

**Council on Postsecondary Education  
September 28, 2008**

**Annual Report of the Association of Independent  
Kentucky Colleges and Universities**

House Bill 191, passed in 2002, calls on the Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities to present an annual report to the Council about the condition of independent postsecondary education and suggest opportunities for more collaboration between the public and independent institutions. The legislation reserves a place on the Advisory Conference of Presidents for the AIKCU president, and it calls on the Council to consider the role and capacity of independent institutions when developing policies to meet the educational needs of the state. It also specifies that state resources may be used to contract with or assist independent institutions in meeting these needs.

HB 191 builds on a growing spirit of collaboration and partnership between independent postsecondary education and the state that began in the early 1970's with the establishment of the Kentucky Tuition Grant Program, a need-based tuition equalization and financial aid program reserved for independent college students. The grant program now serves more than 10,000 lower-income Kentucky students at Kentucky's nonprofit independent colleges and universities, helping them meet the cost of education and encouraging greater postsecondary choice and access.

That spirit of cooperation was reflected more symbolically in the early 1980's when the Council on Public Higher Education was renamed the Council on Higher Education. The new name signified the Council's licensing responsibilities for independent colleges and its broader mandate to ensure maximum use and coordination of all of the state's postsecondary resources, public and independent, to better meet educational needs of the state.

The relationship between the independent sector and the Commonwealth has strengthened in subsequent years. In 1992, independent institutions began voluntarily participating in the Council's unit-record data system, providing the state a more comprehensive understanding of college-going patterns, retention and graduation rates, and degrees awarded. Kentucky remains one of only a handful of states that benefits from this type of data exchange. The independent institutions are partners in promoting college-going through the KnowHow2GoKY campaign, Project Graduate, Gear Up, and GoHigherKy.org, one of the state's college access Web sites. AIKCU also is involved in a number of statewide boards and initiatives, including the Education Professional Standards Board, Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority, Distance Learning Advisory Committee, and a number of CPE task forces and committees.

The 20 members of the Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities embrace Kentucky's Public Agenda for Postsecondary and Adult Education and the Council's vision of reaching the national average of bachelor's degree attainment rates by 2020. Kentucky's independent institutions are committed to working cooperatively with the Commonwealth and its public colleges and universities to attain these goals.

The 2008 AIKCU report to the Council on Postsecondary Education will focus on recent activities of the independent sector designed to address the Public Agenda goals, enhance educational opportunities from preschool through graduate school, and improve the quality of life for all Kentuckians.