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## **THIRTY-FIVE COMMUNITIES ADDED TO LUMINA FOUNDATION'S COMMUNITY-BASED POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION ATTAINMENT STRATEGY**

**INDIANAPOLIS**— Today, 35 new U.S. communities were announced in the second cohort of Lumina Foundation's community-based postsecondary education attainment strategy. The strategy was designed to help communities and regions dramatically increase the number of local residents with postsecondary credentials. The collaborative effort connects participating cities with significant technical and planning assistance, data tools, flexible funding, and the ability to customize attainment plans that will best suit each community's needs and the well-being of its residents.

"Research shows a direct correlation between thriving cities and education beyond high school," said [Jamie Merisotis](#), Lumina's president and CEO. "Increased attainment delivers stronger local economies, greater individual earning power and better quality of life. Every community in America wants that, and we've designed this work to give civic leaders the tools they need to be successful."

Lumina's goal for this work is to mobilize all sectors in a community to improve postsecondary attainment. Communities will partner with Lumina and national thought leaders through 2016 to establish attainment goals. Organizations will work with national partners develop an action plan focused on reaching the attainment goal to increase the percentage of high-quality credentials held by community residents.

Progress toward the goal will be measured by credentials earned after high school, including certificates, associate degrees and bachelor's degrees held by local residents. The cities selected have already demonstrated momentum in advancing attainment agendas, and this effort aims to expand and deepen their work.

"It is our intention that Lumina's support will bolster the great work already being done in our Partnership cities, improving results there and showing cities across the country just how transformational education can be for communities' social, economic and civic strength," said Haley Glover, strategy director at Lumina Foundation overseeing this work.

The overall effort connects to [Goal 2025](#), a national goal to increase the percentage of Americans with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025. Lumina's partners in this effort will provide guidance to the cities as they develop goals and action plans. The national thought-leadership organizations that communities will have access to through this work include: the American Chamber of Commerce Executives, the Brookings Institution, the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, DCA Inc., Excelencia in Education, the Institute for Higher Education Policy, the Michigan College Access Network, the National College Access Network, the National League of Cities, the OMG Center, the Say Yes to Education Foundation, and Strive Together.

“We are pleased to partner with Lumina Foundation to raise educational attainment in communities across the country,” said Clifford M. Johnson, executive director of the Institute for Youth, Education, and Families at the National League of Cities. “Mayors and other city leaders know that by collaborating across sectors to boost college completion rates, they are helping to boost the economic development of the city, and the quality of life and well-being of their neighborhoods and families.”

The second cohort of communities includes: Akron, Ohio; Albany, N.Y.; Austin, Texas; Berkeley, Calif.; Chicago, Ill.; Cleveland, Ohio; Coachella Valley, Calif.; Columbia, S.C.; Corpus Christi, Texas; Dallas, Texas; Denver, Colo.; Detroit, Mich.; Grand Rapids, Mich.; Hartford, Conn.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Kansas City, Mo.; Las Vegas, Nev.; Los Angeles, Calif.; Milwaukee, Wis.; Nashville, Tenn.; New Hampshire Region; New York, N.Y.; Newark, N.J.; Northwest Indiana Region; Orlando, Fla.; Phoenix, Ariz.; Portland, Ore.; Richmond, Va.; Rio Grande Valley Region; Salt Lake City, Utah; Savannah, Ga.; Spokane, Wash.; Southwest Florida Region; Washington, D.C., and Winston-Salem, N.C.

The Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland (the Compact) will administer the program for the city. Cleveland Mayor Frank G. Jackson, who convened the Compact in 2011, said, “Increasing educational attainment among the residents of the City of Cleveland is a priority for me and members of the Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland. The Lumina Foundation’s Community Attainment Initiative will help us toward our goal of more Clevelanders obtaining post-secondary degrees which will translate to a better economy for the Northeast Ohio region.”

Added Maggie McGrath, project director for the Compact, “The Compact has been working for three years to put a solid infrastructure in place, and we’re seeing some progress. The resources that will be available through our partnership with Lumina will help us move that work forward more quickly, which is what this community needs.”

Lumina plans to invest approximately \$5.6 million into the second cohort and over \$13 million directly to communities over the course of the program. Each community will be eligible for an allocation of \$160,000 over a 2.5-year period, which will be tied to achievement of goals.

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**About Lumina Foundation:** Lumina Foundation is an independent, private foundation committed to increasing the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees, certificates and other credentials to 60 percent by 2025. Lumina’s outcomes-based approach focuses on helping to design and build an accessible, responsive and accountable higher education system while fostering a national sense of urgency for action to achieve Goal 2025. For more information, log on to: [www.luminafoundation.org](http://www.luminafoundation.org)

**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. For more information, visit [www.highereducationcompact.org](http://www.highereducationcompact.org)

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