



Creating Solutions. Inspiring Action.®

**Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF)
Louisville On-the-Ground Project**

BHEF is an organization of Fortune 500 and other CEOs, prominent college and university presidents, and foundation leaders working to advance innovative solutions to our nation's education challenges in order to enhance U.S. competitiveness. BHEF brings together an extraordinary coalition of corporate, academic, and foundation members to address education issues fundamental to our nation's ability to compete globally. These include improving student achievement and readiness for success in college and work and strengthening education, particularly our national capacity in science, technology, engineering, and math. BHEF members develop, adopt, and promote best practices and strategic approaches among corporate, education, and foundation leaders, nationally and locally. They also advocate for policy changes at the federal, state, and local levels.

The College Readiness Initiative

BHEF's College Readiness Initiative (CRI) provides a dynamic platform for leaders from business and education to work together to promote college readiness, access, and success for underserved populations. The CRI harnesses the influence and resources of BHEF and its membership. Building on this distinct perspective, the CRI addresses critical P-20 education pipeline issues; identifies practical solutions to local education concerns; focuses on systemic solutions and programs that support key aspects of systemic improvement; and creates a platform for local member-led partnerships to develop strategic approaches, test them, and disseminate lessons learned.

CRI On-the-Ground Work

BHEF's on-the ground work provides opportunities for teams of corporate, university, and foundation leaders in selected communities to work together to support local education improvement efforts. BHEF works with members to bring relevant stakeholders to the table, offers strategic consultation and expertise, and provides members with national perspective and information to make their ideas for educational improvement a reality. BHEF's aim is to engage its members and their peers to invest effectively in education, to advocate for change, and to share information among themselves and their communities. The CRI on-the-ground work benefits the communities in which BHEF members work and live, as well as the business and education sectors generally, by enhancing the impact of their individual and collective efforts, and bringing these local efforts into national focus. The on-the-ground work benefits BHEF and its members by providing a platform to develop strategic solutions to important educational challenges and to analyze local impact and disseminate the lessons that are learned to a national audience.

CRI On-the-Ground Work: Focus on Louisville

BHEF members David Jones, Chairman, Humana, Inc.; Paul Varga, Chairman and CEO, Brown-Forman; Lee Todd, President, University of Kentucky; and Michael McCall, President, Kentucky Community and Technical College System seek to support community-wide education improvement efforts in Louisville, particularly the work of local education leaders Superintendent Berman (Jefferson County Public Schools) and President Newberry (Jefferson Community & Technical College), to improve college readiness, access, and success for the Louisville region. BHEF's Kentucky members aim to address pressing workforce needs in the region through the creation of a Business Leaders for Education (BLE) group, convened through the local chamber of commerce Greater Louisville Inc. The BLE will mobilize around the issues of college readiness, access and success, with particular focus on improving the "pipeline" between grades 9 and 16 and increasing college degree attainment rates. BHEF supports these efforts by fostering collaboration among local K-12 education, higher education, business, and foundation leaders, and by offering strategic consultation and national perspective. In addition, BHEF brings the support and expertise of other BHEF members working on similar issues across the nation, and shares the lessons of BHEF's Kentucky members' education improvement efforts with the BHEF membership as a whole. BHEF and its members recognize the unique opportunity that this project represents and are fully prepared to support the work of BHEF members in the region.