

December 15, 2020



Best Practices for Postsecondary Education in Prison Programs Released by Vera Institute of Justice

Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) has released a new Ascendium-funded report outlining common issues and best practices in setting up postsecondary education in prison programs across 10 key areas. Learn how Vera is providing resources to college and corrections agency administrators on how to improve these programs.

[Read more...](#)



COVID-19 Crisis and Transfer: What Institutions, Systems and States Can Do Today

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased attention given to transfer students and further exposed weaknesses within the college transfer system. With the current crisis, we support the need to build urgency around stronger and better transfer pathways and issue a call to action to institutions, systems and states for accelerating the development of these pathways. Ascendium-funded briefs recently produced by the Aspen Institute provide recommendations that can be implemented today to improve outcomes for transfer students, both in the short- and long-term.

[Read more...](#)

Bethany Miller Joins the Education Grantmaking Team

Join us in welcoming Bethany Miller to Ascendium's Education Grantmaking team as deputy director - learning & impact. In this newly established role, Bethany will provide opportunities for the team to purposefully strengthen our strategy and operations, as well as inform the field in support of greater impact for learners from low-income backgrounds.



[Read more...](#)



Giving Support to Our Local Community Throughout 2020

The extraordinary events of 2020 brought many challenges to all our communities. While our national philanthropy is focused on the power of education and training beyond high school to transform the lives of learners from low-income backgrounds, Ascendium recognized the need to be flexible and responsive in this time of crisis. As a result, we stepped up our local giving to help address this year's challenges. Learn more about how we supported several local community organizations this year.

[Read more...](#)

New Resources

Review Comprehensive Postsecondary Education in Prison Program Data

The Alliance for Higher Education Policy has issued a new report, **The Landscape of Higher Education in Prison 2018-2019**, that collects comprehensive data on postsecondary education in prison programs.



Learn More About Two of Our Focus Areas

Download the newly-released article collection **A College Lifeline: Higher education for incarcerated and rural students—and why it matters** from The Chronicle of Higher Education, as well as their **Market Primer: Educating the Incarcerated**.



Recent Grants

Support Rural Postsecondary Education and Workforce Training

Developing a National Rural Postsecondary Research Agenda Validation
Sova Solutions | \$120,000 | 11/2020 - 08/2021

This grant supports Sova Solutions in facilitating the creation of a Rural Research Working Group to develop a national rural postsecondary education research agenda. The agenda will outline key research questions for the field.

Streamline Key Learner Transitions

HBCU Degree Completion Pilot Exploration
Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Inc. | \$290,950 | 09/2020 - 08/2023

This grant supports the Thurgood Marshall College Fund in piloting an online college degree completion program for near-completer students at member Historically Black College and University (HBCU) Delaware State University, in partnership with Southern New Hampshire University.

HBCU Degree Completion Pilot Exploration
Delaware State University Foundation, Inc. | \$216,200 | 09/2020 - 08/2021

This grant supports the Delaware State University Foundation in piloting an online college degree completion program for near-completer students in partnership with Southern New Hampshire University and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund.

On the Go: Find Ascendium Staff in the Field

Ascendium Education Group has cancelled all staff travel plans until further notice due to COVID-19 concerns, but we are supporting and attending virtual events. We hope everyone stays safe and we look forward to participating in live events in the coming months. We will continue to share past virtual event recordings, resource links and future opportunities to connect with Ascendium staff.

- Global MindED**
Wednesday, December 2 (**recording**)
Toya Wall, panelist: "How Foundations and Funders Are Boldly Responding to COVID and 2020 Crises to Help the Most Vulnerable Populations"
- Grantmakers for Education**
January 7, 2021
Toya Wall, presenter, "The New Traditional Learner: Strategic Investment to Advance Incarcerated Student Success"

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