Portland’s Higher Education Agenda for the 21st Century

February 2008
Executive Summary

The Portland metropolitan area is the population center, the economic hub, and the cultural leader in our state. The future success of Portland and of Oregon as a whole is integrally tied to the availability of smart, creative, and knowledgeable citizens with the ability to understand both the domestic and international environment. An educated citizenry is increasing essential to the success of any city, state, or country in our global economy. Despite the rich endowment of education resources in the Portland area, questions about the adequacy, capacity, and coordination of the educational programs abound.

The Portland Higher Education Subcommittee was established by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education in 2007 to address these questions and to study Portland’s postsecondary education systems in order to develop recommendations to sharpen higher education strategies in this important metropolitan area. The Subcommittee, consisting of leaders from business, government, education, and the community, began with a review of all the postsecondary institutions operating in Greater Portland but chose to limit their initial focus to the public institutions offering programs and services in the area. The Subcommittee’s work is in no way an attempt to reinvent higher education in Portland. Rather, it is an opportunity to identify strengths and gaps and to improve the existing system by promoting collaborations between universities and community colleges. Collaborations featuring joint programs, research, and service will be the future hallmark of this endeavor.

Early in the Subcommittee process, three opportunity areas quickly rose to the top of the Subcommittee agenda: graduate programs and research, student affordability and access, and business, city, and community support for higher education.

- Does Portland higher education have the right mix of graduate programs and research excellence to meet the business and industry needs in our growing economy?
- Is postsecondary education accessible and affordable for all students?
- Can businesses, local governments, and communities strengthen higher education through better advocacy?

This report attempts to answer these questions and offers recommendations to help Portland realize our vision of a comprehensive higher education system featuring a high degree of program coordination, research collaboration, and service integration among all education sectors. This system, spearheaded by Portland State University as the Portland-based comprehensive university, ensures broad student access to higher education and excellence in curriculum and research that is embedded in Portland’s economic, social and cultural environment. It will utilize the capacities of Portland’s community colleges and the special strengths of OHSU and the other OUS system institutions to serve the higher education needs of the greater Portland area.

To make this vision a reality, we propose the following strategies with detailed recommendations in the body of this report:
- Raise Portland’s “IQ” by developing a collaborative multi-institutional Innovation Quarter (IQ) with the main OHSU and PSU campuses, the emerging South Waterfront district, and the historic Old Town district as its boundaries. Portland’s IQ will be anchored by OHSU, PSU, OSU, and UO but will provide opportunities for other institutions to collaborate in this endeavor.

- Build a new life science facility in the South Waterfront district featuring collaborative programs and research led by OHSU and PSU in partnership with OSU, OIT, UO and the Oregon Translational Research and Drug Discovery Institute (OTRA). This facility will provide a cooperative place for coordinated instructional programs, research, and business assistance opportunities.

- Create a national center for sustainability research in Portland by leveraging our reputation and expertise in this increasingly important sector. This new center will be incorporated into the Bio Economy and Sustainable Technologies (BEST) research center and will feature faculty from numerous institutions working with public and private collaborators on projects including but not limited to, green energy, sustainable transportation, green construction, recycling and waste reduction.

- Support current growth opportunities in Product Design programs, Materials, Metals, and Manufacturing initiatives, the Securities Analysis Center, the Metropolitan Knowledge Network, and Urban/Rural Connections Network.

- Coordinate student outreach in a more systemic manner to enhance access, affordability, and opportunities for current and future students, with a particular focus on outreach to K-12 students and historically under-represented populations.

- Strengthen business, local government, and community engagement in higher education. These groups must provide advice, advocacy, and financial assistance where possible to create a sustainable comprehensive higher education system in Portland.

Building a comprehensive higher education system based on the collaborative model that we recommend is a constant work in progress and requires cooperation and agility not typical of most higher education institutions. To be successful, we must promote a culture of cooperation that builds on the individual strengths of our existing institutions but recognizes the value of partnerships and collaborations within OUS, with other education providers and throughout our communities. A comprehensive higher education system in Portland can only be achieved if we fully realize the value of all the available resources. The whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts.
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Portland’s Higher Education Agenda for the 21st Century

Introduction

The future of Greater Portland and of Oregon is linked to education above all else. The Portland metropolitan area is the population center, the principal hub of economic activity, and the cultural leader of our state. Portland’s success in achieving its potential depends upon the availability of smart, creative, and knowledgeable citizens with the ability to understand a domestic and international environment; this in turn requires a quality education system with opportunities available to all. A comprehensive educational system generates ideas, enhances the region’s capacity to innovate and sustain economic vitality, guides urban growth, assures quality environmental conditions, and promotes cultural vitality.

Portland has a rich endowment of public postsecondary education resources, including Portland State University (PSU), Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU), Portland Community College (PCC), Clackamas Community College (CCC), and Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC). In addition, the Portland region is served by important programs from Eastern Oregon University (EOU), Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT), Oregon State University (OSU), and the University of Oregon (UO). The region also has many superb private colleges and universities including, University of Portland, Reed, Lewis and Clark, Concordia, Linfield, Pacific University, George Fox, Marylhurst, and Warner Pacific among others. In spite of this rich endowment of higher education resources, questions persist as to the adequacy, capacity and coordination of postsecondary programs in the region and the manner in which the area’s growing research needs can be best addressed to support a developing economy, a growing workforce, and the cultural amenities needed to serve a growing and increasingly diverse population.

As noted in the Oregon State Board of Higher Education 2007 Strategic Plan, An Investment in Oregonians for Our Future, the population in the Portland metropolitan area is expected to grow at almost double the statewide rate of growth over the next twenty years. This equates to an increase of approximately 700,000 new Portland residents by 2025. The Board’s strategic plan states:

For Portland, the need extends beyond simply accommodating population growth. As Oregon’s economic center, Portland depends on having a broad array of high quality college and university assets to support its vitality and global competitiveness, to provide access to university research and development, to provide continuing education for the knowledge economy workforce and to provide high quality post-secondary option for families of this growing population.

The Portland Higher Education subcommittee, consisting of leaders from business, government, education, and the community recognize that building a comprehensive higher education presence for Greater Portland is a constant work in progress. We recognize that we must build on the existing institutions and their strengths, but we must also make full use of partnerships and collaborations in order to take advantage of the growth opportunities that present themselves.
Creating a Vision for Higher Education in Portland

Our vision is to have a comprehensive higher education system in Portland that features a high degree of program coordination, systems and service integration among all education sectors, governments and businesses in the Metropolitan region. This system, spearheaded by Portland State University as the Portland-based comprehensive university, ensures broad student access to higher education, excellence in curriculum and research that is embedded in its economic, social and cultural environment. It will utilize the capacities of Portland’s community colleges and the special strengths of OHSU and the other OUS system institutions to serve the higher education needs of the greater Portland area. Through targeted investments, this collaborative model featuring a strong and unified higher education system focused on Portland’s strengths in life sciences, sustainability, student access and success, with strong advocacy from the area business leaders will ensure that Portland remains a creative, prosperous and sustainable city and that Oregon will be successful in today’s globally competitive environment.

We envision the creation of an Innovation Quarter (IQ) in Portland’s downtown that will feature OHSU, PSU, OSU and UO as its cornerstones, working closely with other educational providers in a coordinated and integrated manner. The creation of this innovation quarter will feature leading edge research, undergraduate and graduate programs and business incubation activities targeted to the needs of current and future Portland metro area business. This Innovation Quarter will raise Portland’s IQ by enhancing Portland’s higher education capacity and by attracting creative and talented people and clean and green businesses to the City and region. To make this vision a reality we recommend the following strategies:

1) Assert OHSU and PSU into leadership positions in the life and health sciences in collaboration with OSU, OIT and OTRADI. This initiative will include a catalytic investment in a new life science facility in the south waterfront area of Portland; complete with coordinated instructional programs, collaborative research, FDA approved drug development laboratories and clinical trial, and other business assistance programs. This facility will be LEED rated with research and demonstration capabilities that will serve as a magnet to attract bioscience and pharmaceutical industry partners to this neighborhood, thereby bringing additional high paying jobs to Portland.

2) Leverage Portland’s “green” reputation to build a national center for sustainability research in Portland that will include triple bottom line analysis (environmental, economic and social sustainability) to create a nexus for the next wave of business opportunities and a new way of life. This new center will feature faculty from numerous institutions working together via BEST with many public and private collaborators on projects, including but not limited to, green energy, sustainable transportation systems, green buildings, native landscaping, food industry practices, recycling and waste reduction, and storm water management. Working closely, these collaborators will develop capacity in multidisciplinary research, instruction, inclusive discussion, operational practices, and green collar company incubation to create and model a more sustainable way of life for all Oregonians and position Oregon as a world leader in this regard.
3) Take advantage of growth opportunities that enrich program and research excellence in Portland. We identified five current opportunities and offer our full support to the development of the UO Product Design Program, the PSU Materials, Metals, and Manufacturing Initiatives, the UO Securities Analysis Center, the Metropolitan Knowledge Network led by PSU, and the Urban/Rural Connections Network led by OSU and PSU. We encourage the “lead” campus in each of these initiatives to explore collaborations featuring joint programs and appointments as a means of strengthening the collaborative, comprehensive higher education system in Portland.

4) Create coordinated programs and services focused on student success that are integrated throughout all educational sectors: K-12, community colleges and public and private institutions of higher education. This initiative will be led by PSU and PCC in partnership with CCC and MHCC and will include coordinated outreach to involve students and faculty in middle- and high-schools working with postsecondary institutions in a more systematic manner to enhance access, affordability, and opportunities for all current and future students, with particular attention focused on historically under-represented populations, from every part of the metropolitan area.

5) Forge a compact among all participating educational institutions, government, and business leaders responsible to create the synergies and garner the political support and investment needed to accomplish this vision.

**Goals and Objectives**

We have outlined four goals to assist in achieving our vision. The goals are purposefully general at this stage to encourage discussion of how best to measure success. Quantifiable goals with interim targets will be developed in future committee work.

1) The Portland Innovation Quarter and participating institutions will be nationally and internationally recognized leaders in life sciences, sustainability, product design, materials and manufacturing, and securities analysis. Portland’s IQ will support existing businesses and attract new high paying employers to Portland. **Our goal is that Portland IQ will attract new industries and support business development in the metropolitan area.**

2) The Portland area will increased research capacity and knowledge generation sufficient to spawn new start-ups as well as to ensure the continued competitiveness of businesses and industries in the region. **Specifically, by 2025 Portland’s post-secondary institutions will significantly increase: a) annual externally sponsored research expenditures, b) the number of business start-ups, invention disclosures and licensing income, and c) graduate programs that are directly related to the research strengths and goals of the metropolitan region.**

3) Greater Portland will have accessible and affordable quality higher education services available to serve a growing and increasingly diverse population. We recognize that Oregon’s educational attainment rates are not meeting the demands of Portland’s growing and changing economy or the borderless, global workplace in which we now compete. **Our goal is to significantly increase the number of degrees produced annually in Portland by 2025 and for 40% of the population to have a two-year degree and 40% with a four-year degree by**
2025 with a particular focus on historically under-represented segments of the population and degree programs that will serve the workforce needs of the region.

4) We will enhance business and community engagement and partnerships with education in Greater Portland. **The goal is to increase the number of champions for higher education in the Portland region to help execute these strategies and to organize these champions into an external advocacy group to raise significant new resources from local, regional, federal, and private sources by the year 2025.**

Before listing specific strategies aimed at meeting these goals, it’s important to note that if higher education in Greater Portland is to fully realize its potential as an economic engine for Oregon, our proposed initiatives can only become a reality if institutions effectively deploy existing resources toward current priorities and the state and other partners invest new funding to create a strong foundation for all of Oregon higher education. Specifically, we must seek more resources to strengthen existing institutions by addressing the needs for more full-time faculty to ensure that student and curricular needs are served and maintained; adequate facilities are available to serve projected growth and to foster closer collaborations between universities, community colleges, and middle- and high schools as described below. With the above goals in mind, we recommend the following strategies to help accomplish these aspirations.

**Raising Portland’s IQ**

Portland is uniquely positioned in today’s economy with a national reputation in sustainability and institutions with strong life sciences programs. The emerging south waterfront area allows Portland the available land to develop an amazing new Innovation Quarter that showcases these strengths and makes Portland even more notable in these areas. Rather than forcing the merger of PSU and OHSU, we recommend building a collaborative multi-institutional Innovation Quarter in Portland’s downtown area with the main OHSU and PSU campuses, the emerging South Waterfront district and the historic Old Town district as the boundaries of this quarter. Portland’s IQ will be anchored by OHSU, PSU, OSU, and UO but will provide opportunities for other institutions who wish to collaborate in this endeavor.

The Innovation Quarter will raise Portland’s “IQ” by increasing higher education program, research, and service capacity in the city while creating a brand that will become a magnet to attract creative and talented people and businesses to Portland. The Innovation Quarter will feature three key areas of focus:

- **Innovation** – rethinking of the ways things are done and assisting Portland and Oregon adapt to the changing paradigm;
- **Synergies and collaborations** – while many cities and states may have more resources, in Portland and Oregon, we have the ingenuity and ability to work together to leverage capacities of multiples players for the benefit of the whole; and
- **Technology transfer and jobs** – this innovation quarter will help Portland create new technologies and employment for its citizens, thereby fostering economic development opportunities for the entire state.
Furthermore, the new light rail bridge planned for this area will facilitate closer connections with the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) and PCC, spanning the Willamette to create a nexus on both sides of the river and allowing other partners to play an important role in this concept. Creating Portland’s IQ will allow Oregon to distinguish itself nationally and build regional and national strengths in strategic industry clusters important to Oregon’s future economy. To jumpstart the Portland IQ concept we recommend the following initial foci.

**South Waterfront Life Sciences Facility**

An important first step in creating Portland’s IQ is constructing a collaborative instruction, research, and incubation center in the South Waterfront area. Locating PSU’s life science programs - among other institutional programs - in a South Waterfront facility creates opportunities for faculty from the participating institutions to collaborate more closely, creating synergies and opportunities for Portland and Oregon. Furthermore, locating PSU’s science programs in the South Waterfront will resolve some of PSU’s land constraints and begin to cement the vision of an exciting Innovation Quarter in the minds of the public.

The collaborative facility will promote better program and research cooperation among OHSU, PSU life sciences, OSU Pharmacy, UO research, and OIT medical technology programs. Locating these collaborative entities in one facility/area will ensure better program planning, alignment and coordination and will allow faculty from different institutions and disciplinary affiliations to interact with one another and to collaborate on integrated research projects in a mutually beneficial manner. Co-location can also facilitate shared administrative services due to the economies of scale created by centralizing these activities. The South Waterfront facility will create the critical mass needed to distinguish this area as a part of Portland’s IQ. Possible areas of focus include: life sciences, biomedical engineering, pharmacy/drug development, public health, biomedical informatics, bioactive compounds, astrobiology, nanomedicine, and other life sciences concepts.

This new facility can also be used as a means to strengthen and expand health/medical pipeline programs for K-12 and undergraduate students at all area colleges and universities. Creating healthcare and medical pipeline programs will allow colleges and universities to better align curricula, thereby providing Oregon students with an opportunity for pre-admission to medical and healthcare programs. These programs are designed to ensure students are academically prepared to pursue graduate education in healthcare professions. Developing collaborative programs and aligning curricula at PCC, MHCC, CCC, OIT, PSU, UO, OSU, and OHSU can streamline the workforce development and educational programs needed to produce more health care workers to serve the growing needs throughout the state. Many of the area’s private colleges and universities are also contributors of health/medical programs and graduates and need to be engaged in strengthening this pipeline. This initiative will include a modest program request to logically align curricula to facilitate more, better and faster graduates with the requisite credentials necessary to begin a successful career in health care and facilitate lifelong learning and career progression. Direct healthcare education budget requests will flow through the OHSU budget.

A collaborative South Waterfront facility could also provide space for a FDA approved drug production facility and incubator space complete with clinical trial assistance for start-up biomedical/bio-technical companies. The Oregon legislature recently made a significant investment in the Oregon Translational Research and Drug Development Institute (OTRADI). An FDA approved production facility will help OTRADI move discoveries even further before partnering with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. The collaborative facility could also be used to
explore potential research collaborations with OHSU Dietetics and Nutrition and OSU nutrition and agricultural programs. Food processing and agriculture was identified as “one of the most diverse” industry clusters in the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department’s *Oregon Industry Clusters, A Statistical Analysis* and the food industry represents a significant connection between rural and urban Oregon.

In accordance with gubernatorial directives, this collaborative facility should be a LEED certified building that utilizes the latest technologies and design principles to be as sustainable and as close to “net zero” energy consumption as is economically practical. The facility should also possess capability for applied sustainability research and demonstration projects.

**Portland’s and Oregon’s Green Reputations**

Another important focus of Portland’s IQ must be sustainability. Today, this area is well served by public transportation, including bus, streetcar, tram and soon light rail, thereby contributing to the sustainability recommendations and shared service arrangements outlined below. Working through the model established by the BEST initiative we recommend the following initiatives.

Building on Portland’s and Oregon’s green reputations, a legacy started by former Governors McCall and Straub more than forty years ago, we recommend the creation of a national center for sustainability research such that Oregon becomes internationally recognized for research and development in this important sector. This includes areas such as excellence in student learning, innovative research, and community engagement that simultaneously helps Portland and Oregon achieve economic vitality, environmental health, strong families, and communities and stakeholder involvement in the process. However, it also will include the foundation of the nexus for the next wave of business innovation and a new way of life for all.

Investment is needed to add faculty and to fund other initiatives to more fully develop core multidisciplinary research competencies in key sustainability areas related to pressing real world problems. Areas of focus include the following: intelligent transportation systems, integrated water resource management, sustainable urban design and community development, sustainable business processes and practices, green science and technology development, environmental law, sustainable public policy development and management, social equity, and green collar company incubation. This investment should be comprised of two segments: one to provide the base level of support needed to fund the basic infrastructure this center will need to sustain its operations and supplemental funding targeted to specific research initiatives.

Starting in Portland’s newly conceived Innovation Quarter, we recommend the development of sustainable physical campuses as a model for others to emulate and as a means to educate the public about the benefits of sustainable designs. A “first step” in this initiative is to create an inventory of related initiatives currently underway and develop a gap analysis to identify new initiatives. Projects involving green energy, sustainable transportation systems, green buildings, native landscaping, food industry practices, recycling and waste reduction, and storm water management are just a few examples of areas where higher education can demonstrate sustainable practices. Working closely with many public and private collaborators we recommend developing capacity in multidisciplinary research, instruction, inclusive discussion, and operational practices to create and model a more sustainable way of life for all Oregonians.
Portland has the sustainable development base, green building inventory, and reputation to jump start this initiative by building photovoltaic solar power arrays, wind power capabilities and other sustainable energy systems in as many college and university facilities as is feasible. This initiative is consistent with Governor Kulongoski’s direction that state agencies use 100% renewable energy by 2010. We also encourage OIT’s Klamath Falls campus to use its available geothermal resources to take the necessary steps to become the nation’s first “net zero” campus in American as part of this national center on sustainability. These initiatives, along with the inventory of other sustainable practices noted above, can serve as demonstration projects that can both educate the public as to their benefits and provide living laboratories that faculty and students can work within and study. Further, this “green” initiative can be used as leverage by the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department (OECDD), City of Portland, Portland Development Commission (PDC) and other economic development entities in the metropolitan area to recruit more green businesses to Portland.

The subcommittee also recommends that business incubation activities, currently underway at PSU, OHSU, and OIT, be expanded to include a specific focus on assisting “green collar” companies. Many members of the “creative class,” including many people who are highly educated, yet currently underemployed, have been attracted to Portland by its livability and culture. These individuals possess a significant amount of creative energy and good ideas that if focused can become a significant economic engine for Portland and Oregon. Thus, a “green” incubator can assist individuals with good, yet fledgling, ideas to become the employers of the future for Portland, while maintaining the “clean and green” ideals being sought.

In addition to the life sciences and sustainability recommendations listed above, several other strategic opportunities we revealed during the subcommittee process. In accordance with our charge to “take advantage of the growth opportunities that present themselves,” we offer our support for the following additional initiatives to help realize the vision of a comprehensive educational system in Portland.

**Product Design**

In today's economy design is emerging as a critical economic engine in Oregon both in the physical elements produced by companies like Nike and in products that provide interface with digital technologies such as those produced by Intel. These companies along with emerging product/industrial design businesses will shape the physical and cultural landscape of the next century and will demand even more contributors who must be educated in design theory and practice at the scale of products. Design will play an increasingly important role in Portland's future, both as a place which utilizes large numbers of product designs and as a center for companies that focus on product design as their strength.

The Product Design Program led by UO will offer a BA/BS degree in Material and Product Studies in Eugene, and a BFA degree in Portland in Product Design, both beginning in Fall 2008. UO currently offers several important programs that enrich Portland higher education offerings and the development of a design program is a great addition. The Product Design Program will provide a thorough grounding in the use, invention, and production of manufactured goods and will be based in the history and practice of interior architecture, design, and visual arts disciplines. Students will study both material and theoretical aspects of product design, manufacturing, and design research.
Materials, Metals, and Manufacturing

Manufacturing remains an important part of Oregon’s economy. Despite national declines in manufacturing employment, Oregon manufacturing jobs have increased since 2004. Oregon manufacturers have made great strides in productivity, adding value to products in ways that allow them to compete globally. To remain competitive, Oregon manufacturers need access to raw materials, skilled craftsmen, innovative business professionals, and new engineering and applied technologies to produce goods and services.

Portland higher education is a critical partner in increasing the capacity for manufacturing innovation through research in materials and metals and training a manufacturing industry workforce. To strengthen that partnership, PSU is expanding its manufacturing research capacity by creating three new senior faculty positions, strategically aligned with industry need, and acquiring three new pieces of laboratory equipment. As these positions and equipment are brought online, additional investment in laboratory space, support staff, and research grants may be necessary.

Securities Analysis Center

Portland, Oregon has become the focus for money management at a scale not before known in the Pacific Northwest. The UO Securities Analysis Center (SAC) capitalizes on this strength, giving students access to some of the finest minds, best financial practices, and most innovative companies in the world. Because Oregon is home to a variety of companies that are involved in Pacific Rim trade, corporate growth, and money management, students have access to training in international accounting, finance and corporate management principles that will be relevant for years to come. In addition, students will build their experiential portfolio through a host of opportunities within the business community that combine real world experience and in-depth scholarship. Oregon companies that affiliate with the SAC will reap the benefit of its close proximity, world class programs, and international impact across borders.

The UO SAC promotes excellence in research and provides experiential learning opportunities for students. Center graduates are distinguished by their theoretical and experiential expertise and their understanding of the complexities inherent in securities markets that cross international boundaries. Research sponsored by the Center is on the cutting edge of financial, accounting, and management analysis and scholarship. Fundamental to the success of the Securities Analysis Center will be its relevance across borders - whether those borders are between traditional financial and accounting disciplines or geographically diverse economic sectors.

Important Next Steps

1) Explore cooperative mechanisms that simultaneously facilitate and support the research activities of both PSU and OHSU. Potential benefits of cooperation include:

   a. Added expertise including business and industry leaders, venture capitalists, intellectual property attorneys, etc.;
   b. Greater flexibility with regard to faculty compensation, intellectual property development, industry partnerships, etc.;
   c. Fewer barriers in collaborative, multi-institutional endeavors; and
   d. Better synergies and efficiencies in research administration.
2) Discuss strategies with the following business groups and incorporate their views and needs into these recommendations: BEST, OTRADI, the OUS Research Council, PDC, the Workforce Investment Board, the Oregon Business Council (OBC), the Portland Business Alliance (PBA), Associated Oregon Industries (AOI), Green Light Greater Portland and CEOs of our city, among others.

3) Explore potential collaborations between the PSU School of Fine and Performing Arts and Department of Theatre Arts at SOU.

**Affordability and Access**

In our global economy, a college degree is increasingly important to ensure success. However, today in Portland there are growing numbers of families living at or below the poverty level – severely limiting their ability to afford college. Of every 100 Oregonian students entering the ninth grade, only 69 graduate from high school four years later. Approximately 35% matriculate to college and only 15% earn a college degree. In Portland Public Schools, 85% of all students meet third grade reading and math benchmarks. As students progress through Portland’s K-12 system, a learning gap among the various socioeconomic and ethnic student groups becomes evident. By eighth grade, approximately 80% of all white students meet reading and math benchmarks in Portland school districts but only 50% of African American students and 35% of Latinos meet the same benchmarks. By tenth grade, the gap widens further with 70% of white students reaching benchmarks compared to 35% of African American and Latino students. This learning gap results in 34% of white students graduating college compared with 18% of African-American and 11% of Latino students.

To break this cycle, Greater Portland must do a much better job of providing access for its residents, particularly those who are low-income or minorities. An education can bring powerful changes for individuals, thus it is tantamount that we give everyone an opportunity to obtain an education if they are so inclined. To assist individuals in this regard we are suggesting the creation of an Inter-College Access Network also known as the “I CAN” initiative. This initiative will assist individuals who may not think that they have the opportunity to pursue an education to do so. It will consist of outreach to middle- and high-school students by professionals who represent both community college and higher education institutions so that students can increasingly say, “I can get an education,” or “I can become a doctor, engineer, welder or technician.” These outreach professionals will work with students to enlighten available opportunities, assist in completing applications for admission and financial assistance, and otherwise to ensure that these students become prosperous members of society. We recommend three immediate strategies and several important “next steps” to achieve our 2025 goals of having 40% of the population earn a two-year degree and 40% earn a four-year degree.

**Affordability**

The adoption and funding of the Shared Responsibility Model (SRM) are very positive first steps towards increasing affordability. Now we must work with the state and other partners to create a regional marketing campaign to advertise these opportunities and to seek the final installment of funding needed for this important program. We must also engage our community based organizations, led by the United Way and the ASPIRE program, in publicizing these opportunities and assisting students through the application processes. This marketing program must be targeted
to prospective student populations who are most in need, or who may not otherwise view higher education as an option. This program should be aspirational and must contain an emotional appeal to these individuals in order to change their psychological disposition regarding higher education.

In addition to marketing the SRM, we recommend working with foundations and the business community to raise sufficient funds to provide tuition support to cover the student’s share of the SRM for two years at a Greater Portland community college or university for students who could otherwise not afford to attend. Due to the magnitude of funding needed to implement this concept, strong public/private partnerships coupled with prioritization aimed at students pursuing higher education needed for “demand occupations” or other criteria may be a necessary part of a phased approach.

**Access**

Greater Portland is a very large and diverse geographic area with a growing population and increasing demands for higher education programs and services. As we seek to accommodate 700,000 more residents to Greater Portland in the next 20 years and increase the number of post-secondary degrees, it is not realistic to assume that all these students can be accommodated by a few entities in a single or small number of locations. We must find a means of delivering higher education services at convenient locations throughout the metropolitan region in a systematic and sustainable manner. In addition, we must find better ways of ensuring that community colleges’ and universities’ efforts are more closely aligned to serve the diverse educational needs of Portland. These entities must work together to align applications, systems, and curricula to better serve the needs of today’s lifelong learners.

Many of today’s students simultaneously interact with both community colleges and universities, despite the numerous obstacles they encounter in the process. To be successful in meeting the educational needs of Portland, these systems must be streamlined and more closely coordinated around students needs. PSU, working with its partners in OUS, must take the lead in forging a more meaningful relationship with community colleges. The discussions that started under the leadership of former President Bernstine must be continued and expanded.

Four-year degrees must be affordable, convenient and accessible to people living and working throughout the greater Portland area. In the late 18th century Thomas Jefferson said that higher education must be within a day’s horseback ride of all Americans. In Portland in the 21st century, our goal should be to make higher education available within a 20 minute Tri-Met ride of all Portland metropolitan residents. To accomplish this, we recommend making high-demand four-year degree programs available at community college campuses and centers throughout Portland. EOU, OIT, PSU and other institutions already offer programs at various community colleges throughout Portland. However, many of these endeavors have not been sustainable. To be successful these university centers must have four components:

1) Sufficient student demand in specific program areas to form financially viable student cohorts;
2) Adequate numbers of qualified faculty available in the locations where there is student demand;
3) Adequate faculties and other ancillary support functions necessary to serve the student and faculty needs in these locations at the appropriate times of day; and
4) A financial model that provides sufficient financial rewards and incentives to all parties who collaborate in delivering these programs, yet allow the programs to be priced reasonably so as to not thwart demand.

**Early Outreach**

In order to ensure that all residents of the metropolitan area are aware of opportunities that higher education can provide and to increase participation of historically underrepresented groups we recommend better outreach to middle and high school students in new and different ways.

Greater outreach is needed to:

- a. Assist middle school and high school faculty with curriculum development;
- b. Create opportunities to bring students to campuses; and
- c. Provide information to students, parents, counselors, and faculty about programs, careers, financial aid, college experiences, etc.

The University of California academic preparation and K-14 improvement efforts ¹ may provide valuable model as we move this initiative forward. Their programs are aimed at bolstering academic performance in California's schools and better preparing students for college. Using Portland as a test case, we recommend establishing demonstration schools in the metropolitan area to pilot these programs. These schools should contain large populations of students who are historically under represented in higher education. This outreach effort should include a career development plan offered to ninth graders so they can learn how higher education creates a pathway to the jobs they desire. After achieving measurable success at these demonstration schools, we recommend expanding these programs to other schools around the state. Expansion needs to remain prioritized based on population demographics in order to target schools with large populations of students who historically do not continue their education beyond high school.

**Important Next Steps**

1) Expand opportunities for high school students to enroll in dual enrollment/credit programs. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways through Challenge/Link and advanced placement programs or through other collaborative endeavors that will allow high school students to garner college credit while in high school.

2) Work collaboratively with other higher education partners to find more effective ways to educate today’s teachers so they can effectively motivate students to complete their high school degrees, thereby solidifying the promise of continuing on to college and more rewarding, better paying jobs. As noted above, Portland’s high school drop-out rates are alarming, suggesting that significant reforms are needed. Most K-12 teachers and administrators who work in Portland were educated in Oregon universities.

3) Invest more in student service areas by hiring additional advisors, counselors, tutors and other student services and support staff to recruit students and assist them once they arrive on campus. Greater support staff can also free faculty to spend more time in mentoring or other value-adding activities that can also help contribute to student success. Over the last fifteen years,

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¹ For additional information see: [www.universityofcalifornia.edu/collegeprep/welcome.html](http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/collegeprep/welcome.html)
student services offered at many Oregon colleges and universities have been reduced as institutions coped with budget reductions and other funding realities. These reductions are directly reflected in reduced participation, retention, and completion rates. As Oregon’s competitiveness relies on higher educational attainment, this trend must be reversed.

4) Work with private colleges and universities in Greater Portland to strengthen teacher education.

5) Work with K-12 public school superintendents in the greater Portland area (Portland Public, Reynolds, David Douglas, Parkrose, Centennial, Gresham-Barlow, Beaverton, Hillsboro, Forest Grove, Banks, etc.) to obtain their input and support for these goals and recommendations.

Enhance Business, Local Government and Community Engagement

We cannot afford to simply rely on state, federal and student funding to support our higher educational institutions in Portland. We must have greater commitment and engagement from the business community, local government, and the greater Portland community if we want to achieve the goals articulated in this report. These entities must provide advice, advocacy, and financial assistance where possible in new and meaningful ways for this plan to succeed. At the same time, higher education entities in Portland must work in a more cohesive and coordinated manner to serve the needs of these same entities. Working together we can leverage the synergies needed to make the whole greater than the sum of its parts. The following recommendations are aimed at strengthening the relationship between Portland higher education and the businesses, governments, and communities we aim to serve.

Strategic Partners Office

One of the barriers to successfully serving the business community is the absence of a central contact point for businesses to connect to higher education resources. Creating a Strategic Partners Office will help link businesses to leading edge resources in Oregon higher education, applying faculty know-how, specialized facilities, and student talent to such goals as new product development, improved competitiveness, and transformation of industrial processes.

With its in-depth knowledge of faculty expertise, research initiatives, and academic programs, the Strategic Partners Office can easily identify the resources businesses need and make the right connections to develop successful collaborations. We envision staff from this office working closely with major employers throughout the metropolitan area in an effort to ascertain their needs and match these needs with faculty expertise and facilities available throughout Oregon. Some of the higher education resources available to businesses but woefully underutilized are:

**Faculty:** Many outstanding research faculty and other professionals work in Oregon higher education. These faculty members have experience with finding practical, real-world solutions to complex interdisciplinary problems. They can help businesses identify and reach long-term goals. In addition, faculty can craft education and training programs custom tailored to specific business needs.

**Research:** Oregon’s research programs bring interdisciplinary skills to bear on complex challenges. The solutions they have developed – or may develop – can help a company improve its competitive edge.
Facilities: Oregon’s research institutions operate cutting edge facilities to support its research program. These unique facilities are available for corporate R&D efforts and provide a strategic advantage for Oregon businesses.

Students: Oregon’s 200,000 graduate and undergraduate students learn to become problem-solvers and innovators in top-ranked academic programs. Oregon students are in great demand and remain our most valuable asset in building a sustainable Oregon economy.

Networking
Universities are a great resource to policy makers and business and community leaders. They provide economic, demographic, and social data coupled with analysis to facilitate informed decision making. During the subcommittee process, two specific examples of these types of resources were identified. We strongly support the development of these two networks and offer them as examples of higher education’s service to the community.

The Metropolitan Knowledge Network will offer analysis of pressing issues facing the region. It will help users see how issues like economic growth, demographic change, school funding, and crime affect different parts of the region. It can also help users understand the relationships between trends in public finance, economic development, public attitudes, and the quality of public services. The network will include data about a variety of issues, packaged in a way that allows users to look at it the way they need, and explained in a way that helps them understand how trends shape our region.

Potential users include policy makers trying to understand the facts behind important economic and social issues; researchers who need easy access to datasets formatted in a similar fashion; and nonprofits needing to articulate the need for and impact of their work in our community. The Metropolitan Knowledge Network will offer more than raw data. The network will include a variety of tools for understanding that data, including: Policy briefs that improve understanding of the trends and issues shaped by the data and describe the issue from a variety of angles, Tables that allow comparisons of different parts of our region, Maps that show data spatially, Interactive charts that visualize the relationships among variables, and Data notes to help interpret and use the data correctly.

The Urban/Rural Connections Network is focused on the connection between urban and rural Oregon. Its goal is to identify, strengthen, and leverage connections between urban and rural economies, environment and communities. Oregon’s revenue sharing system means that the performance of one part of the state’s economy affects the others. Since communities across Oregon share many of the same challenges and opportunities, it’s vital to find common interests and to strengthen and support common bonds. As a whole, a vital Oregon means urban and rural communities that benefit from connections with each other’s economies, social attributes, and environmental health. The Urban/Rural Connections Network will coordinate and enhance existing research and service taking place around the state. The outcomes of the network will be better connections between our urban and rural communities, coupled with data and research that identifies new environmental, social, and economic opportunities to connect Oregon communities.

Program Coordination
There are many entities (both public and private) in Greater Portland delivering higher education programs and services to the people of the metropolitan area. Thus, one challenge is to coordinate
these efforts to ensure that there is adequate consideration given to meeting the diverse needs for higher education programs and services in Portland. Currently five separate governing boards oversee the public higher education institutions delivering programs and services in Portland. These boards include: OHSU, OUS, PCC, MHCC and CCC. In addition, multiple private institutions and multiple public K-12 systems serving Greater Portland operate with unique governance structures. Thus, today multiple governing entities try to serve the educational needs of the Portland metropolitan area with very little coordination between and among these entities. To address this disconnect, we recommend establishing a coordinating entity charged with systematically assessing the higher education needs and reviewing coordination of programs and services, including outreach efforts to K-12, in the Greater Portland area.

**Higher Education Advocacy**

Greater Portland higher education needs a more effective advocacy structure to represent the needs of higher education in various fora. Any advocacy group would need to be separate and distinct from OUS, comprised of champions who advocate for funding and other support needed to advance the goals contained in this report. An advocacy group could also make the case generally for the value of an educated citizenry for the betterment of society as well as for the economic development needs of the Portland metropolitan area and the State writ large.

**Important Next Steps**

1) Share these strategies with the following business groups and incorporate their views and needs into these recommendations: the PDC; the Workforce Investment Board, AOI, the OBC, the PBA, Green Light Greater Portland, and CEOs of our city, among others.

2) Coordinate this set of proposals with the City of Portland’s Long-Term Planning process and with Metro’s planned update of their 2040 plan.

3) Meet with local elected officials and our Congressional delegation to explore local, regional, and federal funding strategies to supplement State budget requests.

4) Work with private colleges and universities in Greater Portland to build better connections to the business community and explore program coordination.

**Conclusion**

The future of Greater Portland and Oregon is indeed linked to education. However, the higher education community cannot bear this responsibility alone. Leaders from government, the community, higher education, and business and industry must work together to create a better future for all Oregonians. We stand ready to do our part.
## Subcommittee Roster

### Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jim Francesconi, Chair</td>
<td>Oregon State Board of Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sam Adams</td>
<td>Commissioner of Public Utilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Edlen</td>
<td>Principal, Gerding Edlen Development Co.</td>
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<td>Lesley Hallick</td>
<td>Provost, Oregon Health &amp; Sciences University</td>
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<td>Tom Imeson</td>
<td>Public Affairs, Port of Portland</td>
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<td>Marvin Kaiser</td>
<td>Dean, PSU College of Liberal Arts and Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Josh Kardon</td>
<td>Chief of Staff, Senator Ron Wyden</td>
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<td>Roy Koch</td>
<td>Provost, Portland State University</td>
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<td>Preston Pulliams</td>
<td>President, Portland Community College</td>
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<td>Nan Poppe</td>
<td>Campus President, Portland Community College</td>
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<td>Patricia Martinez-Orozco</td>
<td>Executive Director, Council for Hispanic Advancement</td>
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<td>John Minahan</td>
<td>President, Western Oregon University</td>
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<td>John Morgan</td>
<td>President and CEO, HemCon</td>
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<td>Tim Nesbitt</td>
<td>Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of Governor Kulongoski</td>
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<td>Allan Price</td>
<td>Vice President, Advancement University of Oregon</td>
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<td>Sabah Randhawa</td>
<td>Provost, Oregon State University</td>
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<td>Mark Rosenbaum</td>
<td>Chair, Portland Development Commission</td>
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<td>Brent Stewart</td>
<td>President and CEO, United Way of Portland</td>
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<td>Nohad Toulan</td>
<td>Dean Emeritus, PSU College of Urban and Public Affairs</td>
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<td>David Woodall</td>
<td>Provost and Acting President, Oregon Institute of Technology</td>
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<td>Patricia McDonald</td>
<td>Vice President, Technology and Manufacturing Group, Intel</td>
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<td>Eric Parsons</td>
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<td>Tim Boyle</td>
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<td>Peter Bragdon</td>
<td>Vice President and General Counsel, Columbia Sportswear</td>
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<td>Joanne Truesdell</td>
<td>President, Clackamas Community College</td>
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<td>Gary Murph</td>
<td>Interim President, Mt. Hood Community College</td>
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<td>Linda Brady</td>
<td>Provost, University of Oregon</td>
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<td>Robert Packard</td>
<td>ZGF Architects, LLP</td>
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### Resources

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<td>Sheila Martin</td>
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<td>George Hough</td>
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<td>Thomas Potiowsky</td>
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<td>Jane Ames</td>
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### Staff

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<td>Charles Triplett</td>
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<td>Melanie Bennett</td>
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