student success.

Successful mentoring practices will be presented and additional training opportunities developed for mentor institution project staff. Nationally respected faculty and researchers will serve as advisors to the project. An online portal will provide research information on effective practices and opportunity to communicate and collaborate, and promote coordination of efforts.

The second phase is the selection of MSIs as protégé or mentee institutions and matching with mentor institutions. The collaboration between institutions will include campus visits, meetings, and other support activities over a full academic year.

The final phase will be a national conference to share and disseminate lessons learned and best practices among the participating institutions and other invited institutions from across the nation. A final report will be developed, disseminated, and posted on the project portal.