



# Aligning Education and Workforce Goals to Foster Economic Development

Proceedings From *Cities for Success: A BHEF Leadership Summit*

October 28-29, 2010, Louisville, KY

## About BHEF

BHEF is the nation's oldest organization of senior business and higher education executives dedicated to advancing innovative solutions to U.S. education and workforce challenges. Composed of Fortune 500 CEOs, prominent college and university presidents, and other leaders, BHEF addresses issues fundamental to our global competitiveness. It does so through two initiatives: the College Readiness, Access, and Success Initiative (CRI), addressing college and work-readiness, access, and success; and the Securing America's Leadership in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Initiative, promoting America's leadership in STEM. BHEF and its members drive change locally, work to influence public policy at the national and state levels, and inspire other leaders to act.

In 2010-11, BHEF's chair is William Swanson, chairman and CEO of Raytheon Company, and its vice chair is William (Brit) E. Kirwan, chancellor, University System of Maryland.

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\*Past BHEF chair



*Creating Solutions. Inspiring Action.\**

# About This Report

**A**cross the United States, civic leaders from all sectors are working avidly to identify education and workforce strategies that can bolster regional economic development. One notable success story is found in Louisville, Kentucky, where a broad coalition of local leaders identified powerful educational improvement strategies and then successfully mobilized the community around those strategies. That work, spotlighted in a landmark meeting of leaders that the Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF) sponsored in Louisville October 28-29, 2010, is the focus of this publication. The meeting, *Cities for Success: A BHEF Leadership Summit*, was supported by BHEF’s members and through the generosity of the American Fidelity Foundation.

The summit was part of an ongoing BHEF effort, the College Readiness, Access, and Success Initiative (CRI), through which prominent leaders in business and higher education work together to promote college readiness, access, and degree completion—particularly in math and science—for underserved populations, and seek to address the misalignment between workforce needs and student preparation and interest. (For more information about BHEF, including another key program, the Securing America’s Leadership in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Initiative, visit [www.bhef.com](http://www.bhef.com). You can also find a link there to the BHEF resource center, [StrategicEdSolutions.org](http://StrategicEdSolutions.org), which offers specific ideas about how to make a positive impact on—and invest wisely in—education from preschool through graduate school.)



# A Leadership Strategy to Realign Workforce and Education Outcomes

In the ongoing public conversation about improving education in the United States, a deepening concern has emerged: Education outcomes in this country are not keeping pace with our need for an increasingly skilled workforce. The rate of students earning associate's and bachelor's degrees has stagnated at the very time when employers urgently need a highly skilled workforce. Leaders in education, business, government, and philanthropy all recognize that failure to address this challenge threatens not just our economy, but the very well-being of our nation overall.

The challenges of meeting workforce demands, so essential to states' and regions' economic vitality, are exacerbated by the poor alignment among P-12 education, postsecondary education, and the workforce. There is a significant disconnect, for example, between the college readiness of most high school graduates and the knowledge and skills that are required for student success in postsecondary education. Similarly, critical disjunctions exist between what is taught and learned in postsecondary education and the skills that are in high demand in the workplace. Another mismatch exists between student interest in high-growth jobs and employer demands for workers who can fill those jobs. Moreover, even in fields where student interest is in equilibrium with workforce demands, students may be underprepared for jobs in those fields.

The fact that the connections among economic and workforce planning, student career interests, and student preparation are too often out of sync creates systemic inefficiencies that, predictably, lead to poor results for both economic development and employment: individuals training for jobs in

which labor surpluses exist, while high demand jobs go unfilled. These misalignments threaten our ability to meet this country's 21st century education and workforce needs, especially in the highest-demand careers.

## *Addressing the Problem: A New Theory of Action*

To directly address these challenges, the Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF) created and has moved to implement a bold theory of action and change. Informed by the unique perspectives of its members—some of the nation's leading executives in business and higher education—the theory is straightforward:

**Regional economic improvement occurs when business and higher education leaders are equipped with high-leverage strategies and tools that can help them provide the sustained leadership that is necessary to achieve systemic improvement throughout the education pipeline.**

BHEF believes that a strong and substantive path to meeting a community's most pressing economic needs can be found when, first, business leaders take the lead in crafting an economic vision that integrates community perspectives and, second, when higher education leaders collaborate with their business counterparts to develop a comprehensive understanding of the nature of these problems at the regional and local level, and then shape and execute cross-sector, systemic strategies that can improve workforce-education alignment in their communities. This unique leadership strategy leads to systemic change and improvement in education, which in turn drives strong regional economic growth.

## *Lessons from Louisville*

Applying this theory in practice, BHEF found considerable evidence that this model can succeed, as evidenced by one of its most successful local projects in Louisville, Kentucky. There, as described in greater detail in this report, a coalition of community leaders joined forces to identify and implement strategies to better align workforce and education goals.

Louisville's business leaders, with BHEF as a strategic partner, joined forces with the mayor, representatives from P-12 and higher education, and community leaders to commit to improve education outcomes. In 2010, participating leaders signed the *Greater Louisville Education Commitment*, which seeks to improve education attainment in the region by 55,000 degrees over the next decade. A new public/private partnership, *55,000 Degrees*, was formed to help achieve that goal.

Louisville's strategy can be a model for the nation on how to create lasting leadership networks to improve education attainment. Indeed, the meeting from which this report was derived, *Cities for Success: A BHEF Leadership Summit*, engaged teams not just from Louisville—including then-Mayor Jerry Abramson and key partners from Greater Louisville, Inc., the regional chamber of commerce—but also convened teams of mayors, business leaders, superintendents, university presidents, and community and foundation leaders from Des Moines and Oklahoma City, as well as dozens of other national leaders, to engage in a dialogue around improving education outcomes in Louisville and across the country.

This report elaborates on several key lessons that can be drawn from the Louisville experience. These lessons can be summarized as follows:

- **Sustained business leadership** enables a community to create a long-term vision for economic development and education, to work with P-12 and higher education to achieve that vision, and to inspire the community to sustain the hard work of systemic education improvement.
- Successful communities institutionalize **shared accountability and differentiated responsibility**, identifying clear goals and the stakeholders responsible for achieving them.
- **Strategic linkages to regional and national efforts** help stakeholders in business and education develop dynamic networks for sharing and capitalizing on promising practices.
- **Metrics and data** are essential drivers of change. In addition to helping stakeholders develop shared understanding of the issues, they communicate progress toward goals and help keep business engaged.
- **Alignment** among P-12, postsecondary education, and the workforce is important as a strategy to help ensure that students graduating from high school are college-ready and can progress more easily through the system and into jobs and careers.
- Successful communities foster **widespread public awareness**, through marketing and mentoring efforts, that underscore the importance of obtaining a postsecondary degree and show potential students the steps they need to take to enroll in college.

# Louisville: An Incubator of Collaboration

Louisville is fertile terrain for education improvement. In 2003, a merger of city and county governments eliminated duplication between the two jurisdictions. That change created improved channels for cross-sector collaboration and engagement across the metro region. The Louisville region also has benefited from a history of collaboration among community stakeholders. Examples include the well-supported *Every1Reads* program, which sought to have every child reading at grade level by 2008, and Metropolitan College, a “Learn and Earn” partnership among the United Parcel Service (UPS), the University of Louisville, and Jefferson Community and Technical College that provides college education for adult workers.

Despite these successes, the region has suffered from structural misalignments in three key areas:

- Its education institutions do not produce enough skilled workers;
- Student career interests are not aligned with careers that are projected to be high growth; and
- Even when student interest and career demand appear to be in equilibrium, students lack the academic preparation needed for those careers.

In 2007, Greater Louisville, Inc., the region’s Chamber of Commerce, convened the Business Leaders for Education (BLE) Forum. Its goal was to shape a strategy for education improvement in Louisville. David A. Jones, Jr., then chairman of Humana and a BHEF member, served on the BLE and became its chair, a position he holds today. At his request, BHEF agreed to serve as a strategic partner to help guide the BLE in a business-led

education improvement effort for Louisville. Thereafter, BHEF worked with its members in Louisville and with the BLE to analyze key challenges facing the community and to draft an education improvement strategy.

Seeking intentionally to engage a broad cross-section of key stakeholders, the BLE joined forces in 2009 with the newly formed Mayor’s Education Roundtable (MER), a body convened by then-Mayor Jerry Abramson that included education, business, civic, and community leaders from throughout the Louisville metropolitan area. Together, these groups requested that BHEF develop a plan to tackle education improvement in their region. As part of that process, hundreds of stakeholder interviews and numerous meetings and discussions with Louisville’s leaders were held. The immediate result of that effort was the BHEF-produced *Louisville Blueprint for Community Action*.

The *Blueprint* established an important foundation for significant education improvement efforts in the region by identifying a series of education goals for the Louisville community and strategies for accomplishing them. The *Blueprint* drew on successful approaches undertaken in communities across the country and tailored them to the Louisville context, enabling the region to quickly identify essential components of an implementation plan for education improvement.

Thereafter, in May 2010, 23 business, education, civic, and community leaders convened by Mayor Abramson signed the *Greater Louisville Education Commitment*. The overarching goal was that by 2020, 40 percent of working age adults would hold a bachelor’s degree and 10 percent an associate

degree. Signatories included the mayor, the presidents of the local colleges and universities, the public school superintendent, leaders from community organizations, and many of the senior business leaders in the community, most of whom were also BLE members. Each signatory agreed to work together on the common goal of moving the community into the top tier of its peer cities by raising education attainment, and took responsibility for advancing outcomes under their direct purview.

To implement its vision for education attainment and the accompanying strategy, Louisville launched a new public-private partnership, *55,000 Degrees*, in October 2010. The name derived from the number of degrees needed to increase Louisville's competitive rating among peer cities. Designed as a convening forum, *55,000 Degrees* also provides a mechanism for tracking gaps and measuring progress toward achieving the community's education attainment goals.

As Louisville advanced its broadly collaborative cross-sector effort, it became evident that its experience could serve as an adaptable model for how a community can organize itself to develop and sustain community-wide education improvement. *Cities for Success* provided an opportunity for leaders from other communities to learn from Louisville's example. That meeting was convened in October 2010 with support from then-Mayor Abramson and key partners from Greater Louisville, Inc. The conversation included teams of mayors, business leaders, school superintendents, university presidents, and community and foundation leaders from Louisville, Des Moines, and Oklahoma City, as well as dozens of national leaders. Together, they studied work from regions across the country that focused on improving education outcomes.



# Lessons Learned from *Cities for Success*

The discussions during *Cities for Success* ranged from shaping high-level strategy around economic development and community educational improvement to securing funding and other resources to support such efforts. Over the course of the conversation, several essential lessons emerged.

***Lesson 1: Sustained business leadership. Sustained business leadership enables a community to create a long-term vision for economic development and education, to work with P-12 and higher education to achieve that vision, and to inspire the community to sustain the hard work of systemic education improvement.***

A community's economic vitality no longer hinges as much on its geographic location as on its human capital. That is to say that today, a community's workforce is its key economic driver. A corollary to that axiom is that college-ready is workforce-ready. In that regard, the Louisville business community came to realize that an economic development strategy in Louisville is in essence an *education improvement strategy*, and that business leaders, in need of a talented workforce, must become a key catalyst for improving educational outcomes.

For business leaders seeking to lead and sustain education improvement, *Cities for Success* suggests the following guidance:

***Articulate a compelling vision that links education improvement to economic and workforce outcomes.***

Business leaders play a pivotal role in articulating a broader economic vision for their communities and linking that vision to education and workforce goals. This big vision helps galvanize action; helps educators

realize that they are not “in this alone,” but rather have support in the community; and helps leaders move beyond the “blame game” to advance substantive education improvement.

***Engage more than the “usual suspects” in systemic improvement.***

In Louisville, the Business Leaders for Education (BLE) partnered with the Mayor's Education Roundtable (MER), creating a coalition of leaders from business, higher education, K-12 education, philanthropy, and community organizations. This combination generated powerful momentum for the effort, and confirmed the important point that, to have impact, business needs to bring high profile community leaders into the dialogue. Once there, others are more likely to listen.

***Stay engaged: catalyze sustained change around the vision.***

Just as critical to organizing education improvement efforts and shaping a common vision is the role business plays in maintaining momentum to ensure that change happens. A point that was emphasized numerous times by speakers at the summit is that merely throwing money at the problem or ceasing to be engaged once the process is underway is simply not sufficient. Admittedly, stakeholders' differing expectations about the pace of change can make this a challenge. A pace considered glacial to business leaders may seem rushed to educators. Recognizing these cultural differences, business leaders can help by urging partners to find a pace that leaves all a little uncomfortable, but able to remain committed to sustained improvement.



### *Attract national interest and resources.*

Not surprisingly, resources matter in the success of these efforts. Louisville's success was aided by BHEF, which provided strategic advice and national experts, among other support, to assist the Louisville business community's education improvement work. Perhaps most importantly, having this national thought partner enabled Louisville's leaders to see their regional effort in a national context and to realize that their efforts need not start from scratch (see also Lesson 3). In addition to tapping organizations such as BHEF, business leaders can support their communities' efforts to seek philanthropic support to fund education improvement work. Numerous philanthropies consider education improvement a priority; Louisville's efforts, both in P-12 improvement and in increasing degree attainment among adults, have been supported by national foundations attracted to Louisville in part by the engagement of the business community.

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*“Louisville’s businesses won’t be able to operate effectively in Louisville unless the region’s educational attainment problems are fixed and, thus, business must be involved in the solution.”*

*- Louisville CEO*

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### ***Lesson 2: Shared Accountability and Differentiated Responsibility.***

**Successful communities institutionalize shared accountability and differentiated responsibility, identifying clear goals and the stakeholders responsible for achieving them**

The idea of sharing accountability for outcomes across the community was emphasized throughout the summit. One participant, Pat Brown, director of systems innovation for Strive (see Lesson 3), captured the attention of the room when she used the phrase “shared accountability and differentiated responsibility.” She highlighted, and others agreed, that different sectors should rightly focus on the issues most linked to their core activities.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PHILANTHROPY LEADERS ON SECURING PHILANTHROPIC INVESTMENTS**

- Do your research: Study trends in the field and identify your effort's unique contribution.
- Know your plan and include the right partners and substance in your proposal.
- Have a sustainability plan that includes local support.
- Identify what currently is lacking in a project and what a particular philanthropy can do to enhance the effort.
- Be prepared to demonstrate how your work will improve student achievement – greater investment by corporate philanthropy entails greater attention to outcomes.
- Understand how progress will be measured.

This practice of using cross-sector partnerships to share accountability has been integral in many communities over the years. One P-12 educator attributed the Louisville region's overall success to its history of cross-sector collaboration among its leaders. For example, the *Every1Reads* partnership formed several years ago successfully linked the business and education sectors in Louisville around a common education goal. Through this effort, leaders in both business and education recognized that future progress to meet the region's education challenges would require collaboration among all sectors.

BHEF's work underscores how stakeholders in a cross-sector alliance must be able to clearly identify common goals and differing responsibilities. One helpful tool, a mutual accountability agreement, ensures that every player is on the same page and holds stakeholders accountable for their respective responsibilities within the effort.

The *Greater Louisville Education Commitment* is an effective mutual accountability agreement. Against the community's goal of adding 55,000 degrees by 2020, for example, business leaders have committed to focus their efforts on individuals already in the workforce—their employees—to encourage them to return to school to obtain degrees. Leaders in P-12 and postsecondary education, who are the direct service link to students, have committed to improving college readiness, strengthening alignment between systems, and providing retention and transition planning services for students throughout their academic careers. Community organizations, meanwhile, are embracing opportunities to provide mentors to students in high school and college to help ensure

persistence through degree attainment. One *Cities for Success* panelist likened this type of collective work and differentiated responsibility to creating “stone soup” — that is, if all the stakeholders in a community bring what they can to the collective “pot,” they can achieve their desired outcomes.

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*“It is no minor thing that Louisville typically works in a collaborative fashion — this is key to building an initiative. It means that I don't stand alone when I speak to the community, although that often is the case with superintendents in other communities.”*

*- Louisville schools superintendent*

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### ***Lesson 3: Strategic Linkages to Regional and National Efforts.***

**Strategic linkages to regional and national efforts help stakeholders in business and education develop dynamic networks for sharing and capitalizing on promising practices.**

Effective local education improvement is enhanced when regional and national resources and expertise are utilized. BHEF's role in Louisville exemplifies this fact. As strategic partner to the BLE, BHEF provided research, lessons learned from other communities, and proven strategies to aid the BLE (and later the MER) to develop its collective strategy for increasing degree attainment.

**LESSONS FROM THE STRIVE PARTNERSHIP—AN ORGANIZATION THAT AIMS TO UNITE COMMON PROVIDERS AROUND SHARED ISSUES, GOALS, MEASUREMENTS AND RESULTS FOR EDUCATION ATTAINMENT**

- Start community efforts where you have an entrée. In Cincinnati, the non-profit community provided this, so Strive began there and then expanded its work into the schools.
- Drive efforts with data (e.g., community indicators) and internalize the use of data in decision making.
- Focus. Avoid selecting too many priorities and engaging in “spray and pray” behavior.
- Identify what currently is lacking in a project and what a particular philanthropy can do to enhance the effort.
- Expect shared accountability and differentiated responsibility among various stakeholders.

BHEF also parlayed its own national network of business and higher education leaders to support the emerging network of business and education leaders in Louisville. Thus, for example, BHEF’s College Readiness, Access, and Success Initiative Working Group members (which included the CEO of ACT and major university leaders, among others) shared their knowledge about college readiness and degree attainment with colleagues who were leading the education improvement efforts in Louisville. Among many contributions, BHEF-member presidents Lee T. Todd, Jr., of the University of Kentucky, and Michael B. McCall, of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, supported the local Louisville effort by serving as regional leaders of education improvement, supporting P-12 and postsecondary collaboration, declaring a “war on attrition” to increase graduation rates, and dedicating resources to training teachers in STEM fields.

Through *Cities for Success*, leaders from Louisville were able to share promising practices with their counterparts from other regions. For example, the meeting showcased two adaptable models, the

Long Beach Seamless Education Partnership and Cincinnati’s Strive Partnership, and re-launched StrategicEdSolutions.org®, BHEF’s Web-based resource center for disseminating tools and information about education improvement.

***Lessons from the Long Beach Seamless Education Partnership.***

Launched in 1994 by local civic and business leaders to ensure that all students would progress smoothly through Long Beach, California’s education system and into the workforce, the Long Beach Seamless Education Partnership has become a defining feature of the city and its region. The partnership links the Long Beach Unified School District, California State University-Long Beach, and Long Beach City College, with the goal of improving local education outcomes for students across the P-20 system through curricular reform, the use of common standards, and common goals. As it has evolved into a comprehensive education partnership among all education institutions in the community, supported by other key business and community stakeholders, the partnership has become a notable national model.

BHEF's 2009 case study of the Long Beach Seamless Education Partnership highlighted the underlying premise for the collaboration: Long Beach's children are the responsibility of *everyone* in the community, across the *entire* P-20 education system. The sustained involvement of senior leaders across the education and business spectrum underscores this message and highlights this essential component of systemic change.

#### *Lessons from Strive.*

Another national model showcased at *Cities for Success*, Strive, is a Cincinnati-based partnership that aligns community resources across sectors and develops regional strategies to drive education reform. Strive began as a partnership of regional leaders who focused on the success of local children "from cradle to career." After analyzing the community's education and workforce challenges, these leaders concluded that college readiness does not begin in 9th grade, but rather is a continuum starting at birth. A success in Cincinnati, Strive has now expanded to several other communities, including Fresno and the East Bay in California, Houston, and Richmond, Virginia.

#### *Disseminating Lessons through StrategicEdSolutions.org®.*

BHEF chose *Cities for Success* to unveil an enhanced a new generation of its online resource center, StrategicEdSolutions.org®, which houses promising practices, research, and other tools to help leaders make strategic investments in education improvement. The site is built around a theory of action for education reform that offers insights into education improvement strategies and programs that work across the P-20 spectrum to business leaders, P-12 and postsecondary education stakeholders, philanthropists, and other community leaders. StrategicEdSolutions.org® also showcases education improvement strategies from Louisville and other communities.

#### ***Lesson 4: Metrics and Data.***

**Metrics and data are essential drivers of change. In addition to helping stakeholders develop shared understanding of the issues, they communicate progress toward goals and help keep business engaged.**

Perhaps most salient in the dialogue among summit participants was their emphasis on the importance of data. One speaker, a prominent Louisville business leader, asserted three central reasons why data are at the core of what makes it possible for stakeholders to work together:

#### ***Data diagnose the problem.***

Data on student characteristics, both demographic and achievement, and workforce outcomes allow regional leaders to concretely understand the specific issues that challenge their communities. Misinformation abounds about education attainment; providing leaders with high-quality data enables stakeholders to reach a collective understanding of relevant issues, with a common vocabulary, and to measure the same progress.

#### ***Data energize action.***

In Louisville, data drove the community to identify the need for 55,000 additional degrees and to realize that a significant portion of those degrees must come from adults returning to higher education. As Louisville's leaders analyzed competitor cities/regions against the Louisville region's education attainment rates, they realized that Louisville could not achieve its economic development goals by focusing solely on the "traditional" student pathway of students moving directly through P-12 and enrolling immediately in postsecondary education. Rather, "comebackers," adults with some postsecondary education and already in the workforce, would need to finish their degrees

as well. The business community has committed to develop strategies that target this population.

*Data enable stakeholders to know when progress has been achieved.*

Benchmarking with data allows a community to monitor progress toward its economic goals and adjust its action plans as necessary. Adopting a practice from the Strive model, for example, Louisville developed a report card by which the community can monitor progress.

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*“Data is King!”*

*- Louisville business leader*

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### ***Lesson 5: Alignment***

**Alignment among P-12, postsecondary education, and the workforce is important as a strategy to help ensure that students graduating from high school are college-ready and can progress more easily through the system and into jobs and careers.**

National data show that only one in four students who take the ACT college entrance exam meet all four college-ready benchmarks in English, reading, math, and science (*The Condition of College and Career Readiness*, ACT, 2010). While not all of these students enroll in postsecondary education, the fact that more than 40 percent of freshmen need remediation upon entering college is evidence of misalignment between P-12 and higher education. To improve student outcomes, the most effective local school districts and postsecondary institutions collaborate to improve student achievement and provide students with a

smoother path into postsecondary education and the workforce.

The Long Beach Seamless Education Partnership, exemplifies this practice. In Long Beach, faculty from P-12 and postsecondary education meet regularly to align their curricula. California State University’s *Early Assessment Program (EAP)* reinforces this partnership. The EAP evaluates high school students in their junior year for their readiness for college work in English and mathematics, and provides them with an individualized assessment so they can better understand how well they are prepared for postsecondary education. The timing gives students an additional year to improve their academic skills before entering college. This integrated approach has inculcated a perspective across the Long Beach education system that a student’s success in college reflects the success of the P-12 system as well. All have a stake in the outcome.

In the Louisville region, similarly, leaders of the Jefferson County Public Schools and Jefferson Community and Technical College are using the *COMPASS* exam to improve P-16 alignment. A college-placement test administered by ACT during a student’s junior year in high school, *COMPASS* assesses student knowledge and identifies problems in major subject areas that can be addressed before the student enters college. Like the Early Assessment Program, *COMPASS* supports efforts to align the education pipeline to better prepare students to complete high school and then enroll and succeed in higher education.

## ***Lesson 6: Widespread Public Awareness***

**Successful communities foster widespread public awareness, through marketing and mentoring efforts, that underscore the importance of obtaining a postsecondary degree and show potential students the steps they need to take to enroll in college.**

The demands of the workplace have evolved drastically. The idea that most jobs do not require a college degree is no longer true. Likewise, the idea that most postsecondary education students follow a traditional path and graduate in four years is largely an anachronism. As postsecondary education leaders participating in *Cities for Success* pointed out, the majority of today's postsecondary students are likely to be "non-traditional" students: part-time, older, from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, and/or employed full-time. In addition, more of them are likely to take coursework sporadically and from different institutions, which can result in an increasingly fragmented postsecondary education experience and reduced likelihood of success.

These changing economic realities, changes in student demographics, and changes in the education experience place a premium on raising awareness about the importance of college-going and degree attainment. Communities need a variety of public awareness and engagement efforts targeted at parents, employers, high school students, and full-time employees.

Participants in the *Cities for Success* summit discussed at some length many of the efforts under way in Louisville and elsewhere to engage African American males. In Southern Indiana,

for example, leaders are working to engage these youth through participation in fraternities, sports, and mentoring. The Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville offers a program that matches male African American students with male mentors. Each year, a group of Louisville's business leaders bring 600 African American males to tour the University of Louisville campus to introduce them to campus life and to a college-going culture.

Louisville's focus on "comebackers," who often are employed full-time, offers another public awareness opportunity for employers. In addition to providing these individuals with the information and resources they need to return to postsecondary education, employers can provide them with information that they, as parents, can use to inform their children about the importance of college.

Marketing campaigns have been shown to be vital in increasing public awareness about the need for postsecondary education in today's society, and in educating potential students about the steps necessary to successfully enroll and persist in postsecondary education and the workforce. They present opportunities for communities to employ new strategies and tactics that can effectively engage today's students.

# Equipping Leaders for Systemic Action

Given the gravity of the economic and education challenges that this country faces, comprehensive solutions are necessary and much-needed. At the local level, these solutions ultimately will be driven by leaders from business and higher education who collaborate around shared goals for improving education in their communities, and who commit to work together to develop and implement systemic strategies for improving college readiness and degree attainment. As summarized in this report, the BHEF theory of change offers a proven, practicable leadership strategy to meet those critical goals.

One of the most distinctive elements of the BHEF model is that it is predicated on business leaders taking the lead in visioning and defining the needs of the community over a period of time—economically and as a community—and then implementing a collaborative approach with leaders from education and other local institutions to fulfill that vision. Business leaders are uniquely positioned to recognize where there might be misalignment between educational outcomes and the needs of both the community and the workforce, and can play a pivotal role in suggesting avenues toward realigning those mismatches.

We believe that engagement from business leaders, in collaboration with their partners in higher education, is essential for developing a broad aspirational vision for the community that can drive meaningful change. That engagement serves as a strong catalyst for a community-wide commitment that frames shared accountability with differentiated responsibility, and translates community needs into workforce and education goals.

In contrast to other reform efforts that have similar goals, the BHEF leadership strategy focuses on aligning the educational pipeline more directly with the needs of the local economy. We believe that education improvement efforts rooted in a community's larger economic vision are more likely to be sustained through natural periods of transition and challenge. We also believe that this kind of comprehensive approach can be more effective over time than efforts that focus more narrowly—for example, solely on college attainment rates. Moreover, the BHEF model actively engages leaders at the community level and partners with them not just at the beginning of a reform effort, but throughout the process of both developing and executing strategies for change. And while we recognize the value of grassroots reform efforts that work from the bottom up through community organizations, we believe that engaging senior leaders in reform, and capitalizing on their community stature, has an inherently advantageous potential for effectiveness.

BHEF's theory of action equips business and higher education leaders with the networks and tools necessary to achieve the community's desired outcomes around high school graduation, college enrollment and success, workforce preparedness, and economic competitiveness. Our engagement at the community level provides leaders with critical support in developing the comprehensive strategy that is necessary to achieve a community's broad vision for transforming its economy, the workforce, and education.

As the community leaders who attended the *Cities for Success Leadership Summit* continue their improvement efforts, BHEF will continue to support them through our network of members, research, and unique tools such as [StrategicEdSolutions.org](http://StrategicEdSolutions.org)<sup>®</sup>.



*Hon. Mayor Frank Cownie (Des Moines), Hon. Mayor Jerry Abramson (Louisville), and Hon. Mayor Mick Cornett (Oklahoma City) at Cities for Success*





*Creating Solutions. Inspiring Action.®*

# CITIES FOR SUCCESS: A BHEF LEADERSHIP SUMMIT HOSTED IN LOUISVILLE, KY

## AGENDA:

OCTOBER 28, 2010: 2:00PM – 8:00PM

(MUHAMMAD ALI CENTER, 144 N. SIXTH STREET, LOUISVILLE, KY 40202)

- ▶ 2:00 P.M.      **Welcome and Review of the Agenda**

  - **Brian Fitzgerald**, Executive Director of BHEF
  - **David Spence**, President of the Southern Regional Education Board – Facilitator
  
- ▶ 2:15 P.M.      **Introduction to Louisville**

  - **David Jones, Jr.**, Humana Board Member & Chairman and Managing Director of Chrysalis Ventures
  
- ▶ 2:25 P.M.      **Participant Introductions**
  
- ▶ 3:00 P.M.      **Setting the National Context: The Imperative for Education Improvement**

  - **Brian Fitzgerald**, Executive Director of BHEF
  
- ▶ 4:00 P.M.      **Launching Louisville: Convening Stakeholders and Articulating a Shared Vision**

A facilitated discussion with:

  - **Jerry Abramson**, Mayor of Louisville
  - **Joe Reagan**, President & CEO of Greater Louisville Inc.
  - **David Jones, Jr.**, Humana Board Member & Chairman and Managing Director of Chrysalis Ventures
  - **Jim Ramsey**, President of University of Louisville
  
- ▶ 5:30 P.M.      **Reception & Dinner**

Keynote Address:  
**Jamie Merisotis**, President of the Lumina Foundation

# **BHEF's *Cities for Success Leadership Summit* Participants**

## **October 28-29, 2010, in Louisville, KY**

- Hon. Jerry Abramson  
Mayor, Metro Government, Louisville
- F. King Alexander  
President, California State University Long Beach
- Dan Ash  
Executive Director, Metroversity
- Clay Ballantine  
Chief Advancement Officer, Hampshire College
- Sheldon Berman  
Superintendent, Jefferson County Public Schools
- Patricia (Pat) Brown  
Director of Systems Innovations, Strive
- Diana Church  
Program Officer, The C.E. and S. Foundation, Inc.
- John Clemens  
Corporate Director of Community Relations  
Raytheon Company
- Jeanne Contardo  
Director of Programs  
Business-Higher Education Forum
- Hon. Mick Cornett  
Mayor, Metro Government, Oklahoma City
- Hon. Frank Cownie  
Mayor, Des Moines Metropolitan Government
- Robert Denson  
President, Des Moines Area Community College
- Drew Dugan  
Vice President, Education & Workforce Development  
Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce
- Carl Edwards  
Managing Partner & Incoming Chair  
Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce
- Brian K. Fitzgerald  
Executive Director  
Business-Higher Education Forum
- Marlene Gerber Fried  
Acting President. Hampshire College
- Louis Givan  
General Manager-Louisville Office  
Raytheon Company
- George Grainger  
Senior Grant Officer, Houston Endowment
- J. Barry Griswell  
President, Greater Des Moines Community  
Foundation
- Audwin Helton  
President, Spatial Data Integrations
- Robyn Hilger  
Program Director  
The Foundation for Oklahoma City Public Schools
- Tony Hutchison  
Vice Chancellor  
Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
- Parminder Jassal  
Program Officer, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- David A. Jones, Jr.  
Chairman & Managing Director, Chrysalis Ventures
- Virginia Judd  
Executive Director, Humana Foundation
- Mike Kennedy  
Program Assistant, 55,000 Degrees
- Nancy R. Kuhn  
Director of External Relations  
Business-Higher Education Forum
- Bill Lear  
Board Chairman, Stoll Keenon Ogden PLLC
- David Lopez  
President, American Fidelity Foundation
- Terrence Martin  
Associate Superintendent, Des Moines Public Schools
- David Maxwell  
President, Drake University
- Jan McMahill  
Dean, Drake University
- Tess McNair  
Program Officer, The C.E. and S. Foundation, Inc.
- Jamie Merisotis  
President, Lumina Foundation
- Jan Morrison  
Executive Director  
Teaching Institute for Excellence in STEM
- Anthony Newberry  
President, Jefferson Community & Technical College
- Mary O'Hair  
Dean of Education, University of Kentucky
- Sandra Patterson-Randles  
Chancellor, Indiana University Southeast
- Kathy Payne  
Director of Educational Leadership  
State Farm Insurance Companies
- James Ramsey  
President, University of Louisville
- Joe Reagan  
President & CEO, Greater Louisville Inc.

## **BHEF's *Cities for Success Leadership Summit* Participants October 28-29, 2010, in Louisville, KY (cont.)**

- Michael Renner  
Provost, Drake University
- Kate Sandel  
Senior Associate, National League of Cities
- Tim Shaughnessy  
Kentucky State Senator & Visiting Scholar in  
Community College Leadership
- David Spence  
President, Southern Regional Education Board
- Karl Springer  
Superintendent, Oklahoma City Public Schools
- Lee Todd  
President, University of Kentucky
- Gail Vines  
Board Member, Oklahoma City Schools Board of Education
- Mary Gwen Wheeler  
Mayor's Senior Advisor for Education and Youth &  
Interim Director of 55,000 Degrees
- Jim White  
Assistant Vice President- Atlanta Office, ACT
- David Wilkerson  
Superintendent, Waukee Schools
- Shirley Willihnganz  
Executive Vice President and Provost  
University of Louisville
- John Yopp  
Associate Provost for Educational Partnerships  
University of Kentucky
- Kathy Zandona  
Education Director, Greater Louisville Inc.
- Larry Zimpleman  
Chairman, President, and CEO  
Principal Financial Group



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