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### Changes in Education Philanthropy Support Evolving Needs of Learners from Low-Income Backgrounds

Ascendium's Education Philanthropy is adapting our organizational structure to meet the current and future needs of learners from low-income backgrounds. The promotion of two internal leaders to key positions will enhance our grantmaking strategy, tools, and partnerships. We are also hiring a deputy director of education grantmaking to oversee strategic grantmaking pipelines in one or more philanthropic focus areas.

[Read more...](#)



### New Initiatives Aim to Cut Early Student Dropouts by Increasing Connection

Studies have shown the benefits of connectedness and early momentum are especially strong for learners from low-income backgrounds. For the long-term academic wellbeing of these learners, it's essential for postsecondary education institutions to implement strategies to retain students from pre-enrollment through early course successes. Two new grants aim to help them do just that. [Read more...](#)



Courtesy of LaunchCode.

### Why Supporting Financial Aid Administrators Is Key to Unlocking Opportunities for Incarcerated Learners

The return of Pell Grants for incarcerated learners has the potential to dramatically expand who has access to postsecondary education. It also poses fresh challenges for financial aid administrators. That's why Ascendium is supporting the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators in providing technical assistance to financial aid officers and directors of prison education programs. [Read more...](#)

### New Resources

Our grant partners regularly create resources that benefit organizations focused on student success. These resources are published to our [Resource Library](#) often; here's what's new this month.

- [2023 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence](#) (Aspen Institute)
- [Learner Mobility and Transfer in Higher Ed](#) (Academic Intelligence)
- [Report of the New England Commission on the Future of Higher Education in Prison](#) (New English Board of Higher Education)
- [Rural Educator Academy Cohort 1 Report Briefs](#) (Community Colleges of the Appalachia Region)
- [Rural LISC Apprenticeship Toolkit](#) (Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC))
- [Second Chance Pell: Six Years of Expanding Higher Education Programs in Prison](#) (Vera Institute of Justice)

### Recent Grants

#### Remove Structural Barriers to Success

##### **Project Success Formative and Summative Assessment**

**Achieving the Dream Inc | \$400,000 | 07/2023 - 06/2026**

This grant supports Achieving the Dream in evaluating Project Success at its partner Tribal Colleges and Universities. The two-part assessment will provide critical lessons for Achieving the Dream, the participating institutions, and the broader field on implementing student-facing practices.

##### **Building a Movement to Implement Corequisite Models of Support in Illinois**

**Achieving the Dream Inc | \$750,000 | 06/2023 - 06/2025**

This grant supports the Partnership for College Completion in working with a cohort of Illinois colleges to implement developmental education reforms, as required by the Developmental Education Reform Act passed by the state legislature in 2021. Partnership for College Completion will support institutions in designing and implementing multiple measures placement practices and building capacity for continuous improvement through data literacy and change management.>

### On the Go: Find Ascendium Staff in the Field

We look forward to seeing you at upcoming virtual and in-person events.

#### **State Higher Education Executive Officers Association: 2023 SHEEO Higher Education Policy Conference**

Denver, CO

Aug. 7-10, 2023

#### **Correctional Education Association: 77<sup>th</sup> CEA International Conference & Training Event**

Portland, OR

Aug. 20-23, 2023

#### **Rise Up: Virtual Rise Up Conference 2023**

Sept. 6-8, 2023

#### **ECMC Foundation: 2023 Career and Technical Education (CTE) Leadership Collaborative Convening**

Denver, CO

Sept. 18-20, 2023

#### **Rural Community College Alliance: RCCA 2023 National Conference**

The Dalles, OR

Sept. 20-22, 2023

#### **The Communications Network: ComNet23**

Atlanta, GA

Sept. 20-22, 2023

#### **Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness: SREE 2023 Conference: Embedding Equity for Better Methods, Evidence, and Practice**

Arlington, VA

Sept. 27-30, 2023

#### **Excelencia in Education: Examples of Excelencia**


Washington, D.C.

Sept. 28, 2023

#### **Excelencia in Education: National Policy Forum**

Washington, D.C.

Sept. 29, 2023

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