

media release

WICHE & Hezel Associates Partner on Articulation & Transfer Project

Boulder, Colorado — The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has been awarded a grant by Lumina Foundation for Education to work with education research firm Hezel Associates on a project focused on articulation and transfer.

WICHE and Hezel Associates will examine how state colleges and universities coordinate their programs and services to support students who move from two-year to four-year institutions. Today, as many as 60 percent of all college students attend more than one institution en route to earning their undergraduate degree, according to the U.S. Department of Education. Most of those students take the traditional path, moving from a two-year to a four-year college.

It is critical that students know that the courses they take at one school will transfer to another – especially today, when the high cost of college makes taking a class over an expensive burden. But students can't always get this assurance from their institutions. "Articulation and transfer problems have been around since the advent of community colleges in the 1960s – and they should've been solved long ago," says WICHE President David Longanecker. "Now, new technologies are providing us with tools to enhance transcript analysis and course equivalencies. This study will help us examine ways to serve students who transfer better."

The 20-month-long project, called *Best Practices in Statewide Articulation and Transfer Systems* and funded by a \$400,000 grant from Lumina, will involve a series of research studies aimed at developing a deeper understanding of state articulation and transfer processes. The eventual goal is to use these findings to help guide policy and practice within state higher education organizations.

"Some states have developed good systems that enable students to move readily from community college to a baccalaureate college," says Richard Hezel, president and CEO of Hezel Associates. "By learning from the best practices, we hope to encourage policies that will make student transfer more predictable, more rigorous, and less costly to the student, the college, and the state. Ultimately, the U.S. benefits from policies that enhance the global competitiveness of our education system and our workforce."

About WICHE, Hezel Associates & Lumina Foundation for Education

The **Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education** and its 15 member states work collaboratively to expand educational access and excellence for all citizens of the West. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy among states and institutions, WICHE strengthens higher education's contributions to the region's social, economic, and civic life. Our programs – Student Exchange, WCET, Policy Analysis and Research, and Mental Health – are working to find answers to some of the most critical questions facing higher education today. WICHE is the only organization in the West that focuses exclusively on higher education issues, from access and accountability to tuition and fees to distance learning and innovation. Public higher education is the primary backbone of the Western economy, and WICHE's policy research and collaborative programs support the West's citizens and its constantly evolving cultures. WICHE's 15 member states include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. For more information about WICHE, please visit www.wiche.edu.

Hezel Associates, headquartered in Syracuse, NY, provides research, evaluation and strategic services to national and international clients in education, technology, publishing, and business. The firm has earned a distinguished reputation for its state-level program evaluations and research in teacher professional development and distance education. Education leaders and policy makers throughout U.S. and across the world rely on Hezel Associates' strategic recommendations to inform decisions, to create actionable strategies, and to plan for change. For further information about Hezel Associates, visit www.hezel.com.

Lumina Foundation for Education, an Indianapolis-based, private, independent foundation, strives to help people achieve their potential by expanding access and success in education beyond high school. Through grants for research, innovation, communication, and evaluation, as well as policy education and leadership development, Lumina Foundation addresses issues that affect access and educational attainment among all students, particularly underserved student groups, including adult learners. The foundation bases its mission on the belief that postsecondary education remains one of the most beneficial investments that individuals can make in themselves and that society can make in its people. For more details on the foundation, visit its website at www.luminafoundation.org.

January 5, 2009

Contact

Carl Krueger
Project Coordinator
WICHE Policy Analysis and Research
303.541.0263
ckrueger@wiche.edu

Josh Mitchell
Manager, Higher Education
Hezel Associates, LLC
315.703.0991
josh@hezel.com

W W W . W I C H E . E D U
3035 Center Green Drive Boulder, CO 80301 303.541.0200 fax: 303.541.0291