



Independent colleges play vital role in communities, economy



Mason Dyer
AIKCU President

I was pleased to spend some time with Council members in November on the campus of Bellarmine University, where the vitality of our sector was on full display.

As I reported then, Kentucky's independent colleges and universities play vital roles in the commonwealth — by filling their missions as institutions of access, opportunity, and excellence for students, by helping prepare Kentucky's skilled workforce, and by serving as anchor institutions in communities ranging from rural Knott County to downtown Louisville.

While we don't talk about it as often, these institutions are also major employers and contributors to the economic health of Kentucky.

It's not quite ready for publication at the time of this writing, but within days we will release a report detailing the impressive economic impact of our sector.

Let's just say that the numbers reinforce our long-held belief that the investment in state aid for students attending independent colleges and universities represent one of the best rates of return on investment for the commonwealth.

We'll make sure you receive a copy of our economic impact report when it's available.

Thank you for your service to Kentucky students and to all of post-secondary education in Kentucky.

AIKCU members receive funds for healthcare summer programs

Six Kentucky independent colleges and universities have been awarded \$235,418 by the Council on Postsecondary Education to hold summer residential programs on campus focused on healthcare-related fields. The AIKCU members receiving funds for the summer bridge programs are Bellarmine University, Campbellsville University, Centre College, Midway University, Spalding University, and the University of Pikeville.

AIKCU members received half of the 12 grant awards distributed by CPE. Grants were funded by federal, state, and local fiscal recovery funds to help address Kentucky's shortage of qualified healthcare professionals, especially in rural areas, by allowing prospective college students to explore healthcare careers while gaining valuable exposure to college life.



Centre College's Summer Health Immersion Program - SHIP - is one of the summer bridge programs supported by CPE grants.

The summer programs will include hands-on activities, shadowing opportunities, or career workshops through partnerships with area healthcare providers. Postsecondary institutions are encouraged to include underrepresented students, such as low-income or first-generation students, in these programs.

"Kentucky's independent colleges and universities are dedicated to student success and to producing graduates ready to enter the workforce in key areas, like healthcare," said Mason Dyer, AIKCU president.

He added, "We know that summer bridge programs work by providing students the opportunity to jump start their way to positive outcomes, and we're thankful to CPE for supporting these efforts on AIKCU member campuses."

Information from CPE news release, Jan. 8, 2025

Brescia University names Madison Silvert as next president

AIKCU congratulates Madison Silvert, J.D., who has been named the next president of Brescia University in Owensboro.



Madison Silvert, J.D.
Incoming President

Silvert is chair of the Council on Postsecondary Education. He is also an alumnus of AIKCU member Centre College.

We also want to recognize current Brescia President Fr. Larry Hostetter on his pending retirement.



Fr. Larry Hostetter
Retiring President

We appreciate his 18 years of service to Brescia and to independent higher education in Kentucky.