



CITY OF CLEVELAND
Mayor Frank G. Jackson



From: **Office of the Mayor**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland Presents Third Annual Best Practices Symposium: *Degrees by Design*

***Day-long Conference Brings Together National, State and Local
Leaders in College Persistence and Completion***

CLEVELAND, June 4, 2014 – The Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland (the Compact) will present *Degrees by Design*, a day-long symposium at the Bert L. and Iris S. Wolstein Center on June 5 that will focus on ensuring that Cleveland students who enroll in postsecondary education have the support and resources to persist to degree completion.

“Getting students to college is a good thing,” said Cleveland Mayor Frank G. Jackson. “But we can’t stop there. We have to do everything we can to ensure that the growing number of students enrolling in college go on to graduate from college.”

Symposium participants will learn about a variety of college access best practices – including intrusive advising, employing early alert systems, mentoring and student engagement, among others – that are being implemented across the educational institutions and community organizations that comprise the Compact to improve college persistence and completion outcomes for Cleveland students.

Dr. Vincent Tinto, a national expert on college persistence and completion, will deliver the keynote address. Dr. Tinto’s expertise particularly focuses on student success and the impact of learning communities on student growth and attainment. His book, *Leaving College*, lays out a theory and policy perspective on student success that is considered the benchmark by which work on these issues are judged. His most recent book, *Completing College*, lays out a framework for institutional action for student success, describes the range of programs that have been effective in enhancing student success, and the types of policies institutions should follow to successfully implement programs in ways that endure and scale-up over time.

In addition, the *Degrees by Design* Symposium will feature a panel discussion among provosts of Compact higher education institutions about the persistence and completion challenges they face, the innovative programs that are being implemented to overcome those obstacles as well as the implications of statewide policy changes being put in place to emphasize completion. There also will be a lunchtime panel featuring students in various stages of their college-going process who will discuss their experiences and the obstacles they have faced as they pursue their degrees.

The goal for the Symposium is for participants to learn from each other about what is working and leave with ideas that they can take back to their organizations and apply to their student programs.

“The benefit of the Higher Education Compact is this idea of collective impact,” Mayor Jackson said. “Sharing with each other what works and what does not work helps us create a coordinated effort that will result in increasing college attainment in Greater Cleveland. This openness and transparency is what makes the Compact unique.”

About the Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland

The Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland is a collaborative partnership among the City of Cleveland, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, 17 colleges and universities, and more than 45 community organizations that seeks to remove the obstacles that prevent Cleveland youth from going to and succeeding in college. Launched in 2011 by Mayor Frank G. Jackson, the Compact’s goal is to align the efforts of member organizations to best use limited precious resources and increase the city’s number of college graduates.