

The Educational Policy Institute's

student success

December 2010

The Newsletter for Higher Education Professionals



Senator Jim Webb

An EPI Interview

EPI's 2010 Retention Review

A synopsis of what happened in Chicago

EPI-DAS

EPI's New Data Analysis System

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If you would like to comment on this edition of **Student Success** or suggest an article for our next issue, please contact info@educationalpolicy.org or call (703) 875-0701.

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THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY INSTITUTE



The **Educational Policy Institute (EPI)** is a non-profit, non-partisan, and non-governmental organization dedicated to policy-based research on educational opportunity for all students. EPI is a collective association of researchers and policy analysts from around the world dedicated to the mission of enhancing our knowledge of critical barriers facing students and families throughout the educational pipeline.

EPI INTERNATIONAL
801 N. Quincy Street, Suite 700
Arlington, VA 22203-1730
703.875.0701
info@educationalpolicy.org

EPI AUSTRALASIA
PO Box 251
Fairfield, Vic 3078, Australia
61.0.419.514.232



Watson Scott Swail, Ed.D.
President & CEO
Educational Policy Institute

Opening Shots

In each of our Student Success magazines, we often feature people who have and continue to serve as leaders in education. We've featured people like John Gardner, Stedman Graham, and several others who not only lead by example, but also understand the importance of leading and what it means with regard to public policy and educational practice.

In this issue of Student Success, we feature several leaders who are making a difference. In our main article, we interview Senator Jim Webb, whom received the EPI Leadership Award at the National Capitol Summit back in March in Washington, DC. Though a relative newcomer to the US Senate, Senator Webb has quickly established himself as a leader in the Senate and in education. Picking up the mantle of Senator Warner, Senator Webb has served to protect the rights of military service members who put their lives on the line for their country. In 1944, the US Congress passed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act for returning soldiers from World War II. This is better known today as the GI Bill.

The GI Bill fostered a new age in higher education, allowing millions of people, mostly men at that time, to gain access to postsecondary education. True, the GI Bill was partly meant to keep millions of returning veterans out of the workforce, which would have brought on a new depression to America, but it also changed the course of higher education and moved it from a system for the few to a system for the many. This, in great part, changed the landscape of higher education in the United States and had a dramatic impact around the world.

Over the years, the GI Bill had felt the impact of inflation and other issues that reduced the purchasing price for veterans. Senator Webb took it upon himself to bring the Bill up for renewal. He was able to pass, as a junior senator, a major revision of the GI Bill which includes greater educational benefits to returning veterans, including educational benefits for spouses and children. This serves two purposes. First, it provides an incentive for prospective military service members to enter and stay in the armed forces. And second, it ensures that education remains an important foundation of the military.

Bills like this only get passed when someone takes on a major issue and follows it through. It takes vision. It takes determination. In this case, it took Senator Webb.

During our Retention 2010 International Conference on Student Success in Chicago this past June, we heard from several leaders in higher education who are also pushing forward to expand educational opportunity for all students. We heard from Freeman Hrabowski, President of the University of Maryland Baltimore County. Student Success featured Dr. Hrabowski in our last issue. During Retention 2010, Dr. Hrabowski talked candidly with participants about how it takes a "culture" of leadership to make change, and that listening to students and their needs is an important part of leadership. As Hrabowski said, "very few institutions listen to their students." If institutions don't listen to their students, who are they listening to? Consultants like me? I may have something to offer institutions in terms of strategic planning for student success, but number one on the "things

to do” list is listening to your constituency—your students!

Reggie Wilkinson, President of the Ohio College Access Network, noted that we talk a lot about P-16 and P-20 councils, but our leaders need to focus on P-Workforce councils, because if we aren’t having genuine discussions about how our youth get to the workforce and contribute to a broader society, then we miss the point of education altogether. Wilkinson understands that leadership encompasses vision, and we need educational leaders—presidents, chancellors, deans, superintendents, principals—and yes, especially teachers, who are leaders in many respects—to push for a broader vision of education—one that is cognizant of the future issues facing our youth. Education isn’t just about today. It is, ultimately, about tomorrow.

One leader who truly gets that is Dr. Cheryl Hyman, Chancellor of City Colleges of Chicago (CCC). Dr. Hyman was a respected executive at Commonwealth Edison, a large utility corporation

with over 5,500 employees. She gave that up earlier this year to serve as Chancellor of CCC. Why? As she offered in a recent article in the Chicago Sun Times, “Thousands of young people who could be inspired by my story -- their success is hinging on my ability to do this job well. They can hear me and be inspired. But, I have to be able to build a world-class institution at a time of national recession that still puts them in a better position in life than when they came through the doors.”

Dr. Hyman reiterated what Dr. Hrabowski stated in his keynote. “[We need] to do whatever is necessary to retain and graduate more students by understanding who we serve and learning what motivates our students,” she explained.

Understanding students. If we don’t do that, we don’t get it.



Have you completed your survey?

The Educational Policy Institute, with support from TG, is sponsoring the **2010 National Survey of College Outreach Programs**. This survey follows up the 2000 survey conducted by The College Board, which resulted in a directory of over 1,100 programs around the United States.

If you work with a pre-college preparatory program, please go online to www.educationalpolicy.org to complete the survey by December 20, 2010. Survey completers will have their program listed in the directory, receive a copy of the directory, and be entered to win an iPad from EPI.

Contact us at info@educationalpolicy.org with questions.

Educational Policy Institute's
National Survey
of
College
Outreach
Programs

Student Success: An Interview with Senator Jim Webb

Throughout his career, Jim Webb has maintained a strong commitment and involvement towards America's development and future. Jim Webb ran for the Senate in 2006 and won with less than 1%. He was sworn into the 110th U.S. Senate on January 4, 2007, and on his first day in office, he introduced the 21st century GI Bill for post-9/11 veterans providing educational benefits to all members of the military who have served on



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Education Opportunity Act of 2007, which increases opportunities to low and moderate income individuals to attend post-secondary education.

Educational Policy Institute awarded Jim Webb in April 2010 during EPI's Annual National Capitol Summit on Education on Capitol Hill for his leadership in passing the GI Bill.

benefited greatly from its tradition of offering educational assistance to returning veterans. In the 1940s, the first "GI Bill" helped transform notions of equality in American society. The World War II GI Bill paid for veterans' tuition, books, fees, a monthly stipend, and other training costs. However, benefits awarded under subsequent GI bills have not been as expansive as our nation's original GI Bill. After 18 months of working with my Democratic and Republican colleagues in Congress, leading veterans' service organizations, the higher education community, and the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, we accomplished our goal.