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**Pacific's P-20 Initiative
to Increase Diversity in Law Schools**

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The University of the Pacific**

This is the story of how one law school—the McGeorge Law School at the University of the Pacific—is taking initiative to address the long-term challenge of increasing diversity in its own student body and in the law profession it serves. The American Bar Association reports that although the law profession is more ethnically diverse today than it was a decade ago, only 10 percent of all attorneys are nonwhite.² Central to this initiative is a new P-20 partnership among the University's law school, its college of arts and sciences, its school of education, and a new inner-city charter high school located four blocks from the law school in Sacramento, California. Equally important to this initiative is an effort to reach out throughout the United States and beyond to other law schools and their university counterparts that are either already involved in comparable P-20 initiatives or anticipate developing them in the future.

The Challenge

With good reason, issues of educational equity, public accountability, and school reform are at or near the top of the nation's social and political agendas. The landmark *No Child Left Behind* legislation,³ passed by Congress and signed by President George Bush in early 2002, attempts to address these concerns forthrightly and comprehensively for the more than 50 million students enrolled in the nation's public and private P-12 schools.⁴ Reauthorization of the *Higher Education Act*⁵, which is expected in 2005 or

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² See <www.census.gov>; <www.censtats.census.gov/cgi-bin/eo/eojobs.pl>; ABA Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession, *Goal IX Report 2003-2004*, <<http://www.abanet.org/minorities/ftp/goal9report04.pdf>> (accessed October 4, 2004).

³ P.L. 107-110 (2002), 20 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq.

⁴ *Projections of Education Statistics to 2013*, 32nd Edition, National Center for Education Statistics, USDOE, (November 2003).

⁵ 20 U.S.C. § 1001 et seq.

2006, will result in comparable calls for access, performance, and accountability in the nation's public and private colleges and universities.

As growing numbers of young people – particularly those less advantaged – become discouraged with their future roles in American society, they turn away (or, worse yet, are turned away) from meaningful involvement in high school, college, or post-collegiate professional education, thus limiting both their opportunities to benefit from formal education and their subsequent ability to contribute to their communities. Unfortunately, all the statistics are moving in the wrong direction. Compared with White and Asian American high school students, African American, Hispanic, and Native American high school students have lower GPAs, lower enrollment rates in U.S. history, English literature, calculus, and physics courses, and lower participation rates in honors and advanced placement courses and programs.⁶

Moreover, compared with high school dropout rates among White students (7-8 percent during the past decade), dropout rates are generally twice as high among African American high school students and four times as high among Hispanic students.⁷ The Urban Institute recently reported that “barely half of all Black, Hispanic, and Native American students who entered U.S. high schools in 2000 will receive diplomas.”⁸ These dropout statistics are further exacerbated by the fact that there is expected to be a major shift in the social profile of high school students between now and 2017.⁹ Given current trends, the number of Hispanic students is expected to surge in the next decade, while the number of White students is expected to decline. Even if the current dropout rates remain unchanged, there will be 73 percent more Hispanic students graduating from public high schools in 2014 than in 2002 and 6 percent more African American graduates, but there will also be 11 percent fewer White high school graduates in 2014 than there were in 2002.¹⁰ The pool of Hispanic and African American high school students, where dropout rates are currently highest, will be increasing, while the pool of white high school students, where dropout rates are currently lowest, will be decreasing.

Beyond high school, the statistics are even more troubling. African American and Hispanic students are significantly under-represented among first-time freshmen in the

⁶ Catherine Millett, *What We Know About the Skill Set Extant and Needed?* (2004) (Presentation given at the Renovating the K-20 Pyramid Conference at the Wingspread Conference Center on June 12, 2004, paper on file with the authors).

⁷ Digest of Education Statistics, 2002, National Center for Education Statistics, USDOE, 2003.

⁸ Urban Institute, *Education in the Age of Accountability*,

<<http://www.urban.org/content/IssuesInFocus/EducationintheAgeofAccountability/Education.htm>>

(accessed October 6, 2004).

⁹ *Knocking at the College Door*, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE),

<<http://www.wiche.edu/policy/Knocking/1988%2D2018/highlights2.asp>>

¹⁰ Ibid.

nation's top colleges and universities. Only 6 percent are African American; only 7 percent are Hispanic.¹¹

Among these minority students who do graduate from high school and go on to college, many need additional support to survive there, and disproportionate numbers struggle to achieve academic success. At the end of the grade 13-16 continuum, as at the end of the P-12 continuum, the GPAs, test scores, and graduation rates of African American, Hispanic, and Native American students are generally lower than those of their White and Asian American classmates.

Against these realities of minority student performance in both P-12 and 13-16 education are juxtaposed the realities that face law schools today. To "succeed," law schools are compelled to grapple with the ranking system of *U.S. News and World Report*, which rigidly emphasizes scores on the LSAT (Law School Admission Test). As implied above, the pool of minority law school applicants whose academic credentials and LSAT scores will enhance, rather than jeopardize, a law school's ranking is unfortunately very small, and the competition for these applicants is "fierce." For minority students outside the pool, admission to a law school can certainly enrich ethnic diversity in its student body, but it may also negatively impact the school's national ranking and, thus, its ability in the future to attract highly qualified students. This dilemma for law schools is significant, not only on pragmatic grounds, but also on philosophic and moral grounds. A fundamental responsibility of all law schools is to attract a diverse, talented, and committed student body and then prepare the members of that student body to be equally diverse, talented, and committed future members of a nation's legal profession.¹²

Surprisingly, while there is no question that meaningful educational reform will require consistent, constructive collaboration between the nation's elementary and secondary schools and its colleges and universities, P-20 partnerships that involve law schools are few and far between. Some of the better known examples include Georgetown University's many years of work with neighborhood students and more recently with an entire charter school in Washington, DC,¹³ efforts at Rutgers University¹⁴ in New

¹¹ Op. cit. Millett. See generally Education Trust, *Latino Achievement in America* <<http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/7DC36C7E-EBBE-43BB-8392-CDC618E1F762/0/LatAchievEnglish.pdf>> (accessed October 1, 2004); Education Trust, *African American Achievement in America*, <http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/9AB4AC88-7301-43FF-81A3-EB94807B917F/0/AfAmer_Achievement.pdf> (accessed October 1, 2004).

¹² See Elizabeth Rindskopf Parker, *One Dean's View* (2003) (paper on file with the authors). American Bar Association, *Goal IX: "to promote the full and equal participation in the legal profession by minorities, women and persons with disabilities," Goal IX Report, supra n. 1 at 1*; Student Bar Association *Goal IX* <<http://www.abanet.org/lsd/diversity/plan.pdf>> (last accessed October 1, 2004); see also Law School Admissions Council, *Minority Perspectives* <<http://www.lsac.org/LSAC.asp?url=lsac/minorities-in-legal-education.asp>> (accessed October 1, 2004).

¹³ See DC Group description for Wingspread Conference, <http://www.mcgeorge.edu/government_law_and_policy/education_law/wingspread/ccglp_ed_law_wingspread_dc.htm> (accessed October 6, 2004).

Jersey to reach out to neighborhood schools, the Enlace Program (Engaging Latino Communities for Education) at the University of New Mexico,¹⁵ and the increasing number of law schools that have begun to offer “street law courses” and “service learning programs” in off-campus community centers.¹⁶

What is missing, however, is a comprehensive, national effort to engage law schools in leadership roles in P-20 partnerships that will simultaneously close achievement gaps, stimulate civic responsibility, and increase the interest and ability of high school graduates – particularly graduates from under-represented groups – to pursue careers in law and public service.

The University of the Pacific’s P-20 Consortium

In the summer of 2003, thanks to the initiative of its dean, the McGeorge School of Law at the University of the Pacific responded to this challenge by engaging the law school, the Benerd School of Education, and the College of the Pacific (the arts and sciences college in the University) in a partnership with St. HOPE Corporation. Established in 1989 by NBA All-Star Kevin Johnson, St. HOPE is a non-profit community development corporation that takes as its mission the education, training, and empowerment of citizens to change the landscape of low-income areas, beginning with the Oak Park neighborhood of Sacramento, California, where Johnson grew up and learned to play basketball.

In the spring of 2003, St. HOPE was authorized under California’s charter school laws to assume management of historic Sacramento High School, one of the city’s earliest and most prestigious high schools that had become a “failing school” by state standards during the 1990s. A key component in the University’s new partnership with St. HOPE involved helping the new charter high school, which is located less than four blocks from the McGeorge Law School, succeed as an innovative charter school for inner-city youth. Throughout the ensuing 2003-04 school year, as the new charter high school experienced more than its share of start-up challenges with inadequate time for planning and under the intense glare of the local media, the University members of this new partnership did their very best to support the fledgling high school without getting in the way.

From early on, “the Pacific P-20 Consortium,” as it was dubbed, focused its activities on the 300-student School of Public Service, one of six small schools in the new Sacramento High School. Perhaps the year’s most notable accomplishment was the creation of

¹⁴ See Rutgers description for Wingspread Conference, <http://www.mcgeorge.edu/government_law_and_policy/education_law/wingspread/ccglp_ed_law_wingspread_rutgers.htm> (accessed October 6, 2004).

¹⁵ See *Engaging Latino Communities for Education*, <<http://www.idra.org/enlace/aboutenl.htm>> (accessed October 6, 2004).

¹⁶ See generally Gary Miller, John Nagle, Elizabeth Parker, Clark Kelso, Sarah Redfield, *K20 School Reform in Law and Education Crucial Issues* (Lexis 2004).

curriculum for four semester-long “law courses” that are now required courses for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors in the School of Public Service. Other activities in the evolving Pacific P-20 Consortium now include:

- Guest presentations by law school faculty members in these law courses on subjects ranging from family law to international law and from torts to self-defense
- Opportunities for Sac High Students to spend time on the law school campus, attending classes and hearing distinguished speakers
- A monthly lecture program sponsored by the law school for students at both McGeorge and the School of Public Service, including noted jurists, legislators, and leaders in the legal profession
- A mentor/mentee program that pairs law school students with Sac High students to work with each other on both academic and aspirational issues (The law school mentors receive on-going training from a faculty member in the School of Education who is an expert in mentoring and tutoring.)
- An instructional coaching program that will link a School of Education faculty member with the dozen faculty in the School of Public Service
- And opportunities for Sac High students to visit the main campus of the University and shadow undergraduate student hosts for a day (The student hosts are members of the School of Education student chapter of Phi Delta Kappa, an international professional association in education.)

Central to all of these Pacific P-20 Consortium activities is raising the educational aspirations and academic self-esteem of students in the School of Public Service.

Presented below is a more detailed description of the Pacific P-20 Consortium during this second year of operation at Sacramento High School – its partners, its goal, its current activities, and its expected future activities.

The Pacific P-20 Consortium Partners

**St. HOPE Corporation
Sacramento Charter High School
The School of Public Service**

**The University of the Pacific
McGeorge School of Law
The College of the Pacific
Benerd School of Education**

The central mission of Sacramento High School is to provide a curriculum that is rigorous, college-preparatory, and standards-based. Based on the concept of “schools within a school,” Sacramento High School is organized into six small schools. The School of Public Service is one of these six schools. It enrolls approximately 300 students who represent rich ethnic diversity (25% white, 25% African American, 25% Hispanic, and 25% Asian American). Consistent with the central mission of Sacramento High, five “pillars of learning” define the specific mission of the School of Public Service: high expectations, choice and commitment, more time, focus on results, and service for others. The School of Public Service has 14 teachers, one counselor, and a principal.

The McGeorge School of Law is located four blocks from Sacramento High School in the Oak Park neighborhood of Sacramento. By contrast, the Benerd School of Education and the College of the Pacific, which is the University’s arts and sciences college, are located on the University’s main campus in Stockton, an hour’s drive south of Sacramento.

Consortium Goal

To bring the resources of the University of the Pacific collaboratively to bear on Sacramento Charter High School in general and the School of Public Service in particular in ways that will enable (1) St. HOPE Corporation to provide an exemplary high school education for inner-city youth in Sacramento and (2) McGeorge School of Law to increase diversity in its student body.

Current Consortium Activities

An Advisory Committee consisting of the 14 teachers, counselor, and principal in the School of Public Service and deans or faculty representatives from the McGeorge School of Law, the Benerd School of Education, and the College of the Pacific now meets monthly to identify, organize, coordinate, and evaluate specific activities that will support the goals of Pacific’s P-12 Consortium with St. HOPE Corporation. As of September 2004, the Consortium is supporting seven clusters of activities.

The School of Public Service (SPS)	The University of the Pacific

<p>1. <u>Experiencing Life on a College Campus</u></p> <p>Identify appropriate groups of SPS students who will benefit from spending a day on Pacific's Stockton campus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate "A Day at Pacific" visits to the main campus in Stockton that will pair two SPS students with a Pacific undergraduate student for a day of "shadowing" to see what college is all about (COP and Benerd)
<p>2. <u>Law Courses in the SPS Curriculum</u></p> <p>Offer four one-term law-related courses for all freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. The first course was offered in 2003-04; all four courses are being offered in 2004-05</p> <p>Consider adding an international law component in the SPS curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help faculty in the SPS develop the four law courses and identify appropriate materials and resources for them ▪ Serve as guest lecturers in the courses ▪ Involve SPS students in co-curricular activities, e.g., moot court and mock trial proceedings on the law school campus under the tutelage of McGeorge faculty, students, and alumni; Saturday seminars in law-related work places ▪ Facilitate off-campus, law-related field trips, e.g., the California Supreme Court, California Superior Court, the 9th Circuit Federal District Court ▪ Help faculty in SPS develop an international law component in the SPS curriculum ▪ Begin to develop a law library in the School of Public Service (McGeorge)
<p>3. <u>A Mentor Program for SPS</u></p>	

<p><u>Students</u></p> <p>Involve 30-40 SPS students in an after-school Mentor/Mentee Program with 30-40 law school students for an hour each week</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify the 30-40 law school mentors and coordinate their weekly mentor sessions with the SPS students (McGeorge) ▪ Provide initial and follow-up mentor/ tutor training for the 30-40 law school mentors (Benerd)
<p>4. <u>A Lecture Program at SPS</u></p> <p>Involve all students in SPS in a monthly lecture program that features outstanding speakers involved in law and other public service professions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify, schedule, and host these outside lecturers when they come to the School of Public Service (McGeorge)
<p>5. <u>Professional Development Opportunities for SPS Teachers</u></p> <p>Involve SPS teachers in professional development activities that will enhance both their content expertise and their instructional skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct several professional development sessions for all teachers in SPS focused on classroom skills ▪ Work closely with 3-5 teachers as an “instructional coach” – observing, videotaping, and analyzing classroom instruction (Benerd) ▪ Provide opportunities for SPS teachers to audit law school courses (McGeorge)
<p>6. <u>Enhancing Instructional Technology</u></p> <p>Develop a plan and identify the needed resources to use additional</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide SPS with computers that have been upgraded in the law school

computers to support instruction in SPS classrooms	(McGeorge)
<p>7. <u>Other Partnership Activities</u></p> <p>Facilitate other ways that the University and Sacramento High School can support each other's instructional programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide the Drama Department in Sacramento High School with both scripts and access to the McGeorge Court Room for a school-wide Perry Mason drama production in fall 2004 <p>(McGeorge)</p>

Future Consortium Activities

As Pacific's P-20 Consortium continues to evolve, these are some of the additional activities that we hope to develop and implement:

- Opportunities for SPS students to be involved in "job shadowing," internships, and seminars with attorneys and others in the legal and law enforcement professions
- Participation of SPS students in "critical issues forums," like the Monterey Institute of International Studies' program for high school students on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction
- Ongoing development of a law library in the School of Public Service
- A funded longitudinal research design that will document and assess both the activities (interventions) stimulated by Pacific's P-20 Consortium with the School of Public Service at Sacramento High School and the impact of these activities on students, faculty, administrators, parents, district administrators, and others

The Wingspread Conference in June 2004

By early spring 2004, those of us involved in the Pacific P-20 Consortium realized several things. First, we realized that it is indeed possible, under the right conditions, for a law school to engage, not only with its other university colleagues, but also with a high school in ways that benefit both its own self-interest and the educational priorities of high school and university students and faculty members. Second, we recognized

that law schools bring tremendous assets to this kind of partnership, including great intellectual capital, well-developed curriculum and teaching methodologies, strong connections with their local communities and political leaders, supportive alumni, high professional credibility, a commitment to and expertise in education about civics and democracy, and well endowed fiscal resources. And third, inchoate and still developing as our partnership was in the spring of 2004, we saw the value of sharing our experiences with teams from other law schools and their university partners, both to learn about their comparable experiences partnering with P-12 schools and to stimulate new activities and new partnerships.

Given this first year's experience with Pacific's P-20 Consortium, the dean of the law school wrote a short piece in April 2004 about her perspectives on the need to "improve the pipeline" if law schools are to be successful in fulfilling their mission as educators of diverse future leaders. She quickly gained financial, logistical, and policy support for a national conference or roundtable discussion focused on the issues from two very important partners, the Law School Admission Council and the Johnson Foundation. Shortly after, she invited her colleague deans in law schools throughout the United States and Canada to participate in a conference on "Renovating the P-20 Pyramid in Education" at the Johnson Foundation's Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin, in mid-June. As she wrote in her invitation to her decanal colleagues,

We have the opportunity to bring together seven teams of educators to discuss the value and direction of a role for law schools in education reform. Our aim is to improve the quality and diversity of law school applicants as we recommit ourselves to working collaboratively with our colleagues in the P-20 pyramid in education to engage and educate future leaders for our profession.

Those interested in participating in the Wingspread Conference were invited to bring four-person teams consisting of their deans of law, education, and arts and sciences and a leader in P-12 education of their choosing. The invitations were open to both those institutions that were already involved in P-20 partnerships as well as those that recognized the value of such efforts to increase diversity in law schools and in the law profession.

From the many inquiries received, a group of 40 participants was selected, based on geographical and experiential representation, and the three-day conference convened at Wingspread on June 12. The participants included teams from seven different universities and a dozen experts who brought depth and perspective to the discussions. In addition to the University of the Pacific, the universities included Cleveland State University, Georgetown University, the University of New Mexico, Rutgers University, St. Thomas University in New Brunswick, Canada, and the University of Puerto Rico. For three days, participants focused their rich personal experience, their diverse organizational resources, and their substantial creativity on the following broad educational challenge:

How can schools of law, colleges of arts and sciences, and schools of education develop partnerships with P-12 schools that will close achievement gaps, stimulate civic responsibility, and increase the interest and ability of high school graduates – particularly from under-represented groups – to pursue careers in law and public service?

Wingspread Conference Objectives

At one level, conference participants wrestled with the question of how partnering with P-12 colleagues – particularly at the high school level – could foster these six educational outcomes among students traditionally excluded from college, graduate school, and professional school settings:

- High cognitive knowledge and skills
- Strong communication skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Social awareness
- Personal and civic responsibility
- Sensitivity to due process.

All six of these educational outcomes were considered to be essential to a high school graduate's success in college and in subsequent post-collegiate preparation programs for careers in law and public service.

At a more specific level, given the impetus for the conference, participants wrestled with this very pragmatic question:

How can we increase the interest, ability, and success rates of under-represented students – particularly Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans – in the nation's best law schools and, thereby, increase their representation in law and public service professions?

The Flow of Conversation During the Three-Day Conference

Between late Saturday afternoon and Monday noon, the conference agenda moved gradually from exploring (1) “what is” with respect to current students in P-12 education and in schools of law to exploring (2) “what might be” in terms of future goals and objectives for increasing the aspirations, skills, and success of diverse students preparing for careers in law to exploring (3) “how to” develop effective P-20 partnerships to meet these goals and objectives.

Prior to the opening session, participants had provided background information on themselves and on the issues they thought would be helpful to discuss. This information was made available to all on the McGeorge School of Law website. In addition, the conference included several excellent presentations by representatives from the Education Commission of the States, Educational Testing Service, The

Education Trust, the American Bar Association, the Law School Admission Council, the National Service Learning Project, Campus Compact, and law-related P-12 programs and partnerships in the participating universities. These presentations provided helpful background information and data for the discussions that followed.

Equally important, the conference also included three specific opportunities for participants to meet in small groups, wrestle with issues central to the conference goals and objectives, and then report back in plenary session on the gist of each group's conversation. A sequence of three questions guided these small group conversations:

1. *"What is the current status of students in both P-12 schools and schools of law, and what factors impact on their aspirations, skills, and success as prospective members of the legal profession?"*
2. *"How would you design a university-school partnership that will simultaneously increase the likelihood of all students achieving their highest potential and also close well-documented achievement gaps?"*
3. *"And what actions can we take during the next few months, both individually and collectively, to develop P-20 partnerships that will close achievement gaps, stimulate civic responsibility, and increase diversity in both schools of law and the legal profession?"*

The presentations significantly shaped both the plenary and small group conversations, and the small group discussions gradually moved the total group through issues of "what is," "what might be," and "how to."

Answers to the first question resulted in a series of insights about current students, future demographics, and needed curriculum. Answers to the second question led to insights about developing effective P-20 partnerships that will close achievement gaps, stimulate civic responsibility, and increase diversity in both schools of law and the legal profession. These insights included both "facilitators" and "inhibitors" of successful partnerships, and answers to the third question helped define an agenda for the future.

Commitments for the Future

During the final plenary session of the conference, participants made four commitments. First, they committed to draft a "Call to Action" that would focus on strategies to close gaps in student achievement, increase alignment of curriculum within and across P-20 levels of education, increase civic engagement of students at all levels, and increase diversity in the pipeline of students interested in law as a profession and admission to law schools specifically. Second, they committed to take actions "back home" that will improve educational programs and strengthen P-20 partnerships. Third, they committed to develop national and international networks for sharing information about their P-20 partnerships through presentations at national conferences, publications in professional journals and periodicals, and a new website especially created for conference participants (www.mcgeorge.edu/wingspread). And

fourth, they indicated their desire to meet again in 3-6 months at one of the six university sites and to consider returning to Wingspread in summer or fall 2005.

The June 2004 Wingspread Conference – A Unique Experience

As the three-day conference adjourned, *esprit de corps* among participants was high, and there was a clear sense among most that they had participated in a unique experience. First, the conference had given *attention to the full P-20 continuum of formal education*. Participants represented P-12 schools (especially middle and high schools), colleges, and two different post-collegiate graduate schools (law and education).

Second, the conference represented *law school outreach to others in the P-20 continuum*. The impetus for the conference had come from a school of law that sought to reach out, not only to two other academic units in its own university (arts and sciences and education), but also to a local high school. All seven university teams shared these same motivations. For a law school to acknowledge, value, and want to partner with other undergraduate and graduate academic units in its university is quite rare. For a law school to want to partner with a high school is even more unusual. This collaboration became an important theme and direction for the group.

Third, the conference *blended content, pedagogical, and professional expertise*. The mix of law schools, schools of education, and colleges of arts and sciences proved to be especially fruitful, because it blended the general content expertise of the arts and sciences with the pedagogical expertise of schools of education and the professional knowledge and skills of law schools.

Fourth, the conference had *a clear focus on student achievement*. Throughout the three days, discussion never digressed very far from issues of student achievement, especially student achievement in P-12 education and the academic and personal keys to success in law school. All too often, conversations of this kind deal more with *process* (educational programs, projects, and activities) than with *outcomes* (measures of student performance). That was certainly not the case during this conference.

Fifth, the conference dealt not only with student achievement, but it also had *an equally clear focus on personal and civic responsibility*. While members of the university teams and several national experts shared their experiences and insights on students' academic achievement, experts on law-related education and service learning shared their experiences and insights on developing students' personal and civic responsibility.

And finally, *increasing diversity in the law school admissions pipeline, in law schools, and in the law profession* was clearly the sub-text throughout the conference. Improving P-12 student achievement, closing achievement gaps, and balancing academic, personal, and civic education – all of which require partnering with institutions across the P-20 continuum – were seen as means to this end.

The Subsequent “Call to Action”

Within two months after the June 2004 Wingspread Conference, a first draft of a “Call to Action” had been prepared and distributed to participants for comment. The revised draft, which is now being circulated for comment, will lead the agenda when participants reconvene in February 2005 at the University of New Mexico, one of seven universities represented at the 2004 Wingspread Conference.

Drawing from discussions during the three-day conference, the draft Call to Action includes several pages of background information on the gaps in aspirations and achievement that exist in education across racial and socioeconomic lines, the general decline in civic engagement among youth, and the lack of cohesive activity along the full spectrum of the educational pipeline addressed to these two challenges.

Specifically, the Call to Action calls for educational institutions

to work collaboratively to maximize educational aspirations and opportunities for students who are disproportionately represented in colleges and universities and in professional schools, particularly law schools.

To make this goal operational, the draft Call to Action recommends five specific actions:

1. Law schools should take a leadership role in establishing themselves as partners with schools of education and colleges of liberal arts and sciences in their universities and with P-12 educators in their communities, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.
2. Colleges and universities should likewise commit themselves to establishing or strengthening partnerships with neighboring law schools and with their P-12 communities.
3. All higher education institutions should commit themselves to review, and revise if appropriate, their current policies on promotion and tenure (including academic credit for student projects) in order to assure that recognition is provided for those working and researching public education and public service agendas.
4. The P-12 community should be involved with university partners throughout the pipeline, and it should expect and push to have the grade 13-20 community actively engaged in their practice and research.
5. P-12, 13-16, and 17-20 educators should form teams that will work cohesively and collaboratively to put into place local, national, and international initiatives to meet these ends. These teams should in turn reach out to encourage the formation of comparable teams with similar agendas.

Conclusion

While it is now widely recognized that meaningful educational reform at both P-12 and post-secondary levels will require constructive collaboration between P-12 schools and institutions of higher education – including both their liberal arts and sciences academic

units and their professional schools – the extent and nature of law school participation in this kind of collaboration is only now emerging. The differences in grade level, pedagogical approach, and mission that distinguish elementary and secondary schools from law schools – situated as law schools are near the top of the P-20 continuum – are substantial. Yet, these differences must be bridged for the sake of students in P-12 schools, colleges, and law schools.

It is no longer acceptable for law schools to sit atop the P-20 pyramid and simply wait for students to apply. Nor is it adequate for them to simply offer remedial programs for admitted students or pre-law programs for potential applicants at the college level. Rather, law schools, which have traditionally remained largely aloof from the P-20 school reform agenda, now need to reach down into the P-20 pyramid and begin to help prepare students all along the way. Working with their higher education colleagues in the arts and sciences, in education, and in other professional schools, law schools need to begin to play a more vigorous, leadership role in developing partnerships with P-12 schools and with their higher education colleagues that will close achievement gaps, stimulate civic responsibility, and increase the interest and ability of high school graduates – particularly those from under-represented groups – to enter the law school pipeline and pursue careers in law and public service.