



# News Release

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## **The College Board's CollegeKeys Compact™ Innovation Awards Recognize Exemplary Initiatives**

### **Special Recognition Given to Programs that Help Students from Minority and Low-Income Backgrounds Overcome Obstacles to College Success**

NEW YORK — The College Board has named outstanding education programs within each of its six regions as the winners of the second annual CollegeKeys Compact™ Innovation Awards. The winners initiated innovative and effective best practices to help minority and low-income students get ready for, get into and get through college.

“These institutions are creating and implementing programs to help more students prepare for and pursue a college education,” said College Board President Gaston Caperton. “Congratulations to this year’s CollegeKeys Compact Innovation Awards winners for leading the charge toward the common goal of a 55 percent graduation rate by 2025, and in giving our students the best possible opportunities to succeed in college and beyond.”

Exceptional initiatives in the categories of Getting Ready, Getting In and Getting Through are each eligible to receive a \$5,000 award to support the continuation and growth of their program and special recognition at College Board 2011 Regional Forum events.

The Southwestern regional recipient of the 2011 CollegeKeys Compact Innovation Awards was recognized at a special luncheon held at the College Board’s Southwestern Regional Forum in Austin on Feb. 10, 2011. The recipient of the award, by category, was:

- College Forward, Texas — Getting Through

The Innovation Awards celebrate some of America’s most powerful efforts to improve the academic success of students from low-income backgrounds. These institutions have instituted exemplary practices that can be replicated, adapted and expanded in other education settings. They can be used by educators, institutional leaders and policymakers to promote policies and practices that have a far-reaching impact for low-income students who need help to get ready for, get into and get through college.

“By recognizing these programs, we hope to inspire other institutions to continue to expand opportunities for low-income students to successfully prepare for, attend and complete college. We are committed to partnering with key stakeholders across the country to identify and remove barriers to success for underserved students,” said Ronald Williams, the College Board vice president who leads the CollegeKeys™ initiative.

The CollegeKeys Compact was launched in October 2007 following a two-year review of independent research, policy and practices in academic preparation and planning, admission, financial aid, and retention. A report issued by the College Board found that nearly one-half of all college-qualified low- and moderate-income high school graduates do not enroll in a four-year college program because of a combination of poor preparation, low expectations and financial barriers. The goal of CollegeKeys Compact partners is to see that students from low-income backgrounds are represented in, and graduate from, colleges and universities at the same rate as their more affluent peers.

The CollegeKeys Compact is also driven by College Board members' commitment to the belief that all underserved students have a right to an affordable, accessible and successful college experience. The Compact continues to invite all schools, colleges and universities to accept its call to action. The initiative proposes a number of possible activities, which include: creating partnerships to provide more mentors for young people; ensuring the availability of rigorous high school curricula; waiving the fees for college applications for these target students; educating administrators, counselors and teachers to understand the reality of financial aid needs; providing additional tutoring and supplemental instruction, as well as culturally relevant programming; and improving course alignment and acceptance agreements between two- and four-year institutions.

For more information about joining the CollegeKeys Compact or to learn more about the College Board Innovation Awards, please visit [www.collegeboard.com/collegekeys](http://www.collegeboard.com/collegekeys).

### **The College Board**

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of more than 5,900 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT<sup>®</sup> and the Advanced Placement Program<sup>®</sup>. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators and schools.

For further information, visit [www.advocacy.collegeboard.org](http://www.advocacy.collegeboard.org).

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