Annual Report
2018

Using Data-Informed Practice to
Drive Equitable Student Success

Achieving
the Dream ™

Introduction —

By introducing data-informed practices and whole-college solutions, ATD Network colleges are outpacing peer institutions when it comes to helping more students get better jobs, live better lives and have positive college experiences.

Over the last 15 years, Achieving the Dream Network colleges have met the challenge to advance student success and reduce equity gaps, leading to improved economic and social mobility for their students. Achieving the Dream has led the effort to champion evidence-based institutional improvement to help our Network Colleges improve outcomes for their low-income students and students of color who dream of achieving academic success and economic opportunity. ATD plays a critical role in coaching college leaders to strengthen fundamental capacities of their colleges to ensure they are ready to help their students realize those dreams.

In the past year, ATD launched a full suite of customizable professional coaching options to meet the changing needs of our Network colleges, leverage strengths identified on their Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool results, and bolster capacity where needed to implement reforms and guide continuous improvement. We expanded our work with colleges by launching the holistic student supports approach nationwide and working with colleges to disaggregate and understand their own data in order to achieve more equitable student outcomes.

It was a year where we experienced the continued growth of the Network, while celebrating our Network colleges being nationally recognized for their outstanding success. Essential to these transformational efforts were our deep and reciprocal relationships with partners in the field, from serving as faculty for the Aspen Presidential Fellowship for Community College Excellence program to supporting Jobs for the Future's national Student Success Center Network.

A new report, *Measuring What Matters*, produced in partnership with Gallup, showed that institutions working with Achieving the Dream are outpacing peer institutions. By introducing data-informed practices and whole-college solutions, ATD Network colleges are helping more students get better jobs, live better lives, and have positive college experiences. We also welcomed a record 21 new colleges into the ATD Network, and the annual DREAM convening in Nashville was the largest in our 14-year history, with attendance that included representatives from most of the nation's Tribal Colleges and Universities (126 individuals from 33 TCUs).

Dr. Stout receives an honorary degree from Miami Dade College during her 2018 commencement address

As ATD Network colleges have continued their outstanding success, we were pleased to recognize those accomplishments with the Leader College of Distinction designation, a new honor that celebrates Network colleges that have lived their reform work over time and seen real improvements in student achievements across the institution.

We learned in May 2018 that eight of the ten finalists for the 2019 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, a $1 million award that recognizes institutions that achieve exceptional outcomes for their students, are in the Achieving the Dream Network. Two of these eight, Miami Dade College and Odessa College, are both former Leah Meyer Austin Award winners, an honor ATD bestows annually on a college that has shown sweeping institutional change leading to significant improvement in student outcomes.

As we work to ensure that holistic student supports increase equitable success, we also recognize that it is critical to add student voice to these discussions. In 2018, our class of ATD DREAM Scholars provided rich context and insight at the February DREAM Conference. We also announced and awarded the new Harvey Lincoln Scholarship Fund, named in honor of the late husband of ATD Senior Vice President Carol Lincoln.

With our focus on helping our Network Colleges confront new and existing challenges facing their students, Achieving the Dream is committed to innovate in the services we provide and how we approach our work. We look forward to our continued work with you to increase student success and economic opportunity in your communities.

Dr. Karen A. Stout
President and CEO

Redefining Student Success —

Many community college students face academic and personal challenges that prevent them from success in the classroom and may stand in the way of their completing a degree.

There's a growing recognition nationally that students – both in community colleges and four-year institutions – need additional supports to help them persist in school and graduate. Providing holistic student supports requires that institutions become student-ready by integrating and enhancing myriad support services into a seamless, timely, and personal experience for every student.

In Summer 2018, Achieving the Dream released guidance on how to strengthen state policies that can boost the impact of college-level practices focused on increasing student success. Based on ATD's experience with the Working Students Success Network (WSSN) and distributed at Jobs for the Future's semi-annual convening of policy experts, *Integrated Student Support Services: State Policy Considerations* underscores the importance of supportive state policies on postsecondary budgets, access to financial aid, eligibility for child care subsidies, and transportation and housing assistance. In the fall, ATD launched our holistic student supports approach nationwide, including intensive in-person coaching for 11 colleges, virtual coaching for colleges in two states, and in-person institutes for colleges in four states.
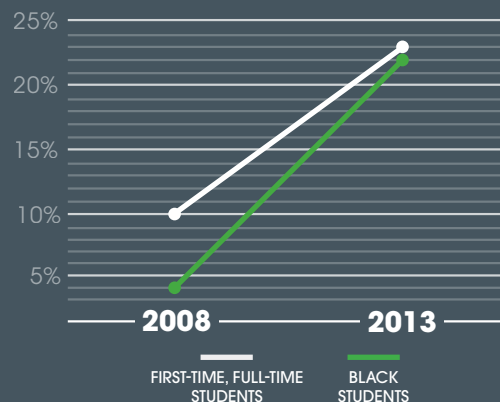
Our second annual ATD Holistic Student Supports Institute brought more than 320 colleagues to St. Louis to participate in a four-day intensive working institute designed to support teams in examining student movement through their institution and executing a coherent strategy for designing a student support model that supports the whole student. At the HSS Institute we launched the new HSS Toolkit, which provides evidence-based, practitioner tested tools, tips, and guides that help an institution from initial exploration of their needs through to successful evaluation and refinement.

The Institute was structured to help attendees develop a vision of holistic supports on their campuses, determine goals and action steps, and identify ways to engage college stakeholders in efforts to put holistic student supports in place. With guidance from trained Institute facilitators, including ATD staff, coaches, college peers, and other experts, the colleges began working to make navigating college less formidable, especially for students facing financial instability and other obstacles to completion. ATD's holistic student supports approach aims to break down the barrier between academic and nonacademic supports to provide a seamless, high quality, and personalized experience that supports every student's academic and basic needs to ensure that more students, particularly students of color and low-income students, can achieve their goals.

Odessa College
THREE-YEAR GRADUATION RATES

| | ALL STUDENTS | HISPANIC STUDENTS | WHITE STUDENTS |
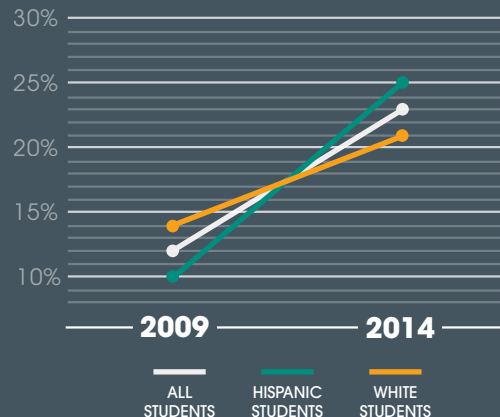
Texarkana College
THREE-YEAR GRADUATION RATES

| | FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME STUDENTS | BLACK STUDENTS |

FOCUS ON STUDENT SUCCESS YIELDS RESULTS

In focusing on student success, the 2018 Leah Meyer Austin Award winners – Odessa College (TX) and Texarkana College (TX) – were able to change the expected outcomes for first-generation and students of color over a short period of time. A focus on holistic supports as a result of data disaggregation has led to the significant improvements for the respective colleges. Facing the threat of losing state funding, Odessa College invested in its institutional capacity for improving student success and they developed a set of leading indicators for student success, including enrollment, in-class retention, course success, and persistence toward degree completion. By making an institutional commitment to evidence-based decision making when they joined Achieving the Dream, Texarkana College articulated clear strategies to increase student success and persistence, leading to a 150% improvement in their three-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time students over the course of just five years.

Mind *the* Data Gap —

Achieving the Dream approaches our data work with the belief that it requires taking a hard look at how people, processes, and systems are working together to make data-informed decisions. We use data to drive our work to innovate and offer new supports and services, and our coaches work closely with ATD Network colleges to integrate data into their work to better support student completion.

Colleges that effectively use data see dramatic gains in student success. Odessa College (next page), one of two 2018 Leah Meyer Austin Award winners, developed data-driven supports over five years to dramatically improve student success. In 2018, ATD Tribal Colleges and Universities, who were new to the Network at the time, used data to identify at-risk students and to begin to target interventions.

Our 2018 Data and Analytics Summit adopted the theme *Mind the Data Gap* in an effort to focus attention on the critical role data plays in reducing the student achieving gap. Minding the data gap means taking the steps necessary to improve all students' experiences from first contact to career. It includes narrowing the gap between student and alumni data, and using alumni data to describe the value of a community college degree. The equity gap requires us to disaggregate data, making all student populations visible and creating momentum for the change that can improve all student outcomes. And minding the data gap between leading and lagging indicators of student success can confirm progress or suggest short corrections. ATD Data Coaches will continue to guide colleges in the development, analysis and use of student outcomes data as we innovate in the ways we use student-level data.

Graduates of ATD Network colleges are showing strong outcomes relative to their peers:

Purpose, or liking what they do each day and being motivated to achieve their goals
48 percent for ATD colleges vs.
35 percent at other community colleges.

Financial well-being, or managing their economic lives to reduce stress and increase security
32 percent vs. 19 percent, respectively

Social well-being, or having strong and supportive relationships and love in their lives
47 percent vs. 36 percent, respectively

Community well-being, or liking where they live, feeling safe and having pride in their communities
39 percent vs. 30 percent, respectively

Statistics from *Measuring What Matters* report

GATES FOUNDATION GRANT TO LEAD TO IMPROVED STUDENT PROGRESS AND COMPLETION DATA

Thanks to support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Achieving the Dream will be able to support colleges in learning to gather and report additional metrics associated with student success and improve the quality of the data reports and dashboards provided to the colleges to promote data-informed decision-making.

This work increases ATD's participation in the Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP), an effort to facilitate better outcomes for all students by helping colleges capture and use more comprehensive data about student progress, early momentum, and degree completion while creating efficiencies and reducing duplicative data submissions at the state and national levels.

The National Student Clearinghouse, the PDP's lynchpin, is working to increase its capacity to collect, verify, and report back to colleges an expanded set of data in easier-to-use formats that could inform new or improved practices directly focused on student needs. Most postsecondary institutions, including many ATD Network colleges, already report basic student-level data on metrics such as student enrollments

and degree completions to the Clearinghouse. The PDP requires colleges to submit two additional files to the Clearinghouse which will yield eight key performance indicator reports on enrollment, gateway course completion, credit accumulation rate, credit completion ratio, outcome completion, retention/persistence, credentials conferred and time to credential.

In Increasing Graduation Rates by 150% for Hispanic Students, Odessa College Eliminates Achievement Gap Over Five Years

Leah Meyer Austin Award winner Odessa College has a student body that is 58 percent Hispanic. As with many higher education institutions, Odessa College experienced an equity gap in graduation rates between students of color and White students.

In 2009, only 10 percent of Hispanic students graduated in three years, compared to 14 percent of White students. As it began its work with Achieving the Dream, Odessa immediately began working with a Data Coach in order to better understand what it needed to change.

Understanding their data led Odessa College to create the Drop Rate Improvement Program, through which faculty implement specific classroom practices that increase a student's connection to the course. Odessa created a new dean of teaching and learning position to support instructors, and faculty now receive real-time data on each of their students that enables them to make data-informed decisions about how to improve their approach to educating students. By 2014, the three-year graduation rate for Hispanic students rose to 25 percent, entirely eliminating the achievement gap and outpacing White students, who also saw impressive graduate rate increases.
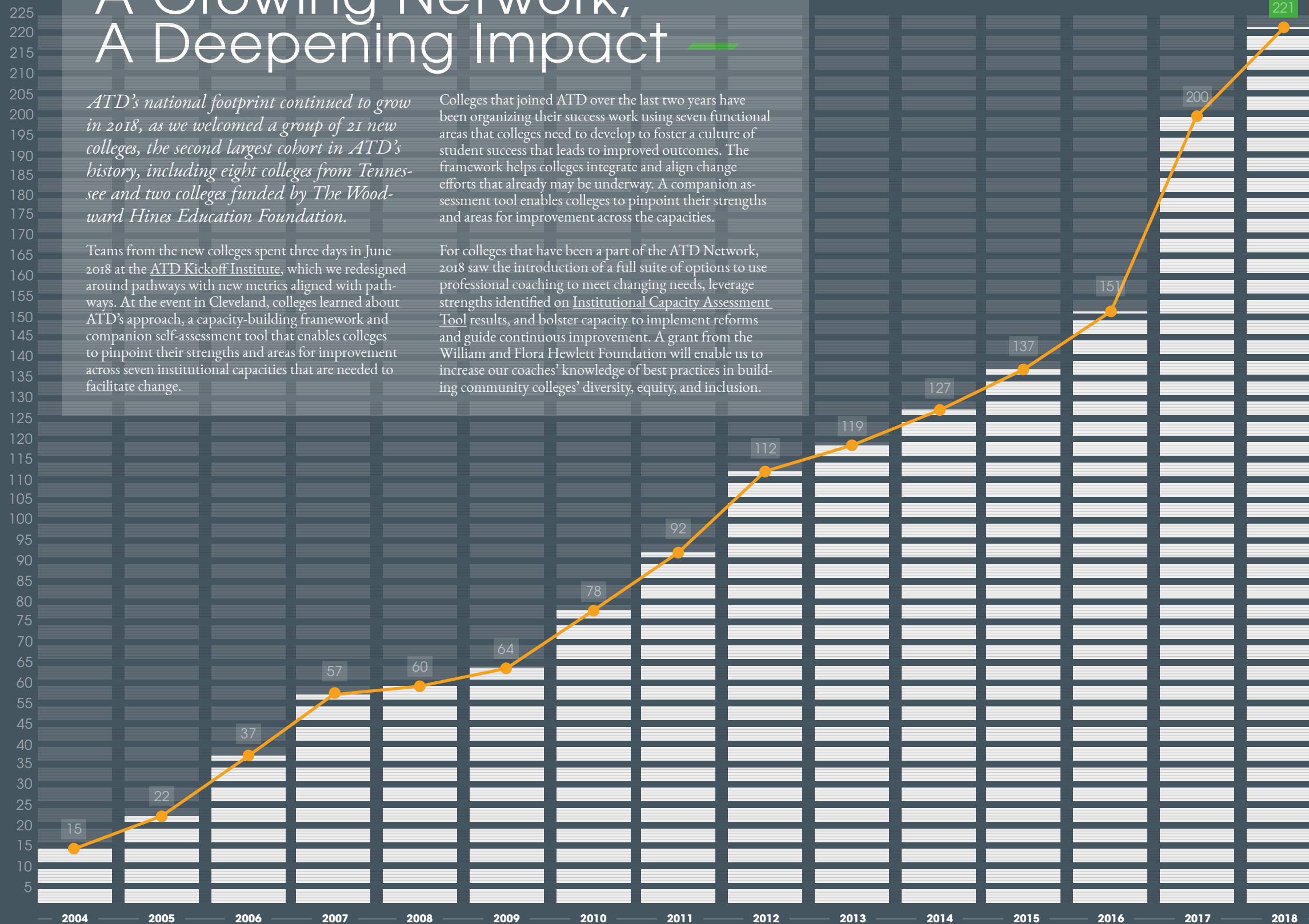
A Growing Network, A Deepening Impact

ATD's national footprint continued to grow in 2018, as we welcomed a group of 21 new colleges, the second largest cohort in ATD's history, including eight colleges from Tennessee and two colleges funded by The Woodward Hines Education Foundation.

Teams from the new colleges spent three days in June 2018 at the ATD Kickoff Institute, which we redesigned around pathways with new metrics aligned with pathways. At the event in Cleveland, colleges learned about ATD's approach, a capacity-building framework and companion self-assessment tool that enables colleges to pinpoint their strengths and areas for improvement across seven institutional capacities that are needed to facilitate change.

Colleges that joined ATD over the last two years have been organizing their success work using seven functional areas that colleges need to develop to foster a culture of student success that leads to improved outcomes. The framework helps colleges integrate and align change efforts that already may be underway. A companion assessment tool enables colleges to pinpoint their strengths and areas for improvement across the capacities.

For colleges that have been a part of the ATD Network, 2018 saw the introduction of a full suite of options to use professional coaching to meet changing needs, leverage strengths identified on Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool results, and bolster capacity to implement reforms and guide continuous improvement. A grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation will enable us to increase our coaches' knowledge of best practices in building community colleges' diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Chart — ATD Network Colleges by year:
- 2004: 15
- 2005: 22
- 2006: 37
- 2007: 57
- 2008: 60
- 2009: 64
- 2010: 78
- 2011: 92
- 2012: 112
- 2013: 119
- 2014: 127
- 2015: 137
- 2016: 151
- 2017: 200
- 2018: 221

Timeline:

2004 — ATD FOUNDED BY LUMINA FOUNDATION AND SEVEN PARTNERS

2009 — VALENCIA COLLEGE SELECTED AS INAUGURAL LEAH MEYER AUSTIN AWARD RECIPIENT

2010 — INDEPENDENT NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION, ACHIEVING THE DREAM, INC., IS INCORPORATED

2012 — ATD LAUNCHES PRESS FOR COMPLETION

2015 — ATD LEADS WORKING STUDENT SUCCESS NETWORK, WITH 23 ATD NETWORK COLLEGES INVOLVED

2017 — 33 TRIBAL COLLEGES JOIN ATD NETWORK

2018 — INTRODUCTION OF HOLISTIC STUDENT SUPPORTS & NEW COACHING MODEL

Leaders Among Peers

One of the benefits of participating in the Achieving the Dream Network is the opportunity to learn and grow from strong peer institutions. We recognize these institutions through the designation of Leader College status and the Leader College of Distinction introduced to the Network in 2018. The new Leader College of Distinction designation indicates that every person who is affiliated with the institution is committed to ensuring student success for all of its students and will be awarded in 2019.

THE FOLLOWING COLLEGES HAVE EARNED LEADER COLLEGE STATUS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 2018:

Anne Arundel Community College (MD)
Central Alabama Community College (AL)
Grayson College (TX)
Roane State Community College (TN)
Western Technical College (WI)
West Hills Lemoore (CA)

The Leah Meyer Austin Award is presented annually and recognizes ATD Network colleges that have demonstrated outstanding progress in designing a student-focused culture and aligning institutional strategies to promote student success. This year, two outstanding institutions, Odessa College and Texarkana College, received ATD's highest recognition for their exceptional progress in creating a student-focused culture.

ATD Network Colleges Earn National Recognition for Exceptional Work

The exceptional work of colleges in the Network has been increasingly recognized nationally and in May, eight ATD Network colleges were named Finalists for the prestigious Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence. These colleges included Alamo College District – Palo Alto College (TX), Broward College (FL), CUNY Kingsborough Community College (NY), Indian River State College (FL), Miami Dade College (FL), Odessa College (TX), Pierce College at Fort Steilacoom (WA), and San Jacinto College (TX). A number of these institutions are also winners of the Leah Meyer Austin Award, ATD's top national award.

The Aspen Prize, awarded every two years, recognizes outstanding student outcomes in four categories that include student learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings, and access and success for minority and low-income students.

What We Can Learn *about* Equity *from* TCUs —

Closing achievement gaps among students of different races, ethnicities, and financial backgrounds is a common goal that brings ATD Network colleges together. In accordance with our equity statement, we commit to offering students what they need to succeed. But determining how best to do that is perhaps the most difficult challenge we face.

Red Lake Nation College, Red Lake, MN

As we think about equity and look for solutions, the philosophy and experience of some of the ATD Network's newest colleges, the country's 35 tribal colleges and universities (TCUs), offer valuable lessons.

In the language of ATD's equity statement, TCUs "address structural inequities that are . . . the result of historic and systemic social injustices." In fact, TCUs could be called equity-by-design institutions based on their location, the students they serve, their physical design, their approach to serving students, and cost. Only 17 percent of Native Americans have an associate's degree or higher, although TCUs are working hard to address this. Like other colleges and universities in the U.S., their mission is to provide quality education to the students they serve and to serve their surrounding community. Unlike other institutions of higher education, however, TCUs have unique additional missions of cultural preservation and revitalization and tribal nation building.

TCUs are located in some of the poorest counties and serve one of the most historically underrepresented and poorest populations in the U.S. Approximately 85 percent of TCU students receive Pell Grants. The colleges and universities, which have existed since 1968 with the launch of Navajo Community College (now Diné College) in Arizona, are mostly found in rural areas on or near Indian reservations. They serve about 80 percent of Native American territory, providing, for many, the only access to higher education that allows students to remain in their communities. They are chartered by their own tribal governments with the exception of three, which are chartered by the Federal government.

Every aspect of the TCU student experience validates the cultural heritage of the majority student population. The effect creates an inclusive and welcoming environment where the risk of stereotype threat is low and cultural and contextual understanding is high. In short, the majority of students can see part of themselves in the campus, thus affirming their identity, self-esteem and potentially their confidence to succeed. The culturally responsive curriculum and teaching methods used by many faculty at TCUs is shown to further reinforce the development of identity.

Finally, TCUs take a holistic approach to serving Native American students by serving the mind, body, and spirit in ways that consider both cultural and social factors. They are high-touch institutions by nature. Living those values often requires a monumental effort by TCU faculty and staff given their scarce resources and the extensive needs of many of their students. High poverty, intergenerational trauma, lack of encouragement at home to pursue education, lack of adequate preparation for college, and family responsibilities require an all hands-on-deck approach at TCUs to address students' academic, social, and emotional learning issues.

While TCUs approach the ideal in addressing many aspects of equity for their students, TCUs are deepening their equity journey with a number of supports from Achieving the Dream, by examining the persistence and performance of various subgroups attending their institutions. In 2018, Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), new to the ATD Network in 2017, began their deep dive into understanding the importance and use of disaggregated data to identify at-risk students and target and evaluate interventions to improve outcomes among various subgroups of students. Through the work of the TCUs, ATD is learning more about how TCUs create conditions for the success of their students through intentional design and we've encouraged them to share their expertise within the ATD Network.

We will be incorporating lessons learned in our equity work in 2019.

A Focus *on* Teaching *and* Learning *in* Community College Redesign —

In November 2018, ATD President and CEO Dr. Karen A. Stout was invited to deliver the fifth annual W. Dallas Herring Lecture at the North Carolina State University College of Education. In her address, Dr. Stout made a bold and unapologetic call for community college leaders to place a greater emphasis on teaching and learning, around which "institutional reform is long overdue."

Dr. Stout laid out key guiding principles for community college leaders driving reform:

1. Supporting and rewarding reflective practice;
2. Establishing centers focused on teaching and learning at the crux of the college's organizational structure;
3. Designing centers to honor the diversity and range of experiences among faculty;
4. Meaningfully engaging part-time faculty; and
5. Making teaching and learning integral to efforts to make their institutions student-centered.

In her address, Dr. Stout stated, "By almost any measure, as community colleges, we are still not meeting our goals, particularly for low-income students and students of color who now make up most of the students at our nation's community colleges." According to Dr. Stout, there needs to be greater urgency for teaching and learning in institutional reform, and college leaders need to empower faculty to lead changes in pedagogy and student learning outcomes, and engage in advising in new and more relevant ways. She called for teaching to be made more dynamic and culturally responsive, while engaging and cultivating students' ownership of what they learn. Dr. Stout acknowledged that faculty need supports and incentives to enable them to teach and learn in new ways.

STUDENTS WHO USE OER FIND ENHANCED INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES, AS WELL AS SAVINGS

At the National OpenEd Conference in October, Achieving the Dream released a study examining implementation of ATD's Open Educational Resources (OER) Degree Initiative. The study found significant benefits to instruction and student learning experiences, as well as savings for students who used OER. The study indicated that, based on two years of implementation across a number of colleges, OER can be an important tool in helping more students, particularly low-income and underrepresented students, afford college, engage actively in their learning, persist in their studies, and ultimately complete. The research, conducted by SRI International and rpk GROUP, shows that OER content plays a role in helping strengthen instruction and learning across not just a few courses but entire degree pathways. The report is the second in a series and included new findings about students' perceptions of their OER courses and the institutional costs and actual student savings of OER degree pathways. Highlights from the report included:

- ATD's OER Initiative has spurred significant expansion of OER courses and enrollments at participating colleges.
- Students find OER materials more relevant, easier to navigate, and better aligned with learning objectives than traditional textbooks.
- Faculty see increased student engagement with OER materials.
- College leaders see OER degrees connected to other institutional strategic goals, including affordability, increased access and equity, decreased time to degree, and improved pedagogy.
- Students realize significant savings from use of free and open course materials, savings that can help them with financial challenges that might interfere with their ability to continue and succeed in their program of study.

Student Voice *is* Critical *to* Success —

Student success is at the core of Achieving the Dream's work. We're committed to incorporating student voice in our work, and to honoring students at ATD Network colleges who have succeeded in spite of the odds.

Our seven-person 2018 DREAM Scholar class (pictured on the cover) included two students from Tribal colleges in the Network. At the DREAM Conference in Nashville, ATD was pleased to award each DREAM Scholar a $1,000 scholarship, sponsored by the community college honor society Phi Theta Kappa.

The 2018 DREAM Scholar class (pictured on the cover) comprised students from seven colleges in five states including, for the first time, two students from Tribal colleges.

During DREAM, the students engage with ATD Network college leaders, share their educational experiences, and attend sessions on improving student success, institutional governance, teaching and learning, administration, and more. The DREAM Scholars' presentation allows them to share what they have learned about Network colleges' efforts to improve their students' success and completion and close achievement gaps for historically underserved student populations. The participation of DREAM Scholars is often cited as a highlight of the DREAM Conference. We will continue to find new ways to introduce student voice in an effort to further inform our work.

IN SUPPORTING STUDENTS, ATD CREATES A NEW SCHOLARSHIP

RaShayla Walker, a nursing student at Oklahoma's Rose State College, is the inaugural recipient of the Harvey Lincoln Scholarship Fund. Ms. Walker, an active community volunteer and campus leader, worked part-time as a clinical care specialist as she studied at Rose State. Like nearly 40 percent of community college parents, Ms. Walker persevered despite being a single mother.
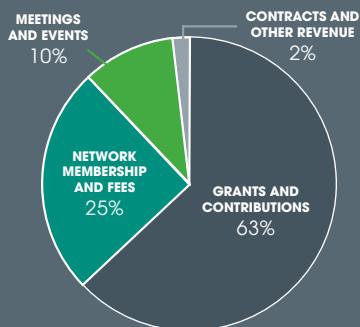

Senior Vice President Carol Lincoln and Harvey Lincoln Scholarship Fund recipient RaShayla Walker

An adult student, Ms. Walker started her college career in 2009 at Oklahoma City Community College but stopped out of college because of financial struggles. She returned to Oklahoma City Community College in 2012 and in 2013 was robbed at gunpoint. Ms. Walker continued to care for her two children, but made a promise to her younger brother who passed away in 2016. She said that her brother "would always tell me how he was so proud of me continuing to go to school and that he knew I would be an excellent nurse." Honoring this promise, Ms. Walker enrolled at Rose State in August 2017.

Ms. Walker continues to face financial hardship, but she expects to be the first person in her family to graduate from college. Her educational and career goals are to complete bachelor's and master's degrees so she can become a nurse practitioner. The Harvey Lincoln Scholarship Fund provides need-based scholarships for community college students who have persisted in their studies despite educational, personal, or financial obstacles and are attending Achieving the Dream Network colleges.
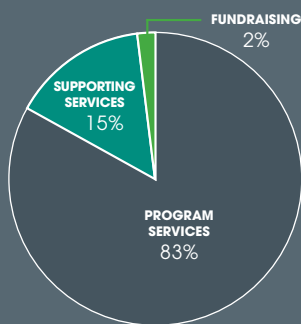
Financials —

Sources of Funds

- MEETINGS AND EVENTS 10%
- CONTRACTS AND OTHER REVENUE 2%
- NETWORK MEMBERSHIP AND FEES 25%
- GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS 63%

TOTAL: *$16,640,644*
FY 2018

Use of Funds

- FUNDRAISING 2%
- SUPPORTING SERVICES 15%
- PROGRAM SERVICES 83%

TOTAL: *$15,610,844*

Foundation Supporters

Achieving the Dream thanks the following foundations for supporting our work in FY2018 to help community college students achieve their goals for academic success, personal growth, and economic opportunity.

Ascendium Education Group

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

College Futures Foundation

Lumina Foundation

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The Kresge Foundation

The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust

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In 2018, we welcomed a new Board of Directors chair, Dr. Pam Eddinger, whose deep experience as a leader in the sector will help us advance our thinking about the next generation of supports that colleges will need to continue as they strive to improve student success on their campuses. We also recognized the leadership of founding Board chair Dr. Robert Templin with a resolution that conveys upon him the designation Board of Director Emeritus, effective with the end of his service on the ATD Board in June 2019.

"Growing up, I created *a* culture *of* doing more *than was* necessary, *and it* has always paid off."

Elda Pere
2018 DREAM Scholar
Bergen Community College

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