



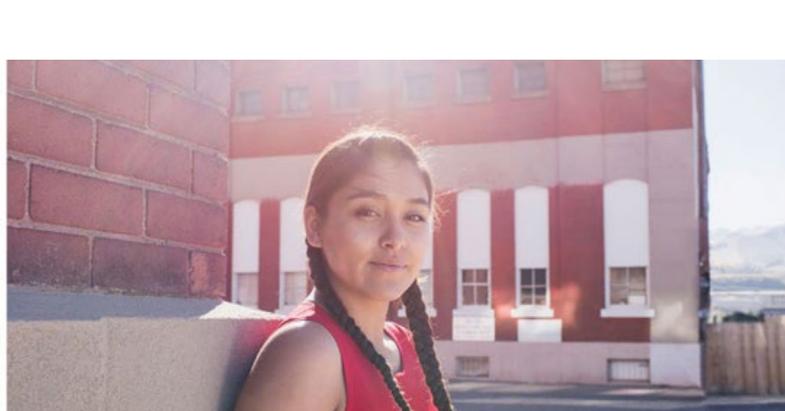
A Message from Our New Vice President - Education Philanthropy, Keith Witham

Keith Witham has been named Ascendium's new vice president of education philanthropy. In this letter, Keith shares his thoughts on his new role and ongoing commitment to improving postsecondary learning and training systems so that more learners from low-income backgrounds secure good jobs. [Read more...](#)



Q&A: AHEP's Ved Price on the State of Postsecondary Education in Prison Programs

Executive Director Ved Price from the Alliance for Higher Education in Prison speaks with Ascendium Senior Program Officer Molly Lasagna about pressing issues around postsecondary education in prison programs. That includes how the field can prepare incarcerated learners for meaningful employment upon their release. [Read more...](#)



Grant Partners Selected for Building Evidence to Increase Rural Learner Success

Ascendium is pleased to announce the seven partners selected to receive funding through our Building Evidence to Increase Rural Learner Success initiative. Over the next three years, these researchers will generate important new insights that can be immediately applied to improve postsecondary education and workforce outcomes for rural learners from low-income backgrounds. [Read the news release...](#)

Additional Ascendium News



[Grants to MDRC, CCRC Aim to Drive Change by Building Evidence](#)



[From Research to Practice: Holistic Credit Mobility Ensures Learning Counts](#)

New Resources

Our grant partners regularly create resources that benefit organizations focused on student success. These resources are published to our [Resource Library](#) often; here's what's new this month.

- [Rural Learning Systems: Driving Outcomes in Rural Texas](#) (Columbus Learning Center Management Corporation)
- [Rural Learning Systems: Talent Development in Hendry County](#) (Columbus Learning Center Management Corporation)
- [Short, Affordable College Alternatives Lead to Careers with Upward Mobility](#) (Academic Intelligence)

Recent Grants

Remove Structural Barriers to Success

[Improving Higher Education Opportunities for English Learners](#)

WestEd | \$130,000 | 02/2023 - 08/2023

This grant supports WestEd in examining the structural barriers faced by English Learners, a growing subpopulation of postsecondary students who disproportionately come from low-income backgrounds. Information from research, policy and institutional practice will be synthesized to provide recommendations for reforming pathways that serve English

Learners as they enter for-credit postsecondary degree programs.

[Examining Student Loss at Community Colleges](#)

The RAND Corporation | \$560,400 | 02/2023 - 12/2024

This grant supports The RAND Corporation in partnering with Dallas College to address early student attrition. The partners will examine institutional data, student experiences and campus-level practices to share insights with the field about students who leave prior to colleges' official enrollment count and how community colleges can help retain them.

[Redesigning Pathways for Adult College and Career Success](#)

Achieving the Dream Inc | \$600,000 | 03/2023 - 02/2025

This grant supports Achieving the Dream in partnering with Jobs for the Future to help nine community colleges across three. Identifying and implement practices and policies that drive adult learner success. Complimentary capacity building for state system offices will help ensure alignment of policy to effective practice and support cross-state learning.

[Exploring Field-Driven Placement Innovation to Promote Student Success](#)

Phase Two Advisory | \$661,900 | 03/2023 - 08/2024

This grant supports Phase Two Advisory in exploring how innovative community colleges' implementation of placement reforms may contribute to comprehensive changes in student instruction, advising and supports in the first year. This exploratory research will identify and document strategies to ensure placement reforms reach all students and are institutionalized into college structures and norms.

Streamline Key Learner Transitions

[Building a National Apprenticeship Intermediary Infrastructure](#)

Apprenticeships for America Inc | \$500,000 | 02/2023 - 01/2025

This grant supports Apprenticeships for America in creating the first national network of apprenticeship intermediaries in the United States and developing research to support the role of intermediaries with the goal of expanding apprenticeship opportunities nationwide.

[Exploring TRIO's Capacity to Provide Career Development to Low-Income Students](#)

Council for Opportunity in Education | \$748,000 | 02/2023 - 05/2025

This grant supports the Pell Institute, the research arm of the Council for Opportunity in Education, in exploring the capacity for federally funded TRIO programs to provide more robust career development and support services to the low-income college students they serve. This study is the first to explore opportunities to leverage TRIO programs in service of post-college career outcomes.

Expand Postsecondary Education in Prison

[Planning for a Center for Prison Education Research and Leadership](#)

University of Utah | \$750,000 | 07/2023 - 12/2024

This grant supports the University of Utah in planning the design and launch of a research center focused on postsecondary education in prisons. The proposed center will serve as a national hub for defining critical evidence gaps and advancing rigorous research to inform the design, evaluation and improvement of postsecondary education programs for incarcerated learners.

On the Go: Find Ascendium Staff in the Field

We look forward to seeing you at upcoming virtual and in-person events.

[Partners for Rural Impact: 2023 Rural Summit 2023, From Cradle to Career](#)
Charlotte, NC
Apr. 3-4, 2023

[American Education Research Association: 2023 Annual Meeting, Interrogating Consequential Education Research in Pursuit of Truth](#)
Chicago, IL / Virtual
Apr. 13-16, 2023 / May 4-5, 2023

[ASU+GSV Summit 2023: Brave New World](#)

San Diego, CA
Apr. 17-19, 2023

[PEAK Grantmaking: PEAK2023](#)

Baltimore, MD
May 5-10, 2023

[Grantmakers for Effective Organizations: 2023 Learning Conference](#)

Washington, D.C.
May 22-23, 2023

[Jobs for the Future: Horizons – Without Limits](#)

New Orleans, LA
June 14-15, 2023

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Ascendium Education Group, Inc. & Affiliates
38 Buttonwood Court
Madison, WI 53718

[Add us to your address book](#)

SENT BY news@ascendiumeducation.org

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