

News from the System

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WANTED

More university graduates!

REWARD

A Mississippi boasting higher salaries, increased tax base, larger and more qualified workforce, lower levels of unemployment, decreased reliance on social programs, reduced crime rates, more social cohesion, and increased levels of civic engagement!

Today's dynamic global landscape is not so different from the Wild West of the turn of the century. Opportunities of wealth and success abound, but there is a risk that we might be left in the dust if the education train leaves without us. **To guarantee a bright future for our state, we must increase the number of Mississippi's children who complete a university degree.**

Of approximately 45,000 children who enter the first grade in public school, only about 11,500, or 26 percent, actually receive a public or private four-year university degree. What happens to the other 74 percent? They slip through the cracks of the education pipeline.

■ **About 35 to 40 percent of Mississippi's ninth graders drop out of high school every year.** Some of these students go on to receive a GED, but many enter the workforce without adequate education or experience.



■ **Less than a quarter of the first-year freshmen enrolled in the two-year colleges, or only 4,700 students, transfer to a four year college or university.** Many receive technical training or an associate degree and enter the workforce. But too many are not pursuing a bachelor's degree.

Mississippi needs more university graduates. To meet this need, we must ensure more students graduate from high school ready for college. We must also make college accessible and affordable to more students. Finally, we must find a way to encourage more students to transfer from Mississippi's community and junior colleges to the state's public universities.

The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) is committed to increasing the number of people in Mississippi with a university degree. **By working together with its funding partners in the Mississippi Legislature, IHL is ready to change Mississippi's tomorrow through higher education today.**