



CITIZENS & SCHOLARS
COLLEGE PRESIDENTS
FOR CIVIC PREPAREDNESS

Impact Report 2025–26

Campus By Campus

The path to **500 campuses** and
5 million students over the next 5 years



C&S

A Coalition Convened by C&S
collegepresidents.org

C&S is working to spark 20 million young people to step up as civic problem-solvers by 2029.

College Presidents for Civic Preparedness

is C&S's flagship higher education coalition, bringing together 140+ college presidents across institution type, geography, and political context to strengthen civic culture on campus. Coalition members share a commitment to ensuring all students—not just those who opt in—graduate prepared not only for careers, but for participation in civic life.



When campuses need more support, C&S delivers programs, tools, and resources that help presidents, faculty, staff, and students strengthen civic culture, including:



Faculty Institute: An 18-month professional learning experience that helps faculty across disciplines design courses and lead workshops that teach students to have productive conversations, use credible information, and collaborate to create solutions.



Campuswide Immersion: C&S-led cohorts bring peer institutions together for regular convenings and shared learning, helping campuses compare approaches, exchange ideas, learn from one another's successes and challenges, and measure how students are developing three essential civic skills.

The Power of &

Learn more at collegepresidents.org



Rajiv Vinnakota
President, C&S

In the fall of 2023,

15 college presidents came together to launch the College Presidents for Civic Preparedness coalition. Representing institutions of different sizes, regions, and traditions, they shared a commitment to ensuring that every student leaves college prepared to participate in civic life.

The coalition grew quickly. By the end of its first academic year, 77 presidents were on board.

Today, just three years after the coalition's founding, 142 college presidents have committed to uphold three civic commitments: educating for democracy, preparing students for a diverse world, and protecting free inquiry. Across their campuses, they are crafting more opportunities for students to learn and practice three essential civic skills: having productive conversation, using credible information, and working across differences to solve problems.

These skills matter far beyond the classroom. They prepare students to contribute at work, strengthen their communities, and help move the country forward long after graduation.

The progress captured in this report shows what is possible when campus leaders act together.

We are well on our way toward our goal of reaching 500 campuses and 5 million students over the next five years.

Campus leaders are joining because they recognize that young people with bold ideas can move the country forward. At a time of deep division, colleges can give students the skills and opportunities to participate, work across differences, and solve problems together.

With support from C&S, presidents, faculty, staff, and students are building that path—campus by campus.

We invite more college presidents to [join us](#) and help make civic preparation a defining part of every student's experience.

By The Numbers

142 presidents in
the College Presidents for
Civic Preparedness coalition

38
new members
joined in 2026

1,000,000+
students reached

33 states + DC represented

69% of participating
schools are private, 31% are
public, 19% are minority-serving,
13% are faith-centered, 7% are
community colleges

39 schools participating
in Campuswide Immersion, our
intensive implementation offering
that infuses civic participation
throughout every aspect of
campus life

662 educators participated in
our Faculty Institute and 800+ courses
have been revamped

98 schools participated in
From Campus to Community,
a commitment to prepare students
for both careers and active roles in
their communities

\$27 million
invested in the coalition, led by an
anchor investment of \$10 million by
the Einhorn Collaborative

Measuring What Matters

This year marked a major step forward for College Presidents for Civic Preparedness. For the first time, 23 campuses participating in our Campuswide Immersion offering used C&S's shared measurement framework to collect comparable data from 20,280 students in spring 2026.

We compared the findings with a nationally representative survey of 3,500 U.S. adults. The results establish an initial baseline for understanding student progress, identifying opportunities for improvement, and measuring change over time.



64% listen at least monthly to people with different beliefs

Versus 49% of college students and 43% of Americans. In fact, these students listen across difference more often than Americans listen to people who share their views (64% vs. 50%).

71% are confident making evidence-based arguments

Compared with 59% of college students nationally and 58% of U.S. adults asked the same question.



80% say understanding different beliefs matters

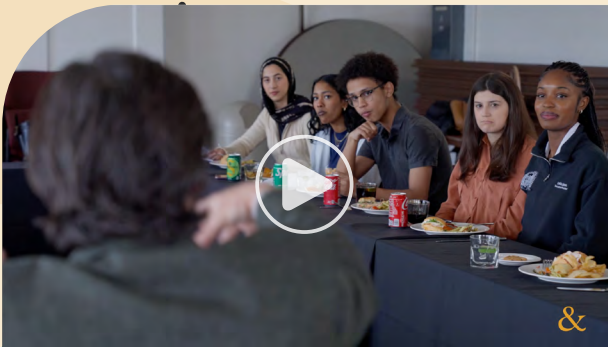
Versus 69% of college students and 61% of Americans

These data move the coalition beyond anecdotes toward a shared understanding of student progress. As the dataset grows, campuses will be able to track change, learn from one another, and strengthen what works.

Building Civic Campuses



This path winds through every corner of the 142 campuses in the College Presidents for Civic Preparedness coalition—and particularly those that participate in Campuswide Immersion, our intensive implementation offering that supports colleges in infusing civic education throughout all aspects of campus life and measuring how well students develop key skills.

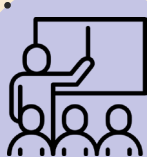


Through Campuswide Immersion work, Montclair is taking civic participation from optional to universal.

The reach of this work became abundantly clear when we [polled schools in the coalition](#) late last year. They showed us all the places civic learning shows up on campus:

- **76%:** campuswide events
- **71%:** co-curricular activities
- **53%:** academic courses
- **40%:** residential life





Classrooms, labs, and studios



Chancellor John B. King Jr., of the **State University of New York** system joined the coalition this year, doubling down on an ambitious initiative that “aims to strengthen democracy, improve discourse, bridge differences, and promote civic engagement among SUNY students,” he says. Part of that effort involves promoting civic learning in the classroom, from engineering courses where students consider public design input to health sciences lessons about cultural competency. Faculty across the SUNY participated in a Faculty Institute in February, and SUNY recently rolled out a new civic discourse general education requirement for undergraduates, solidifying the importance of using credible information, considering multiple viewpoints, and participating in productive dialogue.

Our research shows that young people are ready to have complex conversations—they just need a little support. That’s where the **University of Wisconsin–Madison’s** Discussion Project comes in, helping educators build skills to guide fruitful classroom conversations. “I am not exaggerating when I say it has changed my life,” said Professor Kathy Cramer about the Discussion Project. “I am using the skills you taught me each class session. It has made me think differently about my teaching and I am quite sure the students’ experience is all the better for it.”

Learn more about how the [Faculty Institute](#) supports campuswide civic education.

Faculty Institute



“The Faculty Institute allowed me to subtly but meaningfully reshape our first-year program, which reaches every incoming student. Beginning in fall 2026, dialogue-across-difference activities will become a permanent part of the curriculum.”

—LISA RAFANELLI, ASSISTANT DEAN
AT MANHATTANVILLE UNIVERSITY

“Teaching and learning for democratic vitality is the moral imperative of our times.”

Warren Wilson College
President Damián Fernández



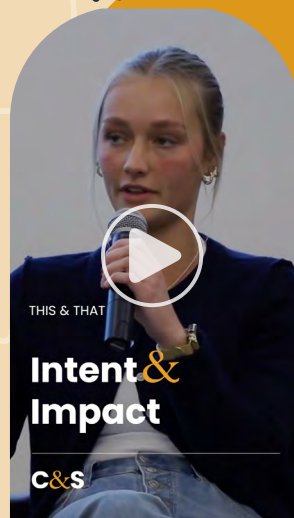


Events and Series

Since it launched in 2024, **New York University's** In Dialogue program has hosted more than a dozen events meant to expose students, faculty, and staff to differing viewpoints on important issues, such as modern masculinity and mental health. Last year, the school added the Democracy Project, a wide-ranging initiative committed to furthering debate about the state of democracy. One hundred experts, representing every point on the political spectrum, were invited to pen essays for the project.

Last year, the **University of Dayton's** Dialogue Zone hosted 50 events that together equipped more than 1,000 students, faculty, and staff with the skills they need to communicate better. From casual coffee-and-chat breaks to discussions about serious topics—including conspiracy theories and the meaning of America today—it's all on the table.

In 2021, more than 1,300 students helped shape what became the **University of Pittsburgh's** All Angles program, an event series that brings people of divergent views together for civil debates. Now, each year, the school uses student surveys to select topics, which ensures a diverse range of attendees—including students from majors not typically associated with civic learning, such as STEM programs. Events are student-run and attended, making them a safe space for learning and expression. "It gives civil discourse an identity across the campus that they know is for them; it's not for anybody else," says Samantha Balbier, director of the school's Elsie Hillman Civic Forum.



Student panelists at All Angles respectfully confront differing ideas on divisive topics like trans issues. Here, Julia Cassidy, president of Pitt's Student Republicans, participates in an October 2025 All Angles session.

See what this looks like. / See the full discussion.



Events and Series



As dusk falls, small groups of **Claremont McKenna College** students gather around firepits near

their dormitories, s'mores in hand, to talk about challenging topics selected by student facilitators. The mood is light, yet the work is important. At these Fireside Chats, students learn to have productive conversations and overcome differences, without getting heated—just warmed by the fire and supportive company.



Civic learning starts from day one at **James Madison University**, thanks to Better Conversations Together, a program professor Kara Dillard developed after attending the Faculty Institute.

Democracy Fellows help the approximately 5,000 incoming students name, rather than suppress, differences. Each student writes their political orientation on a sticky note, then reveals it at the end of a guided deliberation. Facilitators help new students overcome the hesitation to talk about differences, reinforcing that all viewpoints are welcome at JMU. The message is, "I'm excited to see who you all are," Dillard says.



"Throughout the debate, I found myself questioning my own preconceived notions and considering ideas I hadn't thought of before." — **Denison University student Lucy Doyle '28, who took part in a debate at first-year orientation**



Events and Series

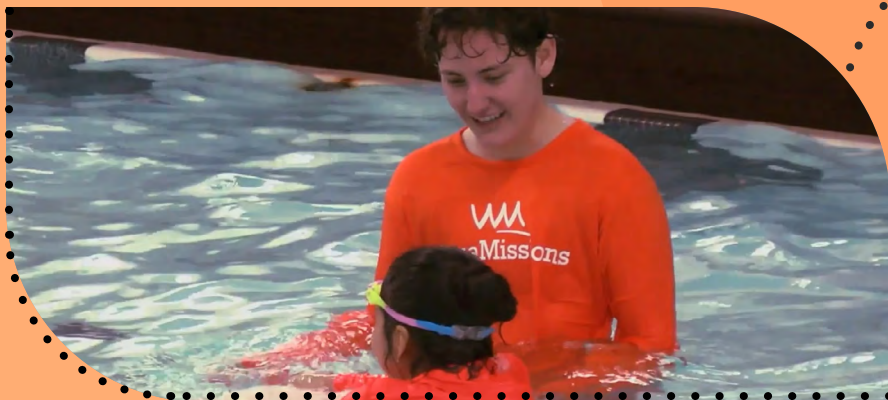


Dr. Chantil Wright-Galloway, a professor at **Benedict College**, does more than encourage civic participation. She models it. When students participate in protests and sit-ins on campus, she's right there alongside them. "If they see people that they trust and have confidence in doing it, they're going to do it," she says.

"To realize the full potential of Duke's people, we must cultivate and maintain a campus community where every person—especially those whose viewpoints or backgrounds may be in the minority—feels a strong sense of belonging and support for their work."

Duke University
President Vincent Price





Delivering Community Impact

The path toward civic renewal doesn't stop at campuses' gates. College presidents in our coalition **see civic engagement work as a way to shape broader society**, as well as campus culture.

98 schools in our coalition have prioritized civic initiatives focused on community impact and engagement—some long-standing, others newly launched. Colleges are forging a variety of partnerships with people and organizations in their communities, creating opportunities for students to step outside the higher-education bubble and shape the world beyond it. Here are just a few examples of how coalition members extend the reach of civic education.



Community classrooms

“In every discipline, the city acts as an extension of the classroom.”

Augsburg University
President Paul C. Pribbenow



Lewis & Clark is joining students with community members in Albina, a historically Black enclave of the school’s hometown of Portland, Oregon. The school’s Face to Face program, run in partnership with Albina Vision Trust, offers public humanities courses, workshops, and lectures open to students and Albina residents alike. By co-creating knowledge with the wider Portland community, the program strengthens civic ties while giving students a sense of place and history. “Learning and caring—that’s the heart of who we are and what we do, and how we want our L&C graduates to be in the world,” says President Robin Holmes-Sullivan.

After a fire damaged beloved businesses in tiny Port Clyde, Maine, **Colby College** stepped in to help. In addition to fixing fire-damaged parts of historic downtown so that businesses could return, Colby is forging a unique bond between school and community. Colby will make Port Clyde home to a new interdisciplinary research center focused on helping communities recover from catastrophic events. It’s part of Colby’s larger commitment to making Maine “as strong as it can possibly be,” and ensuring “that the young people across this state have options in their lives, that they have possibilities, and that they can see the American dream is alive and well in this state,” as President David A. Greene put it.





Workplace and nonprofits



Moravian University has spent the last five years revamping its general education curriculum to emphasize civic learning. As part of that effort, the school has a “Beyond the Classroom” component to drive participation in internships, student teaching, clinical education, and other experiential learning opportunities. “By embracing our Civic Commitments, we ensure that our graduates are not only prepared for fulfilling careers but are also equipped to lead with reflection and purpose in a world of change,” says President Bryon Grigsby.

Hudson County Community College

partners with the Hudson County Improvement Authority, Hudson County Economic Development Corporation, and SRL Enterprises to connect students with internships. Eligible HCCC students are matched with local organizations where they can earn \$20 per hour while gaining career experience, strengthening professional skills, and expanding their networks. The partnership also supports Hudson County businesses by providing access to emerging talent.



“As a young person, if I’m pouring into my community, or I’m advocating for more civic participation or engaging in clubs that help other individuals, then other people around me will also be inspired to do the same.”

Montclair State University
student Adiba Rupa '29

Adiba Rupa, in green, volunteers at the Greater Newark Conservatory with the Bonner Leader Program.



“I’d recommend this experience to any student. You are working with people who are truly passionate about what they do...[and] helping serve the larger Ithaca community in a meaningful way.”

Cornell University

student Katie Kim '28, of the school's community work-study program.





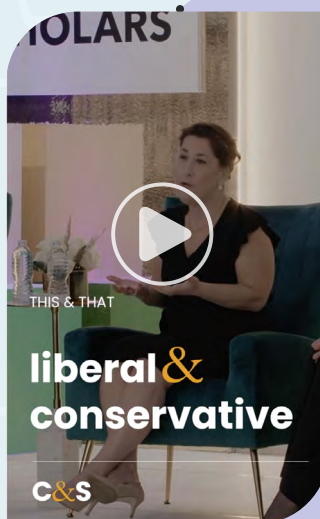
Community Engagement

“When I look at the relationship between DePauw and our surrounding community, I do not see separate entities that simply share an environment. I see an integrated ecosystem.”



DePauw University
President Lori S. White

What do a liberal arts college and a Christian university have in common? More than you might think, thanks to a collaboration between **Macalester College**, University of Northwestern–St. Paul, and the cross partisan initiative Braver Angles. Every two weeks, nine students, a faculty member, and the president from each school gather for a meal. They share ideas and priorities, listen to each other, find common ground, and forge friendships. “Differences of opinion must be treated as opportunities to learn and grow,” says Macalester President Suzanne Rivera.



Suzanne Rivera, President of Macalester College, highlights a program that brought together students at Macalester and the University of Northwestern – St. Paul. These two campuses are right down the road from each other but couldn't be more different. [See the full discussion.](#)

What Comes Next

The spirit of civic renewal can't be contained. Together with the schools in our coalition, we walk a path that brings us ever closer to our goals of **engaging presidents from 500 institutions and 5 million students in five years.**

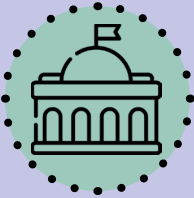
We welcomed 6 new presidents at existing coalition campuses and 32 presidents from new campuses, illustrating just how wide our reach continues to grow. They come to us from schools big and small; northern and southern; public, private, and community.



To make our future vision a reality, we are:

- Welcoming new schools of all types and sizes to the coalition
- Prioritizing measurement and proof of impact
- Emphasizing community, as well as campus, engagement
- Supporting high-impact approaches, such as general education reform
- Providing enhanced organizational support and guidance to coalition members through our Campuswide Immersion and Faculty Institute offerings
- Engaging and motivating the students who animate this work
- Spreading our message beyond higher education to reach the general public

What We're Learning On the Way



Colleges are doubling down on civic commitment, with **85%** of surveyed schools reporting increased investment in civic preparedness work.



The American public believes in this work, too. Our research shows that **75%** of U.S. adults believe colleges should help students become critical thinkers and engaged citizens.



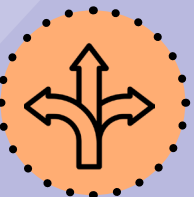
The classroom is a powerful place to spark change, with **64%** of schools that we surveyed about general education reporting interest or efforts to remodel required curricula for greater civic learning—resulting in around 800 revamped courses across these schools already.



Off-campus engagement should also be a priority, as **43%** of U.S. adults that we surveyed said they'd like colleges to provide internships, projects, and classes that benefit the local area.



Young people are ready to have hard conversations... In fact, **77%** told us they practice civic engagement through face-to-face talks with peers and loved ones. Schools that foster motivation in this area see great results.



...they're just not always sure where to start, with **37%** of young people reporting uncertainty about how to get involved—and highlighting how important it is for their colleges to guide the way.

How Presidents Are Shaping a New Narrative

As we work toward our goal of expanding the College Presidents for Civic Preparedness coalition to 500 members, campus leaders are getting the message out to peers and the public. Members of our coalition are speaking, writing, and posting about the power of civic engagement every single day.

What they're saying:

"Higher education has thrived in the ecosystem of freedoms provided by our democracy. Today that ecosystem is under enormous strain, and as teachers and students we must now rise to its defense."



Wesleyan University
President Michael S. Roth,
writing in the [New York Times](#)



Dartmouth
President Sian Leah Beilock,
[writing in the Wall Street Journal](#)

"We must ensure that students can encounter the best arguments, assess evidence and reach their own conclusions. That requires a campus culture where controversial speakers are heard rather than canceled, where disagreement is expected rather than feared, and where people can explore ideas without being defined by them."



Wellesley College
President Paula Johnson,
to 2026 graduates

"We need your deep engagement, your capacity to learn, and your energy, channeled into public service, our institutions, and our country's civic life."

Campus leaders across the field are choosing to walk with us because they see what we see:
Higher education can be a model for the rest of the country, and indeed the rest of the world.

We know motivated young people can change the world. Colleges have both an opportunity and a responsibility to help them. When students graduate ready to have productive conversations, use credible information, and solve problems with others, they can do anything. Our coalition has blazed the path ahead—and we can't wait to follow where it leads.

College Presidents For Civic Preparedness Members

- American University| Jon Alger † Δ
- Amherst College| Michael Elliott *
- Augsburg University| Paul Pribbenow * †
- Augustana College| Andrea Talentino Δ
- Aurora College | Susana Rivera-Mills
- Bates College| Garry Jenkins Δ
- Benedict College| Roslyn Artis * † Δ
- Bronx Community College (CUNY)| Larry Johnson
- Brooklyn Community College (CUNY)| Michelle Anderson
- Bryn Mawr College| Wendy Cadge
- Bunker Hill Community College| Pam Eddinger
- Butler University| James Danko *
- Cal. State University–San Marcos| Ellen Neufeldt
- Carnegie Mellon University| Farnam Jahanian * Δ
- Case Western Reserve University| Eric Kaler
- Centre College| Milton Moreland
- Claflin University| Dwaun Warmack
- Claremont McKenna College| Hiram Chodosh * † Δ
- Clark University| David Fithian Δ
- Cleveland State University| Laura Bloomberg Δ
- Colby College| David Greene Δ
- Colgate University| Brian Casey
- College Unbound| Adam Bush *
- Colorado College| Manya Whitaker * † Δ
- Colorado Mountain College| Matt Gianneschi *
- Cornell University| Michael Kotlikoff †
- Dartmouth College| Sian Beilock * † Δ
- Davidson College| Douglas Hicks * † Δ
- Denison University| Adam Weinberg * † Δ
- DePauw University| Lori White * † Δ
- Drew University| Hilary Link * Δ
- Duke University| Vincent Price * †
- East Texas A&M University| Mark Rudin
- Eastern University| Ronald Matthews
- El Paso Community College| William Serrata
- Elon University| Connie Book *
- Fairfield University| Mark Nemec
- Fairmont State University| Michael Davis * † Δ
- Fordham University| Tania Tetlow †
- Franklin & Marshall College| Andrew Rich †
- George Washington University| Ellen Granberg *
- Gettysburg College| Robert Iuliano Δ
- Goshen College| Rebecca Stoltzfus * Δ
- Grinnell College| Anne Harris Δ
- Hamilton College| Steven Tepper * Δ
- Hartwick College | James Mullen Δ
- Harvey Mudd College| Harriet Nembhard * Δ
- Haverford College| Wendy Raymond Δ
- Hendrix College| Karen Petersen Δ
- Hofstra University| Susan Poser *
- Hudson Co. Community College| Chris Reber * † Δ
- Illinois Institute of Technology| Raj Echambadi
- Indiana University| Pamela Whitten
- Iona University| Seamus Carey
- James Madison University| Jim Schmidt * †
- Kean University–Jersey City| Andrés Acebo
- Kenyon College| Julie Kornfeld * Δ
- La Roche University| Christina Clark
- La Salle University| Daniel J. Allen † Δ
- Lafayette University| Nicole Hurd
- Lewis & Clark College| Robin Holmes–Sullivan Δ
- Longwood University| Taylor Reveley
- Loyola Marymount University| Thomas Poon
- Macalester College| Suzanne Rivera * † Δ
- Macaulay Honors College at CUNY| Dara Byrne
- Maine Community College System| David Daigler *
- Manhattanville University| Frank Sanchez *
- Mass. College of Art and Design| Mary Grant
- Mercy University| Susan Parish *
- Montclair State University| Jonathan Koppell * † Δ
- Moravian University| Bryon Grigsby
- Mount St. Joseph University| James Williams * †
- Muhlenberg College| Kathleen Harring Δ
- Muskingum University| Sue Hasseler *
- Nazareth University| Elizabeth Paul
- New York University| Linda Mills
- Northern Illinois University| Lisa Freeman *
- Oakland University| Ora Pescovitz
- Ohio Northern University| Melissa Baumann
- Ohio Wesleyan U.| Matthew vandenBerg † Δ
- Otterbein University| John Comerford † Δ
- Pace University| Marvin Krislov Δ
- Penn. Institute of Technology| Matt Meyers
- Pitzer College| Strom Thacker
- Randolph–Macon College| Michael Hill

College Presidents For Civic Preparedness Members

- Rhodes College| Jennifer Collins
- Roanoke College| Frank Shushok * † Δ
- Rollins College| Brooke Barnett * † Δ
- Rutgers University| William Tate * Δ
- Salem State University| John Keenan † Δ
- Sarah Lawrence College| Cristle Collins Judd Δ
- Scripps College| Amy Newhall
- Sewanee | Robert Pearigen
- Skidmore College| Marc Conner * † Δ
- Smith College| Sarah Willie-LeBreton *
- St. Lawrence University| Kathryn Morris Δ
- St. Olaf College| Susan Singer * Δ
- Stetson University| Christopher Roellke
- SUNY Brockport| Heidi Macpherson Δ
- SUNY New Paltz| Darrell Wheeler Δ
- SUNY Oswego| Peter Nwosu
- SUNY, State University of NY| John King*
- Susquehanna University| Jonathan Green Δ
- Swarthmore College| Valerie Smith
- Texas Christian University| Daniel Pullin
- The City University of NY (CUNY)| Félix Matos Rodríguez
- The College of Wooster| Anne McCall Δ
- The Johns Hopkins University| Ron Daniels
- Tohono O'odham Community College | Stephen Schoonmaker
- Towson University| Mark Ginsberg * † Δ
- Trinity College| Daniel Lugo
- Trinity University| Vanessa Beasley Δ
- Tufts University | Sunil Kumar
- University of Dayton| Eric Spina * † Δ
- University of Denver| Jeremy Haefner * † Δ
- University of Findlay| Katherine Fell
- U. of Illinois Urbana-Champaign| Charles Isbell *
- University of Iowa | Barbara Wilson
- University of Maine| Joan Ferrini-Mundy
- University of Mary Washington| Troy Paino Δ
- U. of Massachusetts Amherst | Javier Reyes
- University of Minnesota| Rebecca Cunningham
- University of Nebraska at Omaha| Joanne Li † Δ
- University of North Texas|Harrison Keller * †
- University of Pittsburgh| Joan Gabel * † Δ
- University of Richmond| Kevin Hallock * †
- U. of Southern Maine| Jacqueline Edmondson * Δ
- U. of Tennessee-Knoxville| Donde Plowman
- University of Texas at Arlington| Jennifer Cowley
- U. of Wisconsin-Madison| Jennifer Mnookin * † Δ
- Vassar College| Elizabeth Bradley Δ
- Virginia Community College System| David Doré
- Wake Forest University| Susan Wente * † Δ
- Warren Wilson College| Damián Fernández
- Washington and Lee U.| William Dudley * † Δ
- Washington U. in St. Louis| Andrew Martin
- Weber State University| Leslie Durham †
- Wellesley College| Paula Johnson * † Δ
- Wesleyan University| Michael Roth * † Δ
- Wheaton College (MA)| Michael Whelan Δ
- Whitman College| Sarah Bolton
- Xavier University| Colleen Hanycz Δ

*Member's institution participates in the Faculty Institute

† Member's institution participates in Campuswide Immersion

Δ Member president participated in From Campus to Community



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