

Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count (ATD) is a bold national effort to help more community college students succeed, with a special focus on students of color and low-income students.

Our approach uses ground-level strategies to accomplish big-picture outcomes. *Achieving the Dream* proceeds from the premise that success begets success — and every incremental milestone for every student can be positively affected by community college leaders and educators. We

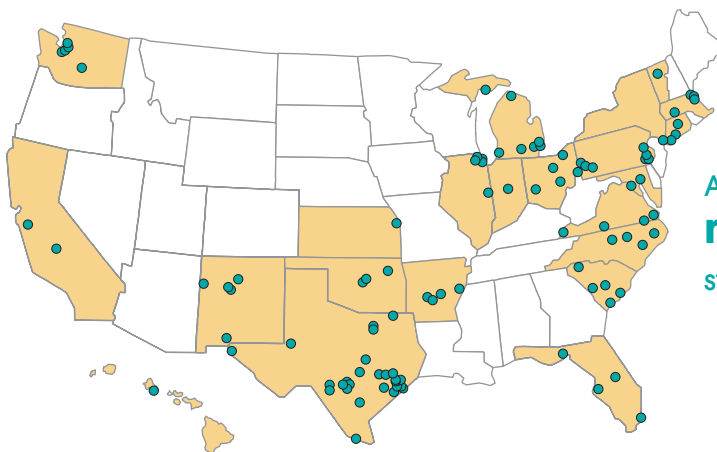
also work with state teams to create a policy environment that promotes innovation and moves more students to degrees and credentials. Community colleges can help deliver on the promise of the American dream — in fact, no educational enterprise is better positioned to do so.

Our Approach

ATD focuses colleges and others on understanding and making better use of student outcome data. We act on many fronts, including:

- **Institutional change:** ATD's coaches, data facilitators, and supporting organizations work with leadership teams comprised of faculty, administration, staff, and others across the campus and community to build a long-term, institution-wide commitment to student success by creating a culture of evidence, engaging with diverse groups, and implementing systemic reforms.
- **Knowledge:** ATD collects data from participating colleges and states, researches and evaluates change efforts, convenes learning events, and issues publications of findings.
- **Policy:** ATD's state lead institutions work to create an education policy environment that encourages innovation and rewards institutions for moving greater numbers of students to degrees and credentials. Areas of focus include aligning standards for "college ready" transitions from secondary school to community colleges, careful student assessment and placement policies, identifying innovations that work, and accurate performance measures with incentives.

ATD's National Network



ATD has established a network of **more than 100** institutions in **22** states serving nearly **1 million** students.

"ATD has been a transformative experience for Phillips Community College. It has changed the way we measure our work from an emphasis on access and enrollment to an emphasis on student success and outcomes." — Steven Murray, President, Phillips Community College

Why ATD Matters

About 6.7 million students — nearly half of all undergraduates in the U.S. — are being educated at 1,200 community colleges. But too few are reaching their goals. Historically, fewer than half of community college students succeed in earning a degree or transferring to a four-year institution. And more than just their hopes and dreams are at stake: the very foundations of our economy depend on increasing student success.

Today, **42%** of whites ages 25-64 have an associate's degree or higher, compared with **26%** of African-Americans and **18%** of Hispanics.

Fewer than 46% of students who enter community college with the goal of earning a degree or certificate have met their goal six years later.

Percentage of young-adult (ages 25-34) degree attainment:	Canada: 55%
	Japan: 54%
	Korea: 53%
	U.S.: 39%
	Poland: 28%
	Mexico: 19%

ATD's Goals

Achieving the Dream seeks to help more students earn postsecondary credentials, including occupational certificates and degrees, by working with institutions to improve student progression.

Our objective is to help more students:

- Successfully complete remedial or developmental instruction and advance to credit-bearing courses
- Enroll in and successfully complete the initial college-level or gatekeeper courses in subjects such as math and English
- Complete the courses they take with a grade of C or better
- Persist from one term to the next
- Earn a certificate or associate's degree

Investment in Student Success Yields Economic Growth

Increased employment

60%

Jobs that are held by workers with at least some postsecondary education or training

Increased earnings

20-30%

The difference in earnings of people who hold associate's degrees as compared with those who hold only high school diplomas

Regional economic development

3:1

Every taxpayer dollar invested in community colleges yields \$3 in taxes from economic growth

National competitiveness

5-15%

Economic growth that results from increasing a country's average level of schooling by one year

"Paris Junior College's participation in the Achieving the Dream initiative is changing the culture of the institution. We are seeing systemic change in the use of data for decision making." — Pam Anglin, President, Paris Junior College

For more information, visit
www.achievingthedream.org or
contact atd@mdcinc.org or
(919) 968-4531 x330


Achieving the Dream™