

May 24, 2007

EPI And TG Release Effective Practices in Student Success (EPSS) Database

SAN ANTONIO, TX - The Educational Policy Institute, a non-profit research center devoted to the study of educational opportunity, and TG have jointly released a new web-based tool to provide strategies for improving student success for postsecondary institutions.

The Effective Practices in Student Success (EPSS) database is the result of a year-long process of collecting information about what works in student retention and success. The EPSS, which is a free resource for institutions of higher education, was unveiled in San Antonio at RETENTION 2007, EPI's annual international conference devoted to student success in postsecondary education.

"We conduct several conferences and workshops on student retention each year," EPI President Dr. Watson Scott Swail said. "The question we get most from participants is, 'what do we do? It's not a trivial question, but there are very few repositories of information to help these people. With the help of TG, we have designed a tool to help these professionals."

The EPSS allows schools to search a database of 150 programs by geography, institutional level and selectivity, and a variety of other variables to find strategies that may work at their institution. Additionally, the EPSS solicits programs to enter their information, which are peer reviewed before being added to the database. Each program must have some empirical evidence of success to be included in the EPSS.

"We are keenly interested in any program that helps students stay in school and succeed. We know that first-generation students, especially, need support to overcome the obstacles they face to stay in school," said Sue McMillin, TG president and CEO. "This is important because we also know that students who succeed in college get better jobs than those who do not, and also are much less likely to default on student loans."

A study conducted in 2003 found that 22 percent of students who borrowed for higher education but did not finish their degree defaulted on their loan obligation, compared to 2 percent of students who graduated from college.

"It's a serious issue," Swail said, "and institutions clearly get this. We are hopeful that the EPSS will provide them with answers to their many problems."

Institutions interested in the EPSS can visit www.educationalpolicy.org/epss. Registration is free, and institutions are encouraged to add to the database.

About EPI

The Educational Policy Institute is a non-profit research center focused in issues of educational opportunity, especially for our most needy populations. Based in Virginia Beach with offices in Toronto and Melbourne, EPI conducts program evaluation, policy analysis, and conducts professional development opportunities for educational professionals throughout the education continuum. Visit the EPI website at www.educationalpolicy.org.

About TG

TG is a public non-profit corporation that helps create access to higher education for millions of families and students through its role as an administrator of the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP). Its vision is to be the premier source of information, financing and assistance to help families and students realize their educational and career dreams. Additional information about TG can be found online at www.tgslc.org.