

Five New American Colleges and Universities -- Butler University, Drury University, Elon University, Wagner College, and Westminster College -- were chosen as models of liberal education and will participate in the Bringing Theory to Practice Project. A release from Wagner College follows below.

September 23, 2008

President Guarasci Chosen for National Education Project

Wagner College President Richard Guarasci and 45 other university and college presidents have formed a national Leadership Coalition, committing their campuses to becoming models for what liberal education can offer—and most effectively deliver.

The institutions in the Coalition will be supported in their plans and work over the next two years as they demonstrate how making a priority of creating and sustaining a campus culture for learning elevates expectations, involves greater faculty and student interaction, broadens reward structures, and results in greater attainment of the academic, well-being, and civic development of students.

With the generous support of the S. Engelhard Center, the Charles Engelhard Foundation, the Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation, and the Lumina Foundation, the Bringing Theory to Practice Project, an independent project in partnership with the Association of American Colleges and Universities, sought applications and plans from interested institutions of all types offering baccalaureate degrees. From those applications, it has selected and will offer grant support to forty-five colleges and universities as they form a Leadership Coalition.

The initial activity of the Coalition will be a President's Symposium, to be held in Washington, DC, November 10-11, 2008. The objective in forming the Coalition is to encourage and support those institutions which are committed to providing successful models of how a campus culture focused on actively engaging students in learning, and evaluating their success in doing so, can address the full dimensions of the intellectual, emotional, and civic flourishing of students.

According to Sally Engelhard Pingree, Project founder and primary funder, "creating campus cultures that help students achieve all of the core outcomes of liberal education can become the defining condition for institutional excellence and appeal, and the best means of re-centering higher education's focus on the whole student." For Donald W. Harward, President Emeritus of Bates College and Director of the BTtoP Project, "The Symposium and the Coalition will call upon presidents as educators to be active in leading the institutional efforts necessary to create and sustain their own campus

cultures for learning—and to be supported as their institutions gain recognition as national models.”

The 46 presidents (leading diverse types and locations of institutions) attending the two-day Symposium will form the nucleus of the Leadership Coalition. In addition to receiving grant support, the participating institutions agree to:

Hold relevant internal conversations regarding the institution’s commitment to a call for a “campus culture for learning,” what that will mean for their campus, and what strategies they may employ.

Establish a leadership/planning team that would initiate plans to fit their own institutional culture. The plans they develop will be presented at a national workshop session in 2009.

Put into practice their plans beginning in calendar year ‘09. A retrieval and dissemination conference will occur 2010. The campus projects will constitute the examples that will become the central features of a nationally distributed publication, promulgating the institutions as models of successful, effective and affordable “Strategies for Change in Creating and Sustaining Campus Cultures for Learning.”

The BTtoP Project and its funders extend their congratulations and profound respect for the institutional achievements already gained by those colleges and universities participating in the Leadership Coalition and to recognize the presidents of those institutions as national educational leaders.

Institutions whose presidents have been invited to participate in the “Bringing Theory to Practice” project are:

- Allegheny College
- Bates College
- Bennington College
- Bryn Mawr College
- **Butler University**
- California State University-Chico
- Clark University
- Colorado College
- Concordia College-Moorhead
- Dickinson College
- **Drury University**
- Elizabethtown College
- **Elon University**
- European College of Liberal Arts, Berlin
- Franklin and Marshall College
- Franklin College
- Georgetown University

- Georgia Gwinnett College
- Hampshire College
- Hendrix College
- Heritage University
- Lebanon Valley College
- Long Island University
- Marlboro College
- McDaniel College
- Montclair State University
- New England College
- Pitzer College
- Ripon College
- Sarah Lawrence College
- School of the Art Institute of Chicago
- St. Edward's University
- State University of New York at Geneseo
- State University of New York-Purchase College
- The Evergreen State College
- The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
- University of Maine at Farmington
- University of North Florida
- University of Southern Maine
- Ursinus College
- Wagner College
- Wartburg College
- Washington & Jefferson College
- Washington and Lee University
- Westminster College
- Wheelock College