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Three More Colleges Join Major Distance Learning Transparency Initiative

BOULDER, CO – [College Choices for Adults](http://www.collegechoicesforadults.org), a website dedicated to providing adult learners with unique information to accelerate and better inform their college selection process, announces publication of data for three additional providers. Ashford University, Nazarene Bible College, and University of the Rockies join the 13 Transparency by Design charter institutions, which already publish information about their program-level learning outcomes, outcome metrics and how students perform against these measures.

"The concept of transparency is very attractive to us and consistent with our university's educational philosophy," said Ashford University President Jane McAuliffe. "This partnership raises the bar and takes us all to new levels of accountability."

David M. Phillips, Vice President for Online Academic Services of Nazarene Bible College concurred: "Thorough disclosure is a key differentiator in an increasingly competitive marketplace. This site represents part of a positive trend in higher education."

The website (www.collegechoicesforadults.org) continues to evolve, most recently with expanded search capabilities accompanying publication of new member institution data. Future updates will provide adult learners with access to student satisfaction ratings, progress rate, and additional school- and program-specific data.

"Our presence on College Choices for Adults enables potential students to make more informed decisions about their higher education experience," said University of the Rockies President Charlita Shelton.

The Transparency by Design initiative, which resulted in the [College Choices for Adults](#) website, was born out of the President's Forum, a consortium of both traditional and non-traditional institutions sharing information about successful operation in an online environment. WCET (formerly the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications), a division of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), was chosen to provide quality assurance on the standards of data reporting jointly developed by the charter institutions of the Transparency by Design initiative.

"The name says it all," comments Russ Poulin, Project Director of Transparency by Design and Associate Director of WCET. "College Choices for Adults is about helping prospective students to understand their options. We are very excited that our new partners have committed to empowering adult learners with information, and we look forward to growing an even larger transparency-focused coalition."

Transparency by Design is funded by a grant from Lumina Foundation for Education and by annual dues from each of the member institutions. Members of the initiative are: American InterContinental University Online, American Public University System, Ashford University, Capella University, Charter Oak State College, Colorado Technical University, Excelsior College, Franklin University, Kaplan University, Nazarene Bible College, Regis University, Rio Salado College, Southwestern College Professional Studies, Union Institute and University, University of the Rockies and Western Governors University. New data from member institutions is regularly added to the College Choices for Adults website.

Lumina Foundation for Education is committed to enrolling and graduating more students from college — especially low-income students, students of color, first-generation students and adult learners. The organization's goal is to increase the percentage of Americans who hold high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by 2025. Lumina pursues this goal in three ways: by identifying and supporting effective practice, through public policy advocacy, and using communications and convening power to build public will for change. Additional information on Lumina Foundation for Education can be found at www.luminafoundation.org.

The **Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education** (WICHE) works collaboratively with its' members to expand educational access and excellence for all citizens of the West. WICHE is the only organization in the western United States that focuses exclusively on higher education issues, from access and accountability to tuition and fees to distance learning and innovation. In addition to Transparency by Design, WICHE's other adult-focused programs include Non-Traditional No More, College Access Challenge Grant Program and Best Practices in Statewide Transfer and Articulation Systems. For more information about WICHE, please visit www.wiche.edu.

WCET (formerly the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications) is a cooperative network of member institutions and organizations that provides a leading source of critical thinking and expertise on the evolving role of technology in higher education. WCET has a long standing tradition of involvement with quality assurance having been an integral part of the Best Practices for Electronically offered Degree and Certificate Programs written with the Council of Regional Accrediting Agencies, and partnered with the Campus Computing Survey to administer the first "Managing Online Programs" survey. For more information about WCET visit www.wcet.info.

The Presidents' Forum was established in 2004 and is hosted by Excelsior College. The forum is a collaboration of accredited, national, adult-serving institutions and programs which have embraced the power and potential of online education. The Mission of the Presidents' Forum is to advance the

recognition of innovative practice and excellence in online learning. Additional information on The Presidents' Forum can be found at <http://presidentsforum.excelsior.edu>.

The College Choices for Adults website can be found at www.collegechoicesforadults.org.

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