



# Transforming Tomorrow:

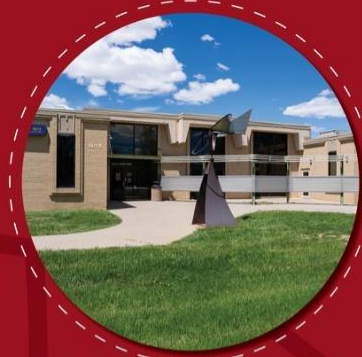
Strategic Partnerships for an  
Evolving Higher Education  
Landscape

**Presented by:**

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President, Community College of  
Aurora



COMMUNITY  
**COLLEGE**  
of AURORA



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Lowry Studios



**CENTENNIAL**  
Center for Nursing, Health Sciences  
and Public Service



**AURORA**  
Center for STEM, Power Mechanics  
and Applied Technologies

# CCA Fast Facts

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- The Community College of Aurora (CCA) is a two-year public, open access institution in Aurora, Colorado and is one of 13 community colleges in the Colorado Community College System.
- The school of choice for 12,000 learners representing over 60 countries.
- Approximately 55% of our students are first-generation college students.
- Designated as both a federally designated Hispanic and Minority-Serving Institution, serving more than 65% students of color.
- Current enrollment of Hispanic/Latino/Latine students is more than 34%







A portrait of Dr. Mordecai I. Brownlee, a Black man with glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a red and white striped bow tie. He is smiling and has his hands clasped in front of him. The background is a blurred indoor setting with a window and some greenery.

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ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

**"Higher Education is Indeed a Business, the Business of Student Transformation"**

**Written By:**  
Dr. Mordecai I. Brownlee

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"The advancement of social and economic mobility must be at the forefront of the minds of educators. America needs the skills, tools, and infrastructure to dig itself out of the realities it has created for itself and its people. Higher education is indeed a business, the business of student transformation. **However, it is time to put our business affairs in order.**"

# Realities Facing the Future of Higher Education

## Demographic Shifts & Enrollment Declines

Fewer traditional-aged students, increased diversity, more adult and nontraditional learners

## Financial Sustainability Challenges

Public funding volatility, affordability pressures, tuition-dependent models

## Technological Disruption & Digital Transformation

AI integration, online learning evolution, cybersecurity threats

## Erosion of Public Trust & Political Polarization

Questioning of ROI, free speech vs. safe space debates, legislative overreach

## The Workforce-Aligned Imperative

Skills-based hiring, microcredentials & certifications, employer partnerships

## Mental Health & Student Well-Being

Rising demand for support, holistic success models



# The Centrality of the Institutional Mission Statement

The institutional mission statement is the guiding compass for an organization's existence, direction, and decision-making. It defines the core purpose, serves as a strategic filter, and cultivates a shared sense of commitment and accountability among learners, educators, and stakeholders.

- Defines Purpose
- Guides Strategy
- Provides an Identity
- Clearly States Purpose of Service



# Mission of the Community College of Aurora



## Open Access to Higher Education

Providing affordable and accessible educational opportunities for all members of the community, regardless of background or prior experience.



## Ensuring Economic Mobility

Offering a wide range of associate degree, certificate, and workforce development programs to meet the diverse needs of students to achieve economic mobility.



## Removing Barriers

Steadfast in its mission to eliminate obstacles hindering student progress and achievement, while building bridges to academic rigor.



## Student Success-Focused

Providing comprehensive academic and support services to help students achieve their educational and career goals.

The Community College of Aurora serves our diverse community by providing high-quality instruction and support services to prepare students for transfer and employment.



# Developing Mission- Centered Partnerships



# The Importance of Conducting an Environmental Scan



## Industry Trends

Analyze current and emerging trends within your education and industry, and discuss how environmental realities impact student success.



## Competitive Landscape

Identify and assess the strengths, weaknesses, and strategies of the academic landscape and how industry is responding to these realities.



## Market Dynamics

Understand the impact your curriculum has on learners and our collective ability to fight poverty and improve economic mobility of learners.



## Academic Insights

Gather feedback and data from your current and former learners to better understand educational needs, barriers, and preferences.

By conducting a comprehensive environmental scan, you can gain valuable insights to inform your strategic decision-making and ensure your organization remains competitive and adaptable in a rapidly changing landscape.

# The Importance of Developing Mission-Centered Partnerships

## Ensures Institutional Alignment

Partnerships that are aligned with the institution's mission and strategic priorities help ensure resources and efforts are directed towards achieving key outcomes.

## Supports Institutional Outcomes

Collaborative initiatives driven by mission-centered partnerships can directly contribute to the achievement of the institution's targeted outcomes and goals.

## Promotes Market Relevance

Developing partnerships that are responsive to industry needs and market demands helps maintain the institution's relevance and competitiveness in the evolving education landscape.

## Communicates Responsiveness

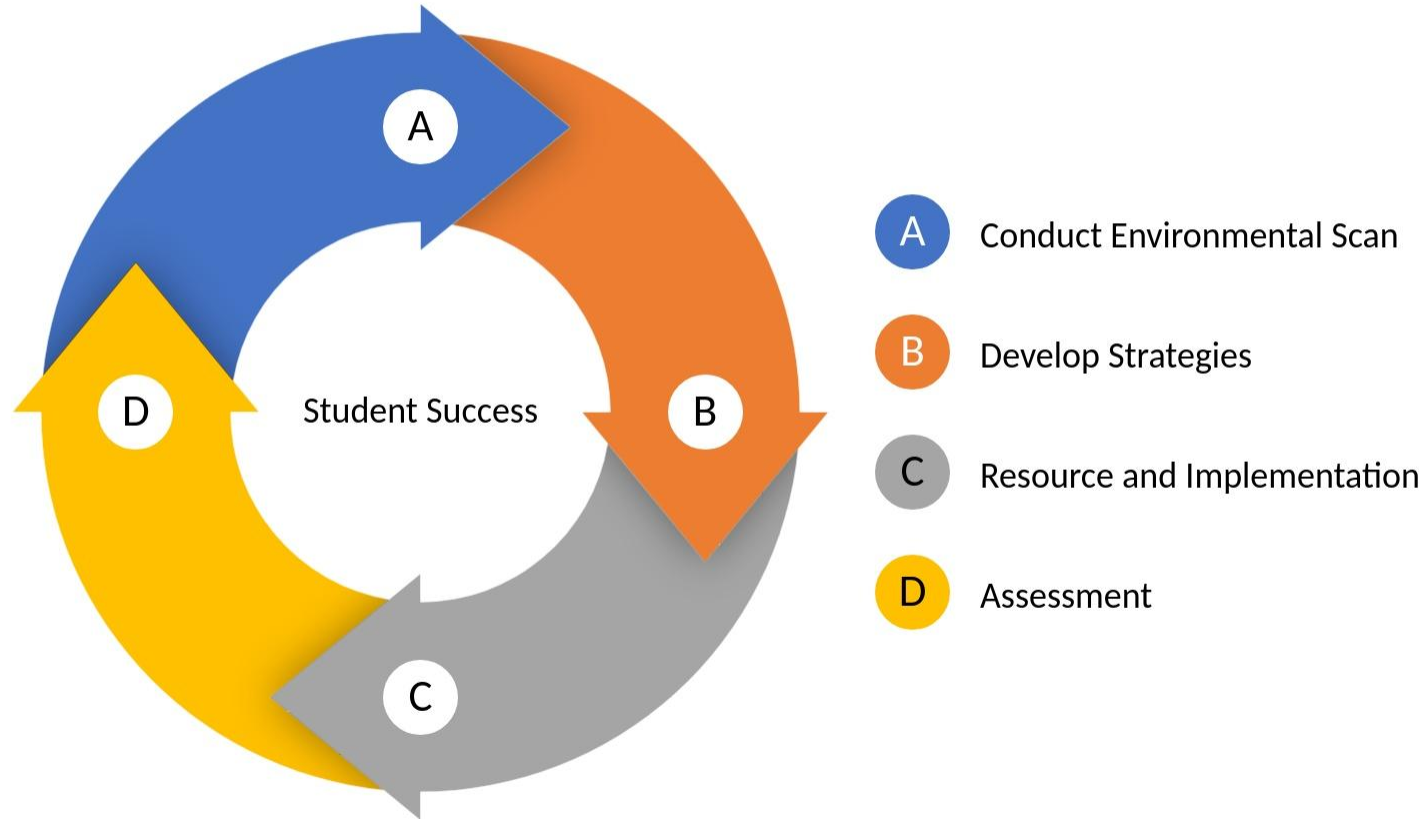
Mission-driven partnerships signal the institution's commitment to addressing the evolving needs of its stakeholders, including students, employers, and the broader community.

## Enables Agility

Collaborative relationships built on shared mission and objectives allow the institution to rapidly adapt and respond to emerging challenges and opportunities in a dynamic environment.



# Systematically Designing for Institutional Impact



# Strategic Partnership Checklist

## 1 Alignment with Mission

Ensure the proposed partnership aligns with and supports the organization's core mission and values.

## 2 Mission Promotion

Evaluate if the partnership actively promotes and advances the organization's mission and goals.

## 3 Potential Distractions

Assess whether the partnership could divert resources, attention, or focus away from the organization's primary mission and objectives.

## 4 Resource Allocation

Determine if the organization has the necessary resources, such as time, funding, and personnel, to effectively engage in and maintain the partnership.

## 5 Stakeholder Alignment

Ensure the partnership aligns with the interests and expectations of key stakeholders, including employees, board members, and the community.

## 6 Risk Evaluation

Carefully assess and mitigate any potential risks, such as reputational, financial, or legal, that may arise from the partnership.

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