

PRESS RELEASE



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WLAC One of 19 Named “Leader College” by Achieving the Dream



Achieving the Dream has announced that West Los Angeles College earned Leader College distinction—a national designation awarded to community colleges that commit to improving student success and closing achievement gaps. West has shown how data can inform policy and practice to help community college students achieve their goals, resulting in improved skills, better employability, and economic growth for families, communities, and the nation as a whole.

“We are proud to be honored in this way but, more importantly, we are pleased to see that steps we have taken and continue to take are making a difference for students,” said Robert Sprague, WLAC Interim President.

West’s Fall to Fall student persistence rose more than 5 percent between 2010 and 2013. The data also shows West is decreasing the gaps in persistence between Black, Latino and low income students and the persistence of White and Asian. The Fall to Fall persistence for African American students rose 10% from Fall 2010 to Fall 2013.

“Becoming a Leader College is very powerful and affirms the exceptional work and commitment of faculty and staff to their students' success,” said Achieving the Dream Vice President for Community College Relations Cindy Lenhart. “West is using evidence to make informed decisions that lead to significant institutional change.”

Contributing factors to the gains in persistence include using the Achieving the Dream framework and making progress on our established intervention strategies of Enhanced Communication with Students, Professional Development, and Enhanced Tutoring.

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October 2, 2015

WLAC One of 19 Named “Leader College” ...continued

Achieving the Dream, Inc. is a national nonprofit that is dedicated to helping more community college students, particularly low-income students and students of color, stay in school and earn a college certificate or degree. Evidence-based, student-centered, and built on the values of equity and excellence, Achieving the Dream is closing achievement gaps and accelerating student success nationwide by: 1) guiding evidence-based institutional improvement, 2) leading policy change, 3) generating knowledge, and 4) engaging the public. Conceived as an initiative in 2004 by Lumina Foundation and seven founding partner organizations, today, Achieving the Dream is leading the most comprehensive non-governmental reform network for student success in higher education history. With over 200 institutions, more than 100 coaches and advisors, and 15 state policy teams – working throughout 35 states and the District of Columbia – the Achieving the Dream National Reform Network helps more than 4 million community college students have a better chance of realizing greater economic opportunity and achieving their dreams.

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BACKGROUND FACTS – NOT FOR PUBLICATION

*Overall, West student Fall to Fall persistence rose from **63.2%** for the Fall 2010 cohort to **68.4%** for the Fall 2011 cohort to **69.5%** for the Fall 2012 cohort and **65.1%** for the Fall 2013 cohort.*

African American cohort Fall to Fall persistence rose from 59.9% for the Fall 2010 cohort to 69.2% for the Fall 2013 cohort. Hispanic persistence fluctuated from 68.3% for the Fall 2010 cohort to 67.6% for the Fall 2012 cohort and 67.6% for the Fall 2013 cohort. While African American, Hispanic, and White Cohort Fall-to-Fall persistence have increased from 2010 to 2012, the 2013 cohort indicates a leveling off or slight decline. Asian Fall-to-Fall Persistence has fluctuated, with the highest rate in 2012 (66.7%). The data indicate for students in these cohorts, the gap in Fall to Fall persistence between Hispanics and African Americans when compared with Asians and Whites has closed. Both Hispanics and African Americans have a higher persistence rate than Asian and White students.