



**MHEC 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Policy Summit**  
*Ready or Not Here They Come*  
*Ensuring the College Success of All Students*

**Summary of Opening Keynote Address**

November 14-15, 2011, Iowa City, Iowa

Summer King, Southern Illinois University  
Blanca Rincon, University of Illinois – Urbana Champaign

Jamie Merisotis, president and CEO of Lumina Foundation, delivered the 2011 MHEC policy summit opening keynote address, “Broader, Deeper, Better: The Essential Building Blocks of College Preparation on the Pathway to College Success.” Merisotis emphasized the need to ensure college success for all students through the achievement of “Goal 2025.” His speech highlighted Lumina’s philanthropic contributions nationwide, which has positioned Lumina Foundation as a key stakeholder in educational initiatives aimed at enrolling and graduating more low-income, students of color, first-generation, and adult learners. Further, Lumina’s most recent initiative, Goal 2025, challenges the nation to increase the percentage of Americans holding a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential to 60% by 2025 and strives to meet the nations’ workforce, economic, and societal needs through a well-educated citizenry.

Merisotis brought the nation’s current educational situation to life by citing the current economic state and how the establishment of college-attainment goals can contribute to ensuring our global competitiveness by focusing on individual student success on a broader scale. Included in this broader scale are students who have previously been excluded from college due to socio-economic status, race, grades, and other variables, thus providing us with the opportunity and challenge of serving the 21<sup>st</sup> century student. To meet this challenge, the postsecondary system must adapt to meet the needs of a more diverse student body that has been traditionally underserved within the system of higher education. Merisotis emphasized that the goal is ambitious and the stakes are high, but the need for systemic change within our postsecondary institutions is necessary to secure economic and social success for all. Specifically, Merisotis provided a more nuanced, holistic framework for college readiness and highlighted several key points that are necessary to promoting college success for all students:

- Move towards student-centered outcomes;
- Contain costs, improve productivity, and ensure quality;
- Facilitate students success by focusing first on access;
- Achieve college readiness through academic rigor, financial literacy, and psycho-social preparation; and
- Focus on the individual on a broader scale.

This holistic approach suggests the need for consistent, coordinated efforts that involve all stakeholders along the academic pipeline. Merisotis presented the state-level Common Core Standards initiative as an example of a standards-based collaborative coalition of multiple stakeholders that is dedicated to streamlining the transition from high school to college.

Throughout the address, Merisotis consistently highlighted the need to establish additional partnerships among stakeholders in order to make bigger strides towards access; these calls to action highlighted the increasing role of the non-profit community within higher education as funders, advocates, and researchers.

This opening keynote address can be found online on the Lumina website at [http://www.luminafoundation.org/about\\_us/president/speeches/2011-11-14.html](http://www.luminafoundation.org/about_us/president/speeches/2011-11-14.html)