

10-3-2008

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Recommended Citation

"More Ohio Graduates" (2008). *News Releases*. 1712.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/1712

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More Ohio Graduates

10.03.2008 | Education, Campus and Community

Ohio has a problem. Too few Ohio students are graduating from high school, fewer still are enrolling in college, and even fewer are graduating.

Bob Taft, former Ohio governor and distinguished research associate at the University of Dayton, thinks we can do better. He is leading a conference to bring together educators and policy makers from Ohio and the region to explore successful ways to increase the number of college graduates.

"If we are to increase the number of Ohioans with a college degree, we must better understand college attendance and graduation rates, learn from successful programs and work together as a region to expand college access and success in the Dayton region," said Taft, who organized the event as head of UD's Center for Educational Excellence.

"Expanding College Access and Enhancing Student Success" is scheduled for 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 16 in the Ponitz Center at Sinclair Community College. Cost is \$15. Register online at <http://regonline.com/ecaess> by Oct. 13. More than 200 participants already have registered.

The event is open to the public. Educational leaders, educators at all levels, and those with an interest in education are encouraged to attend, Taft said.

Eric D. Fingerhut, chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents, will participate in a panel at 1:45 p.m. with high-ranking education officials from Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky on how to bridge the gap between high school and college. The panel will include Stanley G. Jones, commissioner for higher education for Indiana and Dianne Bazell, assistant vice president for academic affairs, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education.

According to the Board of Regents, only four out of 10 ninth graders are likely to enroll in college by age 19, and too few will graduate. More than one out of three Ohio students who enroll in public colleges and universities directly from high school need remedial education before they can do college level work, Taft said.

The event will feature presentations on new strategies and some of the best practices and innovations for expanding college enrollment and graduation. Other sessions will examine community-based, college-based and school-based programs by area colleges and universities to help at-risk students succeed in college.

"If we are to achieve the ambitious goal set by Governor Ted Strickland to increase the number of Ohioans with college degrees, we must learn from each other and move forward with coordination and partnership," Taft said.

Sponsors include the University of Dayton, DP&L, Ohio College Access Network, KnowledgeWorks Foundation, Sinclair and Clark State community colleges, Wright State University and the Dayton Foundation.

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