
Vision and Values in Real Time

“America’s promise is about providing higher education for everyone, regardless of race, creed, national origin or socio-economic background. It is important that our presidents represent that student body and those type of students. If we truly want to deliver America’s promise, now is not the time to let our guard down. Now is the time where we have to be ever more vigilant.”

This quote by Dr. Mary Evans Sias, director of AASCU’s Millennium Leadership Initiative (MLI), is the appropriate concluding statement in the cover story that focuses on diversity in higher education leadership. MLI will celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2018; it has had a significant influence on higher education leadership. We wanted to share some of its accomplishments in anticipation of that celebration.

The point Dr. Sias makes could be generalized to the larger landscape of higher education as represented by AASCU and its members. In her welcome remarks at our Annual Meeting in October, President Muriel Howard said, “AASCU schools are fulfilling the needs of an increasingly diverse America. It is our institutions that are at the forefront of providing educational opportunities for those who comprise this new, changing demographic.” There were a number of occasions when the conversations at the Annual Meeting—both formally and informally—turned to our state colleges and universities and how crucial they are to America’s workforce, as well as to the civic and social fabric of our country.

On page 20, Utah Valley University (UVU) president Matthew Holland writes about how effective UVU’s dual education model has been. He explores how they built a thriving university around a community college. Holland says, “The dual model is not for every institution, but it is now one proven method for making higher education affordable and accessible without surrendering quality.”

He also notes that it has a cultural upside: “As racial and class violence and polarized populations roil the country, bringing together disparate sets of people to learn and socialize together can help bridge the gap...”

“We’ve just got to get the word out.” I find it hard to believe that in 2017, at some institutions, these eight words still form the core belief of how to approach marketing and student recruitment. Stephen Pelletier, in his article on “Managing the Enrollment Crunch,” writes about the demographic challenges for states, particularly in the Midwest and the Northeast, and how they are—and should be—addressing this challenge. He interviews presidents, campus marketing professionals and enrollment management experts for important perspectives on this topic. One of the most interesting pieces of advice comes from the head of an enrollment management service who says that presidents should cultivate better relationships with their enrollment managers: “Presidents tend to have closer relationships with their development officers and tend to be more focused on fundraising, but the truth is most of their revenue comes from enrollment...”

Iwant to thank President Howard for her support of *Public Purpose*. As most of you know, she will retire in early January 2018. It has been a pleasure to work with a president who understands the purpose of the magazine, and who has never inserted herself into its management. (Some of my campus experiences are still top of mind in regard to the latter!) She suggested topics, offered perspectives and occasionally voiced opinions. But she respected our ideas and that of the editorial think tank, honored our expertise and recognized the magazine’s value. We have appreciated her trust and support for our efforts to produce a magazine worthy of AASCU’s vision and values.

S.M.C.

