

Pullias Center *for*  
Higher Education

The USC Rossier School of Education's Pullias Center for Higher Education is considered one of the world's leading research centers on higher education.

## *STRATEGIC GOALS OF THE PULLIAS CENTER*

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*GOAL*

1.

To improve the productivity and effectiveness in the postsecondary sector through innovation, partnerships, entrepreneurship and quality assurance.

*GOAL*

2.

To increase access to college for low-income and underrepresented youth through college-readiness, enhancing technology, and illuminating effective financial aid policies.

*GOAL*

3.

To develop partnerships with strategically relevant universities worldwide through joint research projects, cross-national studies, and comparative analyses of the impact of immigration and globalization on tertiary education.

# Making It Happen

Since 1994 the Pullias Center has undertaken work devoted to the key issues of college access, retention, and accountability for underserved students. Among its programs are:

## **COLLEGOLOGY - GAMES FOR NAVIGATING THE PATH**

The Pullias Center is working with the Game Innovation Lab in the USC School of Cinematic Arts and the Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation to develop and distribute games that will assist high school students, particularly those who are first generation college applicants, to navigate the process of college-going. The suite of games, "Collegology", disseminated in both a card game and Facebook application, derives from research the Center has done on the problems of college access and college readiness for urban high school students.

## **HANDS-ON HELP WITH COLLEGE ACCESS**

The Pullias Center's two college-access programs – Increasing Access via Mentoring (IAM) and SummerTIME – bring underserved high school students to the USC campus for one-on-one tutoring, and intensive pre-college writing and skills workshops. They stand as national models for best practice in increasing access to college and improving writing skills for college-bound youth.

*FOR EVERY DOLLAR WE INVEST IN HIGHER ED,  
WE GET A 43 RETURN*

1:3

*PERCENT OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS  
AGES 17 TO 19 ENTERING FALL 2000 WHO LEFT WITHOUT  
A CERTIFICATE OR DEGREE AFTER FIVE YEARS*

>50

*AT THE 144 MOST SELECTIVE  
COLLEGES, PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS FROM  
THE BOTTOM INCOME QUARTILE*

3

# Making It Happen *continued*

## POST-SECONDARY CAPACITY AND PRODUCTIVITY

The Pullias Center is involved in long-running research pertaining to postsecondary capacity constraints and productivity. Several studies have pointed out the need for more students to participate in the college/university sector in order to ensure high skills jobs that will create a productive economy. But public sector institutions have capacity constraints, and the fastest growing sector –for-profit colleges and universities – have come under increased scrutiny. The Pullias Center has undertaken state and national analyses about how to increase capacity, improve productivity, and suggest ways to ensure that for-profit institutions function in a productive, efficient and ethical manner.

## THE PROFESSORiate

The nature of the professoriate has changed considerably from tenure-track faculty to largely non-tenure track and adjunct appointments. Studies demonstrate problems for students, including decreased transfer and graduation rates, as well as for faculty performance, citing limited professional development and socialization. The Pullias Center is engaged in a national study bringing together experts and stakeholders from every sector to examine this national problem which goes to the heart of academic quality.

## QUALIFIED

# 59%

Percentage of low income students who qualify for highly selective schools either forego college or enroll in less selective schools.

## IN DEMAND

# 61%

Percent of California workers who will need postsecondary education to meet workforce demands by 2018.

## FALSE STARTS

# 21%

Percentage of low income students who start at a community college transfer to 4-yr college. Only 1/4 of those graduate within 6 yrs.

# Making It Happen *continued*

## **GROWING STEM DISCIPLINES**

College campuses struggle to get more students to study STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and meet the rising economic challenge as America struggles to become more competitive. The Pullias Center faculty are engaged with Project Kaleidoscope – a national network of STEM faculty to innovate and change the nature and way science is taught and to attract more students to this critical area.

## **MORE GRADUATES**

The postsecondary sector needs to graduate more students in order to ensure high skills jobs that will create a productive economy. The Pullias Center has undertaken state and national analyses about how to increase capacity and improve productivity. These studies have enabled scholars not only to focus on the challenges facing states such as California, but also to analyze similar sorts of changes in the Mideast and Southeast Asia.

*A BACHELOR'S DEGREE TRANSLATES TO  
\$22,000 MORE PER YEAR IN INCOME.*

**\$22,000**

*ESTIMATED SHORTFALL OF  
CALIFORNIA WORKERS WITH SKILLS  
LEARNED IN COLLEGE BY 2025*

**1M**

*PERCENT OF CSU STUDENTS  
WHO ARE NOT PREPARED TO TAKE  
COLLEGE-LEVEL WORK*

**60%**

# The Pullias Center Research Faculty



**Dr. William G. Tierney** is the Director of the Pullias Center for Higher Education. He is a University Professor, one of only 24 at USC, and holds the Wilbur-Keiffer Professorship in Higher Education. Dr. Tierney is the 2012-13 American Education Research Association president.



**Dr. Adrianna Kezar** is Associate Professor of Education and Associate Director of the Pullias Center for Higher Education and an expert on higher education leadership and diversity.



**Shafiqa Ahmadi, JD,** Assistant Professor of Clinical Education, is an expert on diversity and legal protection of underrepresented students, including female Muslims and sexual assault survivors.



**Dr. Lloyd Armstrong** is also a University Professor and an expert in higher education strategy and policy, and the federal financing of science.



**Dr. Darnell Cole** is Associate Professor of Education and an expert on college student experiences and performance, including those of African American, Latino, Muslim, and Asian students.



**Dr. Guilbert Hentschke** is Professor and the Richard C. Cooper and Mary Catherine Cooper Chair in Public School Administration. His research and writing focus on the finance and governance of public, non-profit, and for-profit education organizations.



**Dr. Zoe Corwin** is an Assistant Research Professor and focuses on programs and projects that seek to increase students' access to postsecondary education.



**Dr. Tatiana Melguizo** is Assistant Professor of Education and an expert in higher education, affirmative action, and college graduation rates.



**Dr. John Slaughter** is Professor of Education and Professor of Engineering in the USC Viterbi School of Engineering. His research has been in higher education leadership, diversity and inclusion, access, and affordability.



**Dr. Kristan Venegas**, Associate Professor of Clinical Education, is an expert in higher education, especially financial aid policy for low-income students and students of color.

# The Pullias Center Research Students

**Dr. Lisa Garcia**, a postdoctoral research associate, is focusing on programs and projects that seek to increase students' access to postsecondary education.

**Monica Esqueda** and **Stefani Relles**, fourth-year students, are investigating the experiences of military-connected students and remedial writing students respectively.

Third-year students **Michelle Castellanos**, **Constance Iloh**, **Holly Kosiewicz**, **Sable Manson**, **Shirley Parry**, **Raquel Rall**, **Jenna Sablan**, and **Ji Zhou** are researching issues pertaining to the transition between high school and college; the academic, personal, and social experiences of low-income college students; and quality assurance practices in domestic and foreign nonprofit and for-profit institutions.

**Julia Duncheon**, **Kristen Fong**, **Sean Gehrke**, **Daniel Maxey**, and **Brian Rodriguez**, second-year students, are researching college-bound and postsecondary student experiences, university governance, community college effectiveness, and emerging technologies relative to college access.

**Daniel Almeida** and **Federick Ngo** are first-year students interested in developmental education in community colleges and pathways for urban students to college and careers.