**Task Force Goal is Support of Teacher Preparation Programs**

AASCU’s Board of Directors has appointed a Task Force on Teacher Education that has three areas of focus: assessing the state of teacher preparation at AASCU institutions; showcasing innovations and successes of teacher preparation at AASCU institutions; and highlighting the roles of AASCU presidents and provosts in strengthening and supporting teacher preparation programs for an increasingly diverse PK-12 student body.

In support of their work, the task force has surveyed AASCU presidents and chancellors, provosts, chief academic officers, deans and directors of teacher preparation to improve their understanding of teacher preparation programs at AASCU institutions with a focus on better serving these institutions. A task force report will be released at the AASCU Annual Meeting in October.

Virginia “Ginny” Horvath, president of SUNY Fredonia, chairs the task force.

Other members are Joseph Aguerrebere, interim assistant vice chancellor of teacher education and public school programs, California State University System; Ira Blake, provost, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania; Carol Burris, executive director, Network for Public Education; Elizabeth Hinde, dean of education, Metropolitan State University of Denver; Katy Heyning, dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies, University of Wisconsin, Whitewater; Tamara Lucas, dean of education, Montclair State University; and Francisco Rios, dean of education, Western Washington State University.

Also Jane Gates, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs and student affairs, Western Connecticut State University; Kim Tobey, executive director, National Association of Community College Teacher Education Programs; Rick Caulfield, chancellor, University of Alaska Southeast; Linda McKee, senior director of performance measurement and assessment policy, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE); Jenny DeMonte, senior technical assistance consultant, teacher education, Education Policy Center, American Institutes for Research; and Marquita Grenot-Scheyer, assistant vice chancellor for teacher education, California State University, Long Beach.

AASCU staff providing committee support are Jolanda Westerhof, associate vice president of academic leadership and change, and Barmak Nassirian, director of federal relations and policy analysis.

**AASCU Provides Resources for National Campaign Involvement**

This summer AASCU President Muriel Howard sent a letter to presidents and chancellors asking them to make a commitment to the *Opportunities for All* national campaign whose goal is to promote a unified brand and message about state colleges and universities (SCUs).

Members were asked to commit to three steps in helping lay the foundation for the campaign: identify a liaison who will champion this initiative across their campus and to work with AASCU; integrate the SCU brand identity and messaging into communications targeted to policymakers, students and family, alumni, and other key stakeholders within their institution and community; and to participate by contributing ideas and joining AASCU’s monthly webinars to share success stories with other members, as well as to learn more about how to incorporate the campaign into the fabric of institutional communications and messaging.

In that letter she noted they would be adding their voice to a chorus of AASCU institutions focused on raising awareness and understanding of the shared values of SCUs.

“This is more than a tagline or logo,” she said. “This is a platform for SCUs to highlight their value and to increase their distinction.”

Since that time, AASCU has undertaken a number of communications initiatives to support member involvement in *Opportunities for All*, including social media programs, an early adopters program to provide individual counsel about implementation, and student-oriented resources, including a video. Webinars are planned for September 20 and October 18 on the topics of community engagement—which will feature two institutions who have provided leadership during the time of community crisis—and government relations in the framework of *Opportunities for All*.

AASCU members should go to the portal on the AASCU website www.aascu.org/Opps4All/Members/ for information about the resources that are available, to access the member toolkit, and to sign the *Opportunities for All* commitment.

(See Chancellor Robert Caret’s perspective on *Opportunities for All* beginning on page 20).
Annual Meeting to Focus on Change and New Leadership Dynamics

AASCU’s 2016 Annual Meeting, scheduled for October 30-November 1 in Miami, Fla., will focus on how higher education can use its distinctive position to lead the nation to a more constructive and prosperous future.

The meeting’s theme—“A New Leadership Landscape: Competitive, Innovative, Adaptive”—will serve as a backdrop to programming that addresses the challenges that public higher education institutions face in an ever-changing world. Today’s state college and university leaders are presented with competitive challenges and fluctuating variables that are briskly altering the environment in which they must lead.

“The fate of state colleges and universities rests on how effectively presidents and chancellors can anticipate trends, adapt to change, define innovative strategies, and demonstrate purposeful leadership,” says Stephen M. Jordan, president of Metropolitan State University of Denver and chair of AASCU’s 2016 Board of Directors. “AASCU’s Annual Meeting will provide participants the opportunity to engage with topical experts and colleagues in exploring how to be effective in the new leadership landscape.”

The meeting will begin on Sunday with the opening general session, “The Collaborative Impact Model: Achieving Large-Scale Change through Collaboration.” This will be followed by the presentation of AASCU’s Excellence and Innovation awards, which honor AASCU institutions demonstrating excellence and innovation in their approach to achieving student success, regional and economic development, international education, teacher education, leadership development and diversity, and sustainability and sustainable development.

On Monday, two sessions will address critical issues in higher education. During the first, “Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis,” presenter Robert Putnam, Peter and Isabel Malkin Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University, will share evidence of a growing opportunity gap and its implications for public higher education and public policy. The following session, “Diversity in Public Higher Education: Engagement on Uncommon Ground: Learning at the Intersections,” will explore how to create more inclusive and equitable campuses, and how presidents can foster a climate of engagement, listening and learning across uncommon differences before, during and after a crisis occurs.

Tuesday’s programming includes Vijay Govindarajan’s session on “The Three Box Solution,” a framework for balancing the imperatives of the present with the demands of the future; the presentation of the Distinguished Alumnus Award to Doris Taylor, director of regenerative medicine research at Texas Heart Institute; and the President-to-Presidents Lecture Luncheon, delivered by Bowie State University (Md.) President Mickey L. Burnim.

For more information about the Annual Meeting, visit www.aascu.org/meetings/annual16/.
Expanding Partnerships Possible Through China, Mongolia Trips

AASCU is sponsoring its 15th annual trip to China for the Sino-American conference, which is co-sponsored with the China Education Association of International Exchange (CEAIE). The Beijing conference, which is comprised of a forum and an exposition, is the weekend of October 21-24. This year the theme is Innovative Education Cultivates Global Talent.

This conference is designed for presidents, provosts, international officers, deans, department heads, and faculty who are interested in participating in a series of activities designed to create and sustain educational partnerships.

During the conference, AASCU members will meet with colleagues from China and other countries who are interested in building sustainable linkages with AASCU institutions. In addition, there will be a series of international forums with educators from around the world, representing more than 600 universities.

For campuses interested in student recruitment, the conference is in the same facility where 50,000 students will come that weekend to participate in an international student recruitment fair to get information about academic programs in other countries. More than 600 booths will be set up representing institutions from countries around the world. AASCU will have a booth shared by all of the AASCU institutions that are participating in the weekend conference.

This year pre- and post-conference trips have been planned to Mongolia and Shanghai. AASCU members have been invited to participate in an EducationUSA student recruitment fair in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia scheduled for October 13-16.

The annual seminar at the AASCU and CEAIE Sino-American Higher Education Leadership and Innovation Center will be held in Shanghai October 24-27. For more information on the trip, visit www.aascu.org/meetings/china16/.

VSA Restructuring to Provide Improved Tools and Data Products

The Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) was created in 2007 through a partnership between AASCU and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU). VSA promotes greater accountability through accessible, transparent and comparable information on public four-year institutions of higher education. It gathers data on four major dimensions of institutional performance—access, cost, student progress and student outcomes—and makes this data accessible to the public via College Portrait, a user-friendly website. Currently, 247 institutions participate in VSA.

In May the VSA board approved a plan to restructure the initiative in response to various changes in the higher education landscape. The new VSA, which will be rolled out over the next 18 months, will offer a broader and more flexible set of tools and data products.

Rather than having participating institutions submit their own data, the new VSA will give participating institutions access to a high-quality national dataset that merges together data from IPEDS, NSF, SAM, the College Board, and other sources. This will reduce the reporting burden on participating institutions, while at the same time granting them access to a one-of-a-kind data product that they can use for internal analyses and external reporting purposes.

VSA will offer a series of trainings for interested staff at participating institutions to equip them with the knowledge and skills they need to take full advantage of this new data. The new VSA will not include data on student learning outcomes, but a complementary initiative, the Excellence in Assessment Designation, will give institutions an opportunity to evaluate and improve upon their learning outcomes assessment practices.